



## Grape Creek Area Characteristics for Protection

- BLM's Grape Creek Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC)
  - Corridor of significant naturalness character with unique high desert riparian resources,
  - Scenic and visual qualities,
  - Along with significant flora (*Aquilegia chrysantha* var. *rydbergii*, *Mentzelia chrysantha*, *Mentzelia densa*) and
  - Fauna values (bighorn sheep and peregrine falcon nesting area).
  - BLM Grape Creek source info can be found at: [https://eplanning.blm.gov/epl-front-office/projects/lup/39877/98742/119610/Prelim\\_Eval\\_ACECs\\_RGFO.pdf](https://eplanning.blm.gov/epl-front-office/projects/lup/39877/98742/119610/Prelim_Eval_ACECs_RGFO.pdf)
  - ACEC completely overlaps State Trust proposed mineral lease land
  - ACEC partially overlaps the northwestern portion of the Oil and Gas proposed lease area, and is adjacent to the west and north
- Colorado Natural Heritage Program (CNHP)'s Grape Creek Potential Conservation Area (PCA)
  - Biodiversity Significance Rank B2: Very High Biodiversity Significance
  - Boundary contains Grape Creek riparian corridor and watershed
  - Biodiversity Significance: This site encompasses an excellent (A-ranked) and a good (B-ranked) occurrence of a globally imperiled (G2G3/S2S3) riparian natural community, narrowleaf cottonwood - Rocky Mountain juniper (*Populus angustifolia* - *Juniperus scopulorum*) woodland. Additionally, there is a good (B-ranked) occurrence of the globally vulnerable (G3/S2) narrowleaf cottonwood - Douglas-fir (*Populus angustifolia* - *Pseudotsuga menziesii*) woodland and a good to fair (BC-ranked) occurrence of the apparently globally secure but state imperiled (G4/S2) Rocky Mountain juniper / Red-osier dogwood (*Juniperus scopulorum* / *Cornus sericea*) woodland. Several fair (C-ranked) occurrences of a globally imperiled (G2/S2) plant, Arkansas Canyon stickleaf (*Nuttallia densa*), have also been documented.
  - Grape Creek PCA source info can be found at: [https://cnhp.colostate.edu/cwic/wp-content/uploads/download/documents/pca/L4\\_PCA-Grape%20Creek\\_3-3-2018.pdf](https://cnhp.colostate.edu/cwic/wp-content/uploads/download/documents/pca/L4_PCA-Grape%20Creek_3-3-2018.pdf)
  - More info on their PCAs and all reports can be found at: <https://cnhp.colostate.edu/ourdata/pca-reports/>
  - PCA nearly completely overlaps State Trust proposed mineral lease land
  - PCA partially overlaps the southwestern portion of the Oil and Gas proposed lease area, and is adjacent to the west and south
- 2018 Grape Creek Colorado Proposed Wilderness
  - Part of Congresswoman Diana DeGette's 2018 Colorado Wilderness Act (CWA)
  - Grape Creek Proposed Wilderness consists of 35,535 acres, comprised mostly of BLM and USFS public lands.
  - "Grape Creek is a secluded and serene body of water that flows into the Wet Mountain Valley of southern Colorado. This creek is responsible for nearly all the snowmelt that comes through this valley, creating a lush habitat with diverse vegetation and wildlife. Grape Creek above all is a destination for fisherman. It has few points of access, and can be successfully fished throughout numerous seasons due to the low elevation of the Valley. These factors create a pristine environment that is a haven for both fish and fisherman



alike, a true example of sustainable Colorado recreation.

- More info on Congresswoman Diana DeGette's 2018 proposed Wilderness can be found at: <https://degette.house.gov/legislative-issues/protecting-colorado-s-wilderness>
- The 2018 Colorado Wilderness Act can be found at: [https://degette.house.gov/sites/degette.house.gov/files/Colorado Wilderness Act of 2018 Background Materials.pdf](https://degette.house.gov/sites/degette.house.gov/files/Colorado%20Wilderness%20Act%20of%202018%20Background%20Materials.pdf)
- Grape Creek proposed Wilderness completely overlaps State Trust proposed mineral lease land
- Grape Creek proposed Wilderness is just to the west and south of the Oil and Gas proposed lease area
  
