



# THE ADVISOR

A Publication of the Rocky Flats Citizens Advisory Board

## From Weapons to Wildlife

In 1992, local communities and government officials began an eight-year discussion on the future of the Rocky Flats Environmental Technology Site. Several ideas were floated that went through many iterations, such as part of the site being developed into an industrial complex, a residential neighborhood, and open space. On the way back from a Rocky Flats meeting in 1999 with his staffer, Doug Young, Representative Mark Udall decided to introduce legislation that would:

1. Designate the Buffer Zone (exclusive of the Industrial Area) as open space,
2. Leave the site in federal ownership, and
3. Establish a stakeholder group to decide what specific type of open space the site would eventually become, e.g. a refuge.

After slight hesitation, the public gave strong support of the bill. Then in the spring of 2000, Senator Wayne Allard expanded upon Udall's idea, and suggested that the entire site become a National Wildlife Refuge upon closure, thus eliminating the need for a stakeholder group to decide the final fate of the land. While both ideas were popular, the public was confused as to which proposal to support. In August 2000, Udall and Allard combined their efforts and formed a bipartisan coalition to introduce a single bill that would establish the site

as the Rocky Flats National Wildlife Refuge upon closure.

The bill passed through the House and was going to the Senate when Senator Allard, realizing that most bills take five years to pass, strategically attached the refuge legislation (Rocky Flats National Wildlife Refuge Act) to the Defense Authorization Bill. This still did not ensure passage, but it significantly increased the possibility, as the 13 Authorization Bills must be passed every year.



In December 2001, Senator Wayne Allard and Congressman Mark Udall announced the passage of the Rocky Flats National Wildlife Refuge legislation.

The Authorization Bill went to conference committee of which both Representative Udall and Senator Allard were conferees. Their membership in the committee significantly increased the chances of preserving the refuge legislation in the bill. In late December 2001, the Authorization Bill was passed by both houses, and President Bush signed the bill into law on December 28.

Now that the fate of the site has been sealed in a congressional act, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) is busy preparing for the eventual transfer of land to the National Wildlife Refuge System. Dean Rundle, the current Refuge Manager at the Rocky Mountain Arsenal who will also preside over the Rocky Flats Refuge, is already working with the Department of Energy (DOE) to create a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)

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# Rocky Flats Updates

## State of the Flats

Each year, the Rocky Flats site sponsors its "State of the Flats" meeting that invites members of the community to hear presentations and meet with site and regulatory agency officials to reflect on progress made in the past year and to highlight plans for the coming year.

DOE-Rocky Flats Manager Barbara Mazurowski opened the meeting by reminding the audience that her goal for the past year was "The Year of No Excuses." Although the site began 2001 behind schedule; Barbara reported that by the end of the year, they had caught up and were now on schedule for closure by the year 2006. The largest accomplishments were bringing the new packaging system on line to prepare plutonium materials for shipment offsite, and increased shipments of transuranic wastes to the WIPP facility in New Mexico. She also reported that improving safety was a major focus in 2001. DOE's goals for 2002 include doubling offsite waste shipments, completing plutonium residue stabilization and packaging, decontaminating and demolishing buildings in the 800 area of the site, and moving approximately 400 employees to new offsite offices. As she did last year, Barbara established a theme for the coming year, "The Pivotal Year." One of the major challenges Barbara sees will be to ensure that plutonium materials leave the site (on schedule) in order to free up resources, now spent on

managing those materials, to be spent on cleaning up and tearing down facilities.

In his remarks to the audience, Kaiser-Hill President Alan Parker spoke extensively about his company's focus on improved safety, especially in the areas of electrical, criticality, and traffic safety. He highlighted major accomplishments in 2001 as the draining of all plutonium liquids in Building 771, the construction of a new transuranic waste loading facility in Building 440, the demolition of Building 111, and the dramatic shrinking and reconfiguration of the site's most secure protected area. He reminded the audience that increased security following the 9-11 tragedy has had a major impact at the site. One of the major accomplishments he noted for 2002 will be to complete at least 50 percent of the decontamination and decommissioning work in three of the four major plutonium facilities at the site.

