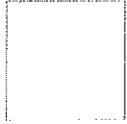


Mike Nelson's Colorado - 7NEWS expert camper Major King tries glamping at Horsetooth Reservoir

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Major King | [Email Me](#)

FORT COLLINS, Colo. - It is a trend that's been building for at least six years, and now it has come to Colorado's Front Range.

Glamping -- glamorous camping -- is a way for the few, the proud, the well-to-do, to experience the great outdoors.

At Horsetooth Reservoir in Larimer County, that means doing it Airstream-style in a 31-foot, 2004 Classic. For \$99 a night (2-night minimum), you can have it all -- full bedroom, bathroom with a shower, kitchen with gas stove, microwave, freezer, fridg, a jamming stereo system with MP3 jacks and even a flat screen TV with DVD.

But wait -- there's more! Can you say "air conditioning?"

"It gives you all the comforts of like a hotel room, I guess I'd say," raved Lee Thielen of Fort Collins. "This is very cool! What county does this?"

Thielen and her husband booked the getaway in July while their house was being remodeled.

There are 560 campsites in the Larimer County Department of Natural Resources System, but so far only one Airstream for rent. A second is being considered for next year.

Purchasing the Airstream was the idea of Larimer DNR Director Gary Buffington. The county bought it in Georgia for \$39,000, paid \$2,000 to have it transported and another \$6,000 for remodeling the flooring, furniture & infrastructure.

The Airstream is so popular they expect it to pay for itself in five years.

"The Airstream concept . . . is a piece of Americana. It's like a '57 Chevy or something like that, it's something that just kind of oozes America when you look at it," said DNR's Dan Rieves.

Airstream has been around for over 80 years. The aerodynamic, rounded aluminum shape is based on designs originally crafted in Los Angeles by Hawley Bowlus, the chief designer of Charles Lindbergh's aircraft "Spirit of St. Louis," according to Wikipedia. Airstream RV's are now manufactured in Ohio.

Just a 30-minute drive from Old Town Fort Collins, the South Bay campground boasts fishing, boating, a swim beach, stand-up paddle boarding, hiking of the iconic Horsetooth Rock & mountain biking.

The Airstream sits off the reservoir directly across Larimer CR 38E from the Stout store behind recently-planted ponderosa pine.

Glamping admittedly isn't for everybody.

"Well, that's like a city-folk camping; this'd be like REALLY camping!" laughed Jennifer Henne, who, with her husband Mike and their Brady-bunch family of seven were camping, old-school style, in tents with air mattresses.

But hey - if you can afford it, why not? For a 50-something news curmudgeon like me, I get a little tired of schlepping backpacks to 11,000-foot so I can sleep on the ground. Besides that, the firewood comes with the deal!

The Airstream is available until the end of September. For more information go to: <http://www.larimer.org/naturalresources/airstream.htm>. Pets must stay at home.

Colorado flood damage: Loss of outdoor spaces is deeply felt

By Susan Clotfelter
The Denver Post



Samantha Young, David Garcia and their dog Lucy ponder Colorado flood damage at Boyd Lake Recreation Trail in Loveland on Sept. 14, 2013. (Susan Clotfelter, The Denver Post)

There's Cody. There's the pair of saucy mutts, Lucy and K.D. (the initials stand for King Dog.) There was Milan the husky, and now that Milan has passed, there's Enzo. Lucky the Border Collie. Lucy the labrador. Buddy the Australian terrier, and the spaniel sisters, Mia and Meg. And now Luna, the rescued Airedale. And, of course, their humans.

We're a tribe, we morning dog walkers on the westernmost stretch of the Boyd Lake Recreation Trail in Loveland. Cyclists and joggers often pass too quickly for greetings, but dog people come to know one another's faces and the dogs' names, which are often exchanged long before human introductions.

Now, after the flood, we are a tribe scattered, a flotilla unmoored.

