

REPORTER-HERALD

Larimer artist unveils watercolor view of Horsetooth

Larimer County seeking visual artist for 2016

By Pamela Johnson

POSTED: 02/10/2016 07:23:58 PM MST

Fort Collins artist Alison Dickson poses Wednesday with her piece, "View from Horsetooth Mountain Open Space," after it was unveiled in the Larimer County offices in Fort Collins. Dickson, the Larimer County Department of Natural Resources' Visual Artist of the Year, painted this watercolor based upon the open space west of Fort Collins. (*Michael Bettis / Loveland Reporter-Herald*)



Every Tuesday evening, Alison Dickson hits area trails on her bicycle with Team BOB, a women's mountain biking club based in Fort Collins.

On one outing last year, she was riding her favorite trail at Horsetooth Mountain Park (Herrington Trail) and saw a breathtaking view of the pine forest and a tawny meadow merging into the bright blue waters with multi-faceted hogbacks serving as a backdrop.

"I was looking for inspiration," said the painter, who was chosen last year as Larimer County's Department of Natural Resources Visual Artist for 2015.

And she found it.

The view from above Horsetooth Reservoir touched her so much that she returned to the spot, sketched what she saw, took photographs, then translated the beauty into watercolors in her Fort Collins studio.

Her painting, "View from Horsetooth Mountain Open Space," was unveiled Wednesday outside the Larimer County commissioners' office in Fort Collins, where it will hang for the next year as part of a program aimed to draw more people into the county's open spaces through expression of different artists.

"It has this old-timey feel," said Commissioner Tom Donnelly. "It also has this western feel. It really captures, I think, Larimer County really well."

Each year, for the past nine years, Larimer County has chosen an artist to draw inspiration from the natural wonders of the county. The volunteer artist chooses an open space and creates a piece based upon the natural beauty, then donates it to the county.

The new art hangs outside the commissioners' office for one year, and is then displayed at other county facilities when the next year's work is unveiled.

An artist for 30 years, Dickson is skilled in the studio and in the field. One of her specialties is plein air painting, meaning that she has a portable easel and paints landscapes on site, working up against changing light and conditions.

While she loves the challenge of plein air painting, she also relishes working in studio, which is where she created the piece for Larimer County. She was moved by the scene and how there were different aspects in the foreground, the middle area and the background. She painted more detail in the pine trees out front, then the amount of detail lessened toward the back, creating the same effect one has when actually gazing upon that scene.

"That was the view that made me buy my house 29 years ago," said Commissioner Steve Johnson, who lives in a neighborhood at Horsetooth.

The department of natural resources is currently accepting applications for artists who want to volunteer as the visual artist for 2016, the 10th year of the program. More information is available at www.larimer.org/openlands/artist.htm or by contacting Teddy Parker-Renga at 619-4561.

REPORTER-HERALD

Larimer County seeks volunteer naturalists

By Reporter-Herald Staff

POSTED: 02/03/2016 10:04:47 PM MST

The Larimer County Department of Natural Resources is looking for volunteer naturalists who want to teach visitors to parks and open spaces about the natural world.

According to a press release, volunteer naturalists lead programs on ecology, geology, local history and more, teaching school groups and talking with visitors to Larimer County's parks and open spaces, as well as leading hikes.

No experience is needed.

Volunteer naturalists must attend training, which starts March 2, pass a background check and have transportation.

The application deadline is Feb. 24. To apply, visit <http://www.larimer.org/nrvolunteer/naturalist.htm>.

For details, contact Heather Young at 619-4489 or hyoung@larimer.org.

REPORTER-HERALD

Devil's Backbone work to start Monday

By Reporter-Herald Staff

POSTED: 02/03/2016 10:05:05 PM MST

With snow in the Loveland area, start of construction at Devil's Backbone Open Space has been pushed back a week to Monday, Feb. 8, according to a press release.

Temporary closures at the popular open space west of Loveland will take place as improvements are made there.

The Devil's Backbone Trailhead and associated parking area, located just north of U.S. 34, will close Monday, and the Morrison Loop Trail and the Wild Loop Trail from the southern arc of the loop to the trailhead will be closed.

Construction is expected to take at least four weeks, depending on weather.

Visitors will be able to access Devil's Backbone Open Space from the Blue Sky Trailhead, near Horsetooth Reservoir, and the trailhead at the city of Fort Collins' Coyote Ridge Natural Area.

The improvements being made include:

- Expansion and reconfiguration of the trailhead and parking area, with more parking spaces.
- A multi-use equestrian and mountain bike trail through the Hidden Valley area of the open space.
- Designation of the Wild Loop Trail as hiking only.

