

# ROCKY FLATS STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL

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Jefferson County -- Boulder County -- City and County of Broomfield -- City of Arvada -- City of Boulder  
City of Golden -- City of Northglenn -- City of Westminster -- Town of Superior  
League of Women Voters -- Rocky Flats Cold War Museum -- Rocky Flats Homesteaders  
Arthur Widdowfield

## Monthly Status Report – October/November 2010

### Board meeting summary

There was no meeting in October.

### November Meeting

#### *Approval of 2011 Work Plan*

The Board approved the 2011 work plan. The plan builds on the Stewardship Council's efforts in 2010. The Board will continue to focus on DOE management issues, worker issues, outreach, and communications. The plan can be found at: [http://www.rockyflatssc.org/work\\_plan.html](http://www.rockyflatssc.org/work_plan.html)

#### *Approval of 2011 Budget*

The Board approved the 2011 budget. This proposed budget reflects a net decrease of \$2,550 over the 2010 budget; 2010 was a reduction of \$2,950 over 2009.

#### *DOE Quarterly Briefing*

DOE discussed the quarterly report for the second quarter of 2010 (April - June). The report can be found at: [http://www.lm.doe.gov/Rocky\\_Flats/Documents.aspx](http://www.lm.doe.gov/Rocky_Flats/Documents.aspx)

### Surface Water Monitoring and Operations

Terminal ponds A-4 and B-5 were discharged. Pre-discharge sampling met all applicable water standards. Surface water at both the Original and Present landfills met all applicable standards, as did water at the other monitoring locations.

The notable exception was plutonium at SW027, which is upgradient of Woman Creek near pond C-2. The site standard is 0.15 pCi/l. The sample registered 0.16 pCi/l. DOE continues to consult with EPA and CDPHE, and is evaluating response actions.

### Groundwater Monitoring and Operations

During the quarter, DOE sampled all RCRA wells (10), AOC wells (9), sentinel wells (28), evaluation wells (42), treatment systems wells (10), and boundary wells (2). DOE also conducted non-RFLMA monitoring at the Mound and East Trenches treatment systems. Additionally, work at the Solar Ponds treatment system continued. During the quarter there was higher groundwater flow into the treatment system, resulting in decreased treatment efficiency. Optimization efforts continue.

### Site Operations

Monthly inspections of the Original Landfill (OPLF) were completed. Some of the seeps were dry, but others were saturated. DOE also surveyed the settlement monuments and the inclinometers to gauge movement of the landfill. Some movement continues to be observed. DOE also noted cracks and slumping of two of the berms.

Additionally, as provided in contact record 2010-01, in August 2008, CDPHE developed the *End of Post-Closure Care* policy. The policy discusses criteria to be evaluated to determine when post-closure care of hazardous waste landfills is no longer necessary, including whether a closed unit may meet “clean closure” standards, or whether a performance-based evaluation shows that the closed unit does not pose a threat for which post-closure care is needed.

DOE believes that OLF sampling data indicates contaminant levels will decrease over time. The data, they argue, can help establish a baseline for current conditions and thus support a decision to terminate certain post-closure maintenance requirements. Ending post-closure care would not necessarily mean that controls for the OLF would end, as Rocky Flats will remain subject to land use restrictions under an existing Environmental Covenant.

### Update on Changes to RFLMA Points of Compliance and Dam Breach EA

Broomfield, Westminster and Northglenn have been meeting with DOE and CDPHE to try to resolve the impasse over DOE’s proposals to move the existing surface water and groundwater points of compliance stationed along Indiana Street to the eastern edge of the COU, and to manage ponds A-4, B-5 and C-2 in a flow-through configuration and later breach them. Since the September Stewardship Council meeting, the cities met a few times with DOE and CDPHE.

The path forward for engaging the cities and community in general is up in the air. DOE discussed the new public process it is developing to address the dam breach environmental assessment (more on topic below). Broomfield questioned how this group would relate to the technical working group CDPHE’s director stated she was willing to initiate. CDPHE staff suggested that DOE’s new group was in line with the director’s commitment, but he would check with her and update the Stewardship Council in the coming weeks.

## Legacy Management monthly site inspection summary

DOE’s September and October 2010 Rocky Flats activities included:

### *Groundwater and Surface Water Monitoring*

- Conducted routine sampling at the Solar Ponds Plume Treatment System (SPPTS)
- Completed quarterly groundwater sampling
- Completed routine maintenance at surface water locations
- Performed periodic Walnut Creek ambient sampling
- Collected and processed automated surface water sample suites
- Collected special grab samples and sampled three wells at the Present Landfill (PLF).

### *Groundwater Treatment Systems*

Routine inspections of the treatment systems were conducted as follows:

- East Trenches Plume Treatment System (ETPTS) – DOE reports the system is functioning normally
- Mound Plume Treatment System (MSPTS) – DOE reports the system is functioning normally
- SPPTS – Optimization of the system is ongoing

### *Ecology*

- Completed wetland monitoring
- Routine Prebles Meadow Jumping Mouse (PMJM) inspections were conducted
- Began photo monitoring at permanent photopoints
- Cut down some small tamarisk and Russian olive saplings
- Observed prairie dog towns in and near COU fence. Only three dogs observed in the town north of Pond A-4. Other towns are still empty and now covered with weeds
- Evaluated forb nursery areas (locations where volunteer seed was spread last winter). Only a few forbs were observed this year. This is not unexpected as it typically takes 4 to 5 years for forbs to be established.
- Conducted interseeding at several small areas to help increase vegetation.
- Conducted the Present Landfill and OLF quarterly vegetation surveys

### *Site Monitoring & Maintenance*

- Landfills – there were no significant changes to report
- OLF inclinometers were measured
- Site road upgrades project completed. Project consisted of regrading, installing new ditches, adding 3/4" recycled concrete to stabilize some road areas and adding new rock to drainage crossings.
- Installed solar powered lighting and overhead door operating system at East Shed
- Installed solar powered access gate

## DOE Dam Breach Public Meetings

In November, DOE announced it would hold monthly public meetings to discuss the dam breach environmental assessments (EA), concerns communities and others have with the EA, and its plans to develop an adaptive management plan (AMP). An AMP, in short, is an iterative process the agency will use to integrate into its decision-making process data it gathers from additional testing and monitoring.