In their presentations to the audience, the regulatory agency representatives outlined their concerns about site safety. They also spoke of the ongoing work to finalize establishment of revised Radionuclide Soil Action Levels, which will guide the environmental restoration work at the site. These action levels must be finalized by this year to allow major remediation projects to begin at the site.

A new addition to the lineup of presenters from previous years was a representative from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife



Service, Dean Rundle. With the passage of legislation designating Rocky Flats a wildlife refuge upon its closure, Fish and Wildlife will begin planning activities necessary to make the transition. One of the first things it will need to do is to establish a memorandum of understanding between the Departments of Energy and Interior regarding roles and responsibilities of the two agencies. Fish and Wildlife also is working on a Comprehensive Conservation Plan for the site. *(see related story in this issue)*

The final presenters at the meeting were representatives from the Steelworkers and Protective Forces unions. The Steelworkers finalized a new contract with Kaiser-Hill in 2001 that will take them through closure. The Protective Forces representative noted that although they are working themselves out of jobs as materials are moved from the site and buildings are closed, they have had an increased focus following the 9-11 events. Their workers have put in many long days and nights to make sure that the site and the community remain safe.

# EMSSAB Groundwater Workshop



*Participants at the EMSSAB Groundwater Workshop.*

Periodically, representatives from the nine Environmental Management Site Specific Advisory Boards (EMSSABs) gather together to discuss issues and develop statements of recommendation to forward to the Department of Energy. This past February, EMSSAB members met in Augusta, Georgia near the Savannah River Site to learn about and discuss groundwater contamination issues.

The workshop began with a day-long tour of the Savannah River Site in Aiken, South Carolina. Savannah River produced plutonium and other nuclear materials in support of our nation's defense during the Cold War. Savannah River is a very large facility, 310 square miles, and has 11 known areas of contaminated groundwater as a result of its former industrial activities and waste disposal practices. Eight groundwater remediation systems have been installed, treating over four billion gallons of water. Some of the innovative technologies being deployed to cleanup the contamination include injection of steam into the ground to drive out the contaminants via extraction wells, vacuum extraction, bioremediation, and horizontal well drilling.

Following the site tour, the workshop participants spent the next two days hearing presentations

and engaging in discussions in order to learn more about groundwater contamination issues at DOE facilities across the country. Paul Beam with DOE Headquarters gave one of the major presentations. He provided some overall information on the challenges DOE faces at its many sites. DOE has identified 176 distinct groundwater contamination plumes at the facilities under its control. Mr. Beam stated that DOE currently spends \$78 million per year to address these plumes, and he estimates that the total life-cycle cost to address the contamination will be over \$3 billion.

Most of the discussions at the workshop took place in four different breakout sessions organized around these topics: communication and public participation; regulatory/decision making; groundwater technology; and long-term stewardship. In each of the breakout sessions the participants engaged in discussions and then developed two statements outlining their concerns. After developing statements, the participants next gathered together to hear what each of the groups came up with and offer feedback. An opportunity was then given for each of the site delegations to convene and comment on the statements based on what they felt might be issues for their fellow board members back home. With this feedback, the four breakout groups got together once more and refined their statements, which were then presented back to the group as a whole. A total of eight statements were endorsed by the workshop participants and will be forwarded to each of the nine EMSSAB local boards for their consideration and ratification. Once the local boards approve the statements, they will be forwarded to DOE under the joint signatures of the chairs of the nine local boards. The goal for completing this process is early April when the EMSSAB chairs hold their next meeting in Cincinnati, Ohio.

## Spotlight on our Newest Board Member

Prior to serving on the Board, Noelle Stenger Green was a member of the RFCAB staff for one year in the position of Program Coordinator. After resigning as a staff member, Noelle decided that she wanted to remain involved in Rocky Flats issues so she applied and was approved as a member. She also has experience as a Project Scientist with Roy F. Weston, an environmental consulting firm, worked part-time as a Legislative Researcher in the Hawaii State House of Representatives, and has experience dealing with radioactive and hazardous waste remediation sites. A resident of Lafayette, Noelle has BA in English from the University of Hawaii, and a law degree from the University of Oregon School of Law, where she specialized in Environmental Law. She will serve as a technical representative.



