

Region 2 Sensitive Species List

Rocky Mountain Capshell (*Acroloxus coloradensis*)

Recommendation Rationale: **R2 Sensitive Species (SS)**

[Note: The evaluation prepared for this species was out of date. Following, is our revised rationale, incorporating more recent information on population status.] In the early '90's only two populations of this Pleistocene relict were known in the United States, one each in Montana and Colorado. The only known population in R2 was found in Peterson Lake, Boulder County, Colorado. This population was believed to be experiencing "extreme population decline" and to be at substantial risk. The habitat of Peterson Lake has suffered from pollution. Furthermore, Lake Eldora Ski Area (subject to FS permitting) uses this lake for snowmaking water supply, thereby creating fluctuating water levels. Because of this situation, the USFWS was petitioned to emergency list the species.

In 1993, surveys were conducted of other lakes in Colorado that appeared to meet habitat requirements of the species, as they were known at the time. This effort identified an additional population in Boulder County (Lost Lake) on the ARNF, one in Rocky Mountain National Park (Finch Lake), and two in Jackson County (Upper Big Greek and Teal Lakes), both on NFS lands. Although population estimates were not done, it appeared that populations were healthy, with reproduction evidenced by different size classes. Another population in Boulder County was found on NFS lands after completion of this survey effort. As a result of this information, USFWS removed the species from the candidate list.

Despite this improved picture of species status in R2 (Colorado), this glacial relict still may remain at some risk. The species is currently known only from 6 populations, and remaining potential habitats along the Front Range are found in areas of urbanization and are often polluted with road salt and other contaminants. Water drawdown, recreation, and other factors could threaten these isolated populations. Because of its remaining known rarity, isolation, threats due to habitat alteration, and the fact that 4 of the 6 known R2 populations are on NFS lands, and a fifth is affected by FS permitting actions for Eldora Ski Area, we believe the species remains justified for Regional sensitive species status.

Revised on January 13, 2003 by Gary Patton