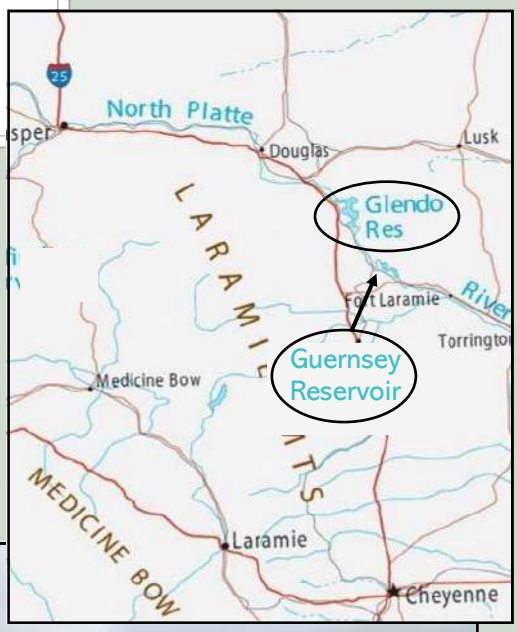
Down the North Platte from Glendo to Guernsey

By Sue Hughes



Leslie Taylor scouted this paddle with Poudre Paddlers last year; this summer she and I, and Doug Hurcomb and new member Drew Bordon joined them again.

We camped at Two Moon campground, which is near the put-in. It is huge, and many sites are wooded and large. Site 10 was spacious, with a good view of the lake from the top of a bluff; there are other good campsites next to it. Site 11, across the road, is closer to the outhouses, which you may notice if the wind is blowing toward the lake.

Two Moon is also central for the many mountain bike trails; there are 50 miles of them. This would be an excellent trip for members who also like to pedal.

View from behind Campsite 10

The day before the paddle, Leslie and I explored all the campgrounds in the huge park. I noted that Sandy Beach Dune Campground would be a wonderful place for young kids; there were lots of they digging in the sand or having a fine time roaring around on bikes like wild children.

Sandy Dune Beach Campground

The beach at Sandy Dune

We found that Whiskey Gulch has a low-water launch; many of the other put-ins, including lovely Sandy Beach, would have been a long carry when we went in August, 2024.

The next day we launched near the broken roadbed leading to the dam by dropping over the side of the guard rails and pushing through the water grasses, or from the dam itself. Both looked tricky, but they weren't.

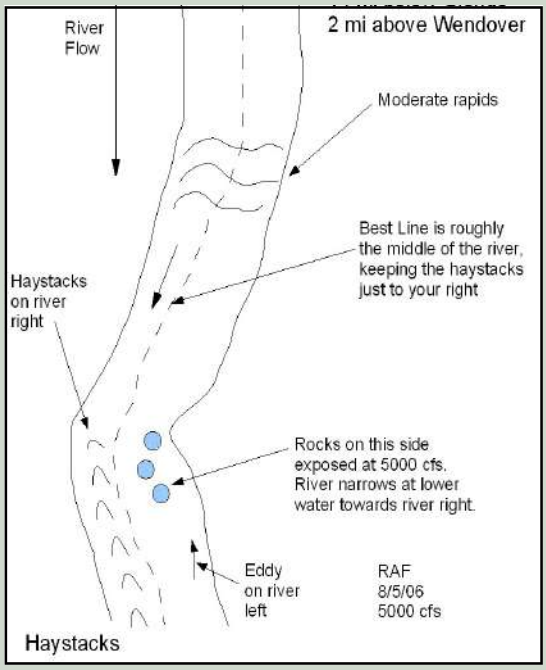
There were lots of Poudre Paddlers on the outing, some in inflatable boats and some with kids. The slower ones paddled sweep.

We had a lunch break at a site the group called Cow Pie Island. Farther downriver, people played in the Haystack rapids, about two miles before the take-out, for almost an hour.

The Haystacks are a huge wave train that has a strong eddy at the end. I wish I'd come down flying on top of those five-foot waves; it looked like a super run. It was sad, but I knew that, after 14 miles on the water, I was too tired to do it safely, and definitely too tired to get myself back in my boat if I got dumped.

I also wish I'd gotten better photos, but I was across the river and struggling not to go shooting back upstream in the eddy. [A diagram from the Poudre Paddlers website is on the next page.]

Hay Stacks Wave Train;
notice Leslie in the red boat in the center



When I got back to the campsite I has glad that I hadn't promised to bring a dish to share at the Poudre Paddlers' potluck they were having that evening. I ate something out of the bottom of my cooler and crawled into my sleeping bag before the sun set.

When I woke up the next morning Leslie was already working her phone to find trailer hitch parts; it had broken on the rough road back from the take-out. Luckily she's handy and travels with a full tool box; she got it replaced and was on the road home by noon.

Photos of the train, the cows and Wendover Canyon on this page are all from the paddle below the Haystacks