## From Weapons to Wildlife (continued from page 1)



Udall and Allard at a joint press conference (held at Rocky Flats in the summer of 2000) where they announced plans for the refuge.

between the two agencies (DOE and the Department of Interior, under which is the FWS). This MoU will outline many issues, most importantly the division of responsibilities between the Secretaries of DOE and DOI to carry out the eventual land transfer and a report of the expected costs that both agencies will incur to handle the refuge transition. The draft MoU must be published in the Federal Register no later than one year from the date the legislation was signed, which will be December 28, 2002. The MoU will be finalized no later than June 28, 2003.

The other major document that is required by the Rocky Flats Refuge Act is the Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP). Every refuge must have a CCP describing how the refuge will be managed including the purpose of the refuge; the habitat and ecological information of species onsite; possible adverse impacts to wildlife, plants, and fish and corresponding correction or mitigation actions; potential plans for a visitor's center or administrative offices; and the opportunities for compatible wildlife-dependent recreational uses. The development of the Rocky Flats CCP will be a team effort headed by Laurie Shannon, an FWS refuge planner, who was integral to the preparation of the CCP for the Rocky Mountain Arsenal. The team will also include FWS planners, policymakers, and biologists; contractors with expertise in land use planning; DOE biologists and policymakers; and other specialists of biology and ecology. Ms. Shannon ensures that the creation and development of the CCP will be a very open process and the public will be encouraged to participate.

Consistent with the legislation, which states that the public involvement process must begin within 180 days of the Act's passage, the FWS has already developed a draft timeline\* for the CCP as follows:

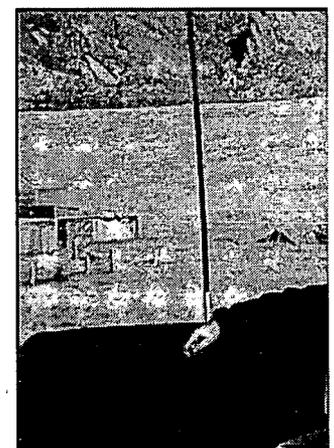
- June to August 2002**  
Initiate Public Involvement and Scoping
  - September to October 2002**  
Review Vision Statement, Goals, and Determine Significant Issues
  - November 2002 to March 2003**  
Develop and Analyze Alternatives
  - April to August 2003**  
Prepare Internal Review Draft CCP/EIS
  - September 2003 to May 2004**  
Prepare Public Draft CCP/EIS
  - June to December 2004**  
Submit Final EIS and CCP
- (the deadline for the final plan is December 28, 2004)

\* A fact sheet on the planning process is available

While the FWS's CCP Planning Team has developed this outline, the FWS does not have funding for this expensive planning process. The legislation authorizing the establishment of a refuge did not authorize funding. The FWS expects DOE to provide the financial resources necessary to complete the CCP, and DOE is working closely with FWS to negotiate this.

The first component of a CCP is the purpose of the refuge, which has already been determined in the Rocky Flats National Wildlife Refuge legislation: to restore and preserve native ecosystems; to provide habitat for, and population management of, native plants and migratory and resident wildlife; to conserve threatened and endangered species; and to provide opportunities for compatible scientific research.

Another major component of a CCP, one that regularly generates a lot of public interest and debate, is determining the type and extent of public uses that are allowed on the refuge. According to Mr. Rundle, many people do not understand that National



Mark Sattelberg, Contaminant and Wildlife Service.

Wildlife Refuges, unlike National Parks or public lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management, are not multiple use lands. Refuges are primary use lands, and Congress has mandated that they be managed for "Wildlife First." Any recreational or commercial uses of refuges that are not compatible with the purposes the refuge was established for, or with the mission of the National Wildlife Refuge System, cannot be allowed. Compatibility testing is a very important function in the Refuge System. Before any use can be allowed, it must be determined, in the "sound professional judgment" of the Refuge Manager, not to "materially detract from the purposes of the refuge or the mission of the Refuge System." Compatibility determinations are now made in writing, and are subject to public review and comment.

