

## Larimer County finalizes \$2 million grant for Poudre River trail



Kate Mullarney rides her bicycle on the Poudre River Trail on Thursday, June 13, 2019, at the River Bluffs Open Space in Windsor. (Photo by Jenny Sparks/Loveland Reporter-Herald)

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A \$2 million grant to complete the Poudre River Trail, in the works for four decades, is official with approval Tuesday of a grant agreement.

The Larimer County commissioners voted 3-0 to approve the agreement with Great Outdoors Colorado for the grant to complete the trail that stretches from Weld County to far west Larimer County along the Poudre River corridor. The approval opened a three-year window for the work.

Elected officials and community members began planning the trail about 40 years ago, and though many of the faces have changed, the commitment to completing the paved biking and hiking path has not. Slowly, pieces of the 45-mile trail have been completed in Larimer and Weld counties, in Greeley, Fort Collins, Windsor and Timnath, and the Colorado Department of Transportation is in on the action with future construction of an underpass beneath Interstate 25 to safely connect the east and west.

Throughout the process, the county, cities and towns have received several grants by working together on the project and completing the pieces together, each providing some resources and money. This collaboration is key to how far the project has come and to this final, \$2 million grant, according to Tom Donnelly, a Larimer County commissioner and Loveland resident.

He spoke of the tangible result of the efforts of many different people over four decades.

“Innumerable members of local elected boards and officials have all picked it up and carried it a little bit down the trail,” Donnelly said.

The grant that was announced in September helps pay for resurfacing of the 45-mile trail, filling in three gaps and adding an offshoot to a new trail that is being built to provide public access in Windsor. This final piece is a joint project between Larimer County, Fort Collins, Windsor and Timnath and should be finished by 2023.