

Beethoven Schubert 9-1-11

Larimer County wants your input

Special to the Surveyor

What are your thoughts on opportunities for experiencing the outdoors? Larimer County Natural Resources wants your input on a survey to gain an understanding how to better connect youth and families to nature and the outdoors.

The survey is part of the "Plug in to Nature" effort to identify how to improve opportunities for people to enjoy the outdoors. This quick and easy online survey is available at www.larimer.org/plugintonature and all Larimer County residents are

encouraged to take it. Your input will help direct future funding for outdoor facilities, lands, and nature programming. Submit a survey and you could win a \$100 King Soopers gift card.



Plug in to Nature

Finding Connections to the Outdoors for Youth and Families in Larimer County

It's no surprise that kids love playing outside. In fact, when adults are asked what their most cherished childhood memories are, they often discuss the special places where they played outdoors. However, today, kids' outdoor time is in decline and fewer children are having the experiences other generations had in nature, an issue known as Nature

Deficit Disorder. Larimer County Natural Resources is seeking to identify practical, community-based solutions to this issue through Plug in to Nature, which is funded by Great Outdoors Colorado (GOOCO) and assisted by Design Work-

shop Inc. Created by Colorado voters in 1992, GOOCO receives up to 50 percent of Lottery proceeds annually, which it reinvests back into projects throughout the state by helping to preserve, protect, enhance and manage Colorado's wildlife, park, river, trail and open space heritage.

Plug in to Nature includes the public survey of outdoor activities, as well as facilities and program analyses to determine how providers and agencies can be more effective in connecting youth and families to the outdoors. A series of public meetings will be held throughout the fall and winter to solicit further ideas.

Plug in to Nature is striving to be as comprehensive and inclusive as possible. Your input is vital to ensuring a final product that will result in improving your community. Please take a few minutes to learn more about the project at the website www.larimer.org/plugintonature, and participate in the online survey. To learn more about Larimer County's parks and open spaces, visit our website at www.larimer.org/naturalresources

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Zac Wiebe <wiebezm@co.larimer.co.us>

Northern Colorado Birding Fair Sept. 23-24

4 messages

dowinsider.wildlife@state.co.us <dowinsider.wildlife@state.co.us>

Wed, Sep 7, 2011 at 3:33 PM

Reply-To: wildlife.dowinfo@state.co.us

To: zwiebe@larimer.org

Colorado Division of Wildlife



NORTHERN COLORADO BIRDING FAIR SEPT. 23-24

FORT COLLINS – Crazy about birds or just curious? Want to learn more about birding close to home? Everyone is invited to a **FREE** weekend of fun and learning for the entire family during the 7th Annual Northern Colorado Birding Fair, Friday, Sept. 23 and Saturday, Sept. 24. The theme of this year's birding fair is, "Birding in your Backyard." The weekend will feature birding field trips on Friday and fair festivities on Saturday.

Schedule of Events:

Birding Behind the Scenes at Soapstone Prairie

Friday, Sept. 23, 7 a.m.- 1 p.m., transportation from Fort Collins provided. City of Fort Collins Biologist Aran Meyer and Educator Sue Kenney will take you to some areas closed to the public for birding and share information about the internationally-renowned Lindenmeier early man site. Freeregistration required, call 970-416-2815 or email naturalareas@fcgov.com.

Birding Tour of Three Bells Conservation Easement

Friday, Sept. 23, 7 a.m. – 9:30 a.m. Join volunteer naturalist Carl for a special tour of the 3-Bells Conservation easement, a private property just north of River Bluffs Open Space. This beautiful conserved area, normally closed to the public, boasts a lovely section of the Poudre River, home to many different bird species. Free registration required. Shuttle will be provided, details to be sent to registrants. Register at <http://www.larimer.org/naturalresources/registration/>

Northern Colorado Birding Fair

Saturday, Sept. 24 at Fossil Creek Reservoir Regional Open Space
Guided bird walks at 7 a.m. and 7:15 a.m., hands-on activity booths, silent auction and vendors 8 a.m.- 2 p.m.
Raptor releases throughout the day.
Hourly presentations at 9 a.m., 11 a.m. & 1 p.m.
Interactive Clinics at 10 a.m. and noon
Details at http://www.larimer.org/naturalresources/birding_fair.htm

National Public Lands Day Service Project

Saturday Sept. 24, after 2 p.m. Celebrate your public lands by volunteering! Sponsored by REI- details will be announced at www.rei.com/fortcollins.

