

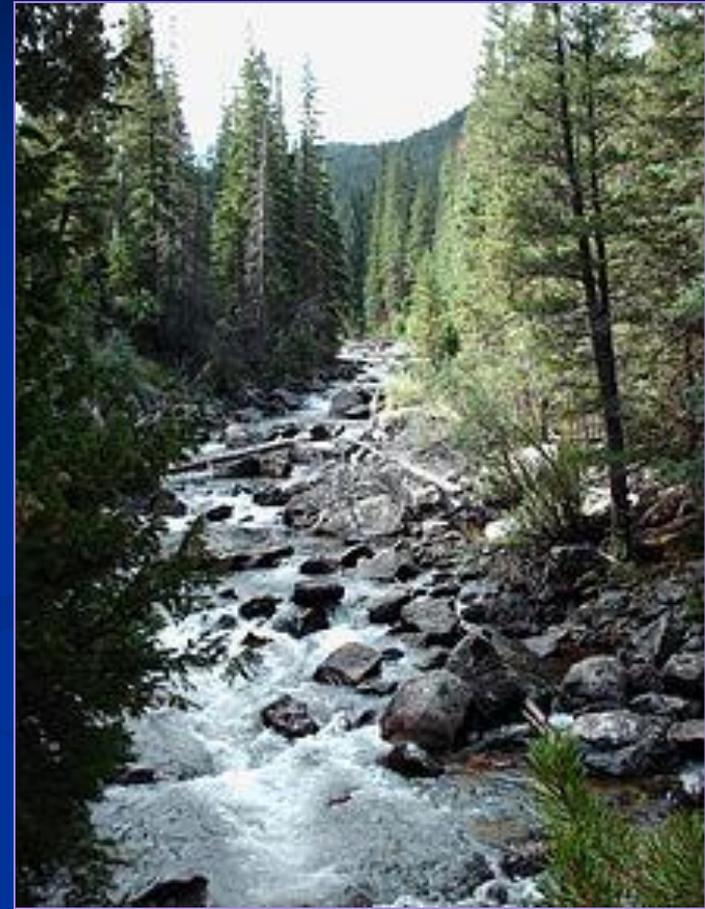
# Poudre River Initiative

## Greeley/Windsor Reach Overview & Opportunity

September 2014

# Orientation

- **Cache la Poudre River**
  - The main and south forks of the Poudre originate in Rocky Mtn Nat'l Park, then flow through Roosevelt Nat'l Forest, passing through Ft. Collins, Windsor and Greeley to its confluence with the South Platte River.
  - From its headwaters to the South Platte River, the Poudre drops 7,000 ft.

