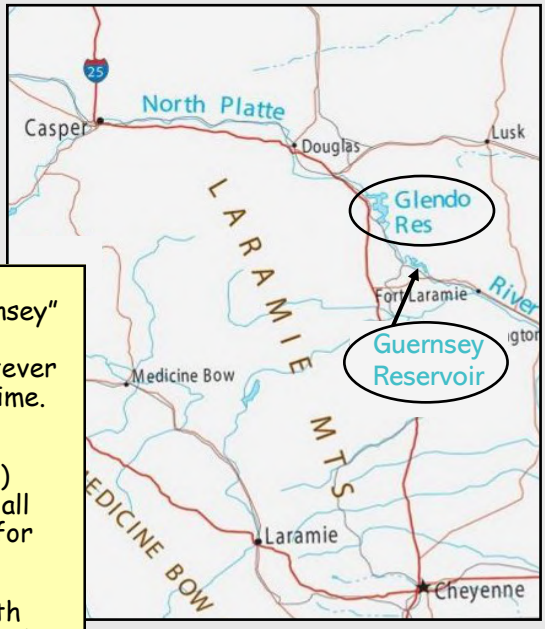
Paddling Below Glendo Reservoir

By Leslie Taylor



Editor's Note: I've been interested in paddling "Glendo to Guernsey" for at least a decade. It's more accurate to refer to this paddle on the North Platte as "Glendo to Wendover Train Tracks" but whatever you call it, it's about 150 miles from Denver and sounds like a good time.

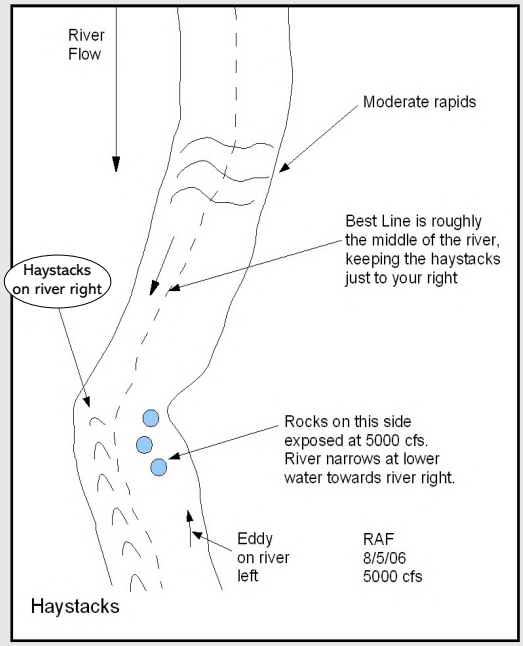
We've published info about it in several back issues: 20-1b has Anne Fiore's account of the run in August of 2012. Dave Hustvedt (26-1b) thought about camping and paddling there for the 2018 eclipse, but all the reserved camping was full and the auxiliary spots they created for the viewing sounded way too primitive.

This report is from Leslie Taylor, who paddled there this August with the Poudre Paddlers, a club in Ft. Collins. Their website has a thorough description of the paddle and the lines through the one tricky part: https://www.poudrepaddlers.org/glendo.html. Several of the photos in this article are from their website.

Leslie's Account of the Paddle: "This past weekend I explored Glendo State Park in Wyoming and did a float on the North Platte River with Poudre Paddlers. Rocky Mountain Canoe Club did the float the week before. I think August is popular for the float because discharge from the dam creates a good flow. [The year Anne did it the flow was 5100 cfs.]

"The float was from the Glendo State Park, just at the power plant, through pretty Wendover Canyon to the take-out where the tracks cross the river near Wendover. The shuttle took a lot of time. We got on the water at about 11AM.

Wendover Canyon



"We had a lunch break; then we played in the Haystack rapids, which are about 14 miles below Glendo and two miles before Wendover, for almost an hour.

