

BUSINESS

Tradesmen, outdoor enthusiasts rejoice: Duluth Trading Co. will soon open in Colorado

A longtime retailer for working men and women, Duluth is setting up shop in Thornton, where it will open its doors for the first time on September 7

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Provided photo

Duluth Trading Company, which developed Longtail T-Shirt — with an extra 3-inches in length in the back to fend off plumber's butt — is opening its 25th brick-and-mortar store Sept. 7, 2017, in the Larkridge shopping center in Thornton.

This is the interior of a store in Hoffman Estates, Ill.

Coloradans searching for shirts to hide unseemly plumber's butt, comfy underwear to last through a long workday, and sturdy outdoor clothing for camping, hiking and fishing should look no further.

Duluth Trading Company, inventor of the "Longtail T-Shirt" — with 3 inches of extra length to defend tradesmen from accidentally revealing their backsides — is coming to Thornton.

A longtime catalog retailer for working men and women, Duluth Trading is setting up its first Colorado store in the Larkridge shopping center at Interstate 25 and Colorado 7. Doors open on Sept. 7. It's the furthest west of the retailer's 25 stores. The next closest is in Omaha.

"We're absolutely excited to move a little further west and into Colorado especially because of the climate. We have gear for that," Duluth district store manager Mark Pickart said. "We love the geography in the area."



The 20,000 square-foot store will feature an Alaskan Hardgear department and a space to view Duluth's popular animated commercials and videos on products while drinking a hot cup of coffee. The store's grand opening will feature two lumberjack shows.

Pickart said he expects the company's fast-drying clothing and movement-friendly outerwear to attract the Denver area's many outdoor enthusiasts. Among Duluth's best-selling products? "Buck Naked" men's underwear that the website boasts is a "popular uprising" against restrictive boxer briefs.

Duluth tracks its customer base through online and catalog orders, Pickart said, and heavy interest from Colorado shoppers led the company to open a physical store here.

Jay Perlmutter, a principal at Jordon Perlmutter & Co., which manages Larkridge, said the store is nice complement to other retailers in the big-box center anchored by Home Depot, Daveco Liquors and Dick's Sporting Goods. The store is taking space in strip occupied by PetSmart and Fodor Billiards.

"It just shows a confidence in how the northern metropolitan Thornton area is growing now," he said. "This is just a testament to the confidence that the national retailers have in the area."

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Duluth got its start in 1989, when brothers Bob and Dave Fierek were working in construction in Duluth, Minn.

After witnessing fellow workers carrying tools haphazardly in spare buckets, the brothers created their first product, the “Bucket Boss” tool organizer. They soon expanded their offerings in an eight-page, hand-illustrated catalog, offering various tools to help working people organize their gear. They continued to grow into the '90s, expanding creating more products for tradesmen, all tested by working people themselves.

This became the core of the company ethos: products by working people, for working people. Duluth’s website explains the retailer’s origins: “Every product was field tested on job sites by a grizzly bunch of construction workers, dock hands, cycle riders, old hippies and other hard-as-nails characters.”

The publicly-traded company is no longer controlled by the pair of grizzled brothers and testing products is now left in the hands of professionals, but the spirit of the company remains.

“We’re totally excited,” Perlmutter said. “It’s perfect...especially in this market because people are so active outdoors, workwise and playwise.”

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