

Cloaked Physa (*Physa megalochlamys*)**Species Status Statement.**Distribution

This pulmonate (air breathing) freshwater snail occurs in Utah, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming and Colorado (Taylor 1988; Frest 1995). The only documented population in Utah lives in Snake Valley, in northwestern Millard County (Taylor 1988). More surveys will improve understanding of the distribution of this species in Utah.

Table 1. Utah counties currently occupied by this species.

<b>Cloaked Physa</b>
MILLARD

Abundance and Trends

Abundance information is not available for this snail.

**Statement of Habitat Needs and Threats to the Species.**Habitat Needs

A specific habitat characterization is not available for the location of this species in Utah. In other states, it lives in extensive marshes and ponds with fluctuating water levels (Taylor 1988). Cattails and bullrushes, and muddy substrates, are common at the other locations where this species lives (Frest and Johannes 1995).

Threats to the Species

Little is known about cloaked physa in Utah, but its apparent natural rarity makes it susceptible to catastrophic events and human interventions. Frest and Johannes (1995) noted that dredging and dewatering of wetlands could degrade and reduce available habitat. Other potential threats include spraying of insecticide and pesticide, poor agricultural practices, and urbanization near wetlands (Frest and Johannes 1995).

Table 2. Summary of a Utah threat assessment and prioritization completed in 2014. This assessment applies to the species' entire distribution within Utah. For species that also occur elsewhere, this assessment applies only to the portion of their distribution within Utah. The full

threat assessment provides more information including lower-ranked threats, crucial data gaps, methods, and definitions (UDWR 2015; Salafsky et al. 2008).

<b>Cloaked Physa</b>
<b>Very High</b>
Small Isolated Populations

### **Rationale for Designation.**

Cloaked physa is only known from one location in Utah, which makes its population susceptible to extirpation by catastrophic events. Surveys are needed to better understand the distribution and status of this species in Utah, and monitoring of threats will help ensure the persistence of this species.

### **Economic Impacts of Sensitive Species Designation.**

Sensitive species designation is intended to facilitate management of this species, which is required to prevent Endangered Species Act listing and lessen related economic impacts. The listing of cloaked physa would impact management and development of water resources within Snake Valley in Millard County. There would also be increased costs of regulatory compliance for many land-use decisions and mitigation costs.

### **Literature Cited.**

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- Salafsky, N., D. Salzer, A.J. Stattersfield, C. Hilton-Taylor, R. Neugarten, S.H.M. Butchart, B. Collen, N. Cox, L.L. Master, S. O'Connor, and D. Wilkie. 2008. A standard lexicon for biodiversity conservation: unified classifications of threats and actions. *Conservation Biology* 22: 897–911.
- Taylor, D.W. 1988. New species of *Physa* (Gastropoda: Hygrophila) from the Western United States. *Malacological Review* 21: 43-79.
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