

C.A.R.D. NEWSLETTER

July 20, 2009



Coloradoans Against Resource Destruction

CARD, PO Box 143, Wellington, CO 80549, 970-372-0029 (leave message) www.nunnglow.com

Important Upcoming Events...

Underground Injection Control Class V Draft Permit Public Hearing

Powertech proposes to reinject groundwater pumped from the upper portion of the Fox Hills formation during an aquifer pump test back into the same aquifer, using the pumping well that pumped the groundwater to the surface. EPA is issuing a Draft Permit to authorize the reinjection of the groundwater into the aquifer from which it was pumped. The pump test and injection site is located in the NE quarter of Section 33 in Township 10 North and Range 67 West. This location is 17 miles northeast of Fort Collins, 29 miles northwest of Greeley, 8 miles northwest of Nunn, and 8 miles northeast of Wellington.

The public hearing is currently scheduled for July 20, 2009, from 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm at the Island Grove 4-H Building located at 527 North 15th Avenue in Greeley, Colorado. EPA will also be accepting public comments at the public hearing. A court recorder will be present at the public hearing, to record any verbal statements made during the public hearing as part of the administrative record for the final permit decision. **Region 8 is receiving comments on the Draft Permit until July 24, 2009. Comments can be submitted to EPA either by email or in writing.**

Send comments to:

Valois Shea
Mailcode: 8P-W-GW
1595 Wynkoop Street
Denver, CO 80202
or
email them to shea.valois@epa.gov

The administrative record for the Draft Permit consists of the permit application, the Draft Permit document, the Statement of Basis, and the geological references listed in the Statement of Basis. These documents are available for public review at the EPA Region 8 UIS library on the second floor at the address shown above. These documents will also be available for public review at the following locations:

Wellington Public Library
800 Wilson Avenue
Wellington, CO
Library hours:

Monday 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.
Tuesday 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.
Wednesday 10 a.m. – 8 p.m.
Thursday 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.
Friday 10 a.m. – 3:3 p.m.
Saturday 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Northern Plains Public Library
216 2nd Street
Ault, CO
Library Hours:

• Monday – Friday 9 a.m. – 7 p.m.
Saturday 9 a.m. - noon

Division of Reclamation, Mining and Safety Stakeholder Meeting

Live audio feed (listen only) available on the Internet on July 30, 2009 at 1:00 p.m. – the link will be posted on the home page, <http://www.mining.state.co.us/>

Thursday, July 30, 2009

1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
1313 Sherman Street, Room 318
Denver, Colorado 80203
(corner of 13th and Sherman Street – one block south of the State Capitol)

Agenda

Continuation of the discussion of

- Rule 1.1 - Definitions
- Rule 1.4 - Application Review and Consideration Process

Deadline for written comments – 5:00 p.m., Thursday, July 23, 2009

If you have additional comments on the proposed Rules 1.1 and 1.4, please submit them in writing by 5:00 p.m., Thursday, July 23, 2009 to the Division of Reclamation, Mining and Safety, 1313 Sherman St., Denver, CO 80203 or email to DMG_web@state.co.us and indicate Stakeholder Meeting #4 in the subject line. Any written comments submitted will guide the discussion at the July 30th meeting.

Powertech touts uranium mine advantages, C.A.R.D. argues contrary

<http://www.greeleytribune.com/article/20090709/NEWS/907089947/1002/NONE&parentprofile=1001>

NUNN — There were 140 folding chairs furnished for spectators in the old gymnasium, but about 200 people attended a head-to-head debate Wednesday at the Nunn Community Center between authorities from a uranium mining company and representatives from a

group opposing a mining project near Nunn.

Officials of Vancouver, Canada-based Powertech Uranium Corp. attempted to reassure residents of Nunn and surrounding areas that the proposed operation of placing uranium mines a few miles west of Nunn would not only bring economic benefits, but would bring no negative water contamination or health problems.

Coloradoans Against Resource Destruction argued the contrary. A number of members of the audience seemed to side with C.A.R.D.

