

COLORADO NATURAL AREAS PROGRAM



Natural Areas' Legislative Mandate:

- Recognize and protect the natural features that make Colorado unique
- Establish land management agreements with landowners
- Promote outdoor education and scientific research
- Natural Areas Act passed in 1977; re-authorized in 1988; unanimously re-authorized in 1999

Established Natural Areas:

- 80 sites designated; 32 sites registered
- 140,130 acres designated; 54,584 acres registered
- Designated Sites: 39% on BLM lands; 25% state; 15% private; 11% USFS; 6% municipal/county; 4% NPS



Giant Ammonite Fossil at Kremmling Cretaceous Natural Area

Recent Contributions:

- Authored 850 pages of statewide manuals: *Native Plant Revegetation, Weed Management, & Wetland Management*; disseminated ~2500 copies
- Recruited 100 Volunteers -- citizens who contributed nearly \$38,000 in volunteer hours to improve site management in 2008
- Natural resource coordination with *Colorado State Parks*, including wetland mapping on all Parks
- Coordinated with *Denver Botanic Gardens*: recruited twenty Rare Plant Monitoring Stewards to collect important scientific data on rare plants needed by land managers
- There are 159 rare, threatened or endangered species and communities protected on Designated Natural Areas
- 493 total records of rare species and communities occur on Designated Natural Areas

Benefits of Natural Areas:

- Public recognition of landowner's exemplary stewardship.
- Serve as examples of native conditions for restoration, research, and education.
- Can help to avoid federal endangered species listings through protection of rare species and habitats.
- Financial assistance for protection and research projects.



Mishak Lakes Natural Area



East Sand Dunes Natural Area



Wheeler Geological Natural Area



Geneva Basin Iron Fens Natural Area

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