

Little Mountain – Devil’s Canyon Ranch Dedication



Lunch stop on the dedication tour of the Little Mountain area.

On June 29, 2004 the Bureau of Land Management, in cooperation with the Trust for Public Lands and Wyoming’s Big Horn County Commissioners, held a dedication to celebrate the public acquisition of the Devil’s Canyon Ranch. The ranch, which is located on Little Mountain, was acquired in June of 2003.

The day of the dedication began with a tour of the Little Mountain area for dignitaries and cooperators who were heavily involved in the Devil’s Canyon Ranch acquisition. Visits to several historic cabins on Little Mountain, most of which were on the newly acquired land, featured prominently on the tour, as well as many scenic vistas unique to Little Mountain. Local folklore as well as historical accounts of homesteading and sheepherding helped make a connection with the land as it is today. Highlighted on the tour was the impressive and spectacular Devil’s Canyon, cut by Porcupine Creek as it flows out of the Bighorn Mountains to the east through the rugged limestone landscape of Little Mountain to join the Bighorn River flowing through the Bighorn National Recreation Area to the west.

The official public dedication event was kicked-off that evening with a delicious barbecue hosted by the Lovell, Wyoming Fire Department, Big Horn County, and The Trust For Public Land at the mouth of Cottonwood Canyon. Several dignitaries and

cooperators were featured speakers during the dedication ceremony including: Senator Craig Thomas of Wyoming's congressional delegation; James H. Hughes, BLM's Deputy Director for Programs and Policy; Will Rogers, Alan Front, and Alex Diekmann, president, senior vice-president of federal affairs, and project manager respectively from The Trust for Public Lands; Blake Henning, Wyoming regional director of the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation; Big Horn County Commissioner, Keith Grant; BLM Wyoming State Director Bob Bennett, and Mike Blymyer, BLM Cody Field Manager.

After the speeches celebrating, highlighting, and thanking cooperators and federal agencies' participation and perseverance in acquiring and completing the land acquisition, a ribbon-cutting ceremony by Senator Craig Thomas was conducted. The ribbon-cutting officially opened and dedicated the Little Mountain – Devil's Canyon Ranch as part of the public lands under the administration of the BLM. The evening's festivities concluded with entertainment provided by Cowboy Poet Mick Kaser, who is a retired BLM access specialist.

So, why is the Little Mountain – Devil's Canyon Ranch acquisition so special and important? The newly acquired land will improve access to thousands of acres of state, public and forest lands on the western slope of the Bighorn Mountains. It will also enable the protection of important year-round habitat for sage grouse, important winter range for elk and deer, and significant cave, cultural, paleontological, and recreational resources for future generations.



Guests at the Little Mountain - Devil's Canyon Ranch Dedication enjoying the delicious barbecue provided by the Lovell, Wyoming Fire Department, Big Horn County, and The Trust For Public Land.



Mick Kaser, the Cowboy Poet, entertaining the crowd, with his humorous but philosophical poetry, featuring Wyoming and the cowboy life.



Keith Grant, Big Horn County Commissioner, one of several featured speakers at the Little Mountain - Devil's Canyon Ranch Dedication, shares his comments about the new land acquisition and how public land users need to care for the land.



Senator Craig Thomas of Wyoming, with his wife Susan, cuts the ribbon during the Little Mountain Dedication ribbon-cutting ceremony, officially opening and dedicating the Little Mountain – Devil’s Canyon Ranch acquisition as part of the public lands under the administration of the BLM.



A historic cabin that belonged to a man by the name of John Blue sits at the beginning of a canyon that bears its occupant’s name along the main access road to the Little Mountain area.



The Little Mountain tour begins the dedication day as it caravans up John Blue Canyon and proceeds further up on Little Mountain.



One of the scenic views featured on the Little Mountain tour.



A view of one of the historic cabins seen on the Little Mountain dedication tour.



Overlooking Devil's Canyon on the Little Mountain Dedication Tour.