

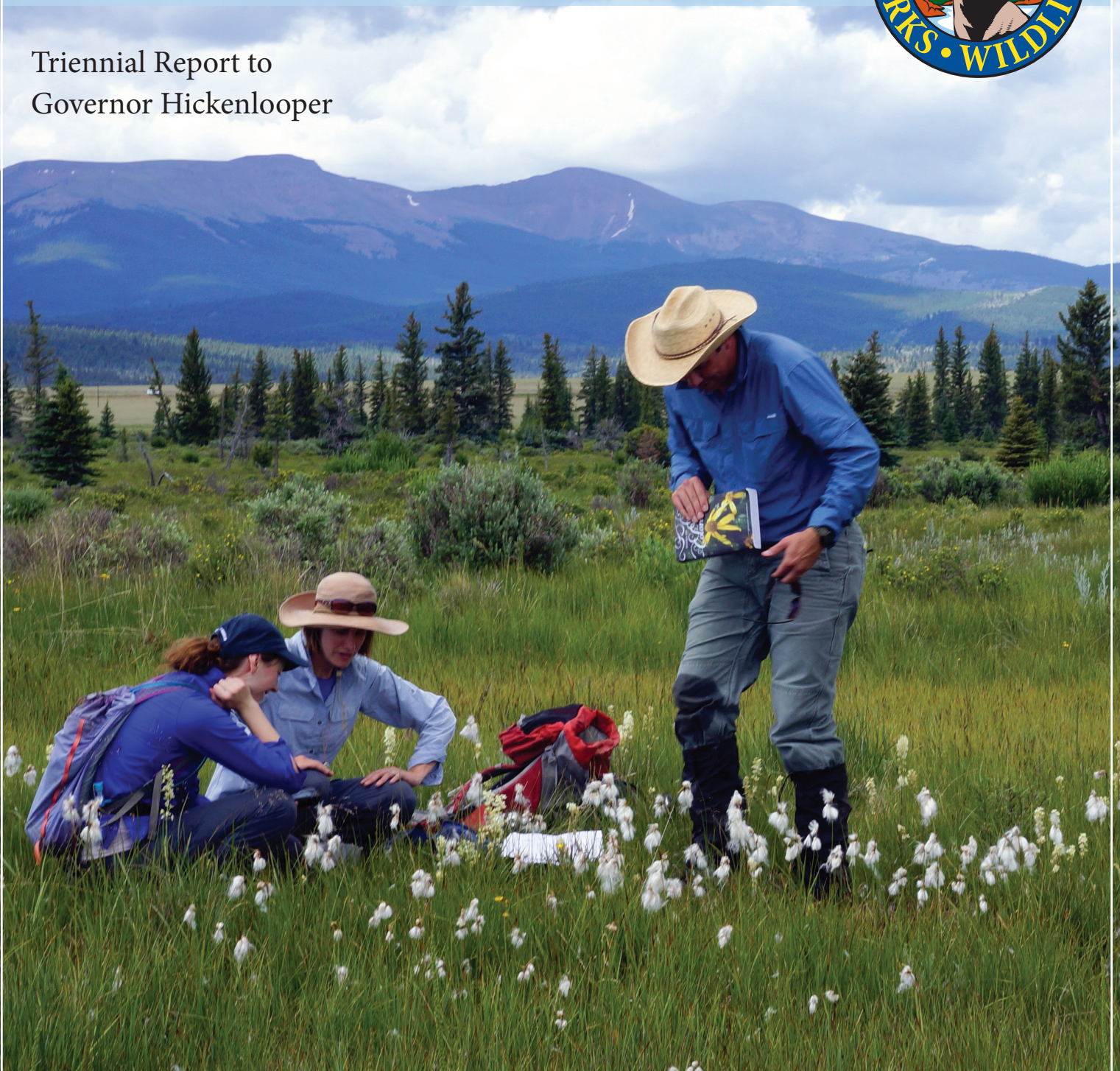
C O L O R A D O P A R K S & W I L D L I F E

Colorado Natural Areas Program



2015 - 2017 Review

Triennial Report to
Governor Hickenlooper



Celebrating 40 Years

The Colorado Natural Areas Program (CNAP) was born 40 years ago from a growing awareness and deep appreciation of Colorado’s iconic landscapes, impressive biodiversity, and unique geological and paleontological resources. With the signing of the Colorado Natural Areas Act in 1977 (C.R.S. 33-33), CNAP was established to recognize and monitor the state’s finest examples of these natural elements. By building strong partnerships with private and public landowners through voluntary agreements, CNAP is integral to the protection and enhancement of rare species and significant natural features.

