

# @The Preserve

*Protecting the history and future of the Monument Preserve*

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

<i>Drilling Decision Delayed</i>	1
<i>Upcoming Events</i>	1
<i>More Green for the Preserve</i>	2
<i>One Tuesday Night</i>	2
<i>Meet the Member</i>	3
<i>Membership Form</i>	4

## Board Meetings are on Summer Schedule!

### Upcoming Events

#### FOMP Board Meetings

Summer Schedule – Held in the [main parking lot](#) every second Tuesday at **5:30 pm** prior to Trail Work. Everyone is invited!

**Tuesday July—8th**

**Tuesday Aug—12th**

**Tuesday Sept—9th**

#### Trail Maintenance Nights

Meet at the main trailhead (weather permitting).

**Tuesday July—8th**

**Tuesday Aug—12th**

**Tuesday Sept—9th**

#### Questions?

Chris or Jon at 719-640-1347

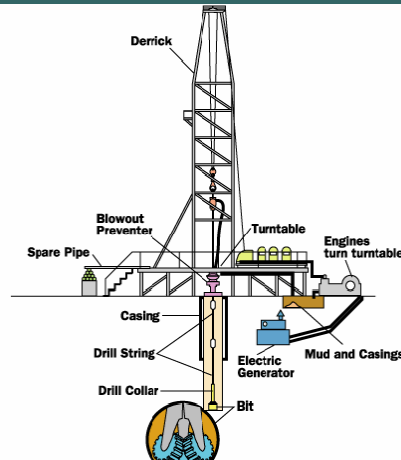
## DRILLING DECISION DELAYED!

by Chris Amenson

On June 25<sup>th</sup>, the US Forest Service announced that it is requiring additional information prior to releasing a decision on drilling near Mt. Herman.

Pikes Peak Ranger Brent Botts said, "We asked Dyad Petroleum representatives for additional information about the site, roads, air and water quality and they responded favorably. It will likely take at least another six months to evaluate the information and prepare the environmental analyses." As it stands now, a decision on the drilling is not expected until Spring 2009. The entire press release can be viewed at: [http://www.fs.fed.us/r2/psicc/news/2008/nr\\_pp\\_06262008.shtml](http://www.fs.fed.us/r2/psicc/news/2008/nr_pp_06262008.shtml).

This does not mean that the issue of gas drilling in the Tri Lakes area has gone away. FRERC, (Front Range Environmental Resource Coalition), was established in March of 2008 as an independent not-for-profit entity with the goal of better understanding, and therefore having a better opportunity to protect against, the potential very harmful effects which natural gas drilling will likely have on the Monument Preserve and



the surrounding area. FRERC is comprised of about 300 individuals who call the Pike National Forest our home and who want to have a say in what goes on there.

We were tipped off to the need to develop a grass roots coalition by the January 18, 2008 article in the Gazette in which FOMP's Chris Tirpak was quoted as being very concerned with the potential damage which deep well gas drilling would likely cause to our environment. After several of us met with FOMP, we all agreed that establishing a separate, cooperative entity would be best.

The primary goal of FRERC is to perform a very thorough, independent, professional review of the Environmental Assessment ("EA") when it is released by the U.S. Forest Service. We want to make sure that all elements of our community have an opportunity to understand the EA, and to have their valid concerns heard by the

entities that control this process.

In my perfect world, we would never be facing the prospect of deep well gas drilling, but little did I know when we moved here that this prospect exists. But now, after a cold slap of reality, I have come to understand that we all have to band together to do our best to protect our air quality, our water supply and our beautiful natural environment.

Please visit our website, [www.frerc.org](http://www.frerc.org), to keep informed on the status of relevant issues concerning this drilling. We have had two community meetings attended by over 400 neighbors, and the presentations from those meetings are on the website as well as other related information. Sign in to our website so that we can keep you informed by outgoing e-mail.

My sincere hope is that by doing a thorough job of reviewing the EA and submitting well organized, thorough response we can convince both the U.S. Forest Service and the BLM that our area of the Pike National Forest is no longer appropriate to be considered for exploratory or productive gas drilling. Please join us in this effort.