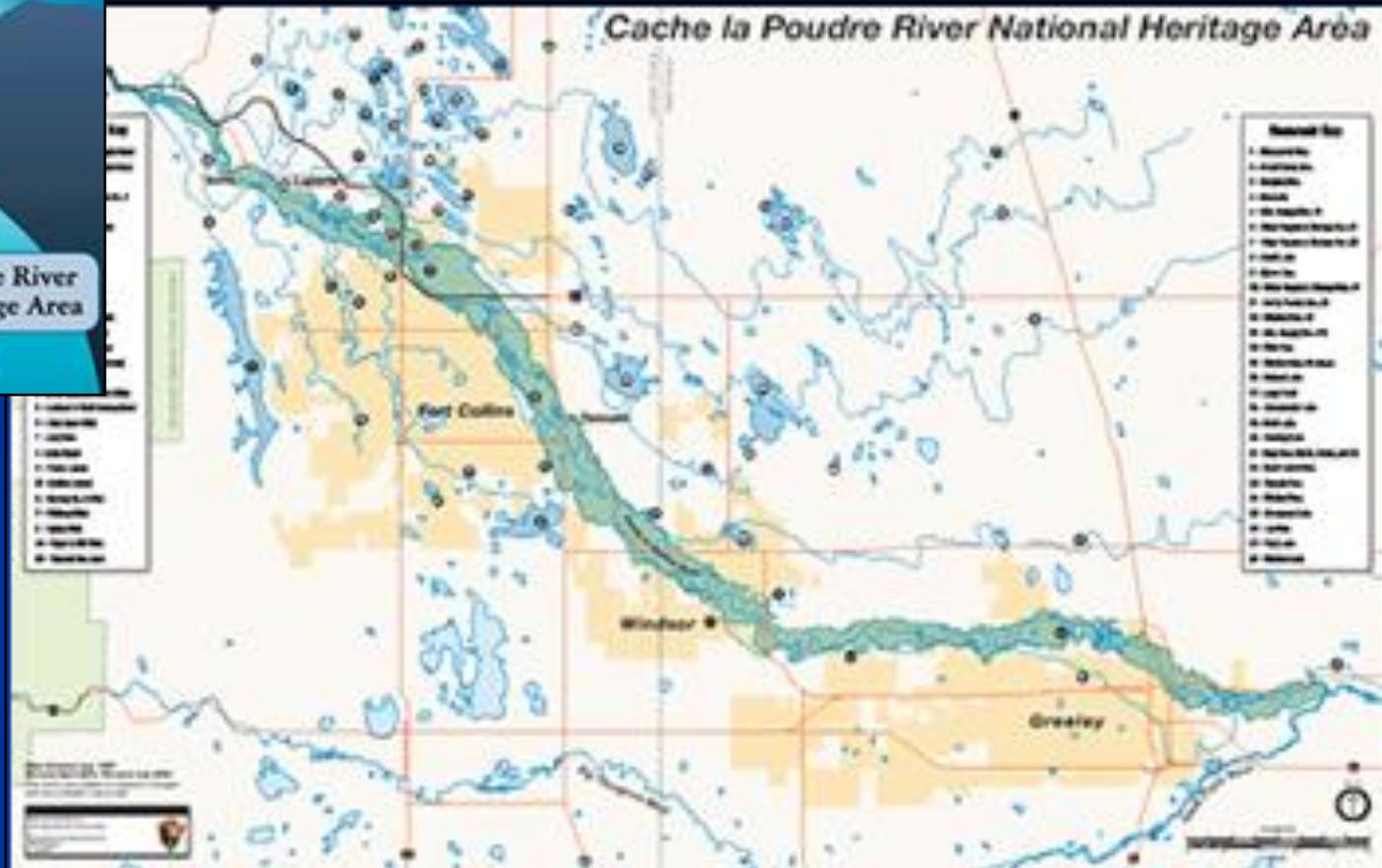
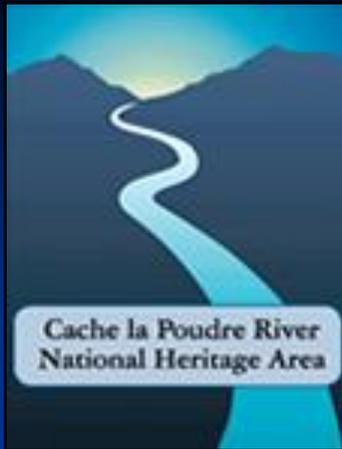


- Early 1800s: river explored by French Canadian Fur Trappers. The name of the river means “**Hide the Powder**” in French referring to when the trappers, caught in a terrible snowstorm and to lighten their load, buried large amounts of their gunpowder along the river banks.
- 1859: California Gold Rush brought settlers to area
- 1870: Greeley formed; first irrigation ditch diversions from the Poudre were constructed, giving rise to the Colorado Water Rights Doctrine

# Review of Poudre Accomplishments: Special Poudre River Designations

- The Poudre is Colorado's first and only National Wild and Scenic River (1986)
- Is nationally recognized for the innovations in water delivery and measurement systems, as associated with the Greeley No. 3 Ditch





- First National Heritage Area established west of the Mississippi, spanning 45 miles from east of Greeley through Windsor and Ft. Collins (1996). Offers national notoriety; Parks “Passport” destination; and, access to funding for educational purposes.

- Is linked through Weld County via the South Platte as a part of the American Discovery Trail (2002)





# Area River Legacy - Chapter One: Poudre River Trail in Review

- Early years
  - 1970s - 1991: creation of a Poudre Trail becomes a community goal ; Larimer Weld COG funds a CU Denver student study for a regional river trail route. Greeley later completes a Poudre River Trail Master Plan & a “blue ribbon” Greenway Commission is formed to initiate the project
- 1993 – 96
  - Greeley & Windsor each receive first funding via GOCO grants to build portions of the trail

- 1996
  - Blue Ribbon panel reformed as independent non-profit, supported by the three area governments (Greeley, Windsor, Weld County)
  
- 1996 – 2002
  - Through a combination of grants, local fundraisers, and land owner partnerships 12.5 miles of trail is developed in sections along the river corridor.



## ■ 2002 – 2008:

- On-going construction & maintenance, sections of trail opened; fundraisers, donations, & grants secured: first trail manager hired,
- Poudre Learning Center built by area **Rotary Clubs**
- Dec. 2008: ‘Golden Spike’ section connects east/west trail sections and completing route from Greeley through Windsor