As DOE explained in its cover letter to the community announcing these meetings, “although DOE has concluded that no significant environmental impacts would result from proceeding with the proposed actions, DOE has identified a number of modifications to the proposed mitigation plans to address comments provided to DOE.” It further stated “adaptive management is used to address unanticipated changes in environmental conditions or subsequent information that might affect the original environmental protections as analyzed in the EA and are of concern to the public. The NEPA adaptive management model adds two steps to a traditional EA. First, ongoing environmental monitoring is required following implementation of any proposed action

that includes mitigation under the EA. The second step requires that the action's implementation or mitigation is adapted as appropriate based on ongoing environmental monitoring data. Under this approach, actions are adjusted to foster desired outcomes and reduce undesired ones."

In a letter dated November 30, 2010, Broomfield, Westminster, Northglenn, Thornton, the Woman Creek Reservoir Authority, and the Jefferson County Public Health Department stated that "while we are anxious to begin technical discussions on an Adaptive Management Plan (AMP) for the April 2010 Draft EA, we do not believe that DOE's approach adequately addresses our written requests to establish a technical work group since it excludes discussion of the proposed changes to RFLMA. Approving either action separately and independently of the other undermines the integrity of open communications and the public involvement process. Both actions are interrelated and must be evaluated in a comprehensive manner."

### Changes in Congress

With the Republicans taking over the House of Representatives, the party has selected Rep. Harold Rogers of Kentucky to head the powerful appropriations committee. The challenge he will face is how to make good on Republican campaign promises to cut domestic discretionary spending by 20 percent. It is far too early to discern how his appointment, changes to the committee membership, and party priorities will affect DOE funding, including funding for DOE's Office of Legacy Management.

Before the change in House leadership, Congress must first approve funding for fiscal year 2011 (October 2011 – September 2012). As of December 4<sup>th</sup>, according to the *Wall Street Journal*, House has presented its \$1.2 trillion bill to fund the government through the end fiscal year 2011. The bill features a ban on earmarks and a freeze on federal salaries. Since September, when fiscal 2010 ended, the government has been funded through short-term funding bills. Funding from the latest of those bills runs out on December 18<sup>th</sup>, by which time both the House and Senate must consider the new funding bill. The Senate, however, will likely take a different tact, and House Republicans will oppose the bill, pressing for a short-term stop-gap funding until they take over the House in January. The current House bill keeps the government funded at the same level it was in 2010. House Republicans say they want to reduce funding to 2008 levels.

### Site Document Update

Contact Record: 2010-07, *Monitoring Results and Water Treatment at the MSPTS and ETPTS*

This contact record concerns volatile organic compounds (VOCs) at Mound Site Plume Treatment System (MSPTS) and the East Trenches Plume Treatment System (ETPTS). According to the contact record, treatment of contaminated groundwater by these systems "results in removal of the vast majority of contamination load from influent groundwater." Treatment, however, does not result in complete removal of all groundwater contaminants, and "low concentrations of a few VOCs remain in system effluent at levels that are above RFLMA Attachment 2, Table 1 standards."

DOE, CDPHE and EPA consulted in June and July, 2010, following a routine RFLMA monitoring. The record provides that "while mitigating actions beyond the scheduled change out of the media and minor system upgrades for the MSPTS are not deemed necessary due to the low

VOC concentrations in the effluent,” the parties agreed to take additional steps described in the contact record.

Specifically, the parties agreed that “extended sampling of these treatment systems would be performed. For the subsequent three months (June, July, and August 2010), the RFLMA locations – influent, effluent, and surface water performance – would be sampled, together with two additional points per system between the effluent and surface water performance locations. These two locations would target system effluent as it moves into the receiving drainage and toward the surface water performance location.” The contact record describes the sampling locations.

Based on the additional sampling, at the MSPTS, the “results demonstrate that residual VOCs in system effluent dissipate very quickly, and would not represent a threat to surface water quality at surface water Points of Compliance. However, DOE is evaluating optimization of the MSPTS to provide additional VOC removal. This optimization is currently conceived as a passive air stripping component. The parties will continue to consult to finalize optimization of system performance to encourage additional VOC removal.” At the ETPTS, “data from samples collected at performance location POM2 show the applicable RFLMA standards are being met consistently. As the objective of these treatment systems is to protect surface water quality, this is seen as an indication that the ETPTS is performing adequately.”

The contact record can be found at: [http://www.lm.doe.gov/Rocky\\_Flats/ContactRecords.aspx](http://www.lm.doe.gov/Rocky_Flats/ContactRecords.aspx)

### Energy Community Alliance 2011 Annual Conference

Energy Community Alliance’s 2011 Annual Conference is scheduled for February 17, 2011, in Washington, D.C. A copy of the conference brochure can be found at: <http://www.energyca.org/PDF/ConferenceBrochure2011.pdf>

### Stewardship Council update:

Next meetings:

February 7, 2011