

engage

Cache la Poudre River
National Heritage Area

HERITAGE TRAILS

"It draws in the visitor, captures a curiosity, develops an interest, and leaves the visitor with an undeniable sense of place and a little bit more knowledge than he or she had before."

— Jonathan Williams, Interpretive Manager with California State Parks

OVERVIEW

The Cache la Poudre River flows through Colorado's history, linking its people, history, and arteries of commerce. It has been counted on for moments of great drama, and for attracting its share of characters. The river has many stories to share, and through our Heritage Trail Program we will elevate those stories in a cohesive manner throughout the river corridor.

The Cache la Poudre River National Heritage Area (CALA) follows 45 miles of the lower "working Cache" through Fort Collins, Windsor, Greeley, and beyond. The Poudre River Trail meanders alongside the river and passes through wooded corridors and among agricultural and natural areas, small lakes and holding ponds, parks and light industrial sites. Along the trail you might see cottonwoods, fish hatcheries, wetland meadows, or reservoirs, pipelines, diversion ditches, pumps – all reminders of the long struggle to sustain a viable agricultural economy, and meet the growing needs of a diverse and expanding population, while conserving the river's health.



Through the Heritage Trail program we will create cohesive branding, storytelling and visitor wayfinding throughout the river corridor. Interpretive signs and viewing areas next to the river will enable visitors to understand more clearly the messages of history, the environment, or a nearly forgotten culture. Also, the Heritage Trail will include iconic gateways that will connect CALA to adjacent town sites, historic structures, natural areas, recreational opportunities, and more.

This program will tie into the re-development of the Poudre River District in downtown Fort Collins that includes a Whitewater Park that will transform sections of the river and improve water flow for kayakers and tubers. The need for interpretation along the new River District will be tremendous given that historical features such as the "Coy Ditch" diversion structure that have been a part of Fort Collins' and Colorado's water history since the late 1800's will be removed.

OVERVIEW

The overarching themes of the signage and viewing areas will be:

- Water for Recreation
- Water for Industry
- Water for Agriculture

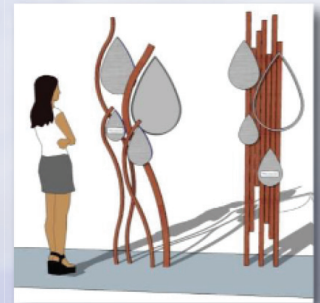


Iconography: The river's water will be represented by a "droplet" icon, and the droplet will be overlaid with images representing each of the overarching themes. These graphics will be incorporated into each interpretive feature and are intended to be quickly recognized.



Interpretive Sign Characteristics:

- Brief stories and images on signs with links to web for more detail
- Materials and character fitting of the Poudre River environment
- Durable
- Modular, changeable, and expandable
- Variety of options and cost levels



PARTNERS

City of Fort Collins, BHA Design, Bohemian Foundation, Downtown Development Authority

GOAL & OUTCOMES

Goal:

Improve the visitor experience throughout the Poudre River Corridor (CALA) and adjacent regions.

Outcomes:

- Develop a coordinated family of interpretive signs, markers and viewing areas that can be utilized throughout CALA.
- Raise awareness about CALA and the Poudre River.
- Draw attention to and educate trail users about interesting and ingenious ways that humans have interacted and worked with the Poudre River to improve life on the high plains of Colorado.
- Improve connections from the river corridor to nearby towns, historical sites, etc.
- Strengthen partnerships between PHA and organizations within CALA.

BUDGET: \$500,000

Each contribution makes an impact:

- \$1,000 – Research content for interpretive sign station
- \$2,000 – Weather proof bench for viewing area (unique to each site)
- \$5,000 – Interpretive sign station
- \$20,000 – Site-specific viewing area with Heritage Trail iconography