■ **17 years, 21+ miles**



# Chapter Two: Initiative

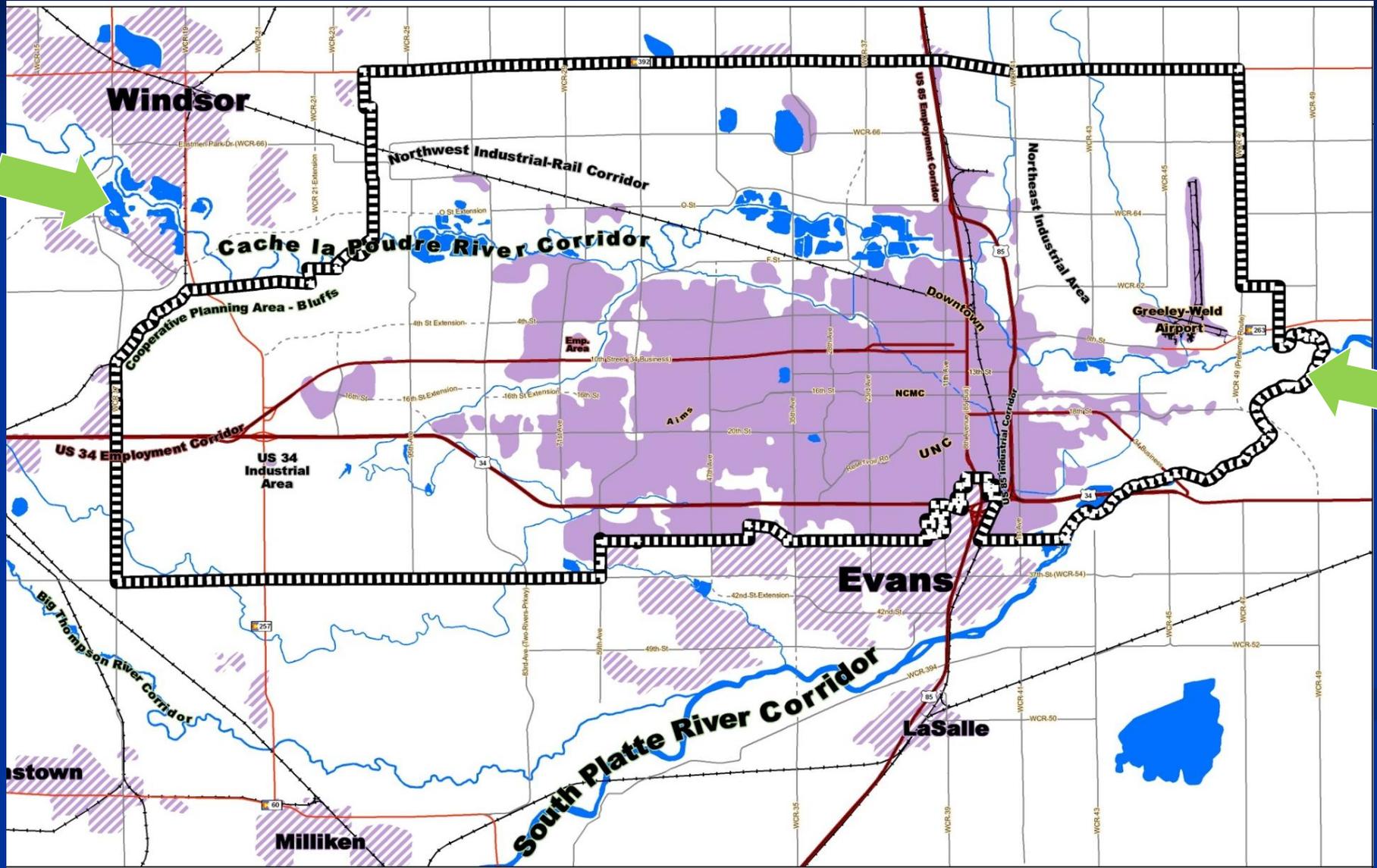
*To foster an expanded partnership and comprehensive framework for the long term preservation, development, enhancement, celebration and use of the Cache la Poudre River Corridor for its perpetual benefit to the northern Colorado community as a regional greenway*

# Master Guide:

## River Corridor Influences

- Agriculture (working river: crops & livestock)
- Gravel mining
- Water Storage
- Land use changes (residential, industrial)
- Environmental (wetlands, wildlife, habitat)
- Flood Management
- Recreation & leisure use
- Education & research