Powertech's License application deficient in South Dakota

<http://powertechexposed.com/>

June 14, 2009 - The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission has identified five material deficiencies in Powertech's application for a license to conduct in-situ leach uranium mining at its Dewey-Burdock project near Edgemont, South Dakota.

The problems with the application are numerous, and will likely take some time to correct. According to a participant who monitored the meeting, the deficiencies include:

- Inadequate characterization of the hydrology and geology of the site, and lack of information to support conclusions.
- Inadequate descriptions of where ISL mining would actually occur. Apparently, Powertech has not conducted enough exploratory drilling to identify all of the specific ore bodies it intends to mine.
- Insufficient detail regarding waste disposal methods. (For a letter from the Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality rejecting an overture from Powertech to pump wastewater across the state line for disposal in a deep injection well, go [here](#).)
- Uncertainty regarding ISL mining in unconfined aquifers.
- Questions concerning aquifers that may serve as sources of drinking water.

The meeting participant said Powertech cited the high cost of exploration drilling and testing as a reason why additional information was not provided to the NRC.

Radiation and Health

http://www.policyalternatives.ca/~ASSETS/DOCUMENT/Saskatchewan_Pubs/2009/Radiation_and_health.pdf

This report was commissioned by the Canadian Center for Policy Alternatives (Saskatchewan office) and the Saskatchewan Union of Nurses. Verbal agreement to proceed was granted on May 28, 2009 for a report to be completed by June 18, 2009. The report is to be presented to the *Future of Uranium in Saskatchewan Public Consultation Process* on June 23, 2009.

The report is very comprehensive, and here are the **Conclusions stated at the end of the report:**

1. Exposure to radiation results in an excess relative risk in the incidence of total solid cancers.
2. Exposure to radiation results in an excess relative risk in mortality from total solid cancers.
3. Lifetime solid cancer risk estimates for those exposed as children are 2-3 times higher than estimates for the adult population.
4. Nuclear power workers have a dose-related excess relative risk of all-cause mortality.
5. Nuclear power workers have a dose-related excess relative risk of all cancer mortality.
6. Nuclear power workers in Canada have a much higher excess relative risk of all cancer mortality in comparison to other countries.
7. Current radiation protection standards for nuclear power workers need to be at least reviewed and possibly revised based on recent evidence.
8. Nuclear power plant explosions like Chernobyl in the Ukraine have health implications for children (thyroid cancer and leukemia) in countries that are thousands of miles away.
9. Living near a nuclear power facility is associated with leukemia in young children.
10. Although nuclear energy has the least amount of overall CO2 emissions, it will take at least 50 years before the technology is developed to the point of universal and commercial viability. As such, nuclear energy will not be a solution to climate change, although it can still have a positive impact on energy production.
11. From a health perspective, the potential benefits of direct solar capture and wind power are very desirable. Wind power is one of the most cost-effective forms of renewable energy.
12. Past experience with nuclear energy suggests that high cost surprises should be included in the planning process.
13. 61.8% of registered nurses and registered psychiatric nurses indicated that they do not support the development of a nuclear power facility. 89.9% indicated that they were concerned about the health implications of a nuclear power plant.

Regional News - Destroying Indigenous Populations

<http://www.truthout.org/062009Y>

This is an interesting article about the plight of the Sioux in the Dakotas, the threat from uranium mining and depleted uranium. CARD has been working with this group to help stop uranium mining by Powertech Uranium Corp. in South Dakota.

Excerpt...

Charmaine White Face, an Oglala Tetuwan who lives on the Pine Ridge Reservation, is the spokesperson for the Teton Sioux Nation Treaty Council (TSNTC), established in 1893 to uphold the terms of the Fort Laramie Treaty of 1868. She is also coordinator of the voluntary group, [Defenders of the Black Hills](#), that works to preserve and protect the environment where they live.

