Press Release:

Green Mountain College dedicates the Lewis Deane Nature Preserve

Poultney -- On Saturday, April 27, 2002, Green Mountain College celebrated the dedication of its recently-acquired forest area, known as the Lewis Deane Nature Preserve. Donated by Bill and Linda Osborne, of Poultney, the preserve is a naturally diverse 85-acre parcel on St. Catherine Mountain, overlooking Lake St. Catherine. The land will be used by students and the community for education, research, and outdoor experience. A conservation easement on the property will be held by the Vermont Land Trust.

In his remarks, Bill Osborne noted that the college’s environmental mission prompted him to make the gift. “Our best hope for reversing environmental damage to the earth is the future generations who have been educated on environmental issues,” said Osborne. “These students will take what they learn from the college out into the world and spread the message. I hope that this piece of land in some small way contributes toward that mission.”

Green Mountain College president, Dr. Thomas L. Benson, confirmed that the land would be gratefully accepted and used in the spirit in which it was donated. “We are thrilled and honored to receive such a storied piece of property,” he said. “At the same time, we are mindful of the tremendous responsibility that goes with such a gift, and we plan to be vigilant in providing the stewardship this land requires.”

The land will be protected in perpetuity through an easement developed and held by the Vermont Land Trust. The easement stays with the property regardless of change in land ownership. VLT representative Sharon Crossman expressed the organization’s ongoing interest in helping the college interpret the terms of the conservation easement.

Dr. James Graves, Associate Professor of Biology and Environmental Studies, gave a brief preview of how and why the land would be of use to students in a variety of disciplines. He said the preserve would become a field station for the college, representing great natural diversity, ranging from moist Hemlock and Northern Hardwoods Forests near Endless Brook to dry Oak Woodland and Rock Outcrops at the top of St. Catherine Mountain.

The Lewis Deane Nature Preserve is accessed from Endless Brook Rd. in Poultney. The peak of the property features dramatic views of Lake St. Catherine and the Adirondacks. The property will eventually be open for use by the general public in addition to the campus community.