

## **For Immediate Release**

April 6, 2010

[www.SaveThePoudre.org](http://www.SaveThePoudre.org)

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## **ARAPAHOE SNOWFLY ON THE BRINK OF EXTINCTION**

### **Scientists and Conservationists Act to Protect Indicator of Cache la Poudre Watershed Health**

**Fort Collins, CO** - A coalition of scientists and conservationists filed a scientific petition today requesting that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service extend Endangered Species Act protection to the Arapahoe snowfly (*Capnia arapahoe*), an aquatic insect.

The Arapahoe snowfly is known from only two small tributaries of the Cache la Poudre River in the Front Range of Northern Colorado: Young Gulch and Elkhorn Creek. A recent status review by the Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation found that this aquatic insect is critically imperiled and likely on the brink of extinction.

Besides being extremely rare, the species is threatened by habitat damage from intensive recreation; livestock grazing; timbering projects; stream de-watering; insecticide application close to water bodies connected to Elkhorn Creek; sedimentation and runoff from roads and trails; and effluent from residential and destination resort septic systems.

“Our organization’s mission is to protect and restore the Poudre River,” said Gary Wockner of Save The Poudre, “and that extends to the species and ecosystem in and around it. We have a moral, environmental, and economic obligation to protect the Arapahoe snowfly. Save The Poudre is proud to support this petition.”

Snowflies (sometimes called winter stoneflies) require cool, clear rivers and streams to survive, which makes them excellent biological indicators of watershed health. The Arapahoe snowfly has been described as an “indicator species,” signaling the health of its freshwater habitats.

The Arapahoe snowfly is only one of the many important species found in the Cache la Poudre watershed. Careful management of recreation, grazing, water withdrawal, and pollution in this watershed is essential to maintain and sustain the diversity of species that this area supports.

“Young Gulch and Elkhorn Creek are critical to the continued survival of the imperiled Arapahoe snowfly,” said Scott Hoffman Black, Executive Director of the Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation. “The protection of these areas is also vital for the many other fish and bird species that call this area home.”

Endangered Species Act protection for the Arapahoe snowfly would mean that its habitat would be protected and restored. The law is enormously effective at preventing extinction.

“The Arapahoe snowfly urgently needs the safety net that the Endangered Species Act provides,” Nicole Rosmarino, Wildlife Program Director for WildEarth Guardians said. “We owe it to future generations to leave behind a legacy of protecting endangered species, like these snowflies, and the special places they call home.”

The petitioners include: The [Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation](#), an international nonprofit scientific organization dedicated to protecting wildlife through the conservation of invertebrates and their habitat; Dr. Boris Kondratieff, a University of Colorado entomologist and expert in aquatic insects; [Save the Poudre: Poudre Waterkeeper](#), an organization that works to protect and restore the Cache la Poudre River; [Cache la Poudre River Foundation](#), an organization founded for the protection of Wild Trout through the town of Fort Collins, Colorado; [WildEarth Guardians](#), which protects and restores wildlife, wild rivers and wild places in the American West; and [Center for Native Ecosystems](#), a group dedicated to protecting native species and their habitats in the Rocky Mountain Region.

[Read the petition.](#)

[Read more about the Arapahoe snowfly.](#)