# Scope of Corridor Review: Phase I



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Growth Boundary

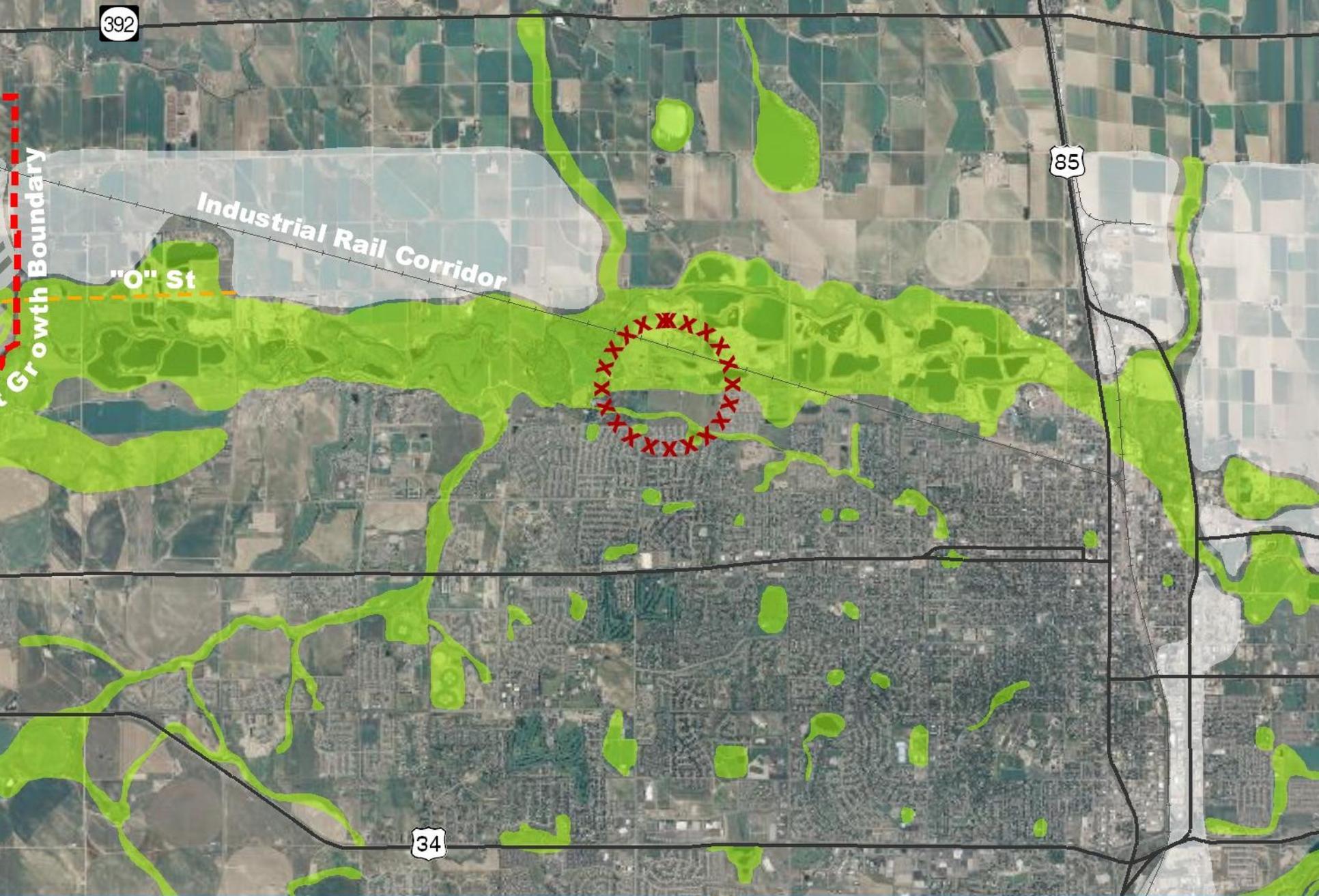
"O" St

Industrial Rail Corridor

85

34

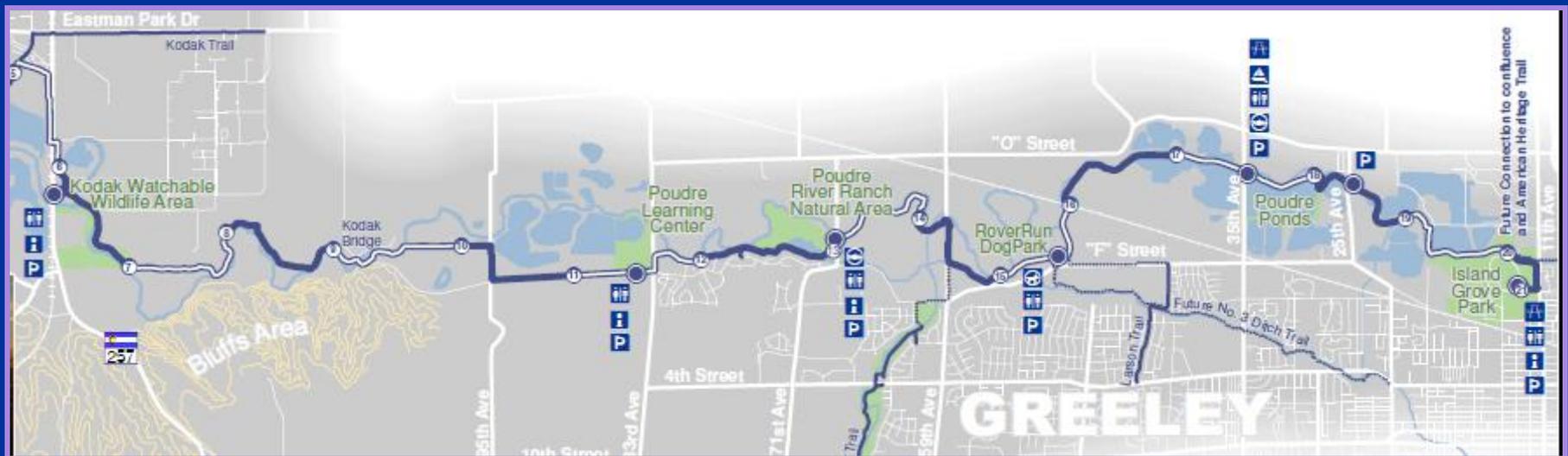
# CORRIDOR VISION



# Background Work

- Assemble Area Project Team 
- Collect Data 
- Review Community Visioning Guides 
- Imagine our Best Future . . . . .

# Observations Objectives Opportunities



## ■ Education

- Demonstration sites
