



## On the Trail to Health, Heritage, and Happiness

### Route 1: "Lions' Share of History"

<https://goo.gl/maps/P3v2rWNY5uE2>

<b>County, City/Town:</b>	Larimer, Laporte and Bellvue
<b>One-way length:</b>	2.8 miles, approximately
<b>Estimated travel time:</b>	Walking time one-way and stopping to answer questions and take pictures = 1.5 hours
<b>Suggested Season:</b>	Summer, Fall
<b>Cell phone coverage:</b>	Available for entire route

**Route Recommendations:** The route and Points of Interest (POIs) are described travelling from east to west, beginning at Lions Open Space on N. Overland Trail in Laporte and ending where the Poudre Trail currently ends, at the entrance to Watson Fish Hatchery / Watson Lake in Bellvue. Easily complete a 5.6 mile round-trip by bike, walk 1.4 miles to the halfway point and then turn back to complete 2.8 miles, or walk the entire 2.8 mile route by bringing a friend and two cars — park one at the Lions Open Space trailhead and the other at the trailhead at Watson Lake.

#### Getting there:

- Trailhead at Lions Open Space (recommended starting point): **The trailhead is located at 2449 N. Overland Trail in Laporte, CO.** From NCRH, head west on Hwy 34 and take the I-25 north exit. Proceed on I-25 for 10.9 miles and then take the exit for Prospect Rd (Exit 268), headed west. Follow Prospect Rd through Fort Collins for 7 miles. Turn right (north) onto S. Overland Trail and proceed 4.1 miles to Lions Open Space. The parking lot will be on the west side of the road. (We recommend using Prospect Rd due to a section of Mulberry St near City Park being closed for construction).
- Trailhead at Watson Fish Hatchery/Watson Lake: **The trailhead is located at approximately 4996 W. County Road 52E in Bellvue, CO.** From NCRH, head west on Hwy 34 and take the I-25 north exit. Proceed on I-25 for 10.9 miles and then take the exit for Prospect Rd (Exit 268), headed west. Follow Prospect Rd through Fort Collins for 7 miles. (We recommend using Prospect Rd due to a section of Mulberry St near City Park being closed for construction). Turn right (north) onto S. Overland Trail and proceed 4.4 miles, past Lions Open Space to the intersection of N. Overland Trail and 287-B / W. County Road 54G in Laporte. Turn left onto 287-B and head northwest for 1 mile before turning left (west) onto Rist Canyon Rd. Follow Rist Canyon Road for 1 mile and then just after you cross the Poudre River, turn right (north) onto W. County Road 52E where you see the "Watson State Trout Rearing Unit" sign. The parking lot is just behind that sign. .
- Watson Fish Hatchery/Watson Lake trailhead to Lions Open Space 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 Watson Lake and then driving to Lions Open Space on N. Overland Trail to start the route. From the trailhead parking lot at Watson Fish Hatchery/Watson Lake, head northeast on Rist Canyon Rd for one mile. Turn right onto 287-B/W. County Road 54 G. Head east for 1 mile and then turn right onto N. Overland Trail. Proceed .3 miles to the Lions Open Space parking lot.

**Make a day of it—Fun for the whole family!** When we say "lion's share of history," we're not kidding! In the route description, you'll see 3 "delightful diversions" that will take you to different historical sites in the area (map on last page). There are also two more nearby sites that you won't want to miss: the 1883 Fort Collins Water Works and the Bingham Hill Cemetery.

- **The 1883 Fort Collins Water Works** was to provide the town of Fort Collins with a better water supply system. By 1900, the community outgrew this first water system, but this Gothic-style pump house is now a Historic Landmark that is open to the public. They are in the process of turning this building into a Water Interpretive Center.
- **The Bingham Hill Pioneer Cemetery** houses over 150 historical graves, dating back as early as 1862. A stone monument lists the names of all the people known to be buried in the cemetery. Visitors are asked to show their respect to this site.

Fort Collins Water Works: 2005 N. Overland Trail in Laporte. (970) 221-0533 [poudrelandmarks.org/water-works/](http://poudrelandmarks.org/water-works/)

- Tickets: FREE, donations appreciated
- Hours: Open on the second Saturday of each month from May through October. 10am to 3pm. Several special events are held throughout the year.