More About the Northern Colorado Birding Fair, Saturday Sept. 24, 7 a.m. – 2 p.m.

No matter what tickles your fancy, birders young and old, beginner to experienced, will find something at the Birding Fair to fit the bill. Don't miss the visit from Professor Avian Guano - one of the wacky alter egos of famous naturalist Denny Olson - who will entertain and delight audiences of all ages with his theatrical and educational comedy. Other presentations are focused on wildlife and habitat gardening, so you can learn how to

draw in local birds to watch from your windows, or use items from your garden to make bird houses. You can even test your skills mimicking bird calls at several bird call contests - kids to experts welcome!), led by the hilarious Prof. Guano - who can make over 100 bird calls himself.

There will be food and drink available courtesy of the Larimer County Friend's Group, and the Berthoud Lion's Club. Prizes will be available for children 12 years of age or under who complete their Birding Fair Passport.

Did you say free? Entry to the Northern Colorado Birding Fair is free for everyone thanks to sponsorships and local vendors who participate. This year's presenting sponsors are Poudre Pet and Feed Supply, Otter Cares and KRFC Community Radio. To help keep the event free, donations from the public will also be accepted.

Directions and more information: The Northern Colorado Birding Fair is at Fossil Creek Reservoir Regional Open Space, on Carpenter Road, one mile west of the I-25/Hwy 392 Windsor exit. Contact Rob Novak at Larimer County Department of Natural Resources for more information, [970-679-4561](tel:970-679-4561) or rnovak@larimer.org. For a full schedule of events visit: http://www.larimer.org/naturalresources/birding_fair.htm.

To learn more about Larimer County's parks and open spaces, go to www.larimer.org/naturalresources

For information about the City of Fort Collins Natural Areas program, go to www.fcgov.com/naturalareas.

To learn about wildlife recreation opportunities, visit the Colorado Parks and Website Get Outdoors page at: <http://wildlife.state.co.us/Education/GetOutdoors/Pages/GetOutdoors.aspx>

Find us on Facebook! The Northern Colorado Birding Fair.

For more information about Division of Wildlife go to: <http://wildlife.state.co.us>.

To opt out of future emails please visit <http://dowlegacyapps.state.co.us/apps/DOWInsider/remove.aspx?userid=51411&email=zwiebe@larimer.org>.

Poudre River Trail work is continuing



Written by

Ashley Keesis-Wood

7:33 PM, Aug. 30, 2011|

It's taken some time, but completion of the Poudre River Trail, connecting Fort Collins, Windsor and Greeley, is near.

After 17 years of work on the trail, 21 miles of trail is complete, mostly in Weld County.

The Weld County side of the trail, in fact, is complete from Island Grove Regional Park in Greeley to the Larimer/Weld county line in Windsor at Weld County Road 13.

While Larimer County officials work on completing its final portion, members of the Poudre River Trail Corridor Board of Directors are pondering their next steps.

"We are working on proposals to connect all the lesser trails to the Poudre Trail," said City of Greeley official Becky Safarik during a work session last Monday night before the Windsor Town Board. "In Greeley, we're working on Sheep Draw Trail, and we're also looking across county lines."

Windsor has been a partner in the Poudre River Trail since its inception, with the city of Greeley and Weld County.

On the Larimer County side, a new trailhead at River Bluffs was dedicated in April, marking the newest addition to the trail.

"We are hoping to finish our connection toward Timnath in the next three years," said Gary Buffington, director of Natural Resources for Larimer County. "Right now we're in negotiations with landowners in Larimer County, from the River Bluffs trailhead and working west."

