

For Immediate Release:

October 20, 2007

Save The Poudre Coalition

http://savethepoudre.org

Contact:

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POUDRE RIVER DRAINED, AGAIN
Victim Report
Poudre River Police

INCIDENT TYPE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ASSAULT <input type="checkbox"/> ROBBERY <input type="checkbox"/> THEFT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER: <u>Dewatering</u>		
	ADDRESS OR LOCATION OF INCIDENT USGS Gage 06752260, Cache la Poudre River near Lincoln St., Downtown Fort Collins, CO	DATE OF INCIDENT October 15 and 16, 2007	TIME OF INCIDENT 11:45 on the 15 th to about 11:00 on the 16 th
INCIDENT DESCRIPTION	<p>On or about 11:45am on October 15, 2007, the Poudre River experienced a sharp spike (increase) in flow to about 250 cfs at the stated location. This spike was followed by a rapid decrease in the river's flow, reaching a low of about 2.5 cfs between 11:00 and 11:45 the next morning (2.5 is ecologically equivalent to "zero.") Following this low, the river flow returned to a "normal" range for this time of year of about 30 cfs. Evidence taken from the USGS web site is attached as Figure 1 below.</p> <p>Rapid flow fluctuations of this type, especially so-called 'down-ramping' events, are known to be highly detrimental to rivers. Rapid water level declines lead to bank slumping, sediment input and accumulation, and temporary excess turbidity, at a minimum. Aquatic life can be severely affected by rapid streamflow fluctuations.</p> <p>Future incidents of this sort will also be reported to the appropriate parties.</p>		
SUSPECT INFORMATION	<p>Suspects have yet to be identified, but would be expected to include several diverters of Poudre River water. Most likely one or more water diversions were abruptly halted at 11:45am on Oct. 15 leading to the initial spike, followed by reduced releases from Horsetooth Reservoir as more ditch companies halted irrigation given recent rainfall in the Fort Collins area last weekend. More investigation is needed to isolate the exact causes, assess responsibility, and identify solutions. Spikes and dewaterings are commonplace on the Poudre through downtown Fort Collins and downstream. None of the irrigators, ditch companies, and cities that divert water out of the Poudre communicate with each other for the ecological benefit of the river. The Poudre is shut on and off like the kitchen faucet in a house.</p> <p>Proposed water projects on the Poudre River upstream of Fort Collins (e.g., the Northern Integrated Supply Project, aka NISP) could exacerbate this kind of problem. Securing adequate instream flows would be a valuable technique to prevent these repeated assaults. River monitoring stations placed along the river immediately beyond diversion points would also be helpful. A volunteer brigade of 'river watchers' would also be useful -- interested volunteers can contact the Save The Poudre Coalition.</p>		

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REPEAT OFFENSES	<p>Over the last year, this crime has been repeated several times. Although the hourly measurements are not publicly available (these would be much more <i>damming</i>), the daily average measurements are available, and thus paint a picture of repeat offenses in November of 2006, and then again repeatedly in January, May, and September of 2007. (see Figure 2, below)</p> <p>Draining the Poudre River is a repeat crime, and has occurred for decades. Until the perpetrators are stopped, the crime will most likely continue into the future. Further, having gotten away with this crime repeatedly in the past, the perpetrators are planning even larger projects with larger "dewatering" capabilities (NISP, etc.).</p>	
PERSON REPORTING	NAME Gary Wockner 516 N. Grant Ave. Fort Collins, CO 80521	PHONE # 970-218-8310
	REPRESENTING Save The Poudre Coalition	OTHER LEADS http://SaveThePoudre.Org http://waterdata.usgs.gov/nwis/uv?dd_cd=04&format=gif&period=7&site_no=06752260
SIGNATURE	X <u>Gary Wockner</u> SIGNATURE OF PERSON MAKING THIS REPORT	DISTRIBUTION: (ORIGINAL TO RECORDS) <input type="checkbox"/> ADMIN <input type="checkbox"/> INVESTIGATIONS <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER: <u>Media Outlets (For immediate release)</u>
	DATE/TIME RECEIVED BY STAR #	APPROVING SUPERVISOR RANK STAR # DATE APPROVED

