

## Horsetooth Rock fall prompts rescue



[Jason Pohl](#), The Coloradoan 7:08 p.m. MDT July 7, 2015



*(Photo: Courtesy Poudre Fire Authority via Twitter)*

Emergency crews worked into the evening Tuesday to rescue a woman who fell from Horsetooth Rock.

Poudre Fire Authority, Poudre Valley Hospital EMS, Larimer County parks units, search and rescue and deputies were dispatched about 2:30 p.m. to Horsetooth Mountain Park. Reports indicated an approximately 25-year-old woman fell about 20 feet while exploring on the north side of the rock.

Rescuers on scene reported she had a moderate but non life-threatening leg injury. Once they reached the woman, responders had to rig a multi-rope system to help lower her to the ground. By 5 p.m. they were working to carry her down to the main trail and to awaiting vehicles.

Persistent rains made trails muddy and limited what vehicles could get to an area. Air Link wasn't flying due to weather. Additional details including the woman's name or whether she was hiking or climbing in the area were not immediately available.

## Dog dies from water hemlock in Horsetooth Reservoir

[Katie de la Rosa](#), *Coloradoan* 3:19 p.m. MDT July 2, 2015



*(Photo: Erin Hull/The Coloradoan)*

A dog died over the weekend at Horsetooth Reservoir after ingesting water hemlock, a plant that is also extremely poisonous to humans.

Larimer County health officials say there is no heightened risk for people or their pets in the wake of the dog's death.

The 3-year-old border collie died within the hour after consuming the [toxic plant](#), which is common among wet and swampy areas. Still, a dog dying from eating the plant is "unprecedented," said Tim D'Amato, land stewardship manager for Larimer County.

D'Amato said although he's never heard of a dog dying from water hemlock, it is fairly common for livestock to die after eating the plant.

Water hemlock is native to this area, and he said it poses a risk not unlike rattlesnakes, poison ivy and mosquitoes carrying West Nile Virus that people take when enjoying Northern Colorado's outdoor areas.

D'Amato said the county will likely post a warning on the kiosks around the reservoir and trail heads that will help people identify the white, flower-like plant that quickly causes muscle and respiratory complications when ingested.

More information on water hemlock is available from the [U.S. Department of Agriculture](#) and the [U.S. Forest Service](#).

## Larimer County awarded \$1 million in GOCO grants

[Katie de la Rosa](#), *Coloradoan* 9:55 p.m. MDT June 25, 2015



*(Photo: Coloradoan library)*

Larimer County was awarded \$1 million in Great Outdoors Colorado grants for trails, parks and open space.

The Long View Corridor Trail between Fort Collins and Loveland received nearly all of the funding at \$999,550, according to a press release. The project will build 4.4 miles of concrete trail to connect the two cities' trail networks.

The trail corridor will pass through five open spaces and natural areas, which will also receive funding.

In Red Feather Lakes, an empty gravel lot at the community library will be transformed into a park, for which \$43,930 will be used. It will feature a natural playscape, educational gardens, new walkways with educational tracks and seating.

Berthoud collected \$40,000 to develop its master plan. The funding will help the management and development of parks, open space and trails.

These grants support Gov. John Hickenlooper's Colorado Beautiful initiative by identifying and filling critical gaps in connectivity for trails and open spaces, according to the release.

GOCO is presently seeking applicants for its new Inspire Initiative, which offers \$1 million to \$5 million in grants to selected communities to encourage kids to have more outdoor experiences.

## Larimer County donates to purchase of Cascade Cottages

County urges Estes, Land Trust to follow suit

*By Pamela Johnson*

*Reporter-Herald Staff Writer*

POSTED: 07/07/2015 02:40:42 PM MDT

FORT COLLINS — Larimer County has agreed to contribute open space tax dollars to Rocky Mountain Conservancy's effort to buy 40 commercially owned acres within the Rocky Mountain National Park boundaries and has issued a challenge to two other entities to follow its lead.

The county commissioners on Tuesday committed \$50,000 to the Rocky Mountain Conservancy's effort to raise \$3.2 million to buy Cascade Cottages, a property just inside the Fall River entrance that contains 12 rustic cabins.

And they challenged the town of Estes Park and the Estes Valley Land Trust to each contribute \$25,000 to bring the total from all three to \$100,000.