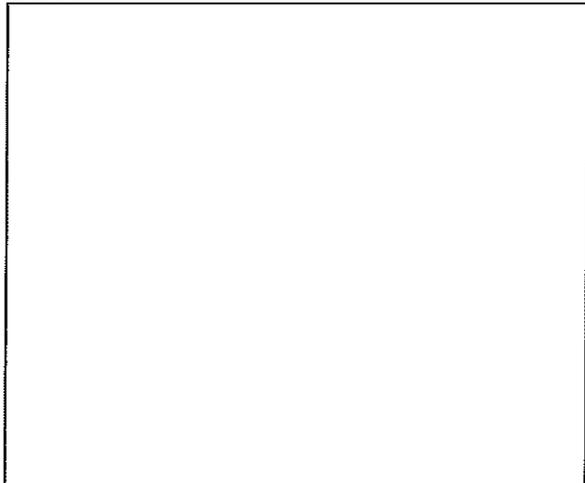
Larimer County will take the trail to Fort Collins, where the city already has done work on the trail and will connect it to their trail system.

"This is a great project," Windsor Mayor John Vazquez said. "We need to continue it."

One of the concerns for Windsor is a lack of access to the Poudre River Trail for many of its residents.

Windsor Parks & Recreation Director

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Melissa Chew said her department is working on two projects to improve connectivity through town.

The first is the Windsor Trail that runs along the Greeley No. 2 ditch behind the Windsor Community Recreation Center and Windsor High School.

"We have received notice of grand funding from GOCO (Great Outdoors Colorado), and are awaiting the release of federal funds," Chew said.

The second project would allow a connection to the trail for residents of the Westwood Village subdivision via a connection from Covenant Park.

"We're in discussions with the state Division of Wildlife about possibly using their conservation easement at the Frank State Wildlife Area for the trail," Chew said.

» In other action before the Windsor Town Board on Monday:

The board was updated on the progress being made on the Great Western Trail, a Rails-to-Trails project that was created along an old railbed system that will eventually run from Windsor, through Severance, and end up in Eaton.

"Right now we have the trail connected from Windsor Lake to Severance," said Don Thompson, a town board trustee and Great Western Trail board member. "There are also a couple of miles in Eaton."

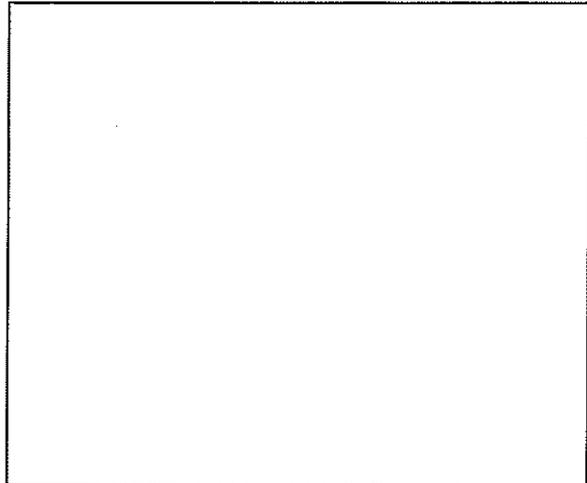
The Great Western Trail is progressing slowly. Although Eaton has a representative on the trail board, Eaton officials have not chosen to make financial contributions.

"It's not a concrete trail, so there are weed and grading issues, and the funding we get from Windsor and Severance gets eaten up pretty fast," Thompson said.

The trail board is working on grants, and they are also working to promote the trail.

"A lot of people don't know it's here," Thompson said.

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City to take on historic property

12:21 AM, Sep. 5, 2011|

A piece of Fort Collins history is changing hands.

Ownership of a 1.75-acre parcel of land along the Poudre River that includes the ruins of the Strauss Cabin is being transferred from Larimer County, which has owned the site since 1976, to the Fort Collins Natural Area's Program.

The move is intended to improve efficiency by having the city own and manage the property, said Gary Buffington, director of the county's Natural Resources Department. The site near the corner of Horsetooth and Strauss Cabin roads is adjacent to the city's Arapahoe Bend Natural Area.

But it also may increase the opportunities for historic preservation or perhaps interpretation of the property and cabin, which was built in 1864 by local pioneer George Strauss.

"The city is in a much better position to do historic preservation," Buffington said.

The cabin was heavily damaged in an arson fire in 1999. The site has been closed to the public for several years, with a tall chain-link fence surrounding the structure. Weeds have nearly overgrown the cabin site and the trail leading up to it

from the Arapahoe Bend parking lot.