- A webcam on the parking area, likely to be installed in spring or summer.
- Additional interpretive materials and play features.

For updates on construction and reopening of the trailhead and trails visit www.larimer.org/naturalresources.

The Rocky Mountain Collegian

Smoke expected to be visible southwest of Fort Collins Tuesday

(Photo courtesy of Larimer County Natural Resources.)

On Tuesday, smoke will be visible southwest of Fort Collins, near Pinewood Reservoir — but don't call 911.

Larimer County will burn “branches and other small diameter wood produced during forest thinning operations,” known as slash piles, the release stated.

“If people see smoke, they are asked not to call 911 or local law enforcement, as they are already aware of these burns,” according to a Larimer County Natural Resources release.

Safety and regulatory requirements call for at least three inches of snow to be on the ground before slash piles may be burned, and Pinewood Reservoir will have at least three inches of snowfall accumulation Tuesday.

“It's good forest management to thin dense stands of trees,” said Jeffrey Boring, resource specialist with Larimer County Department of Natural Resources, according to the release. “It reduces wildfire threats, improves wildlife habitat and removes trees damaged by insects or disease.”



REPORTER-HERALD

Hunt permits available for Red Mountain area

POSTED: 01/27/2016 04:22:15 PM MST

The Larimer County Department of Natural Resources is offering limited big game hunting opportunities at Red Mountain Open Space, located near the Colorado-Wyoming border.

According to a press release, Larimer County, in partnership with Colorado Parks and Wildlife, will offer 19 special access hunting permits in 2016. Four bull elk, three cow elk, six buck deer and six doe pronghorn will be available.

The doe pronghorn special access permits, available for the first time this year, are offered in partnership with the city of Fort Collins Natural Areas Department for use on portions of Red Mountain Open Space and Soapstone Prairie Natural Area.

Permits can be obtained through Larimer County's special access permit application process. The c

Cost is \$10 per application. Applications will be accepted Feb. 1-29.

The drawing for special access hunting permits will be held the first week of March, and those who are selected will be contacted by phone and email.

To apply or for details, visit www.larimer.org/parks/red_mountain_hunting.htm.

THE DENVER POST

Limited big-game permits for Red Mountain Open Space

Larimer County to offer 19 special-access permits for elk, deer and pronghorn in limited draw process

POSTED: 01/22/2016 11:38:31 AM MST [3 COMMENTS](#) | UPDATED: 21 DAYS AGO



A yearling pronghorn seems fearless at his early age. (*Denver Post file photo*)

The Larimer County Department of Natural Resources says it will offer limited big-game hunting opportunities in the Red Mountain Open Space.

In conjunction with Colorado Parks and Wildlife and the City of Fort Collins Natural Areas, the county will accept applications during February for 19 special-access permits for big-game hunting in the 15,000-acre area that sits at the Colorado-Wyoming border.

Permits offered include: four bull elk, three cow elk, six buck deer and six doe pronghorn. The pronghorn permits are for portions of the Red Mountain Open Space and the Soapstone Prairie Natural Area. The open space is touted as where some of the first humans in North America resided more than 12,000 years ago. Its biggest feature is called the Big Hole, a geologic phenomenon where the earth's history can be seen across the various formations.

Applications cost \$10 and [must be submitted via the county's website](#).

Drawings for the permits will occur the first week of March and winners will be notified by phone and email. Unsuccessful applicants will be notified by email only.

Successful applicants must then acquire a big-game license through the Colorado Limited Big Game draw process.



Pronghorn hunting to be offered at Soapstone Prairie



[Stephen Meyers](#), stephenmeyers@coloradoan.com 3:35 p.m. MST January 20, 2016



(*Photo: Courtesy of Dean Warren*)

Limited pronghorn doe hunting will be offered at Soapstone Prairie Natural Area for the first time in December.

The pronghorn doe hunt will be held in cooperation with a similar hunting program at Larimer County's Red Mountain Open Space, which includes bull elk, cow elk and buck deer.

Interested hunters must obtain a \$10 special access hunting permit by the end of February by visiting the [Red Mountain hunting website](#).

To hunt at Soapstone Prairie Natural Area and Red Mountain Open

Space, hunters will need the special access permit issued through a random lottery by the city/county and a valid Colorado Parks and Wildlife late season pronghorn antelope license valid for Unit 9. There are six pronghorn doe access permits.

The hunt will be held Dec. 1-16, a time when Soapstone Prairie and adjacent Red Mountain Open Space are closed for the season to other visitors. Hunters are required to attend a pre-hunt meeting in September.

City code was changed in August to allow hunting in the natural area north of Fort Collins near the Wyoming border.

For more information, visit the [Larimer County website](#).