- Interpretative signage
- Eco-points
- Field work
- Natural area research



## ■ Recreation



- Water trail / water crafts
- Fishing
- Bike Campsites
- RV parks
- Playground areas



## ■ Stewardship

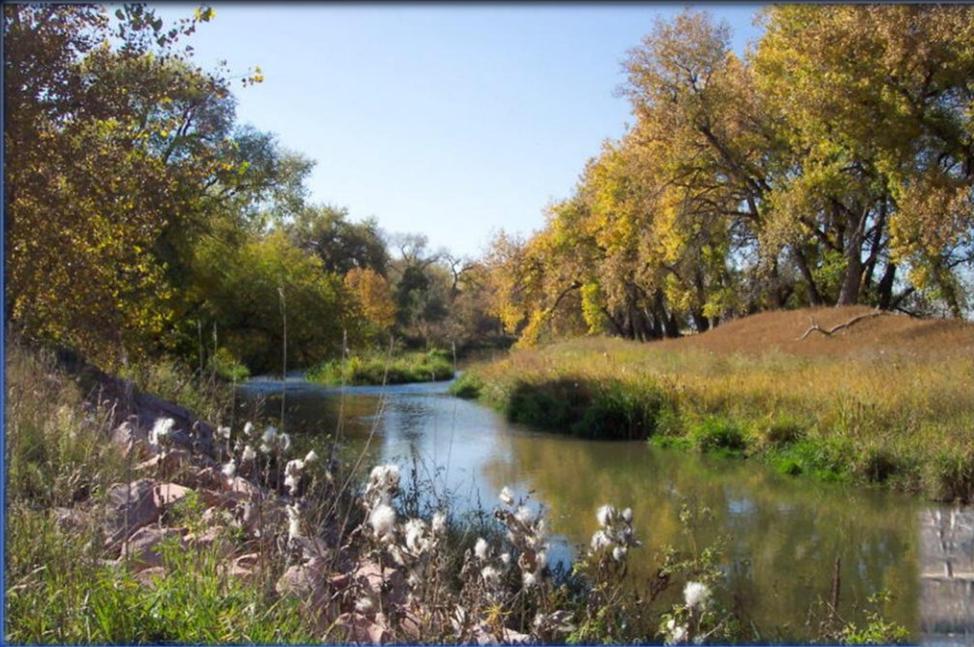


- Adopt-a-trail
- Re-vegetation
- Enhancements

## ■ Natural features/habitat

- Fish hatchery support
- Rookeries
- Water Quality
- Native grasses
- Soil management
- Wildlife corridor