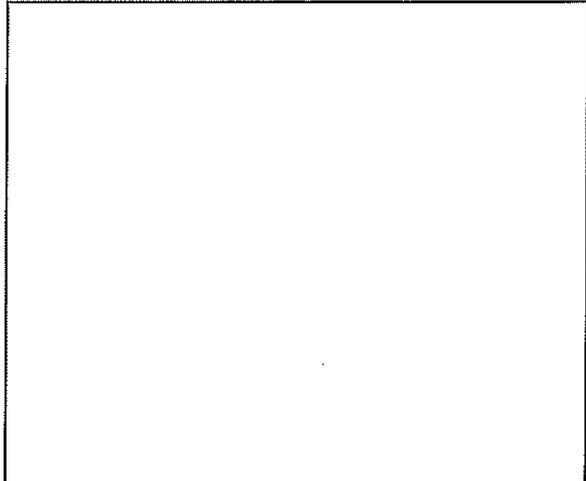
Charred logs mark the location of the original two-story cabin. Stone walls that were part of an addition to the cabin stand in the shade of a large tree.

City officials do not have immediate plans for the site, said Mark Sears, manager of the Natural Areas Program. But they may consider removing the fence and opening the ruins to the public, if the site is safe.

"We might put in a new interpretative feature that extols the history of the cabin and the area," he said. "There's certainly a lot of history there."

The property might come into play when the city extends its portion of the Poudre River Trail under Interstate 25 and connects it to a portion of trail the town of Timnath plans to build, Sears said. The trail extension is still three to five years away, depending on the availability of funding.

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Strauss died in 1904 during a flood of the Poudre River. While trying to escape the high water, he was stranded overnight along a fence line. He was found the next day and was brought to the nearby Strang Cabin, but he did not survive.

The Larimer County commissioners approved the transfer on Tuesday. The Fort Collins City Council already has accepted the proposal, Sears said.

No money is exchanging hands as part of the transaction. The deal is "just a straight handoff," he said.

Charlie Johnson, a senior land agent with the county, told the commissioners the county received a \$239,000 insurance settlement after the fire.

But the county has not developed a plan for the property and has no parks or open lands sites in the area, which is expected to be eventually annexed into Fort Collins.

"It's just sitting there ... It makes sense to transfer this property to the city of Fort Collins," he said.

Putting the property in city hands may open the door for cleaning up and possibly restoring the cabin site, said local historian Wayne Sundberg.

"I think there may be some people lobbying for that," he said.

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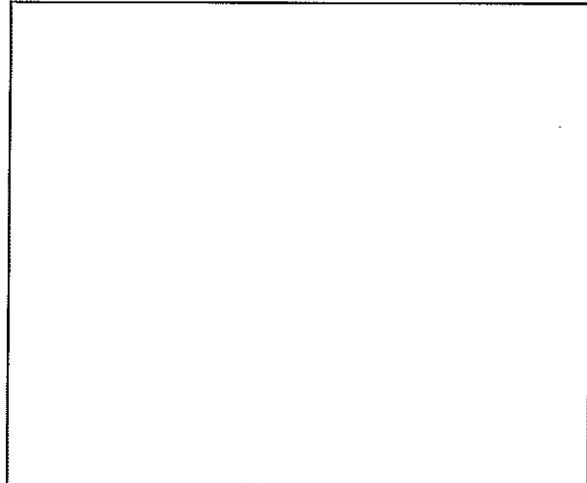
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Larimer County Natural resources survey seeks input on connecting with nature

Written by

Coloradoan news services

4:38 PM, Sep. 3, 2011|

Larimer County Natural Resources wants your input on a survey to gain an understanding how to better connect youth and families to nature and the outdoors. The survey is part of the Plug in to Nature effort to identify how to improve opportunities for people to enjoy the outdoors.