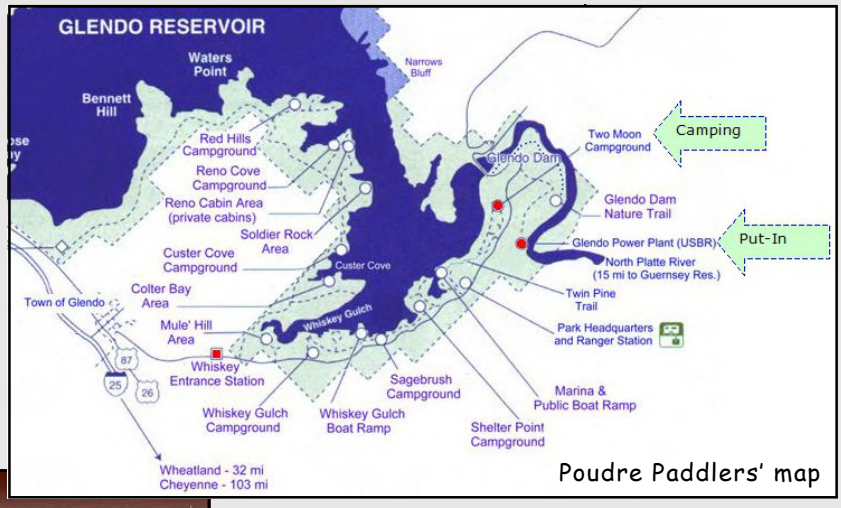
"The Haystacks is a fun wave train that has a huge eddy at the end, so you can easily paddle back up and do it again and again and again. I think I did that five times. I had to actually paddle to catch up from the Haystacks to the take-out. We got there at about 4:30.

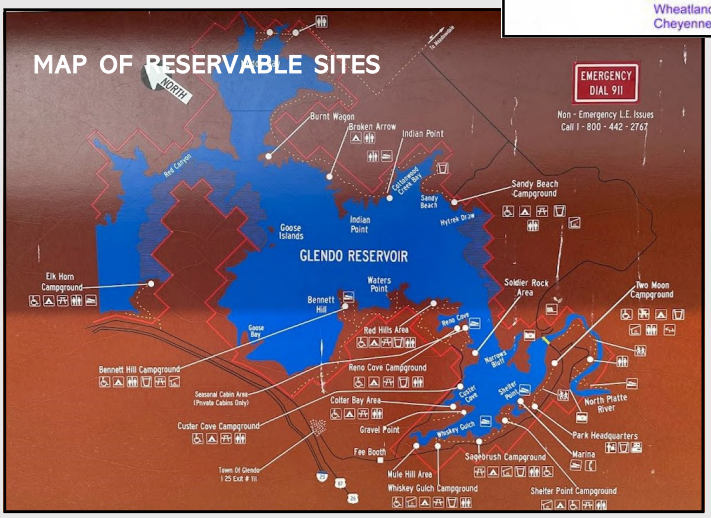
"The paddle would have been much shorter if everyone were in sea kayaks. The flow was strong. I did a lot of backward paddling to prevent getting ahead of the canoe and inflatables and rec yaks. We did a lot of waiting on stragglers.

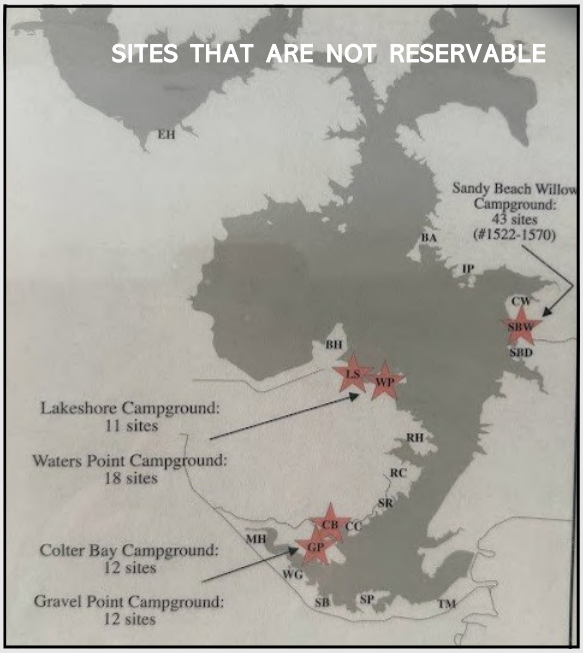
"Total miles is said to be 16 by some and 18 by others, with nothing more exciting than 1+ ripples."