The respective boards for Estes Park and the Land Trust have not yet met to discuss the potential donations.

The contribution and challenge were made upon the recommendation of the Open Lands Advisory Board to make it "\$100,000 for 100 years," said Kerri Rollins, open lands manager for the county.

This year, the national park is celebrating 100 years, and officials hope to end 2015 with the purchase of Cascade Cottages, one of only two remaining commercial properties that are privately owned but within in the national park boundaries.

The Trust for Public Lands negotiated the option to buy the property for \$3.2 million, and the Conservancy, the park's nonprofit partner, is working to raise the money to buy the property.

The option to buy expires at the end of 2015.

The property has been privately owned since before the park was formed, and the rental cabins were built in the 1920s.

The family that owns the campground approached the national park several years ago with the offer to sell — honoring a "handshake" agreement made decades earlier to offer the land to the national park first.

If the conservancy buys the property, eventually it will be given to the park. No decisions have been made on how the property will be used, but park officials have said they might use the cabins as a youth retreat.

The road from the Fall River entrance cuts through the property with the cabins on the south side. The undeveloped north portion is prime habitat for bighorn sheep.

The county commissioners noted that, while this request is different from others they have seen in the past for open space tax money, it would go to a project in the Estes Park area, which generates "quite a bit" of tax revenue for the open space program.

# REPORTER-HERALD

"It does accomplish the goals of open lands here in the county, particularly in providing a variety of opportunities," said Commissioner Tom Donnelly.

"There's a compelling case to participate. There's going to be tremendously positive things to come from it."

## Larimer County issues new Junior Ranger Guide

*By Reporter-Herald Staff*

POSTED: 07/01/2015 09:05:10 PM MDT

Larimer County Natural Resources staff hopes to help children get into nature with its new Junior Ranger Guide.

The 20-page activity guide can teach kids ages 7-12 about the parks and open spaces in Larimer County, how to enjoy and care for the plants, animals and ecosystems in the county, according to a press release.

It features activities that include learning to use a map, attending guided hikes and programs, interviewing a ranger and more.

Children who complete five or more activities by the end of the summer will be entered into a drawing to win a kids' backpack from REI Fort Collins. All children will get a Junior Ranger badge when they complete five activities.

For details or to get a copy of the guide, stop by the Larimer County Natural Resources office, 1800 S. County Road 31 in Loveland or contact Education Program Coordinator Heather Young at [hyoung@larimer.org](mailto:hyoung@larimer.org) or 619-4489, or visit [www.larimer.org/nreducation](http://www.larimer.org/nreducation).

## Larimer to buy Cedar Cove parcel

Couple rescued from river the first in buy-out program

By Pamela Johnson

Reporter-Herald Staff Writer

POSTED: 06/26/2015 12:02:38 PM MDT



The 2013 flood devastated the Cedar Cove neighborhood in the Big Thompson Canyon, including the home of Mike and Florence Horn. The couple is the first to sell its property to Larimer County through a buy-out program. (*Jenny Sparks / Loveland Reporter-Herald*)

A couple rescued from the raging Big Thompson River during the 2013 flood are the first to sell their property to Larimer County through a buy-back program.

A proposal to buy a half-acre parcel in Cedar Cove from Mike and Florence Horn for \$10,400 will go before the Larimer County commissioners on Tuesday. The purchase price is based upon the recreational value of the river on their now-unbuildable lot.

The property is next to two other parcels of private property as well as a few lots that the county purchased from residents after the 1976 flood.

"The first thing we should be looking at is river restoration," said Charlie Johnson, land agent for the county who negotiated the sale. "People come down here and fish, even though the fish habitat is devastated."

The September 2013 flood that scoured the Big Thompson Canyon wiped out nearly all the homes in the Cedar Cove neighborhood, including the Horns' and that of their neighbor Patty Goodwine, who perished in the flood.

Mike and Florence stayed with Goodwine, who suffered from multiple sclerosis, until the floodwaters broke through her doors and washed away all three residents.

Another resident Wesley Sladek, 24, bounded into the river past Mike, who was clinging to a tree, to save Florence, then later returned when the water subsided to help rescue Mike Horn. The couple had lived in their Cedar Cove home for two decades.

