

## Local Restaurant Numbers Down Due to Declining Cocaine Supply

Written by GUEST CONTRIBUTOR Pablito Escobar  
Tuesday, 06 December 2011

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Local restaurant owners are blaming their reduced 2011 numbers on the current scarcity of cocaine in Steamboat. "People just don't have a reason to go to restaurants anymore," says one local business owner, "Locals used to look to our establishment as a place to congregate and have a good time, but with the dwindling cocaine supply, there's just no motivation to eat out anymore."



A former diner, who declined to identify himself, concurs. "I was going stir-crazy from mud season, so I headed to the bar at one of my favorite restaurants last Saturday night for old time's sake. I went to the bathroom and lifted up the spare roll of toilet paper from the toilet tank in the back stall, but when there was no line there, it just wasn't the same."

Another anonymous local business owner noted a 40 percent decrease in worker productivity. "Guests are waiting longer for drinks and food, and my waitstaff are missing little things, details that they normally wouldn't let slide."

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Although the sudden shift from cocaine abundance to shortage is being blamed in part on La Niña, whose monsoons caused mudslides and the subsequent collapse of tunnels along much of the U.S./Mexico border, the larger blame rests with the bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF).

ATF is claiming victory for "cocainewalking," a small offshoot of the Fast & Furious gunwalking program that came under fire earlier in 2011. In "cocainewalking," agents allowed tainted cocaine to circulate back to Central and South American drug lords, who believed it was product seized from a competitor.

After trying their competitor's supposed product, many of the drug lords died from poisoning. Without their top leadership, productivity of many cartels is down this year, resulting in the unavailability of cocaine here in Steamboat Springs. ATF is touting "cocainewalking" as a major victory and vindication of the entire Fast and Furious operation.

The sentiment of local business owners in Steamboat Springs was summed up by yet another anonymous owner: "This unwinnable war on drugs is hurting us all."