



**Table  
Mountain  
Association**

# Table Mountain Newsletter

Volume 6 Issue 1

February 2005

## **TMA Members Invited to Tour Left Hand Water District's Spurgeon Facility May 21st!**

Save this date: Saturday May 21, 2005.

Ever wondered where the water you drink comes from and how it is treated to make it safe for you to drink? Many of us start thinking more about our water with the arrival of spring. Water is never something we should take for granted; indeed, we should cherish it and understand it, so that we can truly appreciate it every time we turn on the tap.

The Table Mountain Association is pleased to announce a tour of the Left Hand Water District's Spurgeon Water Treatment Facility.

Originally built in 1962 and expanded a couple of times since then, the Water District has recently spent more than \$7 million to upgrade this facility. They are especially proud that we now have a state-of-the-art plant which will ensure the quality of our water supply for the future.

Our customized tour will include lots of "tations": we'll learn all about (and get to see)

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## **Three Candidates Vie for Steele's Poudre Valley REA Board Seat**

Three candidates are seeking the seat vacated by Harold Steele when he retires from the Board of Directors of the Poudre Valley Rural Electric Association (PVREA) this March after representing Boulder County for 27 years. PVREA is the electric utility serving most of the Table Mountain area.

Competing for the position are **Robert Lock**, retired mechanical contractor living on Oxford Road south of Table Mountain, **Robert Greenwald**, retired contracts officer for NCAR living near 83<sup>rd</sup> and Yellowstone, and **Todd Ficken**, civil engineer living near 63<sup>rd</sup> and Bluebird. PVREA member families will choose among these three and vote on other board positions at the REA's annual meeting in Fort Collins on Saturday, March 12<sup>th</sup>. Those unable to attend the annual meeting may request a mail-in ballot.

TMA talked with Harold Steele in January to learn more about life on the Board of Directors, and we interviewed the candidates in early February to learn more about their views specific to issues affecting or of interest to Table Mountain residents.

When Mr. Steele was appointed to the Board to fill a vacancy in 1977, the monthly budget of the REA was not even \$700,000. Today it exceeds \$3 million per month. After his first term, Steele had to face Frank Gould for reelection, and he's been reelected every 3-year term ever since. He is one of two board members representing Boulder County. Weld County has 3, and Larimer has 4, distributing board membership according to PVREA membership. Members, however, get to vote for all seats, including two at-large seats.

What's been best about the past 27 years? Mr. Steele said that the REA is like a family. Most issues

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### **MISSION STATEMENT**

1. Preserve, protect, and enhance the unique quality of life of the area.
2. Educate, develop lines of communication, and provide opportunities for social activities among residents of the area.
3. Work to develop a cooperative relationship with the management of Table Mountain.

(Steele Retires PVREA Seat, from Page 1)

are discussed collegially and the board often achieves consensus. "Fortunately, there were few fights!" Harold also enjoyed helping the community. However, board membership requires quite a commitment of time: monthly meetings of a full day each, the annual meeting, various committee meetings (e.g., labor and audit), plus regional and national meetings. Board members are also expected to participate in educational programs to help them learn and better perform their duties. They are responsible for approving budgets, rates, and policies. Although the state's Public Utility Commission may help resolve member complaints or appeals, the REA, as a customer cooperative, is essentially self-regulating.

Fortunately, Mr. Steele leaves the Board with the REA in pretty good shape. It is experiencing about 2% annual growth. There are several large commercial facilities in its service area, and some new facilities expected in the near future. One of the biggest challenges facing the REA is encroachment by municipalities. Most northern Colorado cities have their own municipal electric utility, and when they annex land, PVREA loses paying customers. Fortunately, the city must pay a premium to PVREA, but Harold says this erosion of service area is still a concern.

PVREA must also comply with the provisions of the recently approved Amendment 37 which requires that 10% of its retail electric sales be derived from renewable energy by 2015. The new requirements will pose a big challenge for the REA, as Poudre Valley does not currently generate any electricity of its own, but relies entirely on wholesale power sold by Tri-State Generation and Transmission. This may change, as the Amendment provides for offsets for distributed solar and wind generation by retail customers. Today, PVREA offers "Green Power" to its members at a monthly premium.