CAMPING INFO FROM LESLIE: "We camped at Two Moon campground, which is near the put-in. It is huge, and many sites are wooded and large. Site 11 was primo with a good look at the lake from the top of a cliff. Two Moon is also central for the many mountain bike trails; there are 50 miles of them!

"Glendo State Park has many camping areas. The red map below shows all of them. The other map has first-come areas that do not require reservations.







"Another nice camping area is on the other side of the dam. Sandy Cove. In August it had many sites on a huge beach. I checked out all the other campgrounds. Some of the coves have sites from which you could launch a kayak, especially if the water were higher. Wind and waves might be an issue, but we could take advantage of that with another wind and wave session.

"I think Rocky Mountain paddlers would enjoy a trip to Glendo to do the river float and have some wind and wave practice on the reservoir. I will try to put this on the upcoming summer's calendar. I will also see if some of the cabins and houses in the area can be rented for those who do not camp."

Sandy Cove, a tent-only site

The beach at Sandy Cove

More Specifics about Glendo to Almost Guernsey, Adapted from the Poudre Paddlers' Website

This float, flowing through beautiful Wendover Canyon, starts on the North Platte River near the Glendo Power Plant and finishes at the Wendover train stop just north of Guernsey Reservoir. The trip is about 16 miles long. In August water is released from Glendo Reservoir assuring substantial flows of around 3000-5000 cfs.

This section is a Class I+ with one optional wave train that is a Class II at high flows. The river on this portion is wide with ample opportunity to avoid rocks and strainers, but it does move swiftly. Moving water experience is required.

The optional wave train, the Haystacks, is on river right and has a large eddy on river left. This means you can go through the waves, eddy out, and get in line to run them again. At flows of 3000 cfs and below the haystacks are small. At flows around 5000 cfs and above, they become quite large. At very low flows, 1000 to 2000 cfs, the waves *above* the haystacks become larger while the haystacks become smaller.

All boats used in Wyoming must have the Game & Fish's **Invasive Species Decal,** commonly referred to as the AIS decal. You can purchase it for $15 online. They say it may take ten business days to have your decal mailed to you, but you can print your temporary AIS Decal Program authorization and carry it with you while you are boating. Their website is: https://wgfapps.wyo.gov/elso/elsoaiswelcome.aspx

All boats must be inspected as they enter the state during the summer months. That includes canoes and kayaks. The inspection stations are only open certain hours, so schedule your drive accordingly. If you are coming up I-25 to Cheyenne, the inspection station is in the Welcome Center parking lot, a few miles north of the border, off High Plains Road. Other inspection sites and site hours are available here: https://wgfd.wyo.gov/Fishing-and-Boating/Aquatic-Invasive-Species-Prevention/AIS-Inspection-Locations

Editor's Rant: This explanation about RMSKC procedures is here for our new members. But it's important for us all.

We run this bit about starting time in almost every publication, and it's included in almost every paddle description, but it's still a problem way too often.

Front Range area traffic is horrendous, but it's been that way for years. We should be able to cope with it and plan for extra driving time, every time!

Starting Time: "Starting time" means the time that everyone in the group will be *in the water ready to paddle.* Be sure to arrive early enough to have your boat off the car, loaded and ready to go by that time.

Day Paddles: Non-member guests may paddle with the Club on day paddles if they sign an American Canoe Association *Waiver and Release of Liability* form and pay the $10 ACA event fee. ACA members may join RMSKC day trips if they provide a current ACA card; they must also sign a paper waiver naming RMSKC at the put-in, but do not have to pay the event fee.

Multi-Day Paddles: According to RMSKC policy, overnight and extended trips are open only to club members; additional criteria for members' participation may be included in the trip description at the discretion of the trip leader.