Our trail runs for 25 miles, flowing east from Wilson Boulevard. It swings north to dodge the softball fields, then south to lasso the old fairgrounds, reborn as a sparkling new park where a bustling farmers' market has finally grown large enough to fill the two roofed pavilions. Toddlers splash in water sculptures there, and a

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historic home anchors a new community garden. The trail cuts south, then emerges behind the Quick Lube and Sonic to tunnel under 287. It cruises through Old Town past our library and recreation center, then whips northeast along a tributary stream. It crosses another major road south of the cluster of big-box stores and the deserted Western Sugar plant. Then it rolls north of U.S. 34 onto true, nearly treeless prairie, looping around the shores of Boyd Lake.

Our trail links the wilder, rural western edge of Loveland with the beginnings of the eastern, newer edge. Or rather, it did.

I know this path so well, I could map its features blindfolded. I know the sound the timbers of the footbridge over the Big Thompson make under feet and under bicycle tires. I know the giant, slowly dying cottonwood at the river's edge with the old steel cable embedded in its bark. The clusters of brush that bend under blankets of snow, luring my dog to pounce and burrow for hidden rodents, and the grove of trees where she pauses to see if the squirrels are going to sass her that day. In any given season, I know which sections of the trail will have more shade, which have rabbitbrush and which have poison ivy. I know where the snakes come out to sun themselves.

I know the bend in the river where the great blue heron likes to hide, the trees where cormorants roost and the patches of bottom land where the elk go when snow chases them down from the foothills.

I know the bench memorializing a redhaired woman who walked the trail with her husband and a sweet German shepherd until cancer took the dog, and later took the woman herself. And the brand-new natural area the city was just about to open on the path's south side, with a pond just for paddlers, complete with parking and lights and a boat launch.

It's probably sentimental to mourn the damage to an outdoor space when so many homes, lives, and livelihoods have been lost or damaged beyond repair. But for many of Loveland's walkers, bikers, dog owners, joggers, and birdwatchers, this territory was our home more so than our houses, and the time we spent on it anchored our days. I am sure the same loss tugs at all Coloradans who have lost trails, parks or access to them for the foreseeable future.

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The western end of the Boyd Lake Recreation Trail in Loveland, Colorado was awash as the Big Thompson River crested. (Susan Clotfelter, The Denver Post)

Our trail served as Loveland's long backyard, a world of its own that was still never far from the center of the action. It ferried foot traffic and cyclists into downtown Loveland, lending an assist to its nascent reinvention as an arts haven with galleries and microbreweries and real restaurants along its main streets. It connected us. In any given blizzard, Loveland's main streets might be tough to navigate. But our trail? It would be neatly plowed.

Now Loveland waits to see what the flood has made of this lifeline. More water scoured Loveland on its way east than flowed in the deadly 1976 flood. I wasn't here then; neither was the trail. I have no idea how long it will take to restore the damaged portions of this trail, or the roads to all the wild places our state enjoys.

I make my living thinking about, writing about, advising on, not just the concrete features of home, but the section of the soul that answers to that call. Now the flood has taught me what it means to have a gash torn in my emotional map. Taught me a mere drop of what evacuees must feel.

Home is always a lot more than rooms and a roof. For Colorado, this flood has measured how much more.

Hermit Park Open Space closed due to flood damage

Oct. 5, 2013 |
0 Comments



Last month's flooding caused severe damage of Hermit Park Open Space in Estes Park. / Courtesy of Larimer County Department of Natural Resources

Written by

Coloradoan staff and news services

Hermit Park Open Space outside of Estes Park remains closed to visitors during restoration from last month's flood damage to many of the campsites, cabins and some of the trails.

Larimer County Department of Natural Resources hopes the open space will be open for the start of the camping season next year.

Currently, the department is assisting with the larger recovery effort of Estes Park by providing a staging area for National Guard units and equipment at the entrance of the open space.

For more information, visit www.larimer.org/natural resources.

Floodwaters destroy Glade Park

Owners react to seeing severe flood damage on property west of Loveland

POSTED: 09/15/2013 09:11:59 PM MDT



The Bounds family looks at the destruction from flooding at Glade Park on the Big Thompson River west of Loveland on Sunday. (Jenny Sparks)



As the Big Thompson River started to flood last week, the city of Loveland put up warning signs on the Loveland Recreation Trail off Southeast Eighth Street. By Sunday afternoon, one of those signs had been knocked over by the raging river. In the background sit a boat and shipping containers displaced by the flooding. (Craig Young)

A piece of asphalt juts out from Glade Road into where the parking lot of Glade Park was just a few days ago, with debris, massive fallen trees and a four-lane-wide river raging in its place.