We appreciate the many years and many hours of meetings Harold Steele has served on behalf of Boulder County PVREA members. And we are sure he will enjoy his new free time. Thanks, Harold, for a job well done.

Kevin Markey

Poudre Valley members should have received an annual meeting announcement in early February. A mail-in ballot request form was included. It must be returned to PVREA by March 4<sup>th</sup>. (Contact PVREA for more information: 800-432-1012.)

## Boulder County PVREA Candidate Questionnaire Responses

PVREA's February issue of *Colorado Country Life* contains a biographical profile and statement for each candidate. TMA asked the following additional questions.

**1. Goals:** *What goals have you as a prospective member of the Board specific to interests of Boulder County members of PVREA?*

**2. Table Mt. specifics:** *Have you any more specific objectives relative to members in the Table Mountain area?*

**3. Outages:** *A number of neighborhoods around Table Mountain continue to experience frequent weather and non-weather related outages. Is there any way you foresee improving reliability?*

**4. Renewables:** *REA's have always been electric energy pioneers, yet most REA's including Poudre Valley opposed Amendment 37. Boulder County supported it more than 2:1. How should PVREA seek to comply now that it is State law?*

**5. Summation:** *Have you anything else to share about PVREA or your candidacy?*

### Robert Lock, 4775 Oxford Road

**1. Goals:** To continue the way PVREA is going. It's a good organization and provides good electricity. I don't think it requires any radical change.

**2. Table Mt. specifics:** Nothing to add.

**3. Outages:** Not right now. Our electricity flickers. Switches built into the system for safety shut off the power when problems occur and are quickly restored. My guess is there isn't a whole lot one can do about it.

**4. Renewables:** We already have a program where members can sign up for wind energy. Proponents of Amendment 37 said that it's cheaper to get electricity from renewable sources than coal. If that's so, REA's would buy it. PVREA needs to be mindful of costs passed on to members. I would need to see more proof that it is economically feasible. We may wish to build some small facilities. At one time I helped install solar water systems, but in my experience, it takes a lot of time to pay off. I have solar steam generating collectors, but the heat exchanger was aluminum and failed. I hope to be able install copper heat exchangers some day.

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**(Spurgeon water plant tour from Page 1)**

coagulation, flocculation, sedimentation, filtration, disinfection, and fluoridation. Come on, now – haven't you always wanted to know everything there is to know about flocculation???

There will also be maps of the watershed system and plenty of time for discussion and questions. I still remember quite clearly the tour my Girl Scout Troop took of the water treatment facility near where I grew up – and that was a LONG time ago! We guarantee that this will be a memorable event also!

Please join us on Saturday May 21, 2005 at 11:00am. The tour will take about 45 minutes, depending on questions. The Spurgeon facility is located at 35<sup>th</sup> & Nimbus Rd. From US36, turn east on Nebo Road. Drive east on Nebo to 35<sup>th</sup>, turn south, then turn into the Spurgeon facility driveway and park in the lot – people will be there to guide you after that. Most of the tour will be in the facility's buildings, so the tour will take place rain or shine.

Come on out, meet your neighbors, bask in the sun, and celebrate living in this wonderful Table Mountain area!

Questions: Suzanne Webel, 303-485-2162

**TABLE MOUNTAIN ASSOCIATION**

A Colorado Nonprofit Corporation  
5735 Prospect Rd.  
Longmont, CO 80503

**OFFICERS**

President	Suzanne Webel	303-485-2162
Vice President	Kathleen Cassaday	303-682-4003
Secretary	Steve Engel	303-449-4033
Treasurer	Kevin Markey*	303-682-0810

**DIRECTORS**

John Britton*	303-474-9752
Curtis Chong	303-546-0591
Walter Maschmeyer	303-444-7115
Steve Set	303-440-6953
Jan & Fred Stengel	303 449-0628
Jim & Wilda Swift	303-938-9693

