



April 5th, 2021

Claire Levy, Boulder County Commissioner
Marta Loachamin, Boulder County Commissioner
Matt Jones, Boulder County Commissioner

Dear Boulder County Commissioners,

In the best interests of public health, safety, and wellbeing, we urge you to fully withdraw your participation from the Rocky Mountain Greenway Project. As a public leader and official, it is of utmost importance that you prioritize the health and safety of your constituents.

The proposed mountain biking trail is located on the previous buffer zone of the Rocky Flats Plant, a nuclear weapons plant that produced an estimated 70,000 plutonium pits for nuclear bombs between 1952 and 1989. During that time, there were two massive industrial fires, in 1957 and 1969 that spread plutonium particles all over the Rocky Flats area and the surrounding Denver metro area. Additionally, there were highly questionable practices of storage and disposal of contaminated radioactive material, including 5,000 barrels of plutonium waste that were stored outdoors for 11 years, leaking plutonium waste onto the ground [1]. There is even documented evidence that 1400 barrels of contaminated waste are still buried onsite [2]. The site was officially shut down after an FBI raid in 1989 found severe violation of environmental laws [3].

Cleanup of the site was estimated by the Department of Energy to cost \$36.6 billion and take 65 years - but what ended up happening was only a partial cleanup totaling \$7 billion and ending in 2005 [4]. The result is that the Rocky Flats area is still widely contaminated with plutonium particles, as well as other hazardous waste such as americium, beryllium, uranium, and radioactive lead among many others [5]. In 2018, Dr. Harvey Nichols estimated that there were billions of plutonium particles per acre when he testified in Federal Court [6]. Further, there is court precedent that contamination remains in the class area east of Rocky Flats. The jury from the Marilyn Cook et al. v. Rockwell International Corporation. et al. class action lawsuit found that “plutonium will continue to be present on the Class Properties indefinitely.” [7]

Plutonium has a half-life of 24,110 years, but remains radioactive for over 241,100 years [8]. When a plutonium particle is lodged in one’s body, through inhalation or ingestion, it is likely to remain permanently, and will continuously bombard surrounding cells with radiation [9]. Lasting impacts of plutonium exposure include cancer, immune deficiencies, birth defects, and a wide array of other health problems [10]. The threat to public health, safety and welfare from

promoting recreation at Rocky Flats far exceeds any benefit that the new recreation site would offer.

There is increasing precedent for the decision to keep public recreation off of Rocky Flats. In 2018, seven school districts made commitments to not allow field trips to the refuge, protecting nearly 300,000 students from contamination [11]. In February of 2020, Broomfield City Council voted unanimously to withdraw their participation in the Jefferson Parkway project [12], and on October 27, 2020, the Broomfield City Council also voted unanimously to withdraw from the Rocky Mountain Greenway project [13].

We urge you to make the same commitment to protect public health and safety by also withdrawing your support and participation from the Rocky Mountain Greenway.

This letter also represents a personal commitment on behalf of bicyclists and bicycle businesses in the cities and counties surrounding Rocky Flats, to never recreate on the Rocky Flats area, and to actively warn other bicyclists and bicycle groups to never recreate on the former nuclear weapons production site.

[Citations Below]

Sincerely,

Elected Officials

Edie Hooton, State Representative, House District 10

Daniel Stange, School Board Treasurer, Sheridan School District No. 2

Supporting Organizations

350 Colorado

A Call to Actions

Arapahoe Young Democrats

Beyond Nuclear

BikeSource

Boulder Amnesty International

Boulder Shambhala Center

CEO Pipe Organs/ Golden Ponds Farm

Citizen Action New Mexico

Citizens Awareness Network

Citizens for Alternatives to Radioactive Dumping
Citizens' Environmental Coalition
Clinica Family Health
Concerned Citizens for Nuclear Safety
Concerned Citizens for SNEC Safety
Don't Waste Arizona
Earth Care
Ecological Options Network
Environmental Information Network, Inc.
Gamma Phi Beta
Georgia WAND & Women Changing the World
Green State Solutions
Hilltop's Own
International Tribal Association
Mackintosh Academy
Manhattan Project for a Nuclear-Free World
Metropolitan State Family Literacy Program
Mid-Missouri Peaceworks
Mountain Forum for Peace
Naropa University
Nature's Own
Nevada Nuclear Waste Task Force
New Energy Economy
Nuclear Information and Resource Service
Nuclear Watch New Mexico
Nukewatch
On Behalf of Planet Earth
PeaceWorks, Kansas City
Pearce Coaching and Fitting
Physicians for Social Responsibility
Physicians for Social Responsibility, Colorado
Physicians for Social Responsibility - Kansas City
PortsmouthPiketon Residents For Environmental Safety and Security (PRESS)
Rocky Mountain Peace and Justice Center
Rocky Flats Downwinders
Safe Energy Rights Group (SEnRG)
San Luis Obispo Mothers for Peace
Savannah River Site Watch
Save Our St. Vrain Valley, Inc.
Support and Education for Radiation Victims (SERV)
Snake River Alliance

Spirit of the Sun, Inc.
Stop the Money Pipeline
Sunshine Shave Ice, LLC
The Colorado Coalition for the Prevention of Nuclear War
Tri-Valley CAREs, Livermore, CA
Unite North Metro Denver
Uranium Watch
Veterans for Peace, Boulder Chapter
Veterans for Peace, Phil Berrigan Memorial Chapter, Baltimore, MD
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