

Cottonwood Tree Habitat (TBD)

Summary & Purpose

This exhibit will cover the migratory birds and function of cottonwood trees within the watershed.

One or both of the central columns will be converted to artificial cottonwood trees. At about 8ft high, the branches will spread from the main trunk extending to the ceiling. On the branches, there will be taxidermy birds of the local species. Nests of different species will also be present. Signage will surround the tree trunk.

Objectives

What will visitors learn?

- Rifle/Silt area is the first section of the river where it can support large cottonwood trees on its banks creating diverse habitats

Birds

- Local species and migratory species
- The pattern of their migration
- Recognize the value of preserving habitat for migratory birds within the watershed
- Wetlands, forests, grain fields and ponds provide food and shelter.
- Habitats are disappearing due to urban development? and an increase in human demands on the limited water supply, so wild refuges and reserves provide important protection for bird habitat.

Cottonwood

- Fremont Cottonwood
- In the western US, they support a higher diversity of breeding birds than all other western habitats combined.
- Animals are drawn to the riparian cover for shelter, food, and water.
- Cottonwood trees hold lots of water, up to 50% of its weight. And it gives up 95% of it for transpiration.
- Decline of cottonwoods by altered river flow.
- Link to the "floods and seed germination (life of cottonwood)" content in the "Riparian" exhibit.
- What are other riparian species rely on cottonwoods? Nests on trees?
- [Great article on the function of cottonwoods](#)

Related Themes and Messages

(2.3)

Location

Two columns in the exhibit area

Description and Conceptual Rendering

The artificial cottonwood tree(s) will be created using the columns as supports. The diameter will be roughly 20 inches wrapping the 16-inch columns. The trees will have realistic barks, branches, and green leaves. On the branches, the taxidermy birds and nests will be mounted.

All parts of the trees will need to be safely secured and fire retardant.