- USFS Pike-San Isabel's Tanner Peak Recommended Wilderness
  - Overlaps with much of the USFS portion of the 2018 Grape Creek proposed Wilderness
  - USFS Tanner Peak Recommended Wilderness is adjacent to the southeast of the State Trust proposed mineral lease land
  - USFS Tanner Peak Recommended Wilderness is adjacent to the south of the Oil and Gas proposed lease area
  
- Grape Creek Wilderness Study Area (WSA)
  - Designated in 1980, the Lower and Upper Grape Creek WSAs consist of over 21,400 acres of BLM managed public land.
  - Diverse terrain from rolling hills to rugged canyons and mountains to rich riparian zones along the creek.
  - The predominant feature is Horseshoe Mountain, in the northeastern portion of the WSA.
  - Vegetation consists mainly of pinyon and juniper, ponderosa pine, Douglas fir, and riparian species along Grape Creek.
  - Fauna includes mule deer, mountain lion, black bear, various small mammals, wild turkey, various species of raptors, and trout.
  - Subtle remains of the Denver and Rio Grande railroad spur offer historical significance
  - Activities include hiking, backpacking, camping, horseback riding, hunting, and photography.
  - Source info can be found at: <https://www.blm.gov/site-page/programs-national-conservation-lands-colorado-lower-grape-creek-wsa>
    - And: <https://www.blm.gov/site-page/programs-national-conservation-lands-colorado-upper-grape-creek-wsa>
  - WSA is adjacent with the State Trust proposed mineral lease land to the north, west, and south.
  
- Grape Creek Watershed area provides High Habitat and Range for several Wildlife Species:
  - Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep (*Ovis canadensis Canadensis*) production area, overall range, summer range, winter range, severe winter range, winter concentration area, and summer concentration area
  - Black bear (*Ursus americanus*) overall range, summer concentration area, and fall concentration area



- Elk (*Cervus Canadensis*) overall range, summer range, winter range, and severe winter range
  - Mule deer (*Odocoileus hemionus*) overall range, summer range, summer concentration area, winter range, severe winter range, and winter concentration area
  - White-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*) overall range
  - Pronghorn (*Antilocapra americana*) overall range, winter range, and severe winter range
  - Mountain lion (*Puma concolor*) overall range
  - Brazilian free tailed bat (*Tadarida brasiliensis*) overall range
    - Colorado state ranked critically imperiled species.
  - Townsend's big-eared bat (*Corynorhinus townsendii*) overall range.
    - US Fish and Wildlife Service Endangered Species
  - Gunnison's prairie dog (*Cynomys gunnisoni*) overall range
    - Species of Most Concern by the US Wildlife Conservation and Restoration Program's (WCRP) Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy (CWCS), as well as listed as Colorado BLM sensitive.
  - Aberts squirrel (*Sciurus aberti*) overall range.
  - Bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) winter forage and winter range
    - Listed as Colorado BLM Sensitive, CWCS Species of Most Concern, and Partnership in Flight Priority Bird.
  - Mexican spotted owl (*Strix occidentalis lucida*) proposed critical habitat
    - A CPW endangered species, a CWCS Species of Most Concern, and Partnership in Flight Priority Bird.
  - Scaled quail (*Callipepla squamata*) overall range
    - CWCS Species of Most Concern and Partnership in Flight Priority Bird
  - Wild turkey (*Meleagris gallopavo*) roost sites, overall range, winter range, and winter concentration area
  - Great blue heron (*Ardea Herodias*) foraging area
  - Canadian goose (*Branta canadensis*) foraging area, production area, winter concentration, and winter range.
- Local recreational trails that were completed in conjunction with Colorado Parks and Wildlife and BLM.
    - The Hard Time and Section 13 trails are within the proposed lease boundary
    - The Redemption and The Great Escape trails are located immediately adjacent to the parcel
  - Grape Creek, and Temple Canyon Park, provide local Canon City residents, and tourists, with other forms of primitive recreation
    - Including fishing, hiking, mountain biking, camping, hunting, bird watching, scenic viewing, photography, and bouldering
  - Proximity to Canon City's Dawson Ranch neighborhood.
  - Proximity to Canon City's Temple Canyon Mountain Park
  - The Temple of Temple Canyon is a rare geological rock alcove, formed by the continual seepage of water into small fissures in the rock
    - May have been a Ute Indian Tribal ceremony site.
  - The Temple Canyon area is also well known for Paleontology