Several members of the public and local governments have already begun proposing specific uses of the refuge such as the creation of a trail system to connect with existing trails in the community, and environmental education programs to teach visitors about the remaining contaminated areas and the respective monitoring activities. Mr. Rundle assures that all of those ideas, and others generated by the public, will be carefully considered in the CCP process.

A former nuclear weapons facility is not a typical addition to the refuge system, and careful precautions must be taken to ensure a successful transfer. The obvious concern is the type and extent of contamination that will remain post-closure and how it will affect the use and enjoyment of the refuge by both humans and wildlife. To address this, the FWS has policy in place that requires that a contaminant study

be performed. The purpose of such a study is to provide assurance that the property being transferred has indeed been cleaned up to levels deemed safe for wildlife. Depending upon the circumstances, a FWS Contaminant Study can vary from a mere background check (Level One) to an extensive investigation (Level Three). In the case of Rocky Flats, a Level Three Contaminant Study will be completed. This



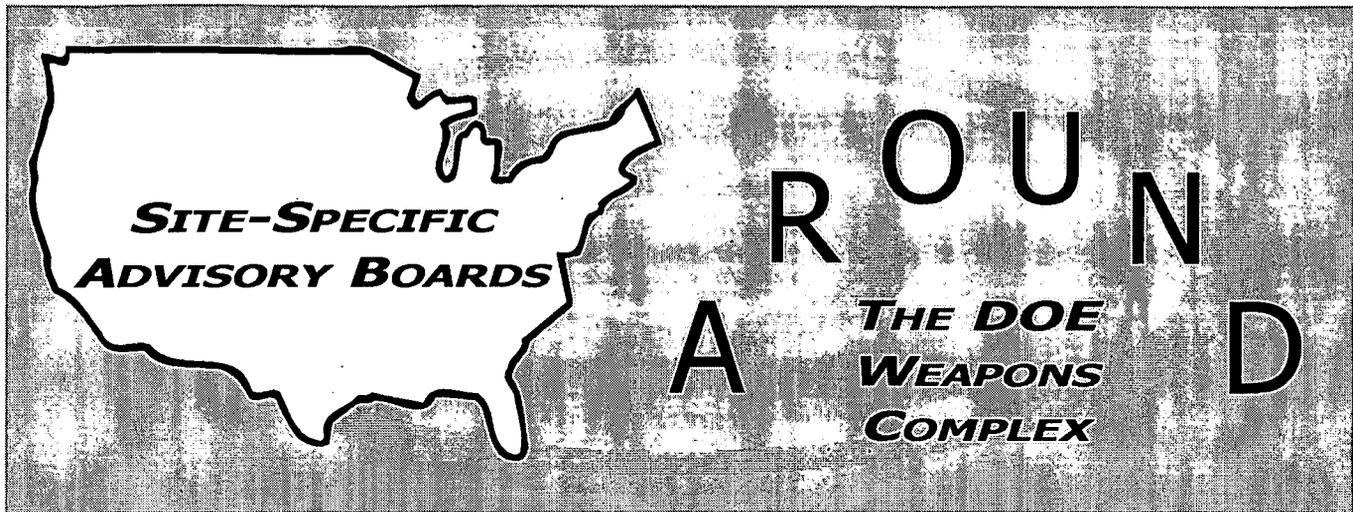
on Biologist with the U.S. Fish



Among the more than 800 plant and animal species found at Rocky Flats are mule deer. Above, a buck in velvet photographed recently at the site.

study is similar to the Comprehensive Risk Assessment that will be done by DOE as required by EPA regulations. To avoid replicating work, the FWS will identify any data gaps and fill them via independent field sampling. The site has just finished an extensive human health risk assessment and plans to do more soil sampling between now and closure, so the FWS will likely focus on assessing the contaminant risk on ecological receptors. For some contaminants, especially heavy metals and PCBs, risks to ecological receptors could prove to be the driving factor in determining final cleanup levels. Whatever cleanup results are attained, one factor will always remain constant: DOE will remain the responsible party for any remaining contamination and any future exposure of contamination.