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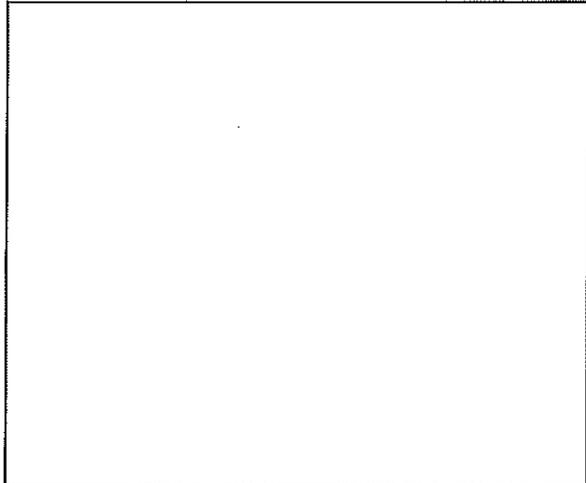
experiences other generations had in nature, an issue known as Nature Deficit Disorder.

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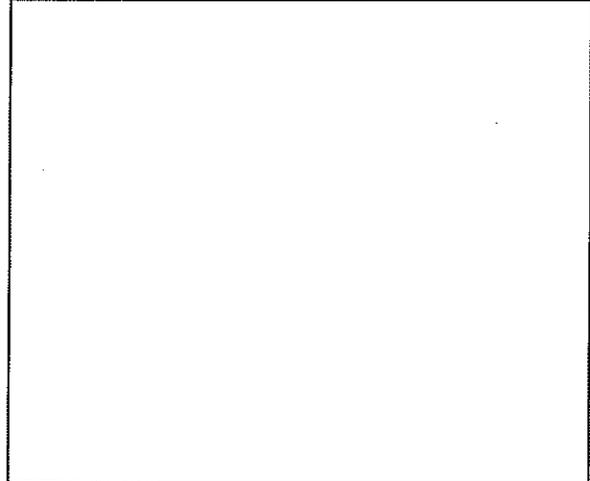
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There's a map for that

GPS may show the way, but understanding topo maps remains an important skill

By Pamela Dickman Reporter-Herald Staff Writer
Loveland Reporter-Herald

Posted:09/01/2011 09:50:28 AM MDT

If You Go

What: Map and Compass Orientation, three-hour program, moderate hiking.

When: 8:30 a.m. Saturday, Sept. 17.

How: Register in advance at larimer.org/naturalresources/ or by calling 679-4489.

Where: Red Mountain Open Space, located

25 miles north of Fort Collins off County Road 15.

Cost: Free.

In the late 1800s, men actually walked the country, recording mountains, lakes, rivers, elevations, boundaries and other important aspects of America.

These U.S. Geological Survey workers were creating the first topographical maps, the basis of which are still used today, although current maps have been backed up by aerial photographs of regions and terrain.

"You can see the history of the past 200 years developing on these maps, and the fact that they are still applicable today is very encouraging," said Heather Lindsey, education program assistant for the Larimer County Department of Natural Resources.

Topographical maps appear different from a city street map with curved lines, colors and unique symbols. At first glance, it may look like reading Greek, but after learning to read topo, the maps are more like an encyclopedia of pertinent information.

The contour lines on a topographic map depict the shape of the earth's surface as well as the elevation above and below sea level, making it possible to measure the elevation of mountains, the depth of the ocean and the steepness of slopes, according to the U.S. Geologic survey website. Topographical maps also feature symbols that help understand an area, such as for streets, buildings, streams and vegetation.

Colors also play an important role in topographical maps. Green, for example, depicts vegetation, blue water and gray or red densely built up areas, the website explains.

Paired with a compass, a person can determine exactly where they are, even in a remote region surrounded by trees and mountains, but no trails.

This can help navigating the backcountry, determining where it is legal to hunt, finding your way back to camp, deciding the best route down a steep slope or even geocaching for hidden treasure.

Global positioning systems are growing in popularity and available with all different features. These electronic devices also can be paired with topographical maps, but because batteries fail and no technology is absolute, it is important to know how to read the map and orient yourself with a piece of paper and a compass, Lindsey said.

Later this month, she will teach a class on how to navigate with a map and compass -- a course that filled up last month and had people clamoring for another shot at a lesson.

"It is important to learn how to use them together," said Lindsey. "They can be real powerful tools for navigating."

