

Eco-briefs | Save the chubs

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By Boulder Weekly Staff

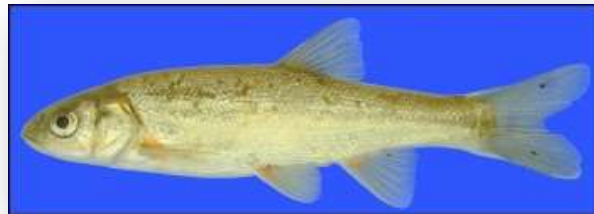


Photo by Chad Thomas, Texas State University
The Rio Grande chub.

The once abundant Rio Grande chub has declined by as much as 75 percent and disappeared from the main stem of the Rio Grande, prompting WildEarth Guardians to submit a proposal to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to list the Rio Grande chub under the Endangered Species Act.

“The Rio Grande chub can’t survive without the river for which it is named,” Taylor Jones, Endangered Species Advocate for WildEarth Guardians, said in a press release from the environmental organization. “The Rio Grande and its namesake fish are facing unprecedented threats. Endangered Species Act protection will help ensure the Rio Grande chub does not go extinct.”

The Rio Grande River is among the top 10 most endangered rivers in the world, according to WildEarth Guardians. The river channel narrowed by 30 meters between 1998 and 2008, and the habitat the river once provided — cool water, sandy bottoms and riverside vegetation — has been fragmented by diversions for agriculture and domestic use, channelization and livestock grazing that’s removed vegetation. Low stream flows lead to increased water temperature.

— Elizabeth Miller