Guest Newsletter Editors	Kevin Markey & John Britton
Database Coordinator	Deb Britton
Webmeister	Jim Waterman

The TMA Website is located at  
<http://bcn.boulder.co.us/community/tma>

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**ADVERTISING POLICY AND RATES**

Business card size only. \$25 for Table Mountain Association members, \$50 for non-members, and \$100 for out-of-our-area ads (Crestview/Lake of the Pines -- 75th St; North Rim/Lake Valley -- St. Vrain Rd); classifieds \$10/max 5 lines; kid-provided service classifieds (lawn-mowing, babysitting, etc) free.  
 More Info: Contact Kevin Markey, 303-682-0810

**Table Mountain Association  
 Newsletter Editor**

Is a **great editor** or **layout artist** locked inside, just waiting for a terrific opportunity to express his or herself? Practice your art and support the Table Mountain Association at the same time.  
 TMA's newsletter needs a **new editor**. Are you the one? Of course! Contact Suzanne Webel today. 303-485-2162

**Homeowners in the Table Mountain Area  
 Visit our website**

[www.tablemountainareanews.com](http://www.tablemountainareanews.com)

Place free private classified ads and use it as an interactive website for the community

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 Walter Maschmeyer and Joshua Stevens

**LIVE RENT-FREE in our 24-foot RV!**  
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(PVREA Candidates continued from Page 2)

Conservation makes a lot more sense now. One gets money back a lot quicker. (We had a conversation about various alternative approaches PVREA may take to encourage those solar technologies like passive solar home construction and excess power purchased from roof-top photovoltaics that might help reduce its costs indirectly. Mr. Lock indicated his willingness to consider such approaches.)

**5. Summation:** I'm retired and will have time to devote to the Board. I will try to do the best job I can. When there are issues, I will dig into the facts and look at both sides before voting.

**Robert Greenwald, 14875 Creekside Lane**

**1. Goals:** To ensure that Boulder County PVREA members get reliable power at reasonable rates. Special problems need to be addressed and viable solutions found and implemented.

**2. Table Mt. specifics:** If the Table Mountain members are experiencing an inordinate number or length of outages, the problems need to be identified and solutions found to remedy the problems.

**3. Outages:** Same as above. PVREA needs to identify the problems and find reasonable solutions so that they receive reliable power.

**4. Renewables:** Without knowing the details of the Amendment other than I believe 10% of the energy must come from renewable sources and be available to members, I don't have a specific answer. However, since the amendment passed, PVREA and consequently the Board will have to comply with the requirements of the Amendment, and this should be done in a fair and equitable manner to all PVREA members.

**5. Summation:** I want to see PVREA provide reliable energy at fair and reasonable prices to its members. PVREA needs to look at available new technologies which could be beneficial and also examine existing practices and operations to see if there are areas for improvement and/or more efficient and economical operations.

**Todd Ficken, 6444 Bluebird Avenue**

**1. Goals:** I have several goals, goals that are centered on quality and reliability of service, goals that are centered on the future of PVREA, and goals that focus on the managerial accounting activities of the

organization. I believe that the areas are interrelated and must be viewed in concert with not only the technical side but also the non-technical side to find ways to balance those issues with social economic considerations such as alternative and renewable energy sources.

**2. Table Mt. specifics:** One of the main areas of interest would be to look into the existing infrastructure including life safety related issues and how best to maintain the existing systems while exploring ways to improve upon them. In addition, I am very anxious to hear from the Boulder members and what their needs and concerns are with respect how they foresee the future of PVREA.

**3. Outages:** I feel that reliability could be improved by looking into various methods on how to upgrade the existing infrastructure to meet current and future electrical demands. I would also like to start exploring some other distribution systems such as underground service.