Overall the future of the Rocky Flats National Wildlife Refuge looks bright. Most people in the community support the refuge, and the FWS is dedicated to long-term and successful management of the site. Mr. Rundle mentioned a few obstacles that he foresees in the future of the urban refuge such as the effects of industrial or residential development close to the site, conflicts between wildlife and pets, fire management issues, and resolving noxious, non-native weed invasion problems. But these are not unmanageable issues, and the FWS is dedicated to making the Rocky Flats Refuge the best it can be.



## This Issue: Saying Goodbye to PPCAB

*The Rocky Flats Citizens Advisory Board is one of nine Site-Specific Advisory Boards (SSABs) that have been formed at former nuclear weapons production sites. In each issue of The Advisor, we spotlight the activities of one of these boards, their respective sites, or other interesting information about the Department of Energy.*

Over the past year, the Pantex Plant Citizens Advisory Board (PPCAB) was officially disbanded. There were several events that contributed to the end of the Board, and there are many differing opinions as to why Pantex Plant Manager Dan Glenn ordered that the Board be dissolved. But first, here's a brief history of the plant.

Pantex Plant was originally constructed as a conventional bomb plant for the U.S. Army during the early days of World War II. After the Japanese surren-

dered in 1949, the entire site (16,032 acres) was sold to the Texas Technological College for one dollar. The land was sold subject to recall under the National Security Clause. In 1951, an extensive survey was conducted by the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) for expansion of their nuclear weapons assembly facilities. Pantex was determined a prime location for the expansion. In March 1951, the AEC reclaimed 7,000 acres of the site, and Pantex became a key support for U.S. efforts in the Cold War. Now, the

U.S. and the former Soviet Union are working to reduce their nuclear weapons stockpiles, and Pantex is playing a vital part in this operation. On February 1, 2001, DOE awarded the Pantex Management and Operations contract to BWXT Pantex, which continues to carry out the weapons assembly/disassembly mission today.

From 1994 to 2001, PPCAB followed all activities of the Pantex Plant, advising and submitting recommendations. When PPCAB was formed, the Board created its own charter and mission, which included advising on operations. The Board continued under these self-created (but approved by DOE, or so the Board thought) directives, until May 2001.

At this time, Martha Crosland, Director of the Office of Intergovernmental and Public Accountability, discovered that the Board was advising DOE on operational matters, an activity not included in the current EMSSAB (Environmental Management Site-Specific Advisory

*(continued on page 7)*

### **2001 Timeline Leading up to Termination of PPCAB**

**May:** DOE told PPCAB to focus on environmental matters, drop operational issues, and submit useful advice.

**June:** PPCAB wrote to General John A. Gordon, Administrator of National Nuclear Security Administration (DOE), to rally support on PPCAB oversight of operations issues.

**July:** DOE responded that the Board's charter will not be expanded to include operational activities and urged the Board again to look at environmental management issues such as groundwater contamination.

**September:** PPCAB Board members voted on their new limited role as defined by DOE. The vote was 12-1 and therefore the Board could not accept DOE's conditions.

**November 16:** DOE terminated the PPCAB based on its failure to reach consensus and its inability to offer effective advice to the Pantex Plant.

## Saying Goodbye to PPCAB (continued from page 6)

Board) umbrella charter. With this as the fuel, in August Pantex Plant Manager Dan Glenn told PPCAB to cease advising DOE on the plant's operational issues, and instead focus exclusively on environmental management, and begin providing useful advice to the plant. Glenn purports that PPCAB has been an ineffective oversight group, weakened by its bipolarity (the Board was evenly split between proponents and critics) and its consensus voting system. If those requests were not fulfilled, Glenn warned that the Board's existence could be in jeopardy.

Former co-chair Walt Kelley explained that PPCAB searched for their independent charter to prove that the Board was acting in accordance with their mission, but it was not to be found. Many Board members felt that Glenn's ultimatum was unfair because the Board had assumed that DOE knew that it was covering operations for the past seven years and now, suddenly, DOE wanted to change the mission of the Board or else dissolve it. Others, such as James Hallmark, PPCAB's facilitator since October 1996, opined that he believes in public participation, but that Glenn was right; the Board was ineffective and did not accomplish much in its seven years.

