**From:** Ryan Moehring
**To:** Robert Segin; FW6 RO EA; FW6 RO ARDs
**Subject:** RE: News Clips 9_11
**Date:** Friday, September 11, 2015 6:23:08 PM
**Attachments:** image009.png
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image013.png

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Nice find, Steve. Kudos to Dean for such an intelligent and even-handed defense of our work! -Ryan

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**From:** Robert Segin [mailto:robert_segin@fws.gov]
**Sent:** Friday, September 11, 2015 1:14 PM
**To:** FW6 RO EA; FW6 RO ARDs
**Subject:** News Clips 9_11

# Dean Rundle: Rocky Flats fear campaign not fact-based

***By Dean Rundle***

POSTED: 09/10/2015 07:45:45 PM MDT

This is in response to LeRoy Moore's recent guest commentary, "Prohibit public access to Rocky Flats" (Daily Camera, Sept. 2). As the Refuge Manager for Rocky Flats and Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuges (NWR) during 2000-2007, I had the pleasure to interact personally with Dr. Moore on many occasions. I recall we even "debated" once on KGNU. He was always cordial, passionate and professional. I respected him.

Dr. Moore wrote truthfully about the nature of plutonium. Some of his assertions about Rocky Flats are correct; others are not.

The plethora facts he omits are what discredit his call to ban public access to the refuge. Those little "particles" (atoms) of Pu-239 aren't found just on the refuge — they are everywhere. Thanks to atmospheric weapons testing in the 1950s and '60s, there is a background level of this highly-toxic, man-made element. Plutonium is in school yards of Boulder and in the parks and forests where we recreate. While you are probably more likely to be hit by a meteorite, it is not absolutely impossible that you might inhale a cancer causing Pu atom at Scott Carpenter Park, or in the Indian Peaks Wilderness. Dr. Moore knows that the levels of residual Pu on the refuge areas proposed for public access are the same or lower than the levels found on the city and county open spaces that surround most of the refuge. No barrier prevents atoms from crossing Highway 128 or Indiana Street. Yet he calls for no ban to public use of the open spaces around Standley Lake or north of Highway 128.

Dr. Moore's insinuation that EPA and CDPHE somehow let DOE "off the hook" during the Rocky Flats cleanup is surprisingly disingenuous. I relied on those regulators to protect the health of our staff. In many internal and public meetings I never once observed anything but hard-nosed regulators and a responsible party committed to delivering a remedy that was fully protective of public health. They were successful.

I proudly led the FWS Comprehensive Conservation Plan efforts for Rocky Flats, an incredibly robust, inclusive and comprehensive public process. Dr. Moore participated continuously. David Abelson, former executive director of the Rocky Flats Coalition of Local Governments called our CCP process "government at its best."

There was no legal challenge to our decision.

Indeed, there were many more comments opposing public access than supporting it. Most opposed were form letters from around the world, generated by an effective network of passionate anti-nuclear activists — "click here to comment." Among the substantive comments from local sources, the "pro and anti" comments were fairly evenly divided. Superior, Boulder, and Boulder County preferred an alternative with little public access; Westminster, Broomfield, Arvada and Jefferson County all supported the alternative that was selected and is now being implemented.

Dr. Moore's complaint that the current FWS program "pre-empts public input" is absurd, truly insulting. He wants another bite of an apple he has already eaten. He raised all of the same arguments during the CCP process and EPA's Record of Decision process. Agency responses to his concerns are all written in the public record. Asked and answered. In a court he would be advised, "Move along, counselor."

What FWS, EPA, DOE and CDPHE cannot do is to guarantee with absolute 100 percent certainty that no one will ever be harmed by the residual contamination at Rocky Flats. Activists want decision-makers to "prove the negative" — prove that nothing bad will happen. Any scientist, in any discipline, knows that is impossible. All science-based decisions involve probabilities.

The law requires remediation of "Superfund" sites so that the most exposed person has an excess cancer risk no greater than one in 10,000. The Rocky Flats remedy was designed to protect the refuge worker. Dr. Moore conveniently failed to tell you what that means; I will. A refuge biologist, standing 1,000 hours a year for 17 years, exposed to soil and vegetation, at the location of highest residual contamination (which isn't even on the refuge, but on DOE-retained lands) would have a less than one in 500,000 chance of an excess cancer. Any refuge visitor would face a far lower risk — many orders of magnitude safer than required by law, or by any definition of reasonableness.

*Dean Rundle managed the National Wildlife Refuges at Rocky Fl*

**http://www.dailycamera.com/guest-opinions/ci_28791589/dean-rundle-rocky-flats-fear-campaign-not-fact**

# Rare photos of Colorado lynx captured by automated cameras

DENVER (AP) — Scores of fierce-looking lynx roam the remote Colorado high country, 16 years after they were reintroduced to the state. But the elusive animals are rarely seen or photographed.

Now state researchers have captured photos of lynx as they prowl the San Juan Mountains of southwestern Colorado. Using automated cameras mounted in trees, the researchers are studying where lynx live and how well they're doing, said Eric Odell, manager of Colorado Parks and Wildlife's carnivore conservation program.

Odell estimates 200 to 300 lynx live in Colorado but no one knows for sure. He hopes to get several years' worth of data to track their range over time.

Some key questions about lynx and the monitoring program:

WHAT ARE LYNX?