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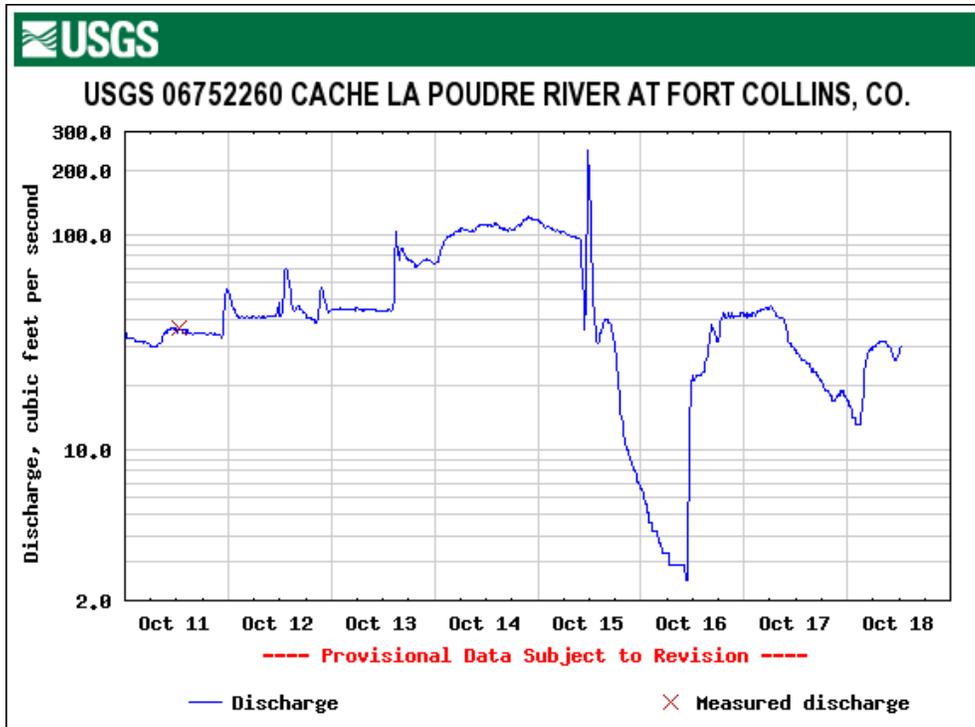


Figure 1. From http://waterdata.usgs.gov/nwis/uv?dd_cd=04&format=gif&period=7&site_no=06752260
 (This is the real 2007 streamflow chart produced from the USGS gauge near Lincoln Street in downtown Fort Collins)

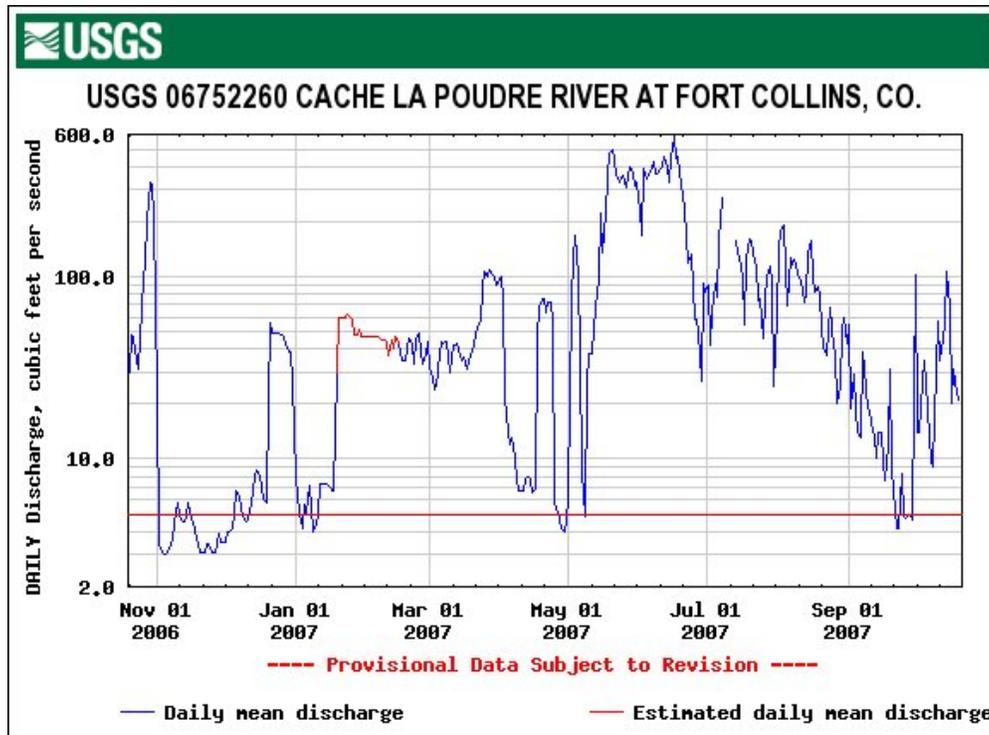


Figure 2. Average daily flow in the Poudre River near Lincoln Street in downtown Fort Collins for the last year (again, this is a real chart). The red line is placed at 5cfs, which is ecologically effectively “zero” or “drained dry.” Hourly flows would yield an even starker picture, but are not publicly available. For example, in Figure 1 above, the average daily flow would be near 100 cfs, but would include a “drained dry” event during that 24-hour period.

The Save The Poudre Coalition requests an immediate investigation -- the Cache la Poudre River, the ecology of the Poudre River corridor, and the downtown Fort Collins economy depend on it.

DISCLAIMER: It is not an actual crime to drain the Poudre River dry. People, cities, and companies who own Poudre River water rights can, and do, legally drain the Poudre River whenever and wherever they want to. The references above to crime, criminals, offenders, and perpetrators are all used solely for satiric and humorous effect.