

#8 - This area is a wonderful location for bird watching! Nesting boxes, such as the ones you can see on wooden posts, were built to provide safe nesting sites for finches and sparrows. Do you see any birds in or near the boxes? These boxes are a part of the work that Boyd Lake State Park performs to help protect the natural landscape and provide visitors with opportunities to enjoy the area. Raptors, such as hawks and eagles enjoy perching in the trees in this area while looking for tasty meals in the meadow. Insects are plentiful here, providing a crunchy and nutritious meal for many songbirds, which in turn become food for the raptors.

#9 -Do you see the spiky cattails growing in the wetland area just to the south, along the lake edge? Wetlands make up about 1% of the total land area of Colorado. Yet almost 95% of Colorado's wildlife depends on wetlands for food, shelter, nesting sites, breeding areas, and more. Wetlands help to control flood waters and improve water quality by acting as giant filters. Many of Colorado's wetlands have been altered

or lost by housing development and farming.

#10 - From here you can view the Front Range of the Rocky Mountains which includes Longs Peak, the highest mountain in the area, reaching 14, 225 feet in elevation. The precipitation that falls on Longs Peak flows into the Big Thompson River watershed. A portion of the water in the Big Thompson River is diverted into ditches and stored in reservoirs along the Front Range including Lake Loveland, Horseshoe Lake (to the west of Boyd) and Boyd Lake. This stored water is used as a source of municipal and agricultural water. What other benefits does this stored water offer to the animals and communities surrounding Boyd Lake?



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COLORADO PARKS & WILDLIFE

Interpretive Trail Guide



AT BOYD LAKE STATE PARK



Consider returning this guide to one of the kiosks on either end of the trail for someone else to enjoy!

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COLORADO

Parks and Wildlife

Department of Natural Resources

Boyd Lake State Park Interpretive Trail Guide

Enjoy this ½ mile self-guided nature trail as you discover Boyd Lake State Park. There are numbered posts along the trail that correspond to the numbers in this guide.

#1 - Take a look all around you. What do you see? Boyd Lake State Park is an urban park and is completely surrounded by development. This presents unique challenges for the Park in meeting its mission to perpetuate wildlife, provide recreation opportunities, and educate and inspire others to be active environmental stewards. In what ways can you be a good environmental steward while visiting the Park?

#2 - The Cottonwood, a tree native to this part of Colorado, is the most common tree found at Boyd Lake. It is a water loving tree with deeply furrowed bark. Look at its leaves - how would you describe their shape? The stalk that attaches the leaf blade to the stem, known as the petiole, is flattened so that the leaves have a particular type of movement in the wind. Look up into

the branches of the cottonwoods and you may see its' cottony white seeds.

#3 - Take a minute and listen to the variety of sounds around you. Close your eyes and open your ears. What natural sounds do you hear? What human made sounds do you hear?

#4 -This area was homesteaded in the late 1800's by the Heinrich family, German immigrants who grew grains and potatoes. The Heinrich family also made a claim under the Timber Culture Act of 1873 which granted an additional 160 acres to anyone who would plant 10 acres of trees on their property. As you leave the park today, look for the original well house and root cellar, which still stand next to the Park office.

#5 - Prior to settlement in the mid 1800's, much of this region was covered with grasslands. This habitat extended from the base of the foothills east for hundreds of miles, interrupted only by patches of cottonwoods and willows along streams. Coyotes and foxes hunt in grassland areas such as this, taking down small game like squirrels, birds, and

rabbits. What signs of wildlife do you see around you?

#6 - From here you can see Boyd Lake, the main attraction of the park. Looking across the lake, you'll see that fishing is a popular activity at Boyd Lake. Common species include walleye, catfish, yellow perch, bluegill, white bass, large and small mouth bass and trout. Some of these fish are very tasty to eat and some make nice trophies and stories, but it's important to properly identify what you catch and know the regulations to ensure that we can keep fishing tomorrow!

#7 -In addition to fishing, what other recreational opportunities do you see people enjoying in and around the lake? When full, the lake covers 1,747 surface acres, and is 65 feet deep. Boyd Lake was originally two small lakes. Between 1905 and 1909, water from the Big Thompson River was diverted into the Barnes Ditch filling these two small basins, forming one large reservoir. The water in Boyd Lake provides water for the City of Greeley and for agricultural lands in Larimer and Weld Counties.