

Level 4 Potential Conservation Area (PCA) Report

Name South Park

Site Code S.USCOHP8*3727

IDENTIFIERS

Site ID 499 Site Class PCA
Site Alias South Park Megasite

Network of Conservation Areas (NCA)

<u>NCA Site ID</u>	<u>NCA Site Code</u>	<u>NCA Site Name</u>
-		No Data

County

Chaffee (CO)
Park (CO)

SITE DESCRIPTION

Site Description

South Park is one of three large intermontane valleys in Colorado. It is a faulted syncline between the Front Range and the Sawatch Uplift. An extensive Arizona fescue-slimstem muhly (*Festuca arizonica-Muhlenbergia filiculmis*) grassland is the dominant plant community on the valley floor. Much of the grassland habitat is fairly flat with gentle slopes. South Park is bounded on the west by the Mosquito Range, on the north and northwest by the southern end of the Park Range, on the east by the Tarryall Mountains and Puma Hills, and on the south by Black and Thirty-nine mile mountains. Tributaries of Tarryall Creek drain the northern park and the South Platte River and its tributaries drain the south portion of South Park. Ponderosa pine and bristlecone pine are found on the south facing hillsides, and on ridges within the Park. The north facing slopes are dominated by Engelmann spruce (*Picea engelmannii*) and subalpine fir (*Abies lasiocarpa*). The vegetation in South Park is generally short and sparse as a result of the dry, windy climate, historic and current grazing, fires, and/or prairie dog activity. The grassland of South Park evolved with fire and grazing by large and small mammals (Fitzgerald et al. 1994). Historically, bison and Gunnison prairie dogs were a significant component of this system (see Fitzgerald et al. 1994). Bison are reported as abundant in South Park prior to 1862 (Carey 1911). By 1871 only a few were seen, and the last four bison in Colorado were poached in 1897 (Meaney and Van Vuren 1993). Currently, the area is grazed by cattle and domestic bison. The surrounding landscape is a mosaic of agricultural and residential-developed areas. Many access roads fragment the grassland.

Key Environmental Factors

No Data

Climate Description

No Data

Land Use History

No Data

Cultural Features

No Data

Minimum Elevation	8,540.00 Feet	2,603.00 Meters
Maximum Elevation	10,558.00 Feet	3,218.00 Meters

SITE DESIGN

Site Map P - Partial Mapped Date 02/09/1996
Designer Fleming, C.C.

Boundary Justification

This site includes known habitat for the Mountain Plover in South Park. Mountain Plovers will move to different areas within this site in response to varying management practices, but will likely show site fidelity to the general area included in the sites, provided continuing compatible management practices are employed within the boundaries. Although the full area of this sites needs to be considered for the conservation of this species, other land use activities can take place within the planning boundary. Numerous additional sites are included within these boundaries; these additional sites are designed primarily to encompass the significant wetland communities of South Park. The wetland sites have different management and protection needs than does this South Park Site.

Primary Area	448,263.64 Acres	181,406.14 Hectares
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SITE SIGNIFICANCE

Biodiversity Significance Rank B2: Very High Biodiversity Significance

Biodiversity Significance Comments

This site supports occurrences of several extreme rich fens. These unique fens are globally rare (G2) wetland type. They support two globally rare plant communities and several globally rare plants (G2), as well as numerous state rare (S1-S2) plants that specifically adapted to the pH of the extreme rich fens. Several good (B-ranked) occurrences of Mountain Plover (*Charadrius montanus*), a bird species that is globally vulnerable (G3) are also present. Preliminary estimates suggest that this area supports approximately 15-20% of the total breeding population for this species. This site also supports a globally imperiled (G2) grassland plant community (*Festuca arizonica - Muhlenbergia filiculmis*). This grassland occurrence is the world's largest at 1.3 million acres. Located throughout the grassland is Colorado tansy-aster (*Machaeranthera coloradoensis*), a globally vulnerable (G3/S3) plant.