As the program’s accomplishments and conservation successes continue to grow, CNAP’s mission remains unique and vital to statewide conservation efforts and to the citizens of Colorado.

Mission: To identify, evaluate, and support the protection of specific examples of natural features and phenomena as enduring resources for present and future generations, through a statewide system of Designated Natural Areas.



95 areas
DESIGNATED STATE NATURAL AREAS



178,275 acres
OF LAND DESIGNATING COLORADO'S MOST SIGNIFICANT NATURAL FEATURES



129 species
SPECIES OF GREATEST CONSERVATION NEED ARE SUPPORTED BY THE CONSERVATION OF STATE NATURAL AREAS



CNAP Designation as a Conservation Tool

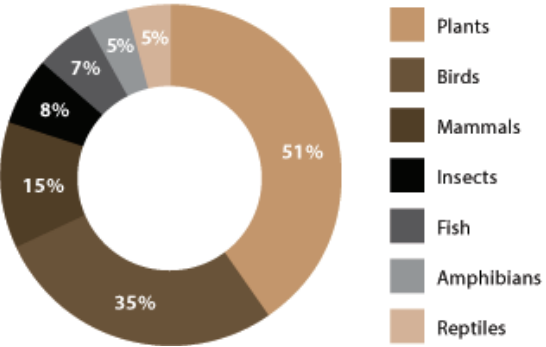
CNAP is the only program within Colorado with a statewide system for identifying and designating unique and significant natural features and is the only program within state government with an emphasis on rare plant conservation.

Since its establishment, CNAP has been paramount in the state’s conservation efforts, identifying and evaluating over 30 remarkable geologic and paleontologic features and supporting the conservation of more than 250 rare, threatened or endangered species or communities. CNAP is integral to the implementation of the Colorado State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP), a guiding document for the conservation of Colorado’s species of greatest of conservation need and their habitats. At least 126 of the species listed in the SWAP are known to occur on state natural areas. Of the 117 plant species listed in the SWAP, 44% are present on state natural areas. Over half (54%) of Colorado’s endemic plant species can also be found on state natural areas

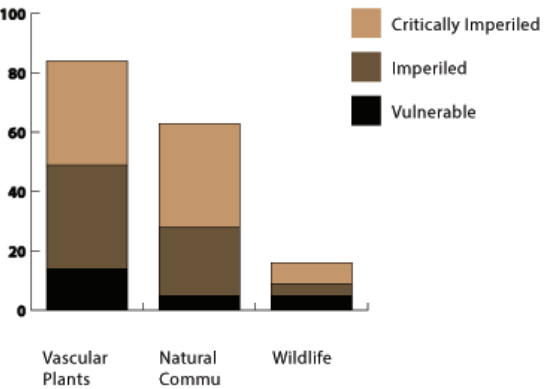
I value the program for the Natural Areas it protects into the future for the state and its people.

- Dave Bathke, CNAP volunteer of 13 years

Globally Rare Features on Designated Natural Area



Number of SWAP Species on Natural Areas





New Natural Area Designations

Between 2015-2017 CNAP designated 4 new state natural areas. Natural area designation serves to bring long-lasting recognition to unique natural elements on public or private lands, and formally acknowledges the essential role of landowners in the conservation of the sites in which they own and manage.

Logan Wash Mine Natural Area (2015):

This natural area enlarged a previous designation, creating the Mount Callahan, Mount Callahan Saddle, and Logan Wash Natural Area. This natural area is located in Garfield County and is home to 3 of the 4 known populations of the federally threatened Parachute penstemon (*Penstemon debilis*). The Logan Wash Mine parcel is owned by Occidental Oil Shale Inc. CNAP's long-standing partnership with this energy company has resulted in protections for the rare plant and successful conservation actions towards recovery of the species.

Staunton Natural Area (2015):

Located within Colorado's newest State Park, Staunton, this designation helps to protect and conserve the globally imperiled budding monkeyflower (*Mimulus gemmiparus*), along with other rare plants, tracked plant communities, and habitat for nesting raptors. There are two designated parcels within the Park, one located in Jefferson County and owned by Colorado Parks and Wildlife, and the second located in Park County and owned by the Colorado State Land Board.

