

GMF's Dewey Mountain Trail Dedicated

By Bob Volpe

Last Saturday morning the Green Mountain Falls Trails Committee (GMFTC) held a dedication ceremony celebrating the official opening of the redesigned Dewey Mountain Trail.

Green Mountain Falls has a reputation of being a hiker's paradise and most of the residents agree that the town's trails are an integral part of the town's history and heritage. Dewey Mountain is known as one of the scenic side routes to the North Catamount Reservoir and is a prime hiking destination in the winter because it is a south-sloping spot and receives plenty of sunshine.

About 30 trail enthusiasts and members of GMFTC met at 9 a.m. on a beautiful Colorado morning to listen to several speakers talk about the history of the trail and to thank the volunteers who helped get the trail in shape.

After the short ceremony many of those present walked from the parking area at Olathe and Ann St. to hike the trail. Free snacks and beverages were provided by The Mucky Duck for everyone on hand as a special thank you.

Hikers and horse back riders have enjoyed the Dewey Mt. trail since 1890, but in recent years a number of problems arose that made the trail difficult to access. After years of horse traffic, the trail had been seriously eroded in spots. Furthermore, opponents of the trail had voiced concerns over parking, trespassing and the risk that hikers may cause forest fires.

After town officials listened to the concerns of both sides of the debate at a town meeting last May, it was decided that a plan to mitigate as many of the residents concerns should be addressed and implemented and everything possible should be done to make the trail safe and open to the public.

Thanks to local resident Christian Keesee, who owns the property at the trail head and his purchase of 139 acres on the side of Dewey Mountain and the work of volunteers with GMFTC the trail was repaired and redesigned and the residents concerns were addressed by designating parking areas for hikers, placing direction signage and no parking signs along the road to the trail head. The volunteer group also closed off social trails in an effort to prevent misdirection and trespassing by uninformed hikers.

The view from the top of Dewey Mountain offers a unique perspective of the town below and how it is situated in the tight valley that is Green Mountain Falls.

The Dewey Mt. Trail is open to hikers only. Horses, Mt. Bikes, and motorized vehicles are prohibited from using the trail. Fires, camping, smoking, and shooting are also banned on the trail.

From the parking area at Olathe and Ann St. you can follow the signs with the blue circles up Ann St. to Grandview Ave and turn right on Myrtle St. to the trail head.

While the trail is only 58 percent complete, it is expected to be finished to the summit of Mount Dewey by August 7th and future plans call for improving the connection of the Dewey Mountain Trail with The Horseshoe Mountain Trail, which leads all the way to North Catamount Reservoir.

Dick Bratton, the chairman of The Green Mountain Falls Trail Committee, said the group will be holding another work day on the trail on Saturday, July 25th. If you are interested in becoming a volunteer you can contact Dick at 719-684-9811 or visit the GMFTC website at <http://www.gmfcotrails.org/index.html>.