

ROCKY FLATS STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL

P.O. Box 17670
Boulder, CO 80308-0670
www.rockyflatssc.org

(303) 412-1200
(303) 412-1211 (f)

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
Karen Imbierowicz

Monthly Status Report – April 2009

Board meeting summary:

Approval of Letters

The Board ratified two letters – one in support of the local governments/community application for NRD funds; a second supporting federal stimulus funding to remediate other DOE facilities.

The NRD letter can be found at:

http://www.rockyflatssc.org/NRD_grant_%20ltr_of_support_final_2_09.pdf

The stimulus funding letter can be found at:

<http://www.rockyflatssc.org/RFSC%20Stimulus%20funding%202-09%20final.pdf>

Charlie Wolf Nuclear Workers Compensation Act

Senator Mark Udall met with the Board to discuss “The Charlie Wolf Nuclear Workers Compensation Act” (S. 757; H.R. 1828). The intent of the bill is to remedy the many flaws that have arisen in implementing the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program Act of 2000 (EEOICPA). The bill, which applies to all sites in the DOE complex, would make two fundamental changes to the EEOICPA:

1. broaden the list of specified cancers
2. shift the presumption to NIOSH to prove a person did not get cancer from work at facility.

Following the discussion the Board approved a unanimous motion in support of the Act. A letter was subsequently sent to the relevant House and Senate committees voicing support for the bill and asking that hearings be held in a timely manner.

The letters are available at http://www.rockyflatssc.org/board_policies.html. For a more thorough analysis of the bill please see the March 2009 update.

Triennial Review of Site Water Quality Standards

The June 8, 2009, Colorado Water Quality Control Commission (CWQCC) triennial review of the South Platte and three other river basins will include Walnut and Woman creeks as they pass through Rocky Flats. The most likely change for the site, which also affects all surface water in the other river basins under review, is the proposal to lower the water quality standard for arsenic. The site’s current standard is 50 micrograms per liter (ug/l). The change proposed for the rulemaking hearing will be to adopt what is termed a “hyphenated” standard of 0.02 – 10 ug/l. In addition the CWQCC may consider a proposal to change the water supply usage

classification for the site since it is closed to the public. DOE, however, will not seek to extend the temporary modification to the water quality nitrate standard due to expire in December 2009 (from temporary standard of 100 mg/l to the state-wide standard of 10 mg/l).

Rocky Flats Cleanup

DOE discussed the history of the cleanup and basis for ongoing management activities. Although a fair amount of cleanup work was done even prior to 1995, most of the work was done in 2000-2005 and most of the buildings were taken down during the final two years of cleanup (2004-2005). The cleanup included disposition of approximately 800 structures. Most were aging facilities, and included improperly stored nuclear materials, as the production was stopped abruptly. Two of the buildings had been classified as among the most dangerous in the DOE weapons complex.

There were also 360 potentially contaminated sites, more than 10,000 meters of underground old process waste lines, and two landfills covering more than 40 acres. The site housed more than 21 metric tons of weapons-grade nuclear materials; more than 100 metric tons of plutonium residues with no treatment or disposal path; 30,000 liters of plutonium and enriched uranium solutions; and 275,000 m³ of radioactive waste. All buildings were removed with the exception of the east and west inspection sheds. Surface soil was remediated, and most ended up well below (cleaner) RFCA's defined action levels of 50 pCi/g. The vast majority of the site is now less than 7 pCi/g. The two landfills are in place with covers. Passive groundwater treatment systems are operating and there is continued evaluation of groundwater and surface water through a sampling network.

The Rocky Flats CAD/ROD was issued in September 2006, less than a year after the official site closure on October 13, 2005. The CAD/ROD established two operable units at the site, the Central Operable Unit (COU) and the Peripheral Operable Unit (POU). The final remedy for the POU was no action, and it was subsequently deleted from the CERCLA National Priorities List (NPL). The Central OU is comprised of about 1,300 acres. The remedy for this area consists of institutional controls, physical controls and continued monitoring. Five-year reviews under CERCLA ensure continued protectiveness, with the next being scheduled for 2012.

Legacy Management monthly site inspection summary:

Following is a summary of site activities for April:

- Completed size reduction and packaging of concrete waste from the dam breach project. A total of 18 packages were prepared and will be shipped to Energy Solutions in Utah for disposal.
- Solar Ponds Plume Treatment System (SPPTS) Phase II and III construction was initiated. Contractors began excavations for collection sumps and treatment cells.
- Staff discovered a break in the SPPTS ITSS line (installed in Phase 1), which was excavated and repaired.
- The site received approximately 3.3 inches of precipitation (rain and snow mix) between April 17 and 19. Special inspections were performed on April 20 in accordance with RFLMA and site procedures. Minor erosion issues were observed at the Original Landfill and on some site roads.

Agency update:

The President's 2010 budget for the Department of Energy identifies the following priorities: (quoting from OMB documents):

- Begins to build a new economy that is powered by clean and secure energy through funding provided in the 2010 Budget and the \$39 billion provided for energy programs in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009.
- Provides significant increases in funding for basic research and world-leading scientific user facilities to support transformational discoveries and accelerate solutions to our Nation's most pressing problems – including the development of clean energy.
- Supports economic investment and positions the United States as the world leader in climate change technology.
- Accelerates the transition to a low-carbon economy through increased support of the development and deployment of clean energy technologies such as solar, biomass, geothermal, wind, and low-carbon emission coal power.
- Builds on the \$11 billion provided in the Recovery Act for smart grid technologies, transmission system expansion and upgrades, and other investments to modernize and enhance the electric transmission infrastructure to improve energy efficiency and reliability.
- Supports and encourages the early commercial deployment of innovative, clean energy technologies through loan guarantees.
- Reduces security risks through the detection, elimination, and securing of nuclear material and radiological sources worldwide while maintaining the safety, security, and reliability of the nuclear weapons stockpile.
- Continues the Nation's efforts to reduce environmental risks and safely manage nuclear materials.

Congressional update:

In May Congress will start marking up the fiscal year 2010 appropriations bill. Staff is tracking funding for DOE's Office of Legacy Management, the program office that manages Rocky Flats. At this time staff expects Legacy Management will be close to fully funded, thereby ensuring DOE will have the funds needed to meet their regulatory obligations.

At this time it is too early to determine funding levels for the US Fish and Wildlife Service and whether, by extension, there will be any funds for the Rocky Flats National Wildlife Refuge.

Site document update:

None at this time.

Stewardship Council update:

Next meeting: June 1