Corral Bluffs Natural Area (2017):

Corral Bluffs boasts world class paleontological resources and includes one of our state's finest fossil forests. Twelve fossil taxa from the Age of Mammals have been found here. The natural area is located in El Paso County and is owned by the City of Colorado Springs.

Pagosa Skyrocket Natural Area (2017):

This natural area is home to over half of the world's known population of the federally endangered Pagosa skyrocket (*Ipomopsis polyantha*). It also includes valuable wetland habitat and other tracked species. The property is located in Archuleta County and is owned by Colorado Parks and Wildlife.

Steering the Ship: Colorado Natural Areas Council

Established in statute, the Colorado Natural Areas Council provides an advisory role to CNAP and is responsible for approving the natural areas registry and making recommendations to the Parks and Wildlife Commission on natural area designations.

In 2016, the Council designed a strategic plan to align natural area designations into a comprehensive vision for the conservation of iconic landscapes and unique habitats in Colorado. Accordingly, the Council is working to foster a robust and sustainable Natural Areas System, which builds on the program's core relationships with private and public landowners, and workforce of dedicated volunteer stewards to lend new protections to even more of the state's most significant natural features.

Colorado Natural Areas Council: Current Members

GOVERNOR APPOINTED

Tom Nesler, Chair | Appointed 2012
Retired, Division of Wildlife Species Conservation Manager

Ken Strom, Vice Chair | Appointed 2014
Retired, Colorado Audubon Director

Julia Kintsch | Appointed 2014
Conservation Ecologist, Eco-Resolutions LLC

Denise Culver | Appointed 2015
Wetland Ecologist, Colorado Natural Heritage Program

Dina Clark | Appointed 2017
Botanist/Herbarium Collection Manager, University of Colorado

BOARD AND COMMISSION REPRESENTATIVES

Alex Zipp | Appointed 2017
Parks and Wildlife Commission

John Shaw | Appointed 2016
Board of Land Commissioners

PREVIOUS COUNCIL MEMBERS

Michelle Zimmerman, Parks and Wildlife Commission
Gary Butterworth, Board of Land Commissioners
Michele Bloom, Board of Land Commissioners
Melissa Smeins, Bureau of Land Management
Renee Rondeau, Colorado Natural Heritage Program



Celebrating Conservation Successes

Protecting the Pagosa Skyrocket

One of the most imperiled plants in Colorado, the Pagosa skyrocket (*Ipomopsis polyantha*), got a big conservation boost in 2016 through the purchase of an 88-acre property in Archuleta County by Colorado Parks and Wildlife. The purchase was made possible with funding from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and Great Outdoors Colorado. The property harbors over half of the world’s population of this federally endangered species. The property was designated as state natural area in 2017 and CNAP staff have been working cooperatively with local Colorado Parks and Wildlife staff, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Colorado Natural Heritage Program, and other local partners to monitor and protect the plant. CNAP has led the charge in developing and implementing a quantitative monitoring protocol for measuring the trend of the species range-wide and contributing necessary data for the plant’s recovery.

Bolstering the Budding Monkeyflower

Until recently, the budding monkeyflower (*Mimulus gemmiparus*) lived a secretive life. The species, only known from central Colorado, has a unique life history and few identified populations. CNAP partnered with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and the U.S. Forest Service to expand on a pilot project initiated in 2012 to help bolster the populations of budding monkeyflower through assisted migration. Through this project, the number of known locations of the species has increased five-fold and we have learned a great deal about the plant’s life history. Our conservation actions are aimed at precluding the need to list the species under the federal Endangered Species Act.

The Colorado Natural Areas Program protects and raises awareness of the things that make Colorado unique and wonderful. The program accomplishes so much and is one of our state’s most amazing and cost effective programs.

– David Anderson, Colorado Natural Heritage Program Director



Most Valuable Assets: Volunteer Stewards & Partnerships

CNAP’s capacity and impact is greatly expanded through the strength of its partnerships and the force of its volunteer stewards – engaged citizens who dedicate their time and expertise to monitoring designated Natural Areas. The information collected by CNAP’s volunteer stewards helps to ensure the long-term well-being of state natural areas and is valuable to both the program and its partners.