**4. Renewables:** There is a difference between acknowledging a requirement and cooperating with a requirement. I am a supporter of Amendment 37, which means I would strive to bring a level of governance that would seek to fully cooperate with the letter and spirit of Amendment #37 balanced with the PVREA structure and its members. This is one of the tenets of why I am seeking a board position. Energy, energy markets, and customer requirements and expectations are changing, changing fast and will keep changing. PVREA must either adjust to the changing times or there could come a time when PVREA would either be forced to change or cease to exist. Therefore, I am most interested in seeking out ways to bring balance to the current times and the future.

**5. Summation:** I am looking forward to hearing fresh ideas and listening to the members and also exploring new ways of looking at current business and operational methods. PVREA has been a leader and long time player in the energy distribution business and I am very interested in helping PVREA maintain a leadership role in the energy distribution business.

Wish to contribute to your community? Have concerns to air? Issues to address? Ideas for neighborhood fun or activities?

**The TMA Board of Directors is looking for YOU!**

Call Suzanne Webel to volunteer: 303-485-2162

### Boulder Feeder Canal Trail Proposal, Redux

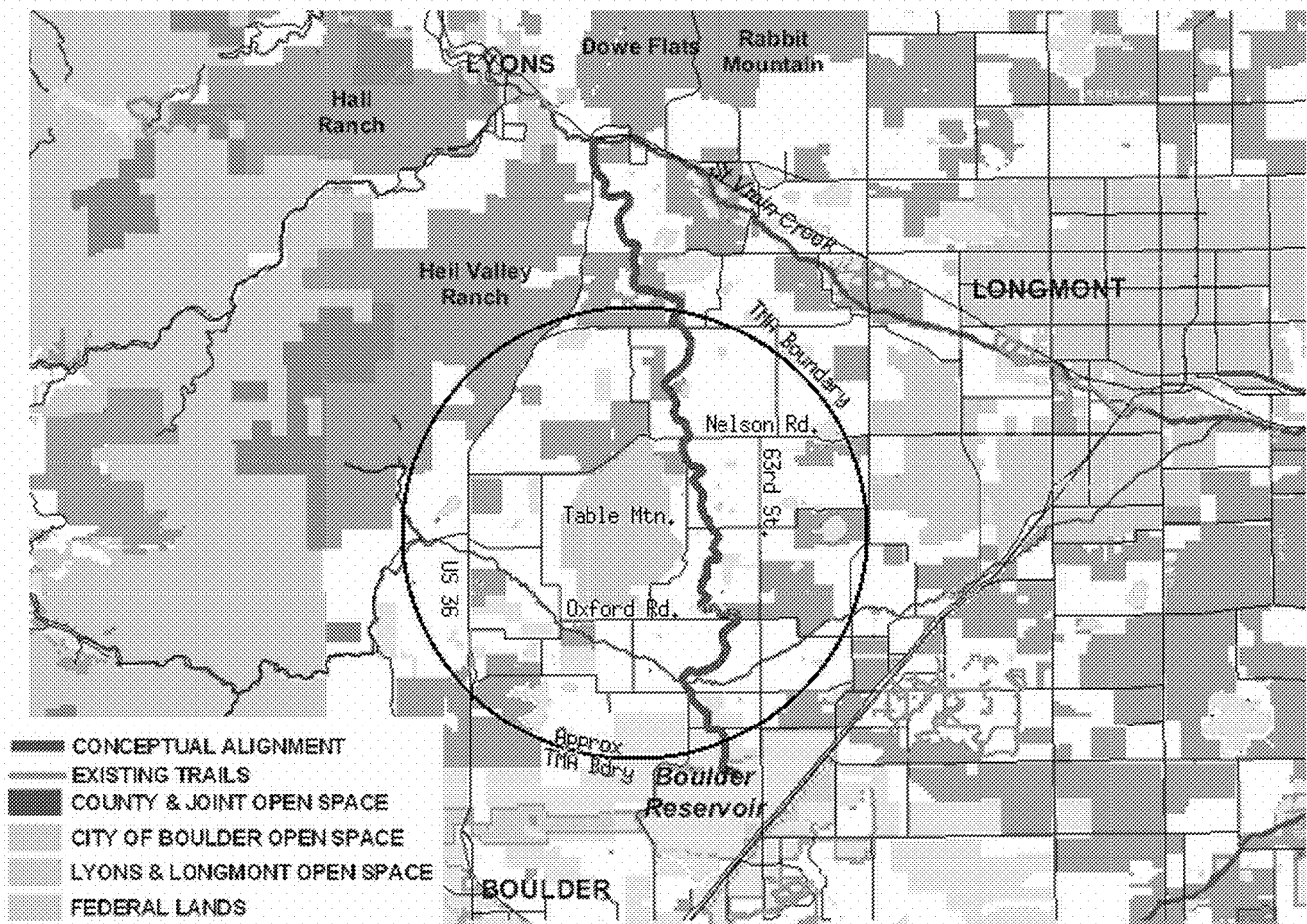
Last fall we wrote an article on the proposed Boulder Creek Feeder Supply Canal Trail (please see the October 2004 TMA newsletter).