## ■ Design & Features

- Protect vistas
- Safety
- Access
- Rest areas
- Protect river channel



# ■ Celebrations

## Poudre River 2011 Trailathlon

run • bike • jog • climb • draw • walk • watch • search • ride









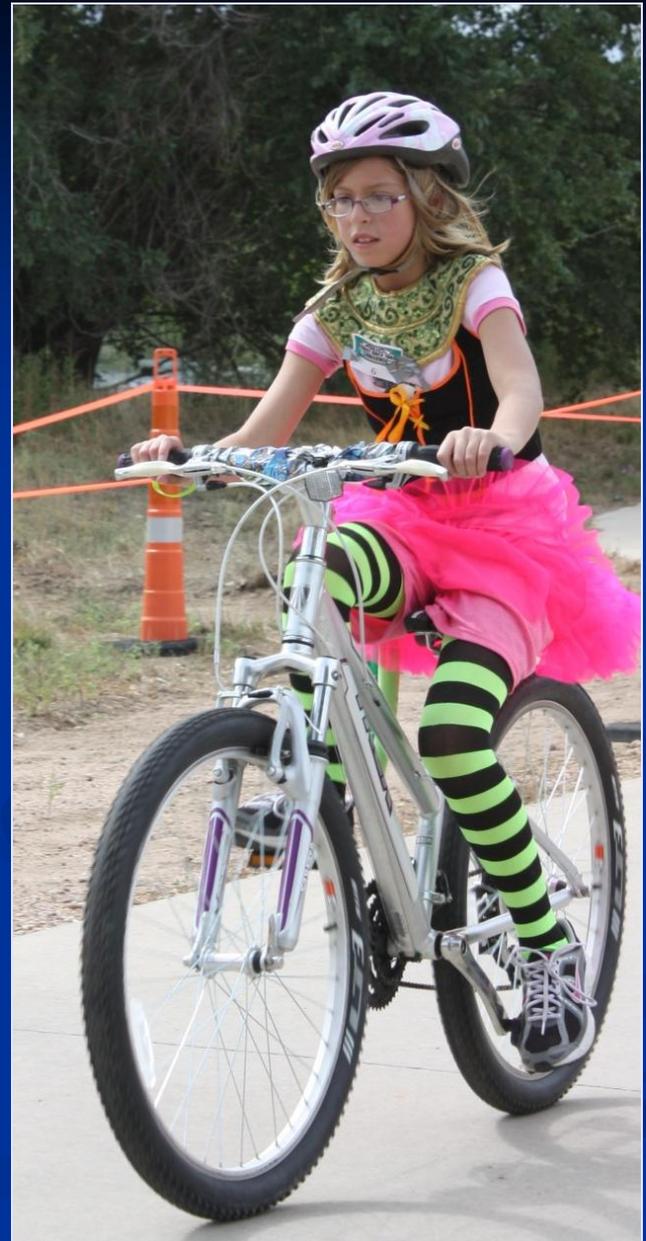
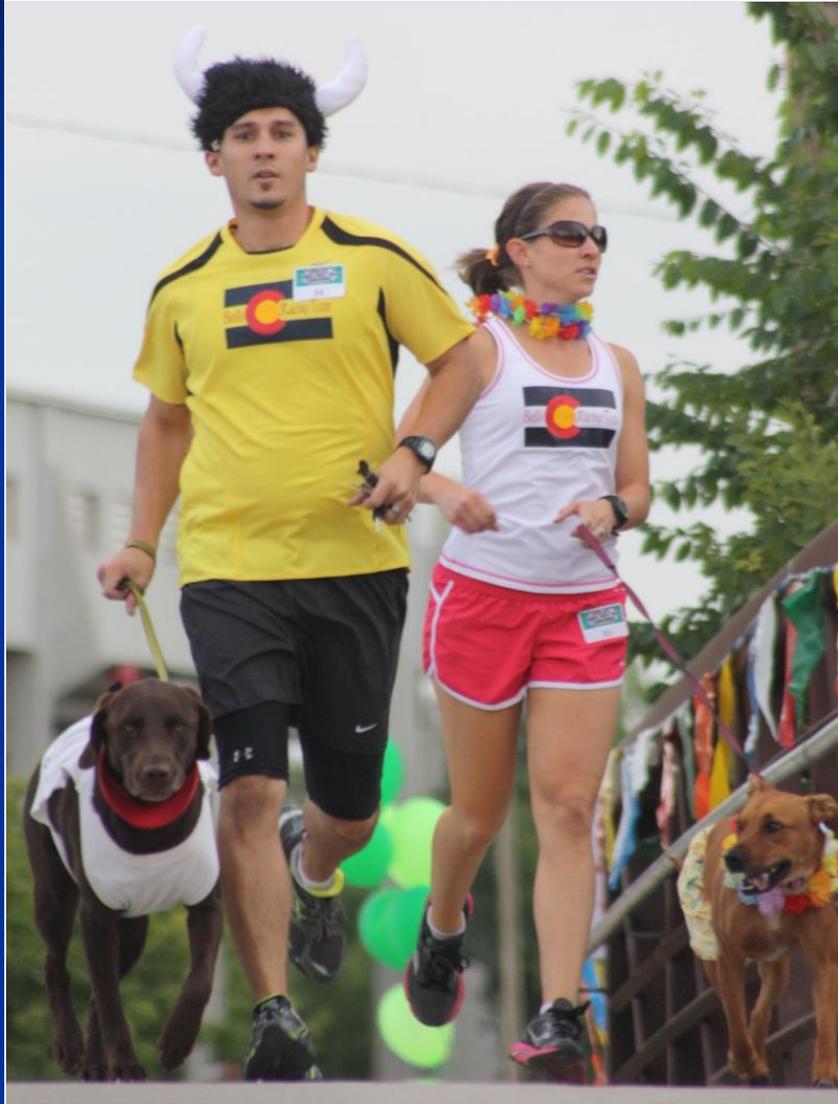


## Packers Goal:

See how many folks we could get on a section of trail in one hour's time

Creative travel and dress were encouraged with prizes for over 30 categories of trail travelers