Most of the Sioux's land has been taken, and what remains has been laid waste by radioactive pollution. "Nothing grows in these areas - nothing can grow. They are too radioactive," White Face said.

There is uranium all around the Black Hills, South and North Dakota, Wyoming and Montana. Mining companies came in and dug large holes through these lands to extract uranium in the 1950's and 1960's prior to any prohibitive regulations. Abandoned uranium mines in southwestern South Dakota number 142. In the Cave Hills area, another sacred place in South Dakota used for vision quests and burial sites, there are 89 abandoned uranium mines.

The worst part, according to White Face, is that, "None of these abandoned mines have been marked. They never filled them up, they never capped them. There are no warning signs ... nothing. The Black Hills and its surroundings are the recharge area for several major aquifers in the South Dakota, Nebraska, and Wyoming regions. The crisis can be gauged from the simple description that White Face gives: "When the winds come, they pick up the [uranium] dust and carry it; when it rains or snows, it washes it down into the aquifers and groundwater. Much of this radioactive contamination then finds its way into the Missouri River." She informs us that twelve residents out of about 600 of the sparsely populated county of Cave Hills have developed brain tumors. A nuclear physicist has declared one mine in the area to be as radioactively "hot" as ground zero of Hiroshima.

The Ogala Sioux are engaged in ongoing legal battles with the [pro-uranium](#) state of South Dakota. They are aware of the unequal nature of their battle, but they cannot afford to give up. Other tribes, such as the Navajo and Hopi in New Mexico, [have been exposed to radioactive material](#) as well. Furthermore, the July 16, 1979, spill of 100 million gallons of radioactive water containing uranium tailings from a tailing pond into the north arm of the Rio Puerco, near the small town of Church Rock, New Mexico, also [affected indigenous peoples in Arizona](#).

Anniversary of the worst accidental release of radioactive waste

On the morning of July 16, 1979, Church Rock (just east of Gallup, NM and north of I-40) was a small sun baked community of mainly Navajo (Dine') people, herding sheep or growing a little corn amidst red dirt and sagebrush. Clusters of traditional hogans (eight sided cabins) and mobile homes can be seen from the roads throughout the region, marking family land allotments.

Behind an earthen pond dam, ninety million gallons of liquid radioactive waste, and eleven hundred tons of solid mill wastes were sitting in a pond waiting for evaporation to leave behind solids. Suddenly, the dam gave way and the waters burst through, flowing out across the red land, and down the washes to permanently contaminate the Rio Puerco, known to traditional Dine' as To' Nizhoni (beautiful water.)

No one was killed in the actual flood. But along the way it left residues of radioactive uranium, thorium, radium, and polonium, as well as traces of metals such as cadmium, aluminum, magnesium, manganese, molybdenum, nickel, selenium, sodium, vanadium, zinc, iron, lead and high concentrations of sulfates. The spill degraded the western Rio Puerco as a water source. It carried toxic metals already detectable at least seventy miles downstream. And it raised the specter that uranium mining in the Colorado River Basin may be endangering Arizona's Lake Mead, and with it the drinking water of Las Vegas, Los Angeles, and much of Arizona.

Except for the atomic bomb tests, the Church Rock disaster was probably the biggest single release of radioactive poisons on American soil. Ironically it occurred thirty-four years to the day after the first atomic test explosion at Trinity, New Mexico, not far away. The source of the catastrophe was uranium mill wastes. Usable uranium is extracted from the sandstone in which it is usually found by grinding it fine and leaching it with sulfuric acid. The acid carries off the desired isotopes. But the leftover waste sands-- "tailings"--still contain 85 percent of the ore's original radioactivity, and 99.9 percent of its original volume. There are now some 140 million tons of them scattered around the West. NRC commissioner Victor Gilinsky and others consider them "the dominant contribution to radiation exposure" of the entire nuclear fuel cycle. The acid milling liquids--called "liquor"--also dissolve dangerous traces of thorium 230, radium 222, lead 210, and other isotopes. Because of their high radioactivity the tailings and liquor both must be isolated from the environment--but nobody has yet demonstrated a method with any long-term success.

