

Rocky Flats Stewardship Working Group

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Ms. Barbara Mazurowski
Manager
Department of Energy
10808 Highway 93, Unit A
Golden, CO 80403-8200

Dear Barbara:

The vast majority of Stewardship Working Group members asked that I write you about the ongoing stewardship discussions at Rocky Flats. Working group members have had various concerns with the Rocky Flats Field Office's commitment to a robust stewardship dialogue but, as discussed below, we believe you and your staff have taken concrete measures to help ensure the ongoing conversation is effective and productive.

Over the past two years the members of the working group have been frustrated with what we view as a tepid commitment from DOE towards a comprehensive stewardship strategy for Rocky Flats. Part of our frustration has been exacerbated by a continual change of DOE personnel assigned to work on stewardship issues. During this two-year period, five different DOE employees have been assigned to work with the Stewardship Working Group. Soon after we would bring the newest DOE employee up to speed on our activities and begin to engage in a substantive dialogue, the responsibility for long-term stewardship planning would shift and we would have to begin anew.

Another cause of our frustration has been rooted in DOE's track record of having limited community involvement in the development of key stewardship documents. The members of the working group do not have all of the answers, but neither do DOE planners. Through our joint collaboration perhaps we can solve some of the remaining stewardship questions.

As you have commented, our involvement remains integral to the development of a stewardship strategy, including the development of a long-term stewardship plan for Rocky Flats. We believe the recent reorganization you implemented, especially as it relates to creating an office charged with long-term stewardship, is an important step in the right direction. We also believe steps Joe Legare and John Rampe have taken to involve the working group move DOE in the right direction. Our goal now is to ensure that these measures are permanent.

In the Stewardship Working Group's report entitled "Hand-In-Hand: Stewardship and Cleanup" one of the recommendations made was to have an on-site stewardship program manager with decision-making authority to coordinate the stewardship program. We therefore commend Joe for his decision to appoint John as the stewardship czar for Rocky Flats. The knowledge and expertise John brings to this position will be instrumental in crafting a comprehensive stewardship strategy for Rocky Flats. We request that the position of the stewardship czar be made permanent, for as noted in your organizational chart, stewardship is one of the key functions that will remain through closure.

Additionally, another positive change we have observed over the past few months is steps DOE has taken to substantively involve interested stakeholders in long-term stewardship issues. We believe that during the development of the draft ER RSOP, DOE and the community developed a constructive dialogue on stewardship issues. While room for improvement remains on the substance of a stewardship analysis, our concerns should not negate the constructive dialogue we developed.

Similarly, we believe DOE's commitment to work with the working group on the development of a stewardship strategy reflects an important change of direction. Joe and John, through their commitments and more importantly through their actions, are actively seeking our input as ideas and draft policies are developed.

We raise these issues for we believe the long-term success of the cleanup program hinges in large measure on the development and implementation of a site stewardship plan. It remains imperative that roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and enforcement mechanisms are implemented. DOE's goal of agreeing to an end-state vision with the community is founded upon a comprehensive commitment to long-term stewardship.

Our goal is to be proactive on long-term stewardship at Rocky Flats so that we can do our part to help protect human health and the environment for future generations. We know DOE shares that goal, and that is why it remains imperative that we maintain open lines of communication and why both DOE and the community commit to an open dialogue about its plans, intentions, and related uncertainties.

Should you wish to discuss our thoughts on the matter, please feel free to contact me or any member of the Rocky Flats Stewardship Working Group.

Sincerely yours,

/s/

David M. Abelson
RFCLOG
Co-Chair, Rocky Flats Stewardship Working Group

cc: Rocky Flats Coalition of Local Governments
Rocky Flats Citizens Advisory Board