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Together, we can save Poudre

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"Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better. It's not." - Dr. Seuss.

It's been four years since the Save The Poudre Coalition first formed and started discussing the threat to the river from the proposed Glade Reservoir. What an inspiring four years it has been!

When we first started meeting, there were just a few of us - there was no coalition, no groups, no thousands of signatures and no million-member supporters in the wings. We didn't have a very good grasp of Colorado water law, of the plumbing of the Poudre River, nor of the intricate proposed workings of the Glade Reservoir. At our first public event three years ago, 10 people showed up.

And no one was watching.

Fast forward four years, and the Coalition to save the Poudre River now represents nearly a million members, 10 formal groups and thousands of petition signers. We're in constant communication with myriad scientists and water law experts, and with a broad Coalition Steering Committee. At our last public event a few months ago, more than 500 people showed up, and we turned people away at the door because the crowded room was breaking the fire code.

A month ago, the Poudre received national attention as one of the "most endangered rivers in America," and recently, groups representing more than 3 million American citizens signed a letter asking for more time to study Glade Reservoir's Environmental Impact Statement.

Moreover, the Poudre is being called "ground zero" for the next phase of the West's water wars; the battle to save the Poudre has been featured in national publications, and the entire western American conservation movement is watching the issue closely.

What happened to pull all of this together?

Just as the Poudre River courses through Fort Collins, the inspiration to save the Poudre River courses through this community's veins. A huge threat arose in the name of Glade Reservoir, and then an even bigger positive response has arisen to fight that threat. The threat of losing the Poudre River has inspired this community to pull together in remarkable numbers - Fort Collins and all of Colorado loves the Poudre River.

And now, finally, after four long years, the public gets a formal voice in this debate.

On Monday, the Army Corps of Engineers will hold a public hearing about the proposed Glade Reservoir. The hearing will be held at the Fort Collins Hilton on Prospect Road and will include an open house starting at 4 p.m. with the public hearing at 6 p.m. If you can't attend the hearing on Monday, another will be held at the same time Tuesday at the Fort Collins Senior Center. Oral and written comments may be presented at the public hearings.

Please attend!

To learn more about the massive threat of Glade Reservoir, you can visit the Coalition's Web site: www.SaveThePoudre.org. In addition, at the public hearings, we will have handouts available with useful ideas on how citizens can best speak out.

Remember Dr. Seuss again:

"You have brains in your head.

"You have feet in your shoes.

"You can steer yourself in any direction you choose."

Please steer yourself to the Hilton on Monday or to the Senior Center on Tuesday. People of any age can speak.

The Poudre can be saved - it might, it could, it will!