Now, they are the first to sell their property to the county through a flood buy-back program that is funded through a reimbursement to the county from the Community Development Block Grant program.

The price is based upon the value now, after the flood, and is much less than the \$150,000 to \$200,000 price it might have drawn with the house before the flood, Johnson explained to the Open Lands Advisory Board on Thursday.

"The only inherent value (now) would be recreation," said Johnson.

The advisory board recommended the county buy the land, and the final decision will be with the commissioners.

This sale is the first, but it will not likely be the only as there are 80 parcels of land that could qualify for the county buy-back program, county officials said.

"It could be dozens," Johnson said. "It could be 78. We don't know, but this is the first of those buyouts."

## Trail to connect Loveland, Fort Collins

Larimer County project nets \$1 million GOCO grant

By *Pamela Johnson*

*Reporter-Herald Staff Writer*

POSTED: 06/24/2015 04:33:34 PM MDT



A \$1 million Great Outdoors Colorado Grant will allow Larimer County, Loveland and Fort Collins to build 4.5 miles of new trail that will connect this current end of the Loveland Recreation Trail near the southwest corner of Taft Avenue and 57th Street to the Fossil Creek Trail in Fort Collins. Included in the \$4 million project are a trailhead at the new natural area across the intersection and what recreation planners view is the first trail connection between the cities. (*Pamela Johnson / Loveland Reporter-Herald*)

**LOVELAND** — Two years from now a paved trail will connect Loveland and Fort Collins, offering two-wheeled commuters a safer route between the cities and expanding existing recreation options by connecting 65 miles of trail.

Great Outdoors Colorado announced Wednesday that Larimer County will receive a \$999,550 grant for the Longview Corridor Trail that will connect Loveland's Sunset Vista Natural Area by trail to Fort Collins' Cathy Fromme Prairie, both along Taft Avenue (Shields Street in Fort Collins).

The project garnered a \$1 million grant from the Colorado Department of Transportation earlier this year, and the remaining estimated \$2 million will be shared by Larimer County, Loveland and Fort Collins.

"It's the first Loveland to Fort Collins connection," said Jeffrey Boring, resource specialist with the Larimer County Department of Natural Resources.

"Loveland has a great trail system and so does Fort Collins, but they have been disconnected."

# REPORTER-HERALD

The project will start on the southwest corner of 57th Street and Taft Avenue in Loveland at a spot where the existing city recreation trail dead ends and will include improvements to help pedestrians and cyclists safely cross the busy intersection.

Then at Sunset Vista, which is on the northeast corner of the intersection, a trailhead and parking area will be built.

From there, another 4.5 miles of trail will continue north to the Cathy Fromme Prairie Natural Area, which is off Shields Street between Trilby and Harmony Roads. There, it will tie into the Fossil Creek trail that winds throughout Fort Collins.

The new trail will include a 10-foot-wide paved section as well as a parallel soft surface path that is 4 feet to 6 feet wide.

The project is currently in the permitting process, and Boring expects that construction will begin this time next year and last about one year. He estimates the trail will open in the summer of 2017.



Larimer County's Longview Corridor Trail project will connect the city of Loveland's newest open space at the northeast corner of 57th and Taft Avenue, pictured here in October 2014, and Cathy Fromme Prairie in Fort Collins. The first trail connector between the two cities, the new trail should be complete by summer 2017. (*Jenny Sparks / Loveland Reporter-Herald*)

The grant from Great Outdoors Colorado was a further investment in a region that has already benefited from lottery grants. The grant announcement reports that this trail corridor will pass through five open spaces and natural areas that have benefited from lottery funding and that GOCO has invested nearly \$3 million previously in outdoor recreation opportunities that will be connected by the project.

In addition, the project also offers a safe alternative to cycle, run or hike from Loveland to Fort Collins.

"As the county grows, there's a greater demand for trails," said Boring. "There's also a demand for non-motorized transportation. We also see it as an alternative for riding from Fort Collins to Loveland."

*Pamela Johnson: 970-669-5050, ext. 526, [johnsonp@reporter-herald.com](mailto:johnsonp@reporter-herald.com), [www.twitter.com/RHPamelaJ](http://www.twitter.com/RHPamelaJ).*