State natural area designations are made possible by voluntary conservation agreements between the landowner and the State; currently, 108 agreements with over 50 different partners exist.

Collectively, the Program, volunteer stewards, and partners work together to ensure that prime examples of our natural heritage are conserved for future generations. These accomplishments have contributed directly to the state’s efforts to prevent and reverse endangered species listings, to protect significant geologic and fossil resources, and conserve valuable habitat.

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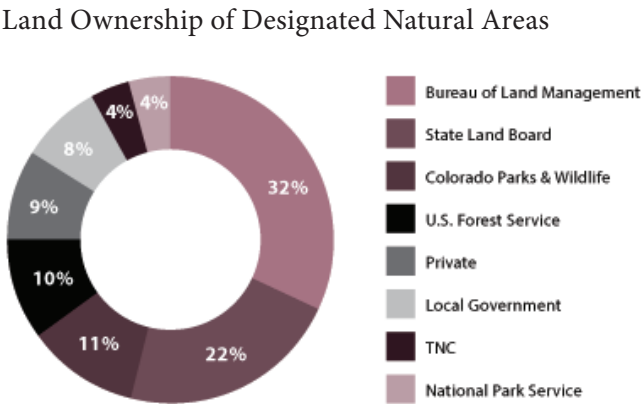
70 total
VOLUNTEER STEWARDS



\$120,000 value
4,600 VOLUNTEER HOURS IN THE PAST 3 YEARS



10 years
1/3 OF CNAP VOLUNTEER STEWARDS HAVE SERVED 10 YEARS OR MORE



Natural Areas Status Reports

Table One:
FEATURES AND CONDITIONS OF
DESIGNATED NATURAL AREAS

Table Two:
FEATURES AND CONDITIONS OF
REGISTERED NATURAL AREAS

FEATURES AND CONDITIONS OF DESIGNATED NATURAL AREAS

NATURAL AREA NAME	OWNER	COUNTY	SIGNIFICANT FEATURES TYPE	CONDITION
KEY: BLM= Bureau of Land Management CPW= Colorado Parks and Wildlife NPS= National Park Service TNC= The Nature Conservancy USFS= U.S. Forest Service				
Aiken Canyon	SLB	El Paso	Plant Communities, Geology	Stable
Antero-Salt Creek	SLB	Park	Wildlife, Plants, Plant Communities	Stable; Stewardship Action Plan implementation forthcoming
Arikaree River	SLB	Yuma	Plant Communities, Wildlife, Plants	Stable
Badger Wash	BLM	Mesa	Plants, Plant Communities	Stable
Blacks Gulch	BLM	Rio Blanco	Fossils	Stable
Blue Mountain- Little Thompson Fault	Private	Larimer	Geology, Plants	Stable; flood impact recovery
Bonny Prairie	CPW	Yuma	Plants, Plant Communities	Stable; rare plant monitoring
Boulder Mountain Park	City	Boulder	Plants, Plant Communities, Geology, Wildlife	Stable; flood impact recovery
Brush Creek Fen	Private	Custer	Plants, Plant Communities, Wildlife	Stable
California Park	SLB	Routt	Wildlife, Plant Communities	Stable
Castlewood Canyon	CPW/SLB	Douglas	Plants, Plant Communities, Wildlife	Stable; recreation management
Chalk Bluffs	SLB	Weld	Wildlife, Plants, Plant Communities, Geology	Stable
Colorado Tallgrass Prairie	City	Boulder	Plant Communities	Stable
Comanche Grassland Lesser Prairie Chicken	USFS	Baca	Wildlife	Lesser Prairie Chickens currently do not occur on property
Copeland Willow Carr	City	Grand	Plant Communities	Stable
Corral Bluffs	City	El Paso	Fossils, Wildlife	Stable
Cross Mountain Canyon	BLM	Moffat	Wildlife, Geology, Plants	Stable
Dakota Hogback	County	Jefferson	Geology, Fossils, Plants, Plant Communities, Wildlife	Stable
Deer Gulch	BLM	Rio Blanco	Plant Communities, Plants	Stable
Dome Rock	CPW	Teller	Wildlife, Geology, Plant Communities	Stable; noxious weed management
Droney Gulch	BLM/SLB	Chaffee	Plants	Stable; rare plant monitoring
Duck Creek	BLM	Rio Blanco	Plants	Stable; rare plant monitoring