Pamela Dickman can be reached at 669-5050, ext. 526, or pdickman@reporter-herald.com

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LaPorte, CO • September 1, 2011

Northern Colorado Birding Fair at Fossil Creek Reservoir on Sept. 23 & 24

by NFN on AUGUST 4, 2011 · LEAVE A COMMENT · in DISPATCHES

“Birding in your Backyard” is the theme for this year’s 7th Annual Northern Colorado Birding Fair, to be held Sept. 23 and 24 at Fossil Creek Reservoir.

The weekend will feature birding field trips on Friday, Sept. 23 and fair festivities on Saturday, Sept. 24.

Schedule of Events:

Birding Behind the Scenes at Soapstone Prairie

Friday, Sept. 23, 7 a.m.- 1 p.m., transportation from Fort Collins provided. City of Fort Collins Biologist Aran Meyer and Educator Sue Kenney will take you to some areas closed to the public for some birding and share information about the internationally renowned Lindenmeier early man site. Free, but registration required. Call 970-416-2815 or email naturalareas@fcgov.com.

Northern Colorado Birding Fair

Saturday, Sept. 24 at Fossil Creek Reservoir Regional Open Space. Guided bird walks at 7 a.m. & 7:15 a.m. Hands-on activity booths, silent auction and vendors 8 a.m.- 2 p.m.
 Raptor releases throughout the day
 Presentations at 9 a.m., 11 a.m. and 1 p.m.
 Interactive Clinics at 10 a.m. and noon
 Details at www.larimer.org/naturalresources/birding_fair.htm

Visitors will also enjoy interactive booths, guided bird walks, a silent auction, a self-guided scavenger hunt, vendors showcasing birding equipment, and rehabilitated raptor releases. There will be food and drink available courtesy of the Larimer County Friend’s Group, and the Berthoud Lion’s Club. Prizes will be available for children 12 years of age or under who complete their Birding Fair Passport.

Entry to the Northern Colorado Birding Fair is free for all thanks to sponsorships and local vendors who participate, including this year’s presenting sponsor, Poudre Pet and Feed Supply. To help

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Survey seeks input on connecting with nature

By Coloradoan news services

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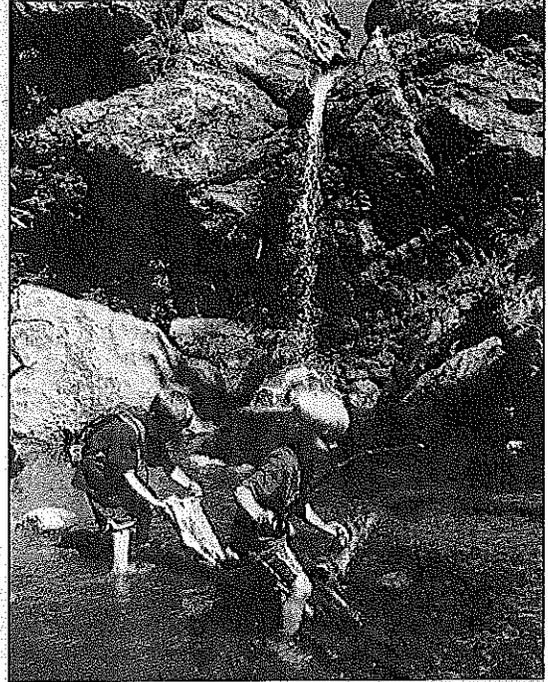
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Brothers, Jett, 5, and Jack Giard, 3, play with a log in a pond at the bottom of Horsetooth Falls in this 2010 file photo. The county is seeking public input on how to connect people, especially kids, with nature. V. RICHARD HARO/COLORADOAN LIBRARY



NEWS

Larimer County Approves New Campsites, Neighbors Stew

August 17, 2011 2:59 PM

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Horsetooth Reservoir (credit: CBS6)

FORT COLLINS, Colo. (AP) – Larimer County officials approved new campsites at Horsetooth Reservoir west of Fort Collins over objections from nearby residents worried about increased noise and blocked views.

Larimer County commissioners gave the go-ahead to nine new campsites Tuesday. The Loveland Reporter-Herald reports that the commissioners acknowledged residents' concerns but said officials will plant trees and landscaping to provide a buffer between the new sites and the residents.

The campground where the new sites will be built currently has 72 campsites.

Residents objecting to the plan gathered 100 signatures opposing the project.

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