"The sound at 1 o'clock in the morning on Friday was, I gotta tell you, it was medieval," said Peter Williams, whose house sits directly west of the Big Thompson River on Glade Road. "Primeval is the best way I can describe it."

Glade Road, west of Loveland was one of the more severely affected locations hit by the brutal forces of the Larimer flood on Thursday.

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Williams was thankful he chose a home that was a significant grade above the river. Some of his neighbors were not so fortunate, however.

Behind Williams' neighbor's house to the east in the 6700 block of Glade Road, the river, which previously ran approximately 200 feet from the back side of the house, had completely consumed the backyard up to the house, flooding the basement with about a foot of muddy water.

The river normally runs approximately 30 feet wide and four feet deep, said Williams, but on Sunday it spanned about a half-mile and was deep enough to touch the house. It destroyed landscaping, washed away two of three storage sheds (leaving the remaining one overturned) and obliterated their chicken coop.

He and his wife Kathy Voth had assisted their neighbors in successfully evacuating the chickens.

"We live on the corner up there. We've started calling it the 'Corner of Hell and Fury,'" said Williams who has lived in the house for 10-11 years. "Hell and Damnation."

The area sustained power outages, which area resident Clint Bounds said lasted from about midnight Thursday to around noon Friday.



Williams said he was impressed with how hard the city's maintenance workers were laboring to keep the area powered.

"We're fortunate. This is only a microcosm of other places

An evacuation notice is tied to what is left of a tree on Cdebaca Cout off Glade Road in west Loveland on Sunday. (Jenny Sparks)

that got it much worse. It's strange to think of this being as a microcosm, really puts it into perspective," Bounds said while surveying the no-longer-existent Glade Park.

The road was closed off by the Larimer County Sheriff's Department and the National Guard just west of Hidden Valley Drive on West Eisenhower, not allowing anyone without proof of residence to head west.

Though their house was at a high enough point on the west side of the Devil's Backbone rock formation, Bounds said he and his family felt "quarantined" up in the canyon because of the roadblocks. Their phone lines were still down as of Sunday.

Bounds and his wife wanted to get out of the house to show their children the awe-inspiring destruction nature can conjure.

Hermit Park to remain closed until summer

Popular open space area near Estes Park sustained heavy road damage in flooding

By Reporter-Herald Staff

POSTED: 10/16/2013 06:57:14 PM MDT



September flooding damaged the roads at Hermit Park Open Space near Estes Park. The county will repair the roads and in some cases re-establish them in better locations in hope of a summer 2014 reopening. (Larimer County Natural Resources staff)

Hermit Park Open Space, hard hit by the September flooding, may not reopen until next summer.

The former Hewlett-Packard retreat, owned by Larimer County since 2006, was particularly hard hit.

Many of the unpaved roads throughout the 1,360-acre open space were damaged due to heavy rains, according to a press release from Larimer County Natural Resources.

"The situation at Hermit Park Open Space is somewhat staggering," Dan Rieves, visitor services manager for the county agency, said in the press release. "It's going to take time to assess, prioritize and secure funds to fix it all. We hope folks are patient and understanding during this process."

Hermit Park Open Space will be closed to visitors during restoration efforts to ensure visitor safety as repairs take place. Rieves said the county will use the opportunity to re-establish some of the roads in better locations.

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Road damage is seen at the intersection of the main road and cabin road at Hermit Park Open Space. (Larimer County Natural Resources staff)

"At this point, we're confident the area will be open in some capacity by summer 2014," Park Manager Chris Fleming said in the press release. "It's important that we take time to get things fixed, but we also understand that many people look forward to vacationing in and visiting this area, so we'll do our best to get everything done as soon as possible."

