



On the Trail to Health, Heritage, and Happiness

Route 4: "Greeley's Number Three"

<https://goo.gl/maps/PA2E5GQML542>

County, City/Town:	Weld, Greeley
One-way length:	4.2 miles, approximately
Estimated travel time:	Walking time one-way and stopping to answer questions and take pictures = 1 hour, 45 minutes
Suggested Season:	Summer, Fall, Winter
Cell phone coverage:	Available for entire route

Route Recommendations: The route and Points of Interest (POIs) are described travelling from west to east, beginning at the Poudre Learning Center at 83rd Ave and F Street in Greeley and ending at Rover Run Dog Park on F Street in Greeley. Easily complete a 8.4 mile round-trip by bike, walk approximately 2 miles to the halfway point and then turn back to complete 4 miles, or walk the entire 4.2 mile route by bringing a friend and two cars — park one at the Poudre Learning Center trailhead and the other at the trailhead at Rover Run Dog Park.

Getting there:

- **Trailhead at Poudre Learning Center (PLC) (recommended starting point):** **The trailhead is located at 8313 W. F Street in Greeley, CO.** From NCRH, head east on Hwy 34 and take the exit toward 10th St/Greeley/Business Route. Proceed on 10th St/Business 34 for 2.9 miles and then turn left (north) onto 83rd Avenue. Proceed north on 83rd Ave for 1.3 miles before turning left (west) onto F Street. The Poudre Learning Center will be on your right. Park in the trailhead parking lot.
- **Trailhead at Rover Run Dog Park:** **The trailhead is located at approximately 5207 F Street in Greeley, CO.** From NCRH, head east on Hwy 34 and take the exit toward 10th St/Greeley/Business Route. Proceed on 10th St/Business 34 for 4.9 miles and then turn left (north) onto 59th Avenue. Proceed north on 59th Ave for 1.1 miles before turning right (east) onto F Street. Proceed .9 miles (approximately) and the entrance to Rover Run Dog Park will be on your left. Park in the trailhead parking lot.
- **Rover Run Dog Park trailhead to the Poudre Learning Center trailhead:** If you decide to bring two cars and leave one at each end of the route, we recommend leaving a car first at the trailhead at Rover Run Dog Park and then driving to the Poudre Learning Center to start the route. From the parking lot at Rover Run Dog Park, head west on F Street for .9 miles before turning right (north) onto 59th Avenue. Head north on 59th Ave for 1 mile and then turn left (west) onto O Street. Head west on O Street for 2 miles and then turn left (south) onto 83rd Avenue. Head south on 83rd Ave for .8 miles before turning right (west) onto F Street and turning into the Poudre Learning Center trailhead parking lot.

Make a day of it—Fun for the whole family! Looking for a fun excursion for your family? There are a couple of nearby attractions that share information about the natural resources and history of the area that you won't want to miss.

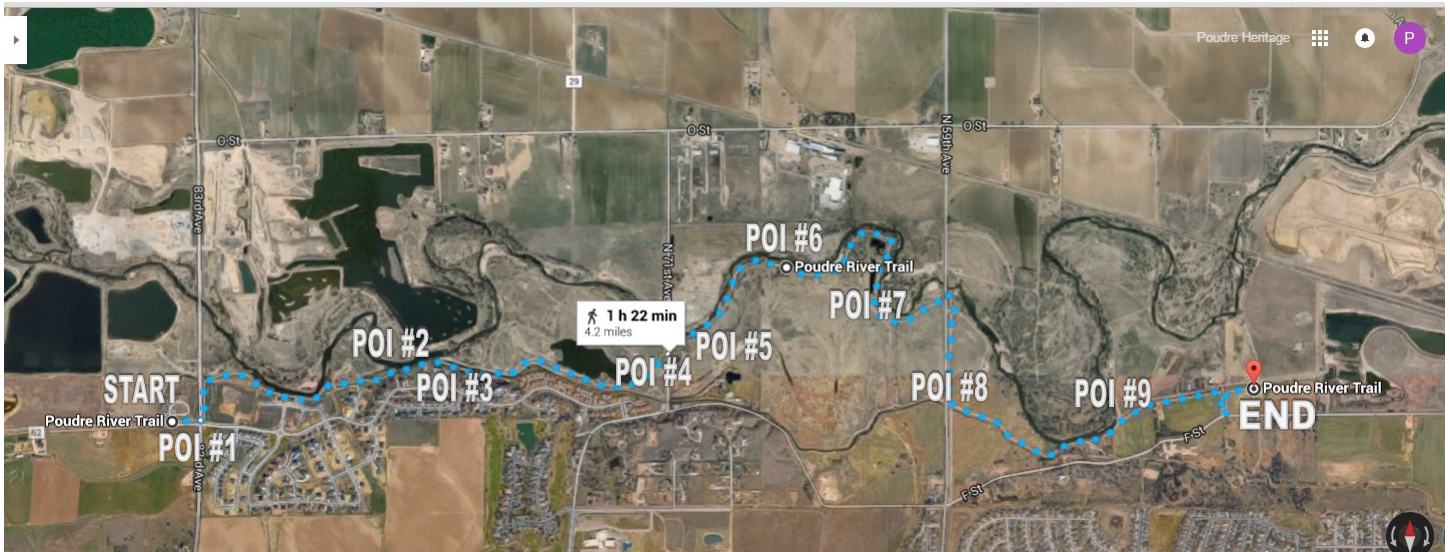
- **The Poudre Learning Center** is a premier facility that develops and offers interdisciplinary education programs aimed at reinforcing concepts presented in local school curriculums and is a focal point for the study of the Poudre River environments through the use of labs, activities, and trips. Check out their calendar before you go to see a schedule of public programs and events!
- **Centennial Village Museum** is an 8-acre living history experience featuring over 35 architecturally unique structures, costumed interpreters, heritage farm animals, beautifully landscaped grounds and interactive experiences. Step back in time and learn about the early pioneer settling of the western high plains, a time when grand houses, growing businesses, extensive prairies and agriculture were all a part of daily life.

