

denver and the west

## City hails "marvel" of flood control

The north Denver project, now completed, transforms a former industrial wasteland.

By Tom McGhee  
The Denver Post

Article Last Updated: 06/10/2008 06:42:14 AM MDT

### Dedication

- [Watch](#) video of the river dedication ceremony with Sen. Ken Salazar.

Denver has completed the transformation of an industrial wasteland where drug dealing flourished and the South Platte River posed a flood risk.

Officials and residents gathered on the bank of the river Monday, where a glistening snarl of white water now rolls between land capped with a smooth, new concrete walkway in north Denver, to celebrate completion of the \$25 million flood-control project.

The project lowered the riverbed between 6 and 8 feet and removed more than 300 acres of land from a 100-year flood plain in the north Denver area and south Adams County.

Globeville resident John Zapien, 72, stood beside

the newly tamed stretch of water and reminisced about the devastating flood of 1965.

"I seen a National Guardsman in a rowboat going down Washington Street," he said. "It was grim because we knew we had a dirty cleanup to face. It wreaked havoc with the industries and business in the area that provided work for a lot of people."

Removal from the Federal Emergency Management Agency-designated flood plain will lower property-insurance rates in the area.

Construction, which began 13 years ago, was completed in three phases, with the most recent beginning in 2005. The project was funded with property-tax and storm-drainage fees paid by homeowners and businesses citywide. It is the largest flood-control project in the city and county of Denver and includes 6,500 feet of new flood levees.

"We are seeing a water engineering marvel," said Mayor John Hickenlooper.

The rehabilitated area, now a stretch of Denver's greenbelt, sits amid a grimy stretch of industrial property and once was used as a trash dump and open-air drug market.

Amenities in the immediate area include a reclaimed Northside Treatment Plant, which is now a park, and the Heron Pond nature area.

"I see a renaissance of the South Platte River in all the amenities around us," said U.S. Sen. Ken Salazar.

The latest portion connects Denver's new 12-foot-wide concrete greenways trail to Adams County's trail system and includes a new pedestrian bridge over the river. It also eliminates a railroad crossing where cars must cross the tracks.

Advertisement

**FACTORY OVERSTOCK BLOWOUT!**

Leather High-Back \$219

Leather Mid-Back \$199

Bookcases Various Sizes \$149-\$259

2-Drawer Lateral File \$399

**OFFICE LIQUIDATORS**  
Profit From Our Experience

11111 W. 6th Ave/ LAKEWOOD  
Between Kipling & Simms

303-759-3375  
www.OfficeLiquidators.com

Print Powered By FormatDynamics™

Wellington Webb, who was Denver's mayor when the project started and was instrumental in getting it funded, said he was happy to see it completed. "Every time I see additional growth, it is like a father — you feel proud of the growth."

Tom McGhee: 303-954-1671 or [tmcghee@denverpost.com](mailto:tmcghee@denverpost.com)

Advertisement

**FACTORY OVERSTOCK BLOWOUT!**

**Leather High-Back**  
\$219

**Leather Mid-Back**  
\$199

**Bookcases**  
Various Sizes  
\$149-\$259

**2-Drawer Lateral File**  
\$399

**OFFICE LIQUIDATORS**  
Profit From Our Experience

11111 W. 6th Ave/ LAKEWOOD  
Between Kipling & Simms

303-759-3375  
[www.OfficeLiquidators.com](http://www.OfficeLiquidators.com)

Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™