

## **Embargoed until 17 April 2008 12:01 AM MDT**

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### **Cache la Poudre among America's Most Endangered Rivers**

#### **Iconic River Could be Robbed of its Glory**

**Washington**—Colorado's only Wild and Scenic River could soon lose much of its remaining water thanks to a scheme proposed by some government officials to unnecessarily divert billions of gallons of water away from the Cache la Poudre. Such action could cripple Fort Collins, which has christened the river as one of the town's "economic engines." Facing problems like these, it's no wonder the Cache la Poudre has been named one of *America's Most Endangered Rivers*.

"Thou shall not steal is one of the first lessons all of us learned growing up, but it's a maxim that some government officials seem to have forgotten" said Rebecca Wodder, President of American Rivers. "While Colorado is facing some serious problems when it comes to water scarcity, robbing the Poudre dry simply isn't the solution."

The proposed Northern Integrated Supply Project (NISP) would cost homeowners and taxpayers nearly a billion dollars, and subject residents and future generations to the debt for 30 years. NISP would divert a staggering 36 million gallons of water a day away from the river before it reaches Fort Collins, enough to fill an Olympic sized swimming pool every 8 minutes.

Meanwhile the energy costs and the potential green house gas emissions that would be caused by the project are equally enormous. The NISP would require a massive pumping station be constructed to carry the water more than 3 miles to the proposed reservoir site: a scenic canyon that would be drowned by this flawed idea.

"This project really goes off the deep end," said Gary Wockner, Spokesman for the Save the Poudre Coalition. "There are some cost effective and common sense solutions that experts agree could make this project unnecessary. It's really irresponsible to be dodging a problem we can solve today, and instead forcing our children to pay for it tomorrow."

Colorado municipalities and water districts have yet to embrace the solutions that others across the country have. Many metropolises have adopted tiered water rates that would provide financial incentives for customers to use less water, and penalize those who are wasteful. Others provide discounted or even free water smart fixtures and appliances for residents. And farmers all across America are dumping flood irrigation, an idea straight out of the last millennium and switching to pivot and drip irrigation systems.

“We need 21<sup>st</sup> century ideas to combat the 21<sup>st</sup> century problems we’re facing due to global warming,” added Wodder. “We need to approach solutions not with ideas that our grandparents would have thought of, but rather with innovations that will make our grandchildren proud of us.”

The Poudre flows 140 miles from its protected headwaters in Rocky Mountain National Park to a confluence with the South Platte River. The Poudre’s upper reaches are a hotspot for fly fishing, rafting, floating, camping, hiking, and a scenic respite from city life. Such activities help power the Fort Collins economy. The NISP would reduce the Poudre to a trickle before it reaches the city eliminating jobs and endangering people’s livelihoods.

The fate of the Poudre currently lies in the hands of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, who can kill the project under authority granted to it by the Clean Water Act. Experts agree that efficiency measures are a much more economically feasible and environmentally sustainable way to go. The Corps is expected to release an environmental impact statement on the project by the summer.

“I encourage everyone to make today the first day in the rest of the Poudre’s life,” concluded Wodder. “Take action help save the Poudre, and help Colorado become a water smart state for generations to come.”

### **About America’s Most Endangered Rivers™**

Each year, American Rivers solicits nominations from thousands of river groups, environmental organizations, outdoor clubs, local governments, and taxpayer watchdogs for the America’s Most Endangered Rivers report. The report highlights the rivers facing the most uncertain futures rather than those suffering from the worst chronic problems. The report presents alternatives to proposals that would damage rivers, identifies those who make the crucial decisions, and points out opportunities for the public to take action on behalf of each listed river.

The America’s Most Endangered Rivers Report results in thousands of supporters taking action on behalf of their beloved river. Such action produces immediate and tangible result. To see success stories visit [www.americanrivers.org/MERSuccesses](http://www.americanrivers.org/MERSuccesses)

### **Interviews**

**Rebecca Wodder is available for interview, both pre and post embargo. Our offices are just blocks away from all major news bureaus. Please contact Garrett Russo (202) 423-9494 for booking. The full report is available at <http://www.americanrivers.org/MERPressroom>**

**Reporters wishing to direct readers to the report online may use the following link\*:**  
<http://www.americanrivers.org/Poudre>

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*American Rivers is the only national organization standing up for healthy rivers so our communities can thrive. Through national advocacy, innovative solutions and our growing network of strategic partners, we protect and promote our rivers as valuable community assets that are vital to our health, safety and quality of life. Founded in 1973, American Rivers has more than 65,000 members and online supporters nationwide, with offices in Washington, DC and the Mid-Atlantic, Northeast, Midwest, Southeast, California and Northwest regions.* [www.AmericanRivers.org](http://www.AmericanRivers.org)