FEATURES AND CONDITIONS OF DESIGNATED NATURAL AREAS				
NATURAL AREA NAME	OWNER	COUNTY	SIGNIFICANT FEATURES TYPE	CONDITION
Dudley Bluffs	BLM	Rio Blanco	Plants, Plant Communities	Stable; rare plant monitoring
East Lost Park	USFS	Park	Plants	Stable
East Sand Dunes	SLB	Jackson	Geology, Plants	Stable
Elephant Rocks	BLM	Rio Grande	Geology, Plants	Stable
Escalante Canyon	BLM	Delta/ Montrose	Wildlife, Plants, Plant Communities, Geology	Stable
Fairview	BLM	Montrose	Plants	Stable; rare plant monitoring
Fourmile Creek	SLB	Park	Plant Communities, Plants	Stable; Stewardship Action Plan implementation forthcoming
Fruita Paleontological Locality	BLM	Mesa	Fossils	Stable
Garden Park Fossil Locality	BLM	Fremont	Fossils, Plants	Stable; rare plant monitoring
Gateway Palisade	BLM	Mesa	Geology, Plants	Stable
Geneva Basin Iron Fen	County	Clear Creek	Plants, Plant Communities, Geology	Stable
Gothic	USFS	Gunnison	Plant Communities	Stable
Gunnsion Gravels	BLM	Mesa	Geology	Stable
Haviland Lake	CPW	La Plata	Plants, Plant Communities, Wildlife	Stable
High Creek Fen	TNC/SLB	Park	Plants, Plant Communities	Stable
High Mesa Grassland	BLM	Fremont	Plants, Plant Communities	Stable
Hoosier Ridge	USFS	Park	Plants	Stable; rare plant monitoring
Hurricane Canyon	USFS	El Paso	Plant Communities, Plants	Stable
Indian Spring	NPS	Saguache	Insects, Geology, Plant Communities	Stable
Indian Springs Trace Fossil Locality	Private	Fremont	Fossils	Stable
Irish Canyon	BLM\SLB	Moffat	Geology, Plants, Plant Communities	Stable
Jimmy Creek	SLB	Larimer	Plants	Stable
Ken Caryl Ranch	Private	Jefferson	Plants, Plant Communities, Geology, Wildlife	Stable
Kremmling Cretaceous Ammonite Locality	BLM\SLB	Grand	Fossils	Stable

FEATURES AND CONDITIONS OF DESIGNATED NATURAL AREAS				
NATURAL AREA NAME	OWNER	COUNTY	SIGNIFICANT FEATURES TYPE	CONDITION
Limestone Ridge	BLM	Moffat	Geology, Plants, Plant Communities	Stable
Lookout Mountain	BLM	Moffat	Geology, Plants, Plant Communities	Stable
Lower Greasewood Creek	BLM	Rio Blanco	Plants, Plant Communities	Stable
McElmo	BLM		Wildlife	Stable
Mexican Cut	TNC	Gunnison	Wildlife, Plant Communities	Stable
Mini-Wheeler	SLB	Fremont	Geology, Plant Communities, Plants	Stable
Miramonte Reservoir	CPW	San Miguel	Wildlife, Plants	Stable; rare plant monitoring
Mishak Lakes	TNC	Saguache	Wildlife, Plant Communities	Hydrologic impacts
Mount Callahan, Mount Callahan Saddle & Logan Wash Mine	Private	Garfield	Plants, Plant Communities	Stable; rare plant monitoring
Mount Emmons Iron Bog	USFS	Gunnison	Plants, Plant Communities, Geology	Stable; restoration work
Mount Goliath	USFS	Clear Creek	Plant Communities	Stable

There is no other program in the state that links state government to the identification and designation of natural areas of high value on both public and private property.