The proposal is still being evaluated by Boulder County's participating land management agencies and the public. Inasmuch as this feature bisects the Table Mountain Association's geographic area, this proposal is of great interest to our community. The map reproduced below was inadvertently omitted from our last newsletter, so it is included here for your consideration. The trail's proposed alignment is shown, together with approximate TMA boundaries. To obtain more information, please contact Boulder County Parks & Open Space and review the document entitled "Boulder Feeder Canal Resource Inventory and Report," which is available from BCPOS.

Once again, we are asking those of you who did not respond last time for your input so that we can accurately represent the desires of our neighborhood. We will try to keep neighbors apprised of any meetings or new developments regarding this proposal. Please contact me or any other Board member and share your thoughts on this matter with us!

Thanks.

Suzanne Webel, 303-485-2162



#### Proposed Boulder Feeder Canal Alignment

Source: City of Boulder Planning and Public Works

[http://www.ci.boulder.co.us/buildingservices/long\\_range/Bldr\\_Fdr\\_Canal.htm](http://www.ci.boulder.co.us/buildingservices/long_range/Bldr_Fdr_Canal.htm)

### KUDOS TO THE COUNTY!

The Table Mountain Association would like to take this opportunity to thank Boulder County for the great job they've been doing maintaining the dirt roads in our neighborhood.

Longtime readers of this publication know that the TMA Board pondered this issue and concluded unanimously that the unpaved roads around Table Mountain serve as valuable reminders of a rural lifestyle, an unhurried pace, and low traffic volumes. Some of our roads serve as de facto trails for equestrians, bicyclists, bird watchers, and moms with baby joggers. Our roads don't go anywhere and we like it that way. We came up with the slogan "Save Don't Pave!"

The Longmont Times-Call has run several features on the benefits of dirt roads. The most recent, entitled "Pavement ends" (Nov. 20, 2004) is a full-page photoessay with a quote from Lee Pitts, western author: "Dirt roads build character. People who live at the end of dirt roads know that life is much more enjoyable when taken at a slow pace..."

Boulder County has respected our wishes and has responded by diligently grading out the washboards, adding roadbase, and filling the potholes. At times the process has been delayed due to weather and other priorities, and at times the bumps and dust have made some of us folks rather testy. But on the whole, we appreciate the County's effort and continue to believe that our dirt roads are among the amenities that contribute to our unique Table Mountain quality of life.

Thanks, road guys!

From <http://www.straightdope.com/>: "According to Tom Pettigrew, a Forest Service engineer, the cause is an unlikely source: your car's suspension. (Well, maybe not yours specifically, but it's not innocent in this matter, either.) A vehicle's suspension system distributes the shock and energy of road irregularities with a bouncing rhythm called harmonic oscillation. At each downstroke, the wheels exert extra force on the road, causing the particles in the road to either pack or displace at regular intervals. Once a pattern of ruts starts to establish itself, it becomes self-reinforcing due to what engineers call forced oscillation. The next car hits the same irregularities in the road and bounces at the same rate, causing the pattern to become more and more defined. Forced oscillation overcomes minor variations in oscillation rate that might otherwise arise due to differences in car weight."