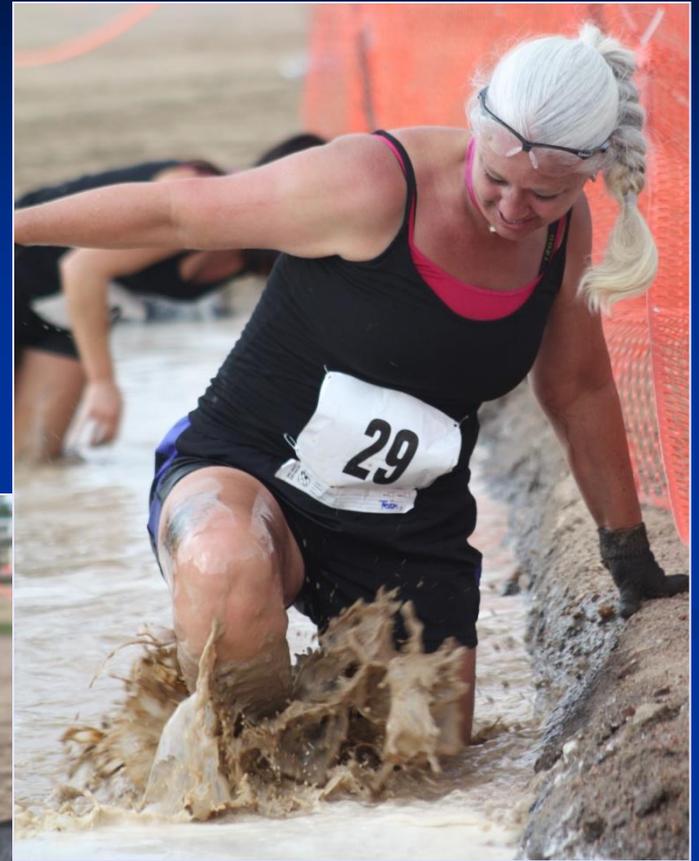


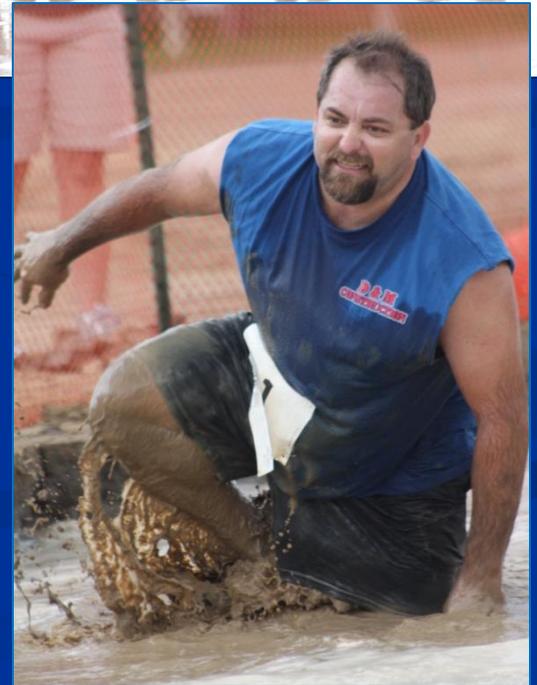
Challengers goal:

Run a 2.8 mile course as individuals, pairs, or a team complete with obstacles....and mud

Brave Souls moved over, under, around and through a series of obstacles to reach the finish line.....









