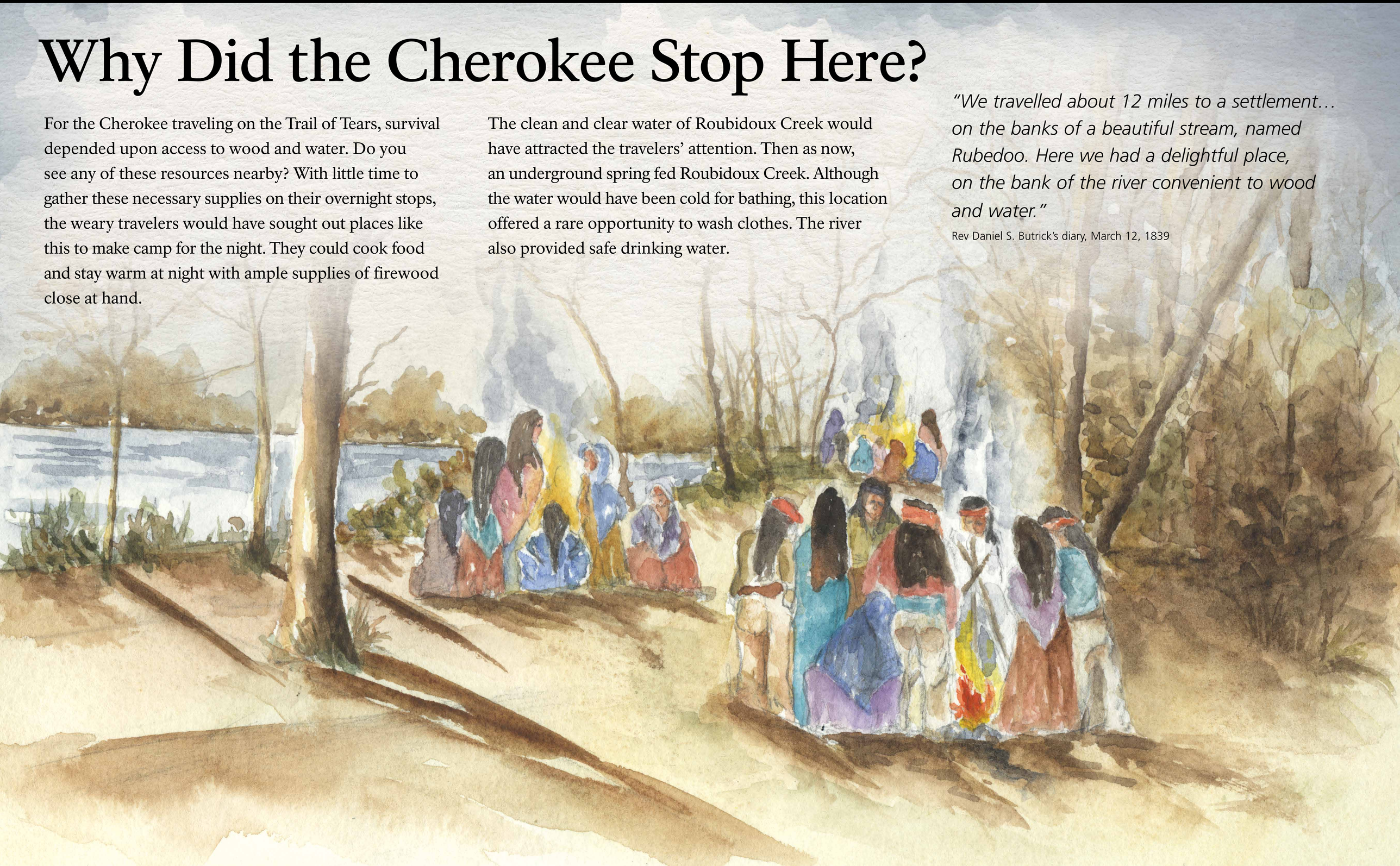
Trail of Tears National Historic Trail
National Park Service

City of Waynesville
Pulaski County Tourism Bureau

Why Did the Cherokee Stop Here?

For the Cherokee traveling on the Trail of Tears, survival depended upon access to wood and water. Do you see any of these resources nearby? With little time to gather these necessary supplies on their overnight stops, the weary travelers would have sought out places like this to make camp for the night. They could cook food and stay warm at night with ample supplies of firewood close at hand.

The clean and clear water of Roubidoux Creek would have attracted the travelers' attention. Then as now, an underground spring fed Roubidoux Creek. Although the water would have been cold for bathing, this location offered a rare opportunity to wash clothes. The river also provided safe drinking water.

"We travelled about 12 miles to a settlement… on the banks of a beautiful stream, named Rubedoo. Here we had a delightful place, on the bank of the river convenient to wood and water."

Rev Daniel S. Butrick's diary, March 12, 1839