

# ROCKY FLATS STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL

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Karen Imbierowicz

## Monthly Status Report – September 2009

### Board meeting summary:

#### *Legacy Management (LM) Quarterly Update*

The Stewardship Council hosted the quarterly DOE briefing for the first quarter of 2009 (January through March). The briefing topics included:

- surface water monitoring;
- groundwater monitoring;
- ecological monitoring; and,
- site operations (inspections, pond operations, security, general maintenance, etc.).

Highlights of the first quarter included:

- All water the RFLMA Points of Compliance along Indiana Street remained below the applicable regulatory standards.
- Per the RFLMA and in coordination with CDPHE, DOE continues to evaluate uranium (U) concentrations at surface water Point of Evaluation (POE) GS10. The increase is a result of changes in hydrology – decreased surface water and increased groundwater. Groundwater contains naturally-occurring U, which adds to the total U concentrations at GS10. Because the U is largely naturally occurring, no specific remedial action will be taken at this time.
- All other POE analyte concentrations remained below reporting levels.
- Erosion and runoff controls, as well as extensive revegetation efforts, have reduced both sediment transport and constituent concentrations. All of the POEs continued to show Pu-239,240 and Am-241 activities well below the RFLMA standards.
- On March 25, 2009, DOE undertook the annual site inspection and monitoring walk-down for evidence of significant erosion and violation of institutional controls. No evidence of violations of institutional or physical controls was observed and no adverse biological conditions were noted during the inspection. Some areas with minor erosion were observed and field teams were sent back to determine what, if any, erosion control repairs needed to be made.
- Maintenance of erosion control features required continued effort throughout first quarter of 2009, especially following high-wind or precipitation events. Repairs were made to erosion wattles and matting loosened and displaced by high winds or rain. Several areas were seeded with additional native species to increase vegetation cover.
- Preparations were made during the quarter for the Phase II and III upgrades to the Solar Ponds Plume Treatment System (SPPTS). (The upgrades were completed in the second

quarter of 2009.) DOE included the current status of the SPPTS in their briefing. In July, DOE discovered structural issues with the system resulting from soil subsidence beneath one of the treatment cells. Subsidence resulted in leakage of water from the cell. DOE's geotechnical investigation indicated the soils beneath the cell in question had not been adequately compacted after a culvert was removed during site cleanup. DOE re-routed the collected water for treatment into another cell and repairs will be made to the affected cell to bring it back on-line.

- The Colorado Water Quality Control Commission (CWQCC) issued two rulings concerning water quality standards at the site. The former site surface water standard for U was roughly 10 pCi/l U. The site requested a change to the state-wide U standard of 30 ug/l (approximately 20 pCi/l). The CWQCC adopted a new U standard of 16.8 ug/l (approximately 11.3 pCi/l). DOE also requested that the gross alpha and gross beta water standards be dropped because they were redundant. The CWQCC agreed.

#### *Review of 2010 Work Plan*

The 2010 Plan builds on the Stewardship Council's efforts in 2009. The Board will continue to focus on DOE management issues, worker issues, outreach, communications, and some USFWS issues. The Plan will be approved at the November 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting.

#### *Review of 2010 Budget*

The Board began reviewing the 2010 budget. The proposed budget reflects a net decrease of \$2,950 over the 2009 budget; 2009 was a reduction of \$19,025 over 2008. Expenditures are expected to remain relatively constant. The budget will be adopted at the November 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting.

### Legacy Management monthly site inspection summary:

August site activities included:

- Geotechnical field work was performed to investigate the possible causes of the subsidence in the Solar Ponds Plume Treatment System (SPPTS) Phase II and III area. Six exploratory boreholes were drilled to provide a general indication of the subsurface characteristics in the area and soil samples were collected for geotechnical testing.
- Additional excavation was conducted beneath the former storage sump to investigate soil conditions. Backfill of the Phase II/III area was completed and flows at the SPPTS were reestablished sequentially until the system was completely back online.
- While reestablishing flows in SPPTS, indications of a new leak at the Interceptor Trench System Sump (Phase I) were observed. The source of the leak was determined to be a break in the end of an unused PVC pipe where it joins the brass valve housing. The pipe was subsequently capped and the area backfilled.
- Ecology personnel began weed mapping for planning weed control efforts this fall and next spring. Manual cutting for weed control was performed for small areas of Scotch thistle and tamarisk.
- Ecology personnel met with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) personnel to visit two locations that had met Preble's Mouse habitat revegetation success criteria based on last summer's monitoring efforts. After visiting the locations, USFWS concurred that these areas no longer need to be monitored and would be credited as restored habitat.
- The Site provided a summary to CDPHE regarding the status of observed cracks around the Original Landfill (OLF) berm 1. The cracks are being filled in by addition of small amounts

of soil and raking to fill, as provided by the OLF Monitoring and Maintenance Plan. In addition, results of the inclinometer readings showing displacement after the heavy spring precipitation were submitted to CDPHE. Data shows a correlation between the heavy precipitation and displacement.

- The design for the 2009 road maintenance project was completed and construction began on August 25.

### DOE Records Management:

As was reported in local press, PM Tech, Inc., an Arvada-based business, was awarded a \$13 million contract to manage records from Rocky Flats. According to *Weapons Complex Monitor*, the contract is for up to five years. Classified documents and records related to litigation are stored at the Federal Center in Lakewood. According to a DOE press release, the records must be maintained in Colorado “due to pending litigation by direction of the U.S. Department of Justice.” Additionally, “many of the records have lengthy retention requirements, [including] some that are required to be maintained for decades.”

These records are maintained by DOE Office of Environmental Management, not the Office of Legacy Management (LM). LM’s records will be housed on West Virginia. Included in the records that are to be maintained in Colorado are the records that were previously housed at Front Range Community College Library in Westminster.

### Congressional update -- Appropriations:

On September 30, 2009, the House and Senate Energy and Water Appropriations conferees agreed to a bill that funds DOE and certain programs within the Department of the Interior. The House approved the conference report on October 1<sup>st</sup>, but Senator Tom Coburn (R-OK) has placed a hold on the Senate’s consideration of the report because of concerns over Congressional reporting requirements contained in the final bill. The continuing resolution that funds DOE and other federal agencies runs through October 31<sup>st</sup>.

### Agency update:

None at this time.

### Site document update:

None at this time.

### Stewardship Council update:

Next meeting: November 2