– Lynn Riedel, City of Boulder, Open Space and Mountain Parks, Grassland Plant Ecologist, CNAP volunteer



FEATURES AND CONDITIONS OF DESIGNATED NATURAL AREAS

NATURAL AREA NAME	OWNER	COUNTY	SIGNIFICANT FEATURES TYPE	CONDITION
Narraguinnep	USFS	Dolores	Plant Communities	Stable
Needle Rock	BLM	Delta	Geology	Stable
North Park	BLM	Jackson	Plants	Stable
Orient Mine	Private	Saguache	Wildlife, Plant Communities	Stable; bat species monitoring
Owl Canyon Pinyon Grove	SLB\ Private\ CPW	Larimer	Plant Communities	Stable
Pagosa Skyrocket	CPW	Archuleta	Plants, Wildlife	Stable; rare plant monitoring
Paradise Park	NPS	Boulder	Wildlife, Plant Communities	Stable
Park Creek Hogback	SLB	Larimer	Plants	Stable; rare plant monitoring
Pyramid Rock	BLM	Mesa	Geology, Plants	Stable; rare plant monitoring
Rabbit Valley	BLM	Mesa	Fossils	Stable
Rajadero Canyon	BLM\SLB	Conejos	Plants	Stable
Raven Ridge	BLM	Rio Blanco	Geology, Plants	Stable; rare plant monitoring
Redcloud Peak	BLM	Hinsdale	Insects	Stable; rare butterfly monitoring
Rough Canyon	BLM	Mesa	Geology, Wildlife, Plants	Stable

Learning from our natural areas opens the door to understanding how plant and animal life adapts to what these landscapes provide.

– Tom Nesler, Colorado Natural Areas Council Chair, CNAP volunteer steward of 5 years



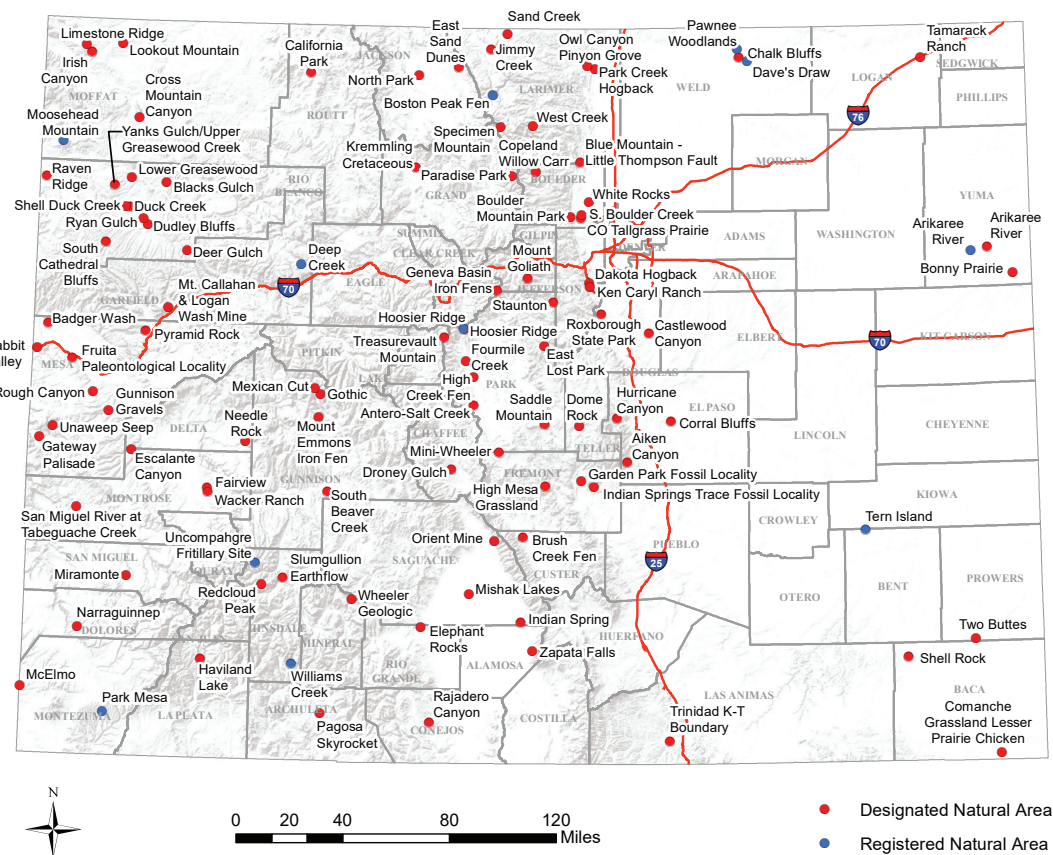
FEATURES AND CONDITIONS OF DESIGNATED NATURAL AREAS