Other Values Rank No Data

Other Values Comments

No Data

ASSOCIATED ELEMENTS OF BIODIVERSITY

<u>Element State ID</u>	<u>State Scientific Name</u>	<u>State Common Name</u>	<u>Global Rank</u>	<u>State Rank</u>	<u>Driving Site Rank</u>
17170	<i>Charadrius nivosus nivosus</i>	Western Snowy Plover	G3T3	S1B	N
18609	<i>Charadrius montanus</i>	Mountain Plover	G3	S2B	N
21615	<i>Sisyrinchium pallidum</i>	Pale Blue-eyed-grass	G3	S3	N
24707	<i>Festuca arizonica - Muhlenbergia filiculmis</i> Grassland	Montane Grasslands	GU	S3	N
18609	<i>Charadrius montanus</i>	Mountain Plover	G3	S2B	N
18609	<i>Charadrius montanus</i>	Mountain Plover	G3	S2B	N
18609	<i>Charadrius montanus</i>	Mountain Plover	G3	S2B	N
23921	<i>Xanthisma coloradoense</i>	Colorado Tansy-aster	G3	S3	N
18609	<i>Charadrius montanus</i>	Mountain Plover	G3	S2B	N
18609	<i>Charadrius montanus</i>	Mountain Plover	G3	S2B	N
21615	<i>Sisyrinchium pallidum</i>	Pale Blue-eyed-grass	G3	S3	N
18609	<i>Charadrius montanus</i>	Mountain Plover	G3	S2B	N
24980	<i>Kobresia myosuroides - Thalictrum alpinum</i> Fen	Extreme Rich Fens	G2	S2	Y
18609	<i>Charadrius montanus</i>	Mountain Plover	G3	S2B	N
18609	<i>Charadrius montanus</i>	Mountain Plover	G3	S2B	N
21615	<i>Sisyrinchium pallidum</i>	Pale Blue-eyed-grass	G3	S3	N
18609	<i>Charadrius montanus</i>	Mountain Plover	G3	S2B	N
18609	<i>Charadrius montanus</i>	Mountain Plover	G3	S2B	N
18609	<i>Charadrius montanus</i>	Mountain Plover	G3	S2B	N
22057	<i>Primula egaliksensis</i>	Greenland Primrose	G4G5	S2	N
18609	<i>Charadrius montanus</i>	Mountain Plover	G3	S2B	N
18609	<i>Charadrius montanus</i>	Mountain Plover	G3	S2B	N
23921	<i>Xanthisma coloradoense</i>	Colorado Tansy-aster	G3	S3	N
21615	<i>Sisyrinchium pallidum</i>	Pale Blue-eyed-grass	G3	S3	N
23921	<i>Xanthisma coloradoense</i>	Colorado Tansy-aster	G3	S3	N

LAND MANAGEMENT ISSUES

Land Use Comments

No Data

Natural Hazard Comments

No Data

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Exotics Comments

No Data

Offsite

Hydrological processes originating outside of the planning boundary, including water quality, quantity, timing and flow must be managed to maintain site viability.

Information Needs

No Data

REFERENCES

Reference ID

Full Citation

172432	Fitzgerald, J. P., C. A. Meaney, and D. M. Armstrong. 1994. Mammals of Colorado. Denver Museum of Natural History and University Press of Colorado.
171839	Meaney, C. A., and D. Van Vuren. Recent distribution of bison in Colorado west of the Great Plains. Proceedings of the Denver Museum of Natural History, Series 3(4):1-10.
172562	Spackman, S., D. Culver, and J. Sanderson. 2001. Final Report: Park County Inventory of Critical Biological Resources. Colorado Natural Heritage Program, Fort Collins, CO.
193367	Wunder, M.B., F.L. Knopf, and C.A. Pague. 2003. The high-elevation population of mountain plovers in Colorado. The Condor 105:654-662.

ADDITIONAL TOPICS

Additional Topics

No Data

LOCATORS

Nation United States

Latitude 390332N

State Colorado

Longitude 1054826W

Quad Code

Quad Name

39105-A5	Glentivar
39105-A6	Sulphur Mountain
38105-H4	Elevenmile Canyon
39105-A7	Hartsel
39105-A8	Garo
39105-B6	Eagle Rock
39105-B7	Elkhorn
39105-B8	Fairplay East
39105-C6	Observatory Rock
39105-C7	Milligan Lakes
39105-C8	Como
39105-D6	Mount Logan
39105-D7	Jefferson
39105-D8	Boreas Pass
39106-A1	Jones Hill
39106-B1	Fairplay West
39106-C1	Alma
38105-F7	Gribbles Park
38105-G5	Thirtynine Mile Mountain
38105-G6	Dicks Peak
38105-G7	Agate Mountain
38105-G8	Castle Rock Gulch
38105-H5	Spinney Mountain
38105-H6	Guffey NW

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38105-H7 Antero Reservoir NE
38105-H8 Antero Reservoir
38106-H1 Marmot Peak

<u>Watershed Code</u>	<u>Watershed Name</u>
10190001	South Platte Headwaters
11020001	Arkansas Headwaters

VERSION

Version Date 12/01/2000
Version Author Spackman, S.C.

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