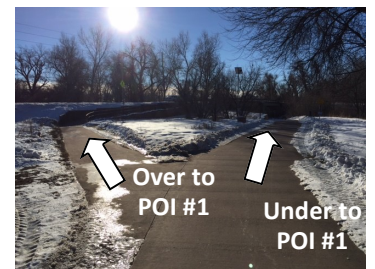
Bingham Hill Pioneer Cemetery: 3706 Bingham Hill Rd in Laporte (approximate address).

- The narrow dirt trail leading into the cemetery is located on Bingham Hill Rd just past the irrigation ditch that leads southeast to the Water Works.



## Route 1: “Lions’ Share of History” <https://goo.gl/maps/P3v2rWNY5uE2>

**START:** Lions Open Space trailhead parking lot at 2449 N. Overland Trail, Laporte. From the parking lot, first head southeast on the trail where it crosses under (or over) N. Overland Trail.



**POI #1:** Lions Open Space Bridge – .3 miles. Cross the bridge and stop where the bridge ends and heads into the Butterfly Woods Open Space.

- **Seasonal Selfie:** Take a selfie looking up river with as much of the bridge in the background as you can!



**POI #1:** L: Looking southeast, R: At other end of bridge, looking back upriver

**Head back across the bridge to Lions Open Space:** Go back the way you came towards the parking lot. When you reach the parking lot, continue northwest on the Poudre Trail along the river towards the next POI or follow the directions below to visit a “delightful diversion.”





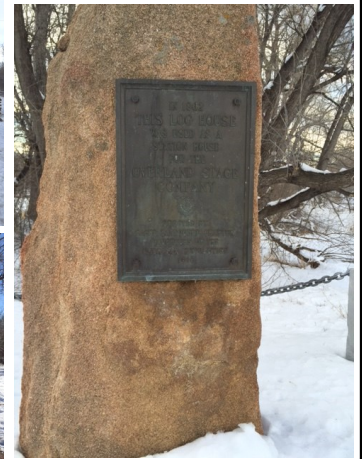
### Delightful Diversion—Overland Trail Stage Stop.

From the Lions Open Space parking lot, you can walk a short distance north on N. Overland Trail or take the dirt path that runs behind the restroom to reach this monument. In 1862, the town of Colona changed its name to LaPorte, and was named the headquarters of the Mountain Division of the Overland Trail State Route. The first post office opened, and a stage stop was built on the Overland Trail. A monument designating the site of the stage stop is next to a wooden fence.

Top left: Monument as seen from N. Overland Trail

Bottom left: Path to monument behind restroom

Right: Overland Trail Stage Stop Monument



**In Lions Open Space, head northwest on the Poudre Trail.** The trail will wind through the woods before reaching the chainlink fence that surrounds the Cache la Poudre School.



Fence bordering Cache la Poudre School on the right, river to the left.

**POI #2:** Edge of Cache la Poudre School grounds — .8 miles. This is a beautiful section of the trail that runs next to the river. Take it all in!

- **Seasonal Selfie:** Take a selfie with the river and foothills in the background.



POI #2: A scenic view of the river

**Continue to follow the Poudre Trail as it winds around behind the football and baseball fields.** The trail passes a Frisbee golf course and then is flanked on either side by homes to the north and the baseball field to the south before running alongside meeting the large brick gymnasium building.



Between homes and gymnasium

**POI #3:** The Poudre Trail takes a sharp left turn (1.2 miles) and proceeds northwest on the trail alongside 287-B/W County Rd 54G to the next POI.



Turn left to stay on the Poudre Trail

**Poudre Trail runs adjacent to roadways—use caution!** From the point at the gymnasium where you turn left to the end of this route, the Poudre Trail runs adjacent to roads. Please stay on the trail and keep an eye on traffic. Continue northwest on the trail alongside 287-B/W County Rd 54G to the next POI.



