

Past, Present & Future Fort Collins



Route Statistics:

Start - Aztlan Community Center
End - McMurry Natural Area River Gage
Total Miles - 1.2 miles (one-way)
Walking Time: Approx. 24 min.



*Be sure to finish your pre-route
reflection before you start!*

**START: Parking lot at Aztlan Community
Center, 112 Willow St, Fort Collins**

POI #1: Heritage Park Kiosk

During this learning adventure, you will have the opportunity to think about the role the Cache la Poudre River plays in many different parts of the natural and human communities of our area. The water in the river is what makes it a river! Because water is so important to human lives and human endeavors like agriculture and recreation and is essential for wildlife, native plants, and the ecology of the region, there are many different views on water and its use. Water laws work to balance these views and demands on water. These laws, along with technology, continue to change how water is stored, delivered, used, and reused in this river where many of these challenges were first experienced over 150 years ago.

Answer the following questions:

1. There is a wealth of information on this kiosk about the history of the Cache la Poudre River National Heritage Area. Write down something new that you learned from this Kiosk!
2. Did you know there are laws about water? Did you know that water is actually owned?



Rank the following water uses from 1-5 (one being the most important) based on how you feel water should be used:

- _____ Recreation
- _____ Drinking water for people
- _____ Water for wildlife (fish, animals, plants)
- _____ Agriculture (Farming, ranching)
- _____ Landscaping (lawns, parks, trees around town and in your neighborhood)



Seasonal Selfie: Take a selfie with the Whitewater Park in the background.

POI #2: New Whitewater Park and Old Coy Ditch Diversion Structure



This is the site of a former agricultural diversion ditch that was no longer used. The diversion structure was removed and a whitewater park was created for river play, tubing and kayaking. The Poudre Heritage Alliance's Play It Safe on the Poudre program raises awareness about approaches to recreating on the river in safe and sustainable ways. The program also calls attention to the history of in-river structures that represent hazards to recreation.

1. In what ways can locally grown food be better for you and for the environment?
2. Both recreation like kayaking and tubing, and eating healthy are important for your health and well-being. List several of your favorite physical activities you like to pursue as well as your favorite fruit and vegetables that are grown in Colorado



In about 700ft after POI #2 a path branches off to the right. Take this path and stay along the river.

You are now on the hickory trail. Keep on this path until it forks. Then head left.

You'll see your next POI Interpretive Sign a little up north.



POI #3: Lake Canal Wayside Interpretive Sign



This site identifies one of the earliest conflicts over water in Northern Colorado. In Colorado the right to use water is given to individuals, cities, or groups. Every bit of water we drink or use is appropriated (meaning given ownership and purpose).

1. Where did the communities of Fort Collins and Greeley meet to settle the 1874 conflict over the Lake Canal?
2. Do you know who owns the right to the water you and your family use?

Now, head back the way you to where the trail forked and continue on the trail to the west. You'll see your next POI on the paved trail.



POI #4: Interpretive Kiosk near Lee Martinez Park

Lee Martinez is noted for helping to build community in Fort Collins. The Cache la Poudre River has a long history of diverse human cultures who have made and called it their home. Sites around the Cache la Poudre have evidence of some of the oldest human uses in North America! Over the past one hundred years, diverse people from many different cultures have come to the Cache la Poudre to make a home.

1. What does the word “heritage” mean to you? When and why did you and your family come to Fort Collins?
2. Lee Martinez was celebrated for his work in integrating the communities of Fort Collins. How do you work to build and benefit the community cultivated by the Cache la Poudre River?
3. Look at the ride side kiosk sign- In between which two Fort Collins’ Natural Areas are you standing between right now?



POI #5: River Up or River Down Interpretive Sign - McMurry Natural Area River Gage

This site shows a river gauge on the far side of the river on the concrete pillar. It also features an artistic bridge and connection to the McMurry Natural Area which features riparian vegetative zones adjacent to rivers and several reclaimed gravel pits that are now functioning as wetlands.

1. The interpretative sign tells you how the volume of water is calculated. Look at the far river gauge (on the side of the bridge). Regardless of what the flow is today, if there are 200 cfs (cubic feet per second) in the river today. How many gallons of water are flowing by this bridge every second? Show your equation.
2. Note the artwork on the bridge. What does it represent? Do you know what species of fish live in this area of the Cache la Poudre River? Are any of these species native fish?

Seasonal Selfie: Take a selfie with the river gage in the background, showing the height of the river during your visit.



END: Turn around and walk back!

As you walk back think about what human uses can you observe alongside the river corridor and in the river from the route you take? Examples might include Recreation (fishing, walking, parks, biking, more!), Housing, Agriculture (farms, ranches), Mining, and Natural Resources Extraction (mining, water diversion).

Be sure to complete the Summative Reflection now that you're finished!



Need more space?



Twelve horizontal lines for writing, each starting with a small gray L-shaped bracket on the left and ending with a small gray arrowhead on the right.