Visitors who had camping reservations at Hermit Park Open Space received full refunds, and the county is not taking any more reservations until staff sets a soft date for the reopening.

Information about the ongoing restoration at Hermit Park Open Space will be posted on the Department of Natural Resources' website at larimer.org/naturalresources.

REPORTER-HERALD

Peter Williams looks at his neighbor's home, which is standing in flood waters from the Big Thompson River on the 6700 block of Glade Road on Sunday, west of Loveland. (Jenny Sparks)

The watermarks on standing trees and fence posts showed the park was under at least 4 feet of water that has since receded, despite the rain continuing to fall most of Sunday.

"They way it's been the last few days, we have an hour or so before we see the effects of the increased rainfall down here," Williams said. He had pushed a stick into the mud at the edge of the lake his neighbor's backyard had become to try and monitor the water level, to try and keep an eye out for his friends.

Both Williams and Bounds said they felt a heightened sense of community in the face of the disaster, something they were proud to be a part of. Williams said he met neighbors he'd never talked to before, each of them offering their services to anyone in need.

Dee Johnson has lived on Cdebaca Court for 13 years, but was forced to take refuge at the Loveland evacuation center at the Thompson School District administration building, 800 S. Taft Ave., after her road was wiped away by flood water.

"It's devastating, these homes along the river. Seeing that park, it's like being on another planet. It's so surreal," she said.

James Garcia can be reached at 970-635-3630 or garciaj@reporter-herald.com. Follow him on Twitter: @JamesGarciaRH.





Guilty plea in drunken boating accident. 9NEWS at 4 p.m. 10/08/13.

Christopher Joseph Feller

A Colorado State University student accused of running over and mauling a man with a boat at Horsetooth Reservoir last summer is to receive probation after pleading guilty Tuesday to drunken boating.

Chris Feller, 22, took a plea agreement with prosecutors to have the felony vehicular-assault charge dismissed.

The boat's propeller broke Anthony Olmsted's hip and foot on the afternoon of June 30 as it sliced deep cuts through most of the right side of his body. Feller told investigators he was dropping Olmsted off near the swim beach and didn't know he already jumped off the boat when he reversed it and heard screams, according to Feller's arrest affidavit.

Olmsted was taken from the scene by helicopter. Feller told investigators that he and others among the seven passengers had been drinking. A field breath test showed Feller had 0.116 breath-alcohol content, and tests revealed that only one of the passengers would have been within the legal limit to drive, according to the affidavit.

Feller has agreed to pay restitution to Olmsted. District Judge Thomas French is set to sentence Feller on the misdemeanor charge at 10 a.m. Nov. 19.

Meanwhile, he's allowed Feller to travel to New York, San Francisco and several other cities for job interviews while on bond. If Feller violates probation, he could face up to a year in jail.

A Larimer County ranger said the plan to drop off a passenger "away from the dock or the actual beach and at a distance from the shore ... was in itself reckless," and the group "had zero commitment to boating safety," according to the affidavit.

The legal limit for drunken boating in Colorado is 0.08 blood-alcohol content, the same as for driving.

Larimer County open space areas now reopen after flooding

Reporter-Herald Staff

POSTED: 10/16/2013 07:05:35 PM MDT

The Larimer County Department of Natural Resources this week updated the status of its open space areas and other areas affected by September flooding.

River Bluffs Open Space, Lions Open Space and Eagle's Nest Open Space have been opened to public use after flood damage there was assessed.

Devil's Backbone Open Space, Blue Sky Trail, Eagle's Nest Open Space, Horsetooth Mountain Open Space, Lions Open Space, Ramsay-Shockey Open Space, Red Mountain Open Space and River Bluffs Open Space all are open for day use.

Horsetooth Reservoir, Carter Lake, Pinewood Reservoir and Flatiron Reservoir are open for day use and camping. Boating also is allowed at Horsetooth and Carter and wakeless-speed boating at Pinewood. No boating is allowed at Flatiron Reservoir. People can volunteer for flood-related restoration projects on Larimer County's parks and open spaces by contacting Pam Mayhew, Volunteer Coordinator, pmayhew@larimer.org or 679-4552.