NATURAL AREA NAME	OWNER	COUNTY	SIGNIFICANT FEATURES TYPE	CONDITION
Roxborough	CPW\SLB	Douglas	Geology, Plant Communities, Plants, Wildlife	Stable; recreation management
Ryan Gulch	BLM	Rio Blanco	Plants	Stable
Saddle Mountain	USFS\SLB	Park	Plant Communities	Stable
Sand Miguel at Tabeguache Creek	TNC	Montrose	Plant Communities	Stable
Sand Creek	SLB	Larimer	Plant Communities, Plants	Stable
Shell Duck Creek	Private	Rio Blanco	Plants	Stable; rare plant monitoring
Shell Rock	SLB	Baca	Plants	Stable
Slumguillion Earthflow	USFS\ BLM	Hinsdale	Geology	Stable
South Beaver Creek	BLM	Gunnison	Plants	Stable; rare plant monitoring
South Boulder Creek	City	Boulder	Wildlife, Plants, Plant Communities	Stable; flood impact recovery, road expansion mitigation
South Cathedral Bluffs	BLM	Rio Blanco	Plants, Plant Communities	Stable
Specimen Mountain	NPS	Larimer/ Grand	Wildlife, Plant Communities	Stable
Staunton	CPW/SLB	Jefferson/ Park	Plants, Plant Communities, Wildlife	Stable; rare plant monitoring & research
Tamarack Ranch	CPW	Logan	Wildlife, Plant Communities	Stable
Treasurevault Mountain	SLB	Park/Lake	Plants, Plant Communities, Wildlife	Stable
Trinidad K-T Boundary	CPW	Las Animas	Geology	Stable
Two Buttes	Private	Prowers/ Baca	Geology, Wildlife, Plants	Stable
UnawEEP Seep	BLM	Mesa	Insects, Plants, Plant Communities	Stable
Wacker Ranch	CPW	Montrose	Plants	Stable; rare plant monitoring
West Creek	NPS	Larimer	Wildlife, Plant Communities	Stable
Wheeler Geologic	USFS	Mineral	Geology	Stable
White Rocks	City	Boulder	Geology, Wildlife, Plants	Stable
Yanks Gulch/Upper Greasewood Creek	BLM	Rio Blanco	Plants, Plant Communities	Stable
Zapata Falls	SLB	Alamosa	Geology, Wildlife, Plant Communities	Stable

FEATURES AND CONDITIONS OF REGISTERED NATURAL AREAS

NATURAL AREA NAME	OWNER	COUNTY	SIGNIFICANT FEATURES TYPE	CONDITION
Arikaree River	TNC	Yuma	Wildlife, Plant Communities	Stable
Boston Peak Fen	USFS	Larimer	Plants, Plant Communities	Unknown
Daves Draw	USFS	Weld	Plant Communities	Stable
Deep Creek	USFS	Garfield	Geology, Plants, Wildlife,	Unknown
Hoosier Ridge	USFS	Summit	Plants	Stable
Moosehead Mountain	BLM	Moffat	Plant Communities	Unknown
Park Mesa	NPS	Montezuma	Plants, Plant Communities, Wildlife, Geology	Stable
Pawnee Woodlands	Private	Weld	Plants, Plant Communities,	Unknown
Tern Island	SLB	Bent	Wildlife	Hydrologic impacts, rare species monitoring
Uncompahgre Fritillary Site	USFS	Hinsdale	Insects	Unknown
Williams Creek	USFS	Hinsdale	Plant Communities	Unknown

Map of Designated Natural Areas



CNAP uses volunteer stewards to monitor sites, which is a very enriching experience for members of the public and an effective way for this small state program to keep in touch with the status of many sites across the state.

- Lynn Riedel, City of Boulder, Open Space and Mountain Parks, Grassland Plant Ecologist, CNAP volunteer



Redcloud Peak columbines

State of Colorado

Governor:

JOHN W. HICKENLOOPER

Department of Natural Resources:

BOB RANDALL, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Colorado Parks & Wildlife:

BOB BROSCHEID, DIRECTOR

Colorado Natural Areas Council:

TOM NESLER, CHAIR

KEN STROM, VICE CHAIR

ALEX ZIPP, PARKS AND WILDLIFE COMMISSION

JOHN SHAW, BOARD OF LAND COMMISSIONERS

JULIA KINTSCH, MEMBER

DENISE CULVER, MEMBER

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Colorado Natural Areas Program
cpw.state.co.us/aboutus/pages/CNAP.aspx