

NREL's Visitors Center Offers a Unique Experience

The Visitors Center at the U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE's) National Renewable Energy Laboratory provides an engaging and educational way for students and adults to explore renewable energy and energy efficiency concepts.

Open to the public Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., the Visitors Center features an interactive exhibit hall and DOE public reading room. The building itself is a model of energy-saving strategies including passive solar technologies.



NREL's Visitors Center

On March 17 and 31, the Visitors Center will offer special tours to businesses from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. For information and reservations, contact James Bosch at (303) 384-6567. Adults always are welcome to attend a "Community Focus" program and learn more about renewable energy and energy efficiency. These Visitors Center programs are presented twice a month.

For details about upcoming events, educational opportunities, group programs and volunteer opportunities, visit www.nrel.gov/visitors_center or call (303) 384-6565.

The Visitors Center is at 15013 Denver West Parkway in Golden, Colo. ■



The U.S. Department of Energy's National Renewable Energy Laboratory South Table Mountain site

Open Space Crews Break Ground on New South Table Mountain Trail

Jefferson County (Jeffco) Open Space workers are constructing a new multiple-use trail that will originate about 1,000 feet northeast of the U.S. Department of Energy's National Renewable Energy Laboratory's (NREL's) Visitors Center and continue northwest to South Table Mountain. The natural-surface path will provide access for hikers, mountain bike enthusiasts and equestrians. Motorized traffic will not be permitted.

The half-mile trail will connect to a network of social trails that meander across the South Table Mountain mesa. The trail is being built on the conservation easement of the U.S. Department of Energy's 327-acre South Table Mountain site, which houses NREL facilities.

Workers are starting at the eastern mesa edge near the Colorado State Patrol pursuit track and will follow the slope down to the southern meadow.

Most of the work is expected to take place Monday through Thursday between 7 a.m. and 5 p.m., weather permitting.

Crews will range in size from two

to 12 people. Equipment may include a small grader and mini excavator as well as standard hand tools. The goal is to reclaim some of the old roads while building the 4-foot-wide trail. Open Space vehicles will park at the NREL Visitors Center, not on the mesa.

The multi-phase project, which eventually includes formalizing existing social trails and revegetating others, should be completed in 2005. Trail maps will be available at the NREL Visitors Center as the project nears completion. For more information, please contact the Jeffco Open Space office at 303-271-5925. ■

National Renewable Energy Laboratory Contact:

If you have any questions about NREL's programs or activities, please contact Kerry Masson, Director, Office of Outreach and Public Affairs at (303) 275-4083. ■

National Renewable Energy Laboratory

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NREL to Build New Research Facility

The U.S. Department of Energy's National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) has received funding from Congress to begin construction on a 71,000-square-foot research facility on the Laboratory's South Table Mountain site. The new research facility, called the Science and Technology Facility (S&TF), will support research on photovoltaics (solar-electric cells and modules), hydrogen production and storage technologies, and electrochromic window technologies (windows with shading that can be controlled with electric current).

This multi-level facility, to be located adjacent to the east side of the Solar Energy Research Facility (SERF) will



A model of NREL's Science and Technology Facility

accommodate offices and research laboratories. S&TF employees will use the existing SERF parking lot. The exterior construction consists of pre-cast concrete and metal panels that will complement adjacent buildings and NREL's natural surroundings.

Energy-efficient features are included in the building's design, such as the use of natural lighting (also known as daylighting), installation of a

raised floor air distribution system that allows employees to control the temperature in their work areas and energy recovery for ventilation air in the laboratories. The building is expected to use 40 percent less energy than a conventional building because of this attention to energy efficiency.

Construction is scheduled to start in September and completion is scheduled for 2006. ■

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