Today, the Church Rock accident is acknowledged as likely the largest single release of radioactive contamination ever to take place in U.S. history (outside of the atomic bomb tests). A few weeks after it occurred, the mine and mill operator, United Nuclear Corporation, was back in business at Church Rock as if nothing had happened

Thank you to all who have supported our efforts to stop uranium mining in Colorado by donating money, volunteering, signing petitions and business resolutions and getting the word out to everyone you know.

We need your help now more than ever

If you don't want uranium mining by Canadian company, Powertech Uranium Corp. 10 miles from Fort Collins, please stay involved and help us stop the mining.

On May 20, 2008, Colorado Governor Bill Ritter signed House Bill 08-1161, the most comprehensive state legislation in the U.S. on in situ leach uranium mining and ground water protection. State legislators Steve Johnson, John Kefalas, and Randy Fischer -- all from Fort Collins -- sponsored the bill.

Some people thought that we had “won” the battle against uranium mining when the law passed. - NOT TRUE.

Laws by themselves cannot stop anything. Laws must be *enforced*, and that starts with writing rules that say exactly what a law means.

The rulemaking process has already started. The uranium mining companies, the Colorado Mining Association, and their allies will attempt to weaken the rules.

Rulemaking includes public hearings, and we all need to be ready. Letting state rule-makers know that thousands of Colorado residents want strong protection (and over 11,000 have already signed petitions) is one way we can insure that the will of the people is incorporated into these rules.

As you might expect, the mining companies are pressuring to weaken the regulation language to their favor. They have deep pockets and will likely hire a number of pro-uranium mining consultants to testify at the upcoming rulemaking hearings. They will argue how “benign” ISL mining is.

The truth is - in situ leach mining has never restored the water back to previous condition. The mining industry argues this is possible, but when ISL mines have been declared “restored” it is only by lowering the restoration standards. Those are the facts. We can find no records of any ISL mine in the US that has “restored” groundwater without relaxed standards. This means the water wasn't actually restored, it remained contaminated because total restoration is virtually impossible.

Coloradoans Against Resource Destruction (CARD) does not have a financial sponsor. We must rely on donations and grants to raise money to fight uranium mining.

We need approximately \$10,000 to hire expert witnesses to testify how important it is to keep the regulations strong and hold the mining companies accountable for restoring the water back to previous conditions. We need your financial support to make this happen!

If the mining companies are successful in getting the rules of HB 08-1161 relaxed to their favor, and our water is contaminated, it could have serious economic and negative health

effects to humans, livestock and agriculture - forever - or after 4.5 billion years (the half-life of uranium), whichever comes first.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- We need your financial support to hire these expert witnesses.
- Please donate what you can. Donations can now be tax-deductible.
- You can donate through our website: www.nunnglow.com
- Or mail a check to our fiscal agent Information Network for Responsible Mining (INFORM) PO Box 349, Lyons, CO 80540. Donations to INFORM are tax deductible.
- Everyone in the State of Colorado has a say on whether uranium mining is permitted here. Let your voice be heard! - Continue writing letters to the editor and to your elected officials telling them you are against in situ leach uranium mining.
- When the mining companies apply for a mining permit later this year you can appear and state your objections to uranium mining at the public hearings. Sign up for our electronic newsletter at www.nunnglow.com so we can notify you when and where to appear.

Who Are We?

CARD (Coloradoans Against Resource Destruction) is a diverse collection of citizens concerned about the health, environmental and economic impacts of uranium-related activity. We are convinced this project will have dire consequences for northern Colorado and set a dangerous precedent. Our goal is to prevent uranium mining in Colorado and protect our valuable resources, especially our water, for future generations.

The CARD website, www.nunnglow.com, has a wealth of information about the proposed mining, the processes and the potential impact on our air and water. On our website you can learn what you can do to stop the proposed uranium mining, sign an online petition and make a donation.