Poudre Learning Center: 8313 W. F Street in Greeley. (970) 352-1267. www.poudrelearningcenter.org

- **Tickets:** FREE, donations appreciated
- **Hours:** Monday - Friday, 7:30am to 4:30pm. Evening and weekend programs as scheduled.

Centennial Village Museum: 1475 A St. in Greeley. (970) 350-9220. <http://greeleymuseums.com/locations/centennial-village/>

- **Admission:** \$8 Adults, \$6 Seniors (60+), \$5 Children (3 to 17), \$18 Family Rate (max. 5 people)
- **Hours:** Open May through September, Fridays & Saturdays, 10am - 5pm, Sundays, 12pm - 5pm. Closed major holidays.



Route 1: “Greeley’s Number Three” <https://goo.gl/maps/PA2E5GQML542>

START: Poudre Learning Center trailhead is located at 8313 W. F Street in Greeley. From the parking lot, head east toward the Eagle Tower. On your way, check out the first of three “story posts” that you will see on this route. Each of the 13 sections of the eastern Larimer/western Weld Poudre River Trail is named with a historical or geological reference and is marked with a Story Post that features the names of the two adjoining trail sections along with decorative engravings that illustrate the significance of that section. These posts received a first place award in the 2010 AICA Design Contest in the category for Public/Civic Monuments.



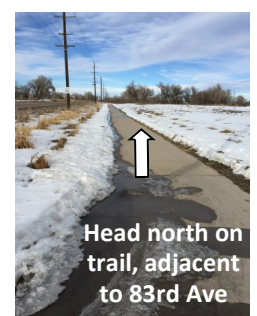
POI #1: PLC Eagle Tower—Lions Open Space Bridge – 282 feet. Check out the Eagle Tower with its layers of rock that represent the surrounding geology. Locate the blue-bordered Cache la Poudre River National Heritage Area (CALA) sign that surrounds the base. You are viewing one of four CALA signs.

- **Heritage Hunt Question:** Share a date/time frame and one piece of information from the “Timeline” section on the right side of the sign:



POI #1: PLC Eagle Tower with CALA interpretive sign pictured to its left.

Continue east and cross 83rd Avenue: Once you have crossed 83rd Avenue, you will turn directly north and continue on the Poudre River Trail to the next POI.



POI #2: The Narrows / Signature Bluffs — .7 miles. This is a beautiful (and narrow) section of the trail that runs next to the river and a great place to view wildlife. Use caution and watch out for cyclists and poison ivy! Please practice Leave No Trace and do not make your mark on the fragile Signature Bluffs.



POI #3: Greeley #3 Ditch—Head gate, wayside interpretive sign, and Parshall Flume / chart house — .9 miles. Check out the 2009 head gate structure and then learn more about the historic Greeley #3 Ditch, built in 1870.

- **Heritage Hunt Question:** How did the Union Colony pay for the building of the Number 3 Ditch?
- **Heritage Hunt Question:** Scan the QR code on the interpretive sign (or visit the website listed by the QR code: www.poudrerivertour.com/3ditch), watch the *Irrigation, Ditches, and Canals* video and answer the following question:

For what purpose were the Greeley #2 and Greeley #3 canals built?



POI #3: Number 3 Ditch sign and modern head gate in background.

Proceed a little farther east along the trail and you will see a chart house and Parshall Flume, used for measuring surface waters and irrigation flow. Continue on until you reach a bridge that crosses the Greeley #3 Ditch—1.0 miles.

- **Seasonal Selfie:** Standing on the bridge, take a selfie with the Greeley #3 charthouse in the background.



Greeley #3 Ditch—looking upstream towards charthouse and head gate.



Greeley #3 Ditch - The Big Ditch. The Greeley No. 3 Ditch was the first canal built by the Union Colony. Four canals were originally planned, but only two were built. Robert Cameron and H.T. West were given the job to plan the town and the No. 3 ditch. They made many mistakes with the No. 3 ditch. They had to study other ditches before No. 3 was able to get enough water to the crops. The ditches were difficult to dig because the sides would erode and water would leak in.