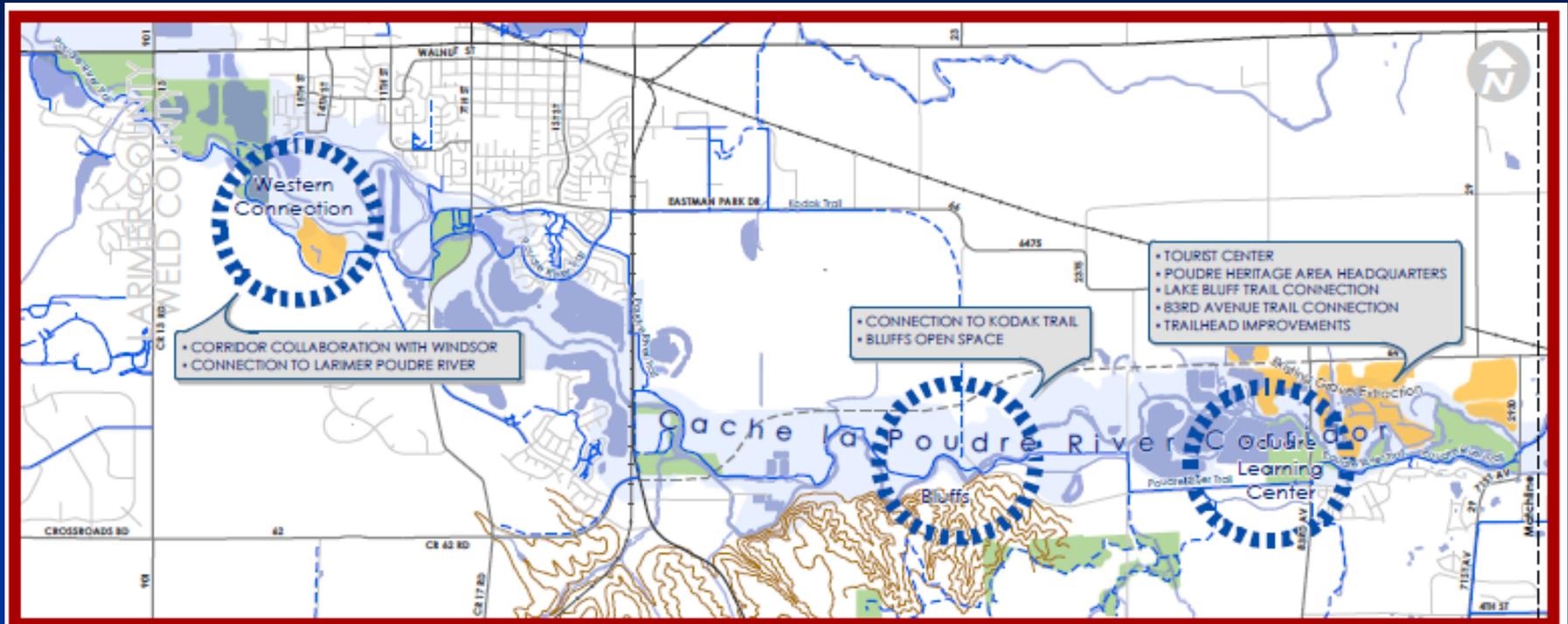
Chamber,  
Downtown and  
other  
businesses all  
contribute to  
the day's  
success

## ■ Destinations

- River walk
- Trail heads
- Picnic sites
- Trail connections
- “Ride to” activities
- Coffee/bike shops
- Entertainment



# Imagining Regional Possibilities



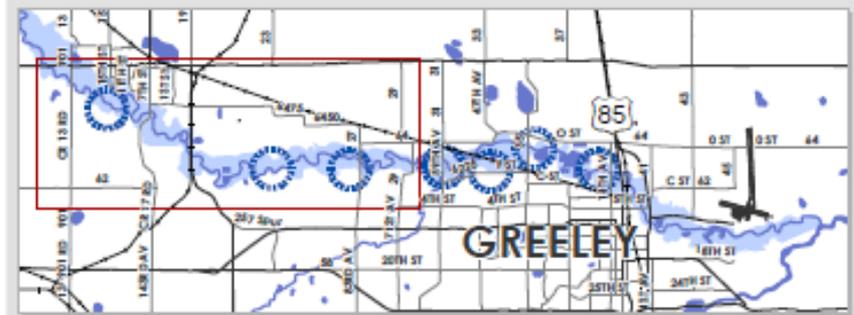
## POUDRE RIVER CORRIDOR VISION

A huge part of the draw of the Poudre River Trail is the regional connection it provides through the National Heritage Area. With future collaboration with Windsor and other partners both west and south, this regional connectivity will be further enhanced.

The "bluffs" area is one of the most unique natural features to be found in Greeley, apart from the Poudre River itself. The rolling relief of this semi-arid landscape makes for great views of and from the river, and offers a special perspective of the area's geography.

The Poudre Learning Center is a natural connection for future bluff trails and serves as an invaluable asset along the corridor (offering educational support opportunities spanning from young schoolchildren to graduate education in addition to serving as the headquarters for the Poudre River National Heritage Area).

## WEST PANEL



# Recent Accomplishments

- 2012: Greeley, Windsor, Timnath, Larimer Co. & Ft. Collins collaborated on a regional Rivers Legacy Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) grant application
- Of field of 60+ community applications, ranked the No. 1 project and received ~ \$5M over next 3 yrs to:
  - Larimer Co. : acquire easements & build trail
  - Windsor: acquire easement for a trail connection
  - Ft. Collins: leverage CDOT funds to build a bike/ped overpass on I-25 to link east/west trails
  - Greeley: acquire open space along river to protect corridor (\$3m+ of the GOCO Award – 4 properties)

# Update...

- Greeley closed on the first of its target properties to acquire in part with GOCO funds
  - Located at 59<sup>th</sup> Ave. & the Cache la Poudre River and known as the Sheep Draw Natural Area
  - Adds ~ 158 acres of open space to the river corridor as a greenway
- Has appraised remaining grant-funded 2-3 sites for acquisition

# Next Steps

- Purchase of next 3 properties, establish conservation easements for perpetual protection and public use
- Engage the community to help define and refine the larger Poudre Corridor Initiative/Greenway vision
- Work with the community and partners to work on a number of strategies to preserve and improve this important river corridor

Questions. . . .