**POI #4:** Taylor and Gill Ditches wayside interpretive sign — 1.4 miles **HALFWAY POINT**

- **Heritage Hunt Question:** How long is the Taylor and Gill Ditch?
- **Heritage Hunt Question:** Scan the QR code on the interpretive sign (or visit the website listed by the QR code: [www.poudrerivertour.com/taylor](http://www.poudrerivertour.com/taylor)), watch the ***Poudre Heritage Alliance*** video and answer the following question:

In what year did Congress designate the Cache la Poudre River National Heritage Area?



POI #3: Taylor and Gill ditch wayside interpretive sign

- **Seasonal Selfie:** Take a selfie with the Taylor and Gill ditch charthouse in the background.

Taylor and Gill ditch charthouse



**Continue northwest on the Poudre Trail, cross the Taylor and Gill Ditch, and then turn left (south) onto Galway Drive.**

Walk a short ways down Galway Drive to the next POI.

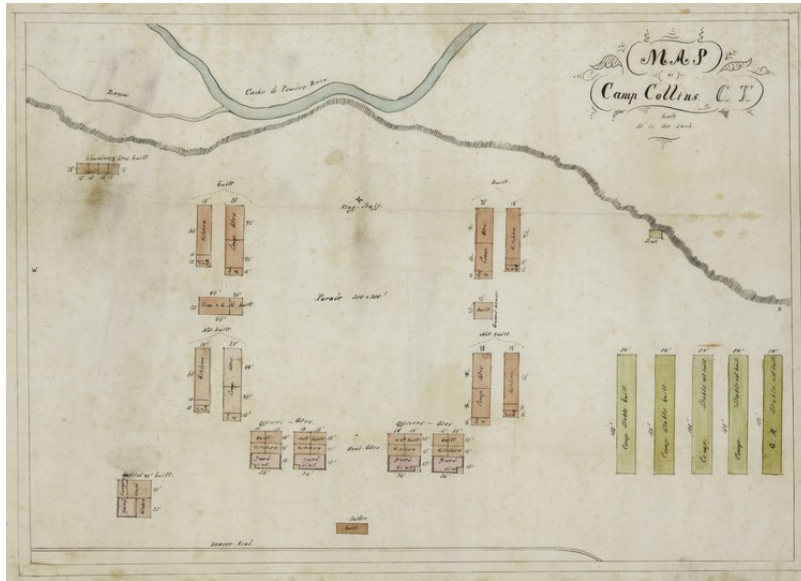
**POI #5:** Antoine Janis monument—1.8 miles. This stone monument and plaque honor Antoine Janis, the first European settler in the area.



Janis pictured (in front row, 2nd from left) with members of the Oglala Sioux Tribe.

**Antoine Janis - First European Settler to the area. (1824-1890)** Born in Missouri to a French father and a mulatto mother, Antoine Janis traveled on trading caravans with his father. He journeyed west on his own in 1844 and worked as a scout and interpreter at Fort Laramie. He married First Elk Woman of the Oglala Sioux Tribe. On the return from one trip, he passed through the Cache la Poudre Valley and remembered what he called “the loveliest spot on earth.” At the time, it was not open to settlement, but Janis staked out a claim with plans to return once the area was free to be homesteaded. Janis settled among 150 Arapaho lodges. He later constructed a cabin and founded the town of Colona, now known as Laporte. His cabin can be viewed at the Heritage Courtyard at Matthews St. and Olive St. in Fort Collins. *Photo courtesy of Fort Collins History Connection and text from Loveland Reporter-Herald article by Kenneth Jessen.*





**Unmarked, but Remarkable - Camp Collins.** The original site of Camp Collins, is unmarked and on private land in the area west of Galway Drive. Fort Collins had its beginning on July 22, 1862, when soldiers were sent from the 9th Kansas Cavalry at Fort Laramie to what is now the town of Laporte to protect the Cherokee trail and to guard the Overland Stage Line. A devastating flood rushed down the canyon of the Cache la Poudre River during the night of June 9, 1864. Flooding Camp Collins, it carried tents, ammunition and some of the cabins downstream. The soldiers managed to retreat to the nearest bluff without lives being lost, but the morning presented a scene of desolation: a sea of muddy water and only the roofs of a few cabins visible. Looking at the low nature of this terrain,

does it make you wonder about the wisdom of building a camp here? *Description courtesy of Fort Collins History Connection and map of Camp Collins drawn by Lieutenant Caspar Collins from CSU Libraries.*

**Continue to follow the Poudre Trail as it turns onto Rist Canyon Road near Vern's Place.**  
The trail crosses Rist Canyon Road right before the Poudre River.



