

Press Release

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Green Mountain Horse Association Launches Major Cross-Country Upgrade Project

South Woodstock, Vermont (May 11, 2011)—The Green Mountain Horse Association (GMHA) is embarking on an ambitious, multi-year project to upgrade their cross-country course, including footing and site work, installation of new complexes, creation of an Intermediate track and repairing and augmenting the current Beginner Novice through Preliminary-level jump inventory with new permanent and portable fences.

The past decade has seen a decline of upper-level eventing in Area I, most significantly at the Intermediate level, forcing accomplished riders to travel outside of New England to compete and qualify for national championships. Providing a modern, up-to-standard Intermediate course will allow riders at this level to stay on home turf and help stem the exodus of the area's best riders and horses. The re-introduction of the Intermediate level will also serve to educate and inspire those at the lower levels, which supports GMHA's mission as an educational facility.

All levels will benefit from the upgrades as long-standing footing and drainage issues will be addressed, permanent complexes installed, current fences repaired and new jumps created ensuring well-built, educational and up-to-standard obstacles across the board.

The discipline of Eventing has a long and memorable tradition at GMHA, which in 1957 hosted one of the country's first non-military horse trials and today runs three United States Eventing Association sanctioned horse trials, including a long-format Novice/Training Three Day Event as well as several schooling trials. In addition, the course is heavily utilized for schooling by equestrians throughout New England.

A committee has been formed to manage the project's multi-year plan for improvements with the goal of hosting an Intermediate division at the 2012 August Horse Trials. The aggressive timetable calls for work to begin immediately following this year's September Horse Trials.

Tremaine Cooper has been selected as Course Designer for the project. Cooper, from Bluemont, Va., is an FEI internationally licensed designer as well as a USEF course inspector. He has designed courses for many prominent events including Millbrook Horse Trials (NY), Morven Park (VA), Southern Pines (NC), Puhinui Horse Trials (NZ) and Poplar Place (GA). Cooper has worked on GMHA's course in previous years and has familiarity with the challenges of the acreage in South Woodstock. He will work with local course designer Janine Preece McClain to ensure that the property upgrades will also meet the needs of the many other disciplines that use the facility.

The course improvements will be funded entirely from donations and the committee is thrilled to announce they have already received a very generous \$20,000 pledge to help kick off the project. Project details, specific fundraising information and sponsor/donor materials will be available soon. In the meantime, for more information or to donate please contact Molly Hutchins at (802) 457-1509 or molly@gmhainc.org.

The Green Mountain Horse Association, a 65-acre equestrian facility in South Woodstock, Vermont, is a non-profit 501 (3)(c) organization fully committed to equine activities including Trail Riding, Hunter/Jumper, Dressage, Eventing and Driving. With approximately 2,000 members, GMHA is a vital community of equestrian enthusiasts. In addition to competitions and pleasure rides, GMHA offers horsemanship clinics and other educational activities and is active in trail stewardship and land preservation. Member support helps to ensure that GMHA will continue to exist for future generations and preserves its legacy in the equestrian community.