### Longmont Airport Update

Twice in 2004, Tim Barth, manager of Longmont's Vance Brand Municipal Airport, members of the Airport Advisory Board (AAB), and representatives of Mile-Hi Skydiving met with TMA's Board of Directors to discuss progress in addressing concerns with airport operations. Joining Barth in May were Kory Cash and Jim Gessner of the AAB with Nikolai Starret and Frank Casares of Mile-Hi. Barth explained the new noise abatement program instituted at the airport. Starret and Casares discussed changes in Mile-Hi's equipment and flight plans that attempt to reduce noise. All joined in a lively discussion. Barth, Cash, and Casares returned in October to present a progress report.

Historically, TMA has had several concerns: (1) the repetitive, annoying, and unvarying patterns of skydiving climbs, (2) low-flying and aerobatic aircraft, (3) particularly noisy and low-flying ultra-lights, and (4) airport traffic patterns affecting the northeast portion of the TMA area. A detailed noise abatement plan was presented that proposes new traffic patterns, frowns on touch-and-go before 8 a.m. or after 8 p.m., suggests power settings, minimum altitudes for turns, other operational restrictions and enforcement actions. Skydivers have new equipment and new flight patterns to address concerns with their operations.

Unfortunately, safety requirements and Denver traffic control take precedence over noise control. Suggestions to avoid flying over the city of Longmont can encourage additional traffic over TMA's rural area. Ultra-light aircraft are not required to register; hence, they cannot be identified or reported when unsafe or annoying.

Nonetheless, Barth reported progress. For the first time, he has sent 60 complaint and warning letters to pilots. Public complaints are down more than 50%, although the poor economy may have helped; the airport has vacancies for the very first time. Mile-Hi has seen an increase in its flights, but a decrease in complaints.

The Board was quite pleased with the airport's eagerness to meet and address concerns. Observations of traffic patterns and noise by individual board members were mixed. One noticed no significant changes, another thought it worse, and others felt that Mile-Hi's flights have not been as annoying. Unfortunately, ultra-lights have grown worse, but the airport has no control over them.

What are your observations? Email us with your feedback: [klmarkey@comcast.net](mailto:klmarkey@comcast.net).



### **The Great Horned Owl – *Bubo virginianus***

This fine specimen was photographed in my back yard, on a board bridging the Table Mountain ditch. You've probably all seen Great Horned Owls, flying at dusk, or perched on a fence post. If you haven't seen one, you've heard one — the male's call can travel several miles on a still night. Though rabbits are its favorite meal, these owls eat an extremely wide variety of unlucky critters (over 250 species!), including cats and dogs. I was lucky enough to get very close to this proud bird. It seemed to not fear me, and why should it? I meant it no harm. The more mice it keeps from gnawing into my home, the better, and our housecat only goes outside during supervised, daylight hours.

Copyright 2004 John Britton. Reprinted by permission.  
Photos of this owl, and some other Table Mountain critters, can be found at  
<http://www.jbbritton.com/latesummer2004/index.htm>

TABLE MOUNTAIN ASSOCIATION  
5735 PROSPECT RD.  
LONGMONT, CO 80503

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

**Please RENEW NOW if  
you haven't already  
done so for 2004-2005**

Annual dues are payable between October 1 and December 31<sup>st</sup> each year. Your mailing label should indicate when you last paid. New members who joined and paid dues after July 1, 2004 will be considered paid through Sept. 2005.

Thus far this year, 92 members have renewed or joined TMA. If you are not one of them, please consider renewing or joining now.

**Support  
Table Mountain!  
Please Join Us**

If you haven't yet joined, and would like to support our activities, please use this membership application form.

- MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL
- NEW MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

ANNUAL DUES \$10.00 per family:  
Payable to **Table Mountain Association**

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E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

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Interested in volunteering or serving on a committee? \_\_\_\_\_

Please mail to: **TABLE MOUNTAIN ASSOCIATION**  
**8853 N. 55<sup>th</sup> St.**  
**Longmont, CO 80503**

Please note **new address** for dues. Please use this coupon, not an old one.