Trail crosses Rist Canyon Road

**POI #6:** Bellvue Hydraulic Irrigation Laboratory wayside interpretive sign — 2.7 miles

- **Heritage Hunt Question:** What was the name of the college that Ralph Parshall taught at?
- **Heritage Hunt Question:** Scan the QR code on the interpretive sign (or visit the website listed by the QR code: [www.poudrerivertour.com/bellvue](http://www.poudrerivertour.com/bellvue)), watch the **Water Innovation** video and answer the following question: In what year was the Parshall Flume patented?



**Father of the Flume—Ralph Parshall.** Ralph L. Parshall (1881-1959) was a pioneer in the fields of civil engineering and hydrology, and is best known for developing the Parshall Flume at the hydraulic laboratory in 1921. Noticing problems with stream flow measurements, Parshall developed the device that, when placed in a channel, measures the flow of the water as it uniquely relates to water depth. Today, the Parshall Flume is still widely used to help gain more accurate measurements of water flow. A chart house accompanies a flume and contains measuring and recording devices to monitor the amount of water flowing through a ditch.

*Photos and description courtesy of the CSU Water Resources Archive. Learn more at: <http://lib.colostate.edu/archives/water/parshall/>*

Continue to follow over two bridges until you reach the end of the Poudre Trail.



**END:** This is the official end of the Poudre Trail in Larimer County - 2.8 miles. The parking lot is at the entrance to Watson Fish Hatchery/Watson Lake (behind the sign), located at approximately 4996 W. County Road 52E, Bellvue, CO.



**Delightful Diversion—How the Cache la Poudre River Got Its Name.** From the Watson Fish Hatchery/Watson Lake trailhead, you can either walk or drive to this site - if you walk, be aware that there is no trail and you will be walking on the road. Head west on Rist Canyon Road for .1 miles and then turn left (south) onto North County Road 23. Proceed on CR 23 for .2 miles and then turn left (southeast) onto Bingham Hill Road. Proceed for .2 miles to the Cache la Poudre River marker which will be on the right side of the road, if you are heading southeast. Take a look at the monument and then read on about the many names of the Poudre River .

The original name for the river was said to be "Pateros Creek," named by a bewildered Frenchman who came upon the river after wandering for 20 days without food. Pateros is French for "lake." Another story, related by C.A. Duncan, a son of an early settler, said that the river was called "Piteux Creek" by a settler who spent the winter of 1839-40 near its banks and almost froze to death. Piteux is French for "piteous." Yet another name for the river was given by a band of Sioux who dubbed it "Minni Luzahan" which means "Swift Current."

Lastly, the most accepted story of the Poudre River's name is from November 1836 when a group of fur trappers were stranded in a snowstorm near the banks of the river and the wagon boss ordered the men to lighten the load by stashing supplies so they could continue their journey to Green River, WY. A large part of the goods was gun powder, hence the name "Cache la Poudre" or "where the powder was hidden." *Summarized from the Fort Collins History Connection.*



**Delightful Diversion—Sam Deon Cabin.** From the Watson Fish Hatchery/Watson Lake trailhead, drive east on Rist Canyon Road and then take a slight right onto 287-B/W County Rd 54G. At the intersection of 287-B and N. Overland Trail, turn right (south) and then immediately left into the Post Office parking lot. Directly south of the parking lot is the Sam Deon Cabin.

The cabin was built by Sam Deon, French fur trapper, in 1858. Probably the oldest building in Laporte, the building was used as a saloon for many years. A billiard room was added to the east side later. In 1868, Deon sold the cabin to D.W. French who used it as a store until he sold it to Mr. and Mrs. Wesley Tharp in 1877.

*Summarized from the Fort Collins History Connection.*





<https://goo.gl/maps/CifRxuYgc5T2>