In June, the Board went to a third party in DOE, General John A. Gordon, Administrator of National Nuclear Security Administration, to try to rally support. But Gordon agreed with Glenn, and the Board was forced to vote on whether to limit its mission to environmental management issues. One Board member stood fast at the September vote, and the Board had to tell DOE that it could not accept Glenn's demands. On November 16, 2001, Glenn sent a letter to the Board's co-chairs, which stated that based on PPCAB's "...failure to reach consensus on this fundamental issue, and (on) my opinion that the Board has not been effective in providing advice to the plant, I have decided to terminate the advisory board."

The future of an advisory board at Pantex is uncertain. Glenn states that DOE will expand its public participation efforts with other groups such as the groundwater roundtable group, but there is a possibility that he will revisit the citizens advisory board idea in a year or so.

## We Want Your Opinion!

Our Board is undertaking a new effort to gather public comment and opinion of the residents surrounding Rocky Flats. Please help us by giving your input on various issues related to the closure of Rocky Flats.

You can either:

1. participate in our monthly public opinion survey and leave detailed comments at:  
**www.rfcab.org**

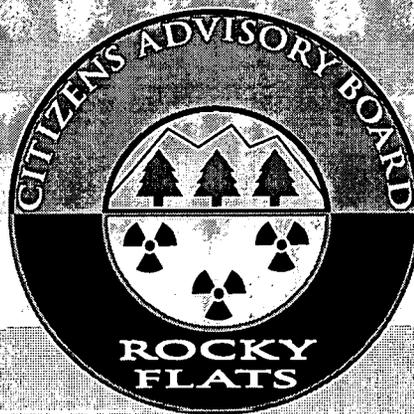
-- or --

2. call our public comment hotline and share your opinions:  
**(303) 420-6148**

All information gathered through the public opinion survey and public comment line will be shared with Board members, the Department of Energy, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment.

### RFCAB MISSION STATEMENT

The Rocky Flats Citizens Advisory Board, a nonpartisan, broadly representative, independent advisory board with concerns related to Rocky Flats activities, is dedicated to providing informed recommendations and advice to the agencies (Department of Energy, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, and the Environmental Protection Agency), government entities, and other interested parties on policy and technical issues and decisions related to cleanup, waste management, and associated activities. The Board is dedicated to public involvement, awareness and education on Rocky Flats issues.



RFCAB Web site:  
**www.rfcab.org**

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# Rocky Flats Public Meeting Calendar

<b>April</b>		
1	Rocky Flats Coalition of Local Governments	8 to 11 a.m. Jeffco Airport
3	RSAL Focus Group	3:30 to 6:30 p.m. Broomfield Municipal Center
4	Rocky Flats Citizens Advisory Board Meeting	6 to 9:30 p.m. Jeffco Airport
8	RFCAB End-State Discussion Steering Committee	6 to 8 p.m. College Hill Library
17	RSAL Focus Group	3:30 to 6:30 p.m. Broomfield Municipal Center
25	Stewardship Working Group	3:30 to 5:30 p.m. Arvada City Hall
<b>May</b>		
1	RSAL Focus Group	3:30 to 6:30 p.m. Broomfield Municipal Center
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<b>June</b>		
3	Rocky Flats Coalition of Local Governments	8 to 11 a.m. Jeffco Airport
6	Rocky Flats Citizens Advisory Board Meeting	6 to 9:30 p.m. Jeffco Airport
10	RFCAB End-State Discussion Steering Committee	6 to 8 p.m. College Hill Library
27	Stewardship Working Group	3:30 to 5:30 p.m. Arvada City Hall

**ALL MEETINGS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE, PLEASE CALL BEFORE YOU GO: 303-420-7855**

**Arvada City Hall, 8101 Ralston Road, Arvada**  
**Broomfield Municipal Center, One DesCombes Drive, Broomfield**  
**College Hill Library, 3705 West 112th Avenue, Westminster**  
**Jefferson County Airport Terminal Building, Mount Evans Room, 11755 Airport Way, Broomfield**

**Rocky Flats Citizens Advisory Board**  
**9035 Wadsworth Parkway, Suite 2250**  
**Westminster, CO 80021**

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