## MORE GREEN FOR THE PRESERVE

by Jon Nordby

In April of 1989, the Berry Creek fire burned approximately 850 acres in and around the Monument Preserve. The fire threatened dozens of homes, including the home of the Pike Hotshots and Monument Helitack fire crews that live directly where the fire burned. After winds whipped it west across Mt Herman road, the flames shot off the top of Mt Herman and were clearly visible from Palmer Lake. The smoke reached the north side of Colorado Springs obscuring the foothills west and north of the burn area all the way over the Palmer Divide. All buildings were saved, but the character of the Preserve was changed forever. One only has to look at some of the stands of trees that survived, and imagine if those trees extended into the dozens of acres of burned stumps now obscured by gamble oak. Those large open areas were once as forested as the rest of the Preserve.

FOMP volunteers are continually working in the burn areas in the Preserve, and have planted thousands of trees since the group was formed over 10 years ago. Serteens, Scouts, Churches, elementary school classes, and countless community volunteers have participated in this effort. Late April, FOMP volunteers planted another 200 seedlings about 1/3 mile west of Memorial Grove covering several acres.

In the past 10 years, seedlings have begun to sprout on their own, especially on the shady north facing slopes of the burn area. Some areas where the burn wasn't

quite as hot, the seedlings have come back quite well – the southern hillsides in the center of the Preserve are full of young Ponderosa that are now taller than adult humans. However, near the USFS 715 hiking trail and the hillsides south of Memorial Grove, the seedlings are slow to take and are competing with the gamble oak that thrive in the area. On the north facing slopes of these hotter burn areas, Douglas Fir seedlings seem to be most prevalent, but quite a few Ponderosa Pine and a few Juniper seedlings have been spotted as well.

FOMP volunteer and Air Force Academy Forester Diane Strohm, along with her husband Mark, recently coordinated and effort with the Pike Ranger District to “release” some of these seedlings from the competing gamble oak. The idea is to pare back the oak and give the young trees space where they do not compete for light, space, and water with the oak that has taken over. When the leaves come out on the Oak in early

June, the canopy really shuts off the light available to the young trees. Once we started finding trees in heavy cover that needed help, it was easy to see how discolored and relatively weak they were compared to the green and vibrant trees that found their own natural openings. Since these young trees are on north facing slopes, Diane instructed us to really emphasize clearing the east, west, and south areas around these seedlings, about a 5 foot circle. The north sides were not as critical, but were cleared at least enough to let the seedling branches grow without interference.

We are always in need of volunteers for projects such as this. If interested in reforestation projects in the Preserve, please contact [info@fomp.org](mailto:info@fomp.org) to join us. On the second Tuesday of each month, the night we work trails, we also plan to work on the reforestation efforts as time and volunteers allow.



*Before Picture: Douglas Fir seedling struggling against the Gambel Oak*



*After Picture: Seedling has less competition for light and nutrients*

## ONE TUESDAY NIGHT IS ALL IT TAKES

by Chris Tirpak

I'm sure I don't need to tell everyone how much more usage the Monument Preserve is seeing these days. We are all aware of the full parking lots on weekdays, let alone weekends. This increased usage takes a toll on the trail system in the Preserve. One of the primary things

that we do as a group is trail maintenance. Last year hundreds of volunteer hours went into the trails. Our great volunteers are the key to keeping the trail system in the Preserve viable. Without them, the trails would be in far worse shape and many would need to be closed to stop erosion and other resource damage.

The key is the volunteers and we need you!

I meet a lot of users out on the trails in the Preserve. When I am not in a hurry I frequently stop and chat with them to find out what they like and don't like about the Preserve. I encourage users especially frequent users to join FOMP and especially

to join us on our trail maintenance nights. Some of our best and most dedicated volunteers have turned up as a result of these conversations.

FOMP is not a large organization. We can not afford to hire someone to work on the trails in the Preserve and the USFS has no budget for this either. That is why we need volunteers.

One Tuesday night a year is all it takes. 2.5 hours. That is what I am encouraging every member of FOMP or reader of our newsletter to commit themselves to. Every volunteer hour counts and makes the Preserve a better place. Grab a friend, gloves, a water bottle, and some eye protection and come join us on one Tuesday night this year. We meet on the second Tuesday night of the month at 6:00 PM in the parking lot on the corner of Mt. Herman Rd. and Nursery Rd.

What is a typical trail work session like? Most times we will leave from the main

parking lot a few minutes after 6:00pm. We'll have a quick safety lecture for newcomers and then we'll set out to a project that the trails coordinator (these days that is Jon Nordby) has identified. On a typical night, we head to a section that needs branches cut back and water bars repaired or installed.