The ditch was dug using horses, oxen, mules and a tool like a plow. One of the problems was that Greeley did not have enough workers. So earlier residents were used to help. Any able bodied man who lived in the colony became one of the "volunteers". The men used pick axes, shovels and the plow to make the ditch. The ditch was begun in May of 1870 and finished June 10, 1870. The ditch followed the bluffs in the town so instead of being straight, it zig-zagged. The zig zags made the ditch water flow slower. Residents also still had to face little or no water at the end of the growing season because the ditch would be low on water. Not until reservoirs were built was the ditch able to water crops for the whole growing season. At first, it irrigated over 5000 acres of land. Today it irrigates about 1500 acres of land. Description and photo courtesy of www.greeleyhistory.org

POI #4: 71st Avenue Trailhead — 1.5 miles. Once you see the big red barn, you'll know you're almost there. Check out the story post for the Signature Bluffs / Sheep Draw Junction and learn more about the Poudre River Trail as well as the multitude of wildlife that exists along the river. Continue to follow the trail and cross over 71st Avenue to continue on the route. to the next POI.



POI #5: Old farm equipment — 1.7 miles. Just after you cross 71st Ave, you'll see a sign letting you know about the Duran Family who provided their farmlands to the Poudre River Trail. Just past the sign you'll see a variety of old farm equipment on the south side of the trail.

- **Seasonal Selfie:** Take a selfie with some old farm equipment in the background.



POI #5: Old farm equipment



POI #6: HALFWAY POINT at chain link fence

POI #6: Chainlink fence — 2.0 miles **HALFWAY POINT**

POI #7: Interpretive Sign about area birds — 2.5 miles. This is a great place to view birds. Take a moment at this sign and learn more!

- **Heritage Hunt Question:** Which type of bird builds a nest with a "back door?"



POI #7: Bird interpretive sign

Continue on the Poudre River Trail, cross under 59th Avenue, and then follow the trail as it heads directly south along 59th. Before you head under the 59th Avenue overpass, signs of the May-June 2015 flood may still be visible in grasses that were plastered to fencing and the side of trees as the river swept over its banks.



POI #8: Intersection of the Poudre River Trail and the Sheep Draw Trail — 3.1 miles. At this trail intersection, turn left (east) to stay on the Poudre River Trail. You will now be walking along the Greeley #3 Ditch once more!



Enjoy the “Poudre prairie dogs” who will likely herald your approach.



Continue to follow the Poudre River Trail as crosses a footbridge over the Greeley #3 Ditch where it returns some of its flow to the Poudre River. The Greeley #3 Ditch continues south east into Greeley and the Poudre River Trail once again parallels the river.

POI #9: Boyd and Freeman Ditch head gate — 3.7 miles. At this point the trail continues east, while the river meanders north before turning east again.

- **Seasonal Selfie: Heritage Hunt Question:** From the trail, take a selfie with the Boyd-Freeman head gate in the background.



POI #9: Boyd and Freeman head gate



A Ferry and a Fort—Robert Boyd. The Boyd and Freeman Ditch has a #6 priority from the Poudre River, and was established on March 15, 1862 by Robert Boyd and James. W. Freeman. One of the first settlers in Weld County, Boyd came to Colorado in search of gold, but stayed to farm the land. He later became the first Weld County Commissioner and a Colorado State Senator. Boyd’s “compound” was established in 1859 and consisted of a sod house with a stone chimney and a sod corral on the south side of the river. His place was the dividing line between the West and East Poudre census and voting precincts. When Ben Holladay’s Overland Stage operated along the South Platte Branch of the Overland Trail in the 1860s,

Boyd operated a ferry service on the Poudre. When news of Indian scares surfaced in the 1860s, Boyd’s house and corral were used as a “fort” for his neighbors. The structures were eventually razed and the site is now a gravel pit. Boyd died June 1, 1915 in Greeley. Photo of corral courtesy of the Fort Collins History Connection - <http://history.fcgov.com/>

Fight over Rights. In the 1920s, the Boyd Irrigation Company transferred the water rights of the Boyd and Freeman ditch to the municipal pipelines of Fort Collins and Greeley. The water was taken out of the river at Bellvue. That transfer of water rights was strongly disapproved of by other river users near Greeley and led to several lawsuits. In 1926, as a result of those lawsuits, the courts decreed that the Boyd and Freeman Ditch would forfeit their water rights and be limited to the return flow from other ditches and other available water. The Boyd and Freeman Ditch lost its excellent water use priority number and position on the river. The ditch owners can no longer place a call on the river for water or be assured of a water supply by the water commissioner. The company essentially lost most of its effectiveness as a water supplier. Description from the Preliminary Inventory of Irrigation and Water-Related Structures in the Cache la Poudre River Corridor

Continue to follow the trail around a driveway until you reach Rover Run Dog Park.



END: Rover Run Dog Park - 4.2 miles.

The parking lot is located at approximately 5207 F Street in Greeley, CO .

Check out the third story post on this route (Cottonwood Bend / Sandpiper Ponds). If you continue on the Poudre River Trail between two chain link fences, you will cross over the Boyd and Freeman Ditch.



END: Story Post and trail over the Boyd and Freeman Ditch, near Rover Run Dog Park