



August 5, 2021

Press Release:

**The Horse Council of the Roaring Fork Valley (RFVHC) working with our partners
"In the area of" the Town of Snowmass Village and Sky Mountain Park**

An equestrian and hiker trail, the Upper North Mesa Trail is accessed from Highway 82, then to Brush Creek Road and at the roundabout, turn right into Snowmass Rodeo Parking Lot. *Directions to this trailhead compliments of the 2021 RFVHC Hiker and Equestrian Trails Questionnaire found on the RFVHC website.*

Due to town dog policy regulations and the serious biodiversity nature of this trail, dogs must be always on leash and dog owners are required to clean up after their dogs. There is no doubt about it - leash laws on these trails are strictly enforced.

The Upper North Mesa Trail is a 2-hour, 3-mile horseback ride with breathtaking 360-degree views of Snowmass Village, Aspen, Snowmass Mountain, Capitol Peak & Mt. Daly. Incredibly special, there is an ancient Fen protected and off limits by the TOSV as an ancient site and a water source for wildlife. The characteristics of a fen are peat-forming wetlands that rely on groundwater input and require thousands of years to develop and cannot easily be restored once destroyed. Fens are also hotspots of biodiversity. They often are home to rare plants, insects, and small mammals. As a bonus, on this remarkable trail, is a great picnic spot for lunch intertwined in an aspen grove.

The RFVHC, together with the Rocky Mountain Youth Corps, TOSV and a team of RF Outdoor leaders improved this trail last week. The work was made possible through the generosity of our partners, RFVHC members and by a grant from the Round Up Riders of the Rockies for RFVHC summer 2021 projects.

Equestrians and hikers will immediately notice the trails improvements. TOSV land manager Brandon Hawksley color flagged the trail, marking each task along the route. Based on the preference from crew leaders of RMYC, the crew remained together for both days of trail work. The first day and a half was spent rerouting the upper section around the pond. This included clearing existing brush and sage, scratching in a trail, and completing the finish work of tread. The remainder of the project was spent corridor cutting from the reroute back down trail to lower fork.

Taylor van Zyl, RFVHC Board Member, was our on-site representative for the TOSV trail work. "I greeted the RFOV and the RMYC at the Snowmass Rec Center last Tuesday. This trail offers amazing views of Snowmass and surrounding peaks, and it is a great ride for any level of equestrian. I am looking forward to going up soon to check out the new sections of trail and have lunch at the scenic picnic area."

In response to the 2021 RFVHC Survey Monkey responses, Taylor also visited with Brandon on behalf of all our RFVHC members and their horseback riding and hiking guests about making clear signage in this neighborhood. Taylor said, "The signage is a bit scattered right now so it can be a bit confusing to get around the subdivision to the trail head. Overall, I am very grateful for all their combined hard work!" TOSV responded by saying, "Signage has been added as you leave the rodeo lot directing folks back toward the new trailhead. You will come to an intersection where 7 Star Trail forks to your right and a sign placed at this point directing horseback riders onto the road through the neighborhood and straight to the new trailhead."

When the two-day project was completed, this report from **TOSV Trails Manager Brandon Hawksley** came in, "A HUGE thanks to **RFOV Leader Jack Douglas**, the RMYC young crew led by **RMYC crew leaders Bobby Oshaben and Nicole Naylet** and the RFV Horse Council for putting together this opportunity on short notice! The crew did an AMAZING job on the North Mesa Equestrian Trail. They were

able to complete the 200 yard reroute around the wetlands as well as a corridor cut of the upper section from the fork in the trail, up through the picnic area and all the way to the pond. “

“The crew worked through two of the hottest days of the summer with little shade and completed the tasks at hand! We were able to get them access to our TOSV Recreation Center and pool facilities once they finished up on Wednesday and one of my crew members was so impressed with their work ethic they were rewarded with pizzas on Wednesday as well! “

Attached are a few photos from the project. The TOSV will implement a phase 2 portion to this project to hopefully be completed this summer to finish corridor cutting from wetlands area at top back down to the fork in trail mentioned above to complete the upper loop of the North Mesa Trail. Thanks again to the RFVHC for reaching out and getting this organized and completed on such short notice! Hopefully we will see in an increase in horseback traffic up there again! Looking forward to working alongside the RFVHC in the future.”

Friends and RFVHC members, it's time to ride!



The Upper North Mesa Trail leads to
spectacular views of the RFV

This is where we work every day!



For photo credit: compliments of TOSV and additional details
Contact Karin at rfvhc.colorado@gmail.com

Roaring Fork Valley Horse Council
P.O. Box 127, Snowmass, Colorado 81654
* 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization *
www.rfvhorsecouncil.org
www.facebook.com/keephorsesontrails/

For more photos and a MAP – see below



The Rocky Mountain Youth Corps
Thank you very much!





The Rim Trail is the blue/white track
The Upper N Mesa Equestrian Trail is the red track
The Silver Star Trail is the blue track