We'll usually construct water bars with large rocks as the foundation and sculpt the trail above and below to manage water flow as best we can. We take time at the end to try to disguise our work if

possible and also strategically place guidance to keep users in the trail.

Over the last several years we have spent a lot of time being trained professionally on proper sustainable trail maintenance and we are trying to pass along our knowledge through training to the other members of FOMP. Trail maintenance is good, but proper long-term trail maintenance is even better.

So a lot of digging, hauling, and trimming would sum it up. We provide the tools in conjunction with the USFS. For the curious, this is one thing that FOMP spends membership contributions on, mostly trimming tools, rock bars, wheelbarrows, etc. Other tools like Pulaski's, McCleoud's and combi's we get from the USFS.

Thanks, and we'll see you out there one Tuesday night!

## MEET THE MEMBERS—HERMANN & NANCY SPIELKAMP

by Amy L. Smith

While most mountain bikers were cutting teeth and learning how to walk, the Spielkamps were enjoying the beauty of the Monument Preserve. Hermann and Nancy Spielkamp have been enjoying the trails of the Monument Preserve for over 30 years. With their daily use, the Spielkamps and the local animals are practically on a first name basis.

Nancy primarily uses the trails for mountain biking, hiking and cross country skiing while Hermann also enjoys riding his horse on the trails. Their dog Foster, is always along, eager to get out and run. Hermann and Nancy utilize most all of the trails, but some of their favorite trails are the ridge trails with the views stretching out over the TriLakes area and Black Forest. When asked about what makes the area special to them, they have a hard time pinpointing just one thing, "the whole area is so unique and such a variety of landscapes, meadows



***Hermann and Nancy take a break on a trail that Hermann helped build 22 years ago***

and alpine areas. The light is different and changes all the time. We marvel at the multitude of flowers and animals especially the birds."

One of the most interesting things for the Spielkamps has been watching the Preserve change over time. The most dramatic change was watching the Preserve undergo the fire of 1989 and seeing how it has slowly recovered.

Hermann and Nancy know that with the

growth of the area the Monument Preserve won't be a secret forever. They have seen first hand a dramatic increase in use. "The wear and tear of the increased usage means it's essential to do maintenance. Since we use it all the time we feel a certain responsibility to help out", says Hermann. The Spielkamps feel strongly about keeping the area as it has been all along. They advocate keeping the Preserve a pristine and primitive place with no facilities, no signage and no comfort stations. They would rather keep the Preserve feeling like part of the National Forest rather than turning it into a park with gazebos and facilities.

Besides helping with trail maintenance, the Hot Shot dinner, and other events, Hermann also has been instrumental in maintaining the Blue Bird boxes on the Preserve. For the last several years, he has worked with the Mt. Herman 4-H club to assure that the Blue Birds have new clean housing at the Preserve.



**FRIENDS OF  
MONUMENT PRESERVE**

PO Box 634  
Monument, CO 80132  
Email: [info@fomp.org](mailto:info@fomp.org)  
[www.fomp.org](http://www.fomp.org)

**We're on the Web!!**  
**[www.fomp.org](http://www.fomp.org)**

### **Safety Warning!**

There has been increased coyote activity at the Preserve in the Memorial Grove area and on trail 715. Please take extra caution to ensure your safety and the safety of your pets.

**Don't miss out  
on a  
membership  
for 2008!**

## MEMBERSHIP FORM



**FRIENDS OF  
MONUMENT PRESERVE**

**Become a member of the Friends of Monument Preserve.**

As a member of the Friends of Monument Preserve, you will help fund trail maintenance, educational programs, volunteer events and more!

**Make your tax deductible donation to**

Friends of Monument Preserve  
PO Box 634  
Monument, CO 80132

### Annual Memberships

Individual \$15 \_\_\_\_\_  
Family \$25 \_\_\_\_\_  
Business/Sponsor \$100 \_\_\_\_\_  
Other \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Company \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email\* \_\_\_\_\_

Renew or join using Google Checkout at: [www.fomp.org](http://www.fomp.org)



Your Interests: Hiking \_\_\_\_\_ Biking \_\_\_\_\_  
Horseback riding \_\_\_\_\_ Fishing \_\_\_\_\_  
Nature/Ecology \_\_\_\_\_ Archeology \_\_\_\_\_

\* used for newsletters and event reminders