Lynx are medium-size cats with delicately tufted ears, short tails and broad, kitten-like paws. They can be nearly 3 feet long and weigh as much as 30 pounds. Their big paws work like snowshoes, helping them walk across powdery snow, Odell said. They're widespread in Canada and Alaska but scarcer in the 48 contiguous states, where they are protected as threatened species under the Endangered Species Act. They primarily hunt snowshoe hares.

In this Feb. 9, 2015 photo, provided by the Colorado Department of Parks and Wildlife, a rare lynx i …

WHERE ARE THEY IN COLORADO?

Colorado began reintroducing lynx in 1999 after they disappeared from the state in the 1970s because of hunting, poisoning and development. The lynx were captured in Canada and Alaska and released in the San Juan Mountains. The transplanted cats began having kittens by 2003, and Colorado-born lynx have been having kittens ever since. They mostly live in spruce and fir forests above 9,000 feet elevation.

WHY TAKE THEIR PICTURES?

The cameras are part of an effort to see how much of their potential habitat the lynx are occupying. Researchers randomly chose 50 plots of land, each one about 29 square miles, and began monitoring last winter. They also visit more accessible plots on snowmobiles or skis to look for lynx tracks, scat and fur.

WHY NOT JUST COUNT THEM?

In this March 14, 2015 photo, provided by the Colorado Department of Parks and Wildlife, a rare lynx …

Counting lynx is expensive and labor-intensive. Unlike some species, individual lynx aren't distinguishable by appearance, so they have to be captured multiple times to document their status, Odell said. The study is also less invasive.

HOW DO THE CAMERAS WORK?

The cameras' motion detectors trigger the shutter when animals walk into view. At night, they use an infrared flash so the lynx don't know they're being photographed. Crews seal the battery-powered cameras inside weather-tight cases and mount them in trees before the snow begins to fall and retrieve them after the snow melts. Odell expects to deploy 124 cameras this winter, about the same as last winter.

WHEN WERE THE PHOTOS TAKEN?

Researchers got some lynx photos in 2011. Last winter was the first season for the full study. Odell hopes the state will fund the study for 10 years.

HOW MUCH DOES THIS COST?

The first year of the study cost about $40,000, Odell said.

## HUNTING SEASON

**Nebraska** -(Ammoland.com)- September in Nebraska means football – and hunting. The first day of the month brings the opener of several hunting seasons, including dove, grouse and archery deer. Archery deer hunting is available under the authority of several different permit types, although statewide archery permits are unlimited in number. Read the 2015 Big Game Guide at digital.outdoornebraska.gov/i/502872-big-game-guide-2015 for more information.
Sept. 5 brings the opening day of early teal season in the Low Plains zone. The season opens in the High Plains zone on Sept. 12, and seasons in both zones run through Sept. 20.
The teal season in the northern portion of Nebraska is on an experimental basis. Continuation of the teal season in that area depends on hunters' ability to distinguish teal from other duck species. During this experiment, the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission will evaluate the rate at which nontarget species are shot at or taken. If the rate is considered unacceptable by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the northern portion of Nebraska will lose its teal season. In addition, those who take or attempt to take ducks other than teal will be subject to prosecution.

Other hunting seasons opening Sept. 1 are cottontail, jackrabbit, snipe, rail, raccoon and opossum.

A companion for every hunter should be the 2015 Nebraska Public Access Atlas. This free publication details sites enrolled in the Open Fields and Waters program, which allows public walk-in hunting, trapping and fishing access on private lands. The atlas also includes public lands. It is available wherever permits are sold and atdigital.outdoornebraska.gov/i/554204-public-access-atlas-2015.

Read more: http://www.ammoland.com/2015/09/several-nebraska-hunting-seasons-opening-in-early-september/#ixzz3lSREe6n8

# No chromium six contamination discovered in Colorado River

Posted: Thursday, September 10, 2015 11:05 pm | *Updated: 11:08 pm, Thu Sep 10, 2015.*

**By BRANDON MESSICK Today's News-Herald | 1 comment**

The Clean Colorado River Sustainability Coalition (CCRSCo) met Thursday to discuss the protection of the Colorado River and Lake Havasu from potential pollutants.

Pacific Gas & Electric representative Curt Russell, who manages the energy company's site in Topock, spoke at the meeting to address pollution that leaked from the Topock groundwater station in 1951.

Hexavalent chromium, also known as chromium six, was featured in the 1996 film "Erin Brockovich," and is believed to cause cancer and other illnesses when inhaled or ingested by humans. The substance is used to process textile dyes, paints, plastics and other coatings, but its use within the European Union is largely prohibited.

Chromium six was discovered by Pacific Gas & Electric at the energy company's Topock site in 1996, where it leaked into the soil. PG&E The facility lies within the Havasu National Wildlife Refuge. According to Russell, the chemical entered the soil surrounding the facility, and contaminated an aquifer underneath.

Russell says that investigations have shown no contamination of the Colorado River from the pollution, and PG&E is working with state and federal agencies to reduce contamination. One of the company's more ambitious cleanup efforts began in 2005, when well water was extracted and moved to a treatment facility, where it continues to be treated and pumped through the water system.

To date, 8,200 pounds of chromium have been removed from groundwater neighboring the Colorado River, from 660 million gallons treated.

"This isn't meant to be the final cleanup," Russell said, "But it's meant to keep it away from the river. The river continues to be protected."

The company is compiling a report for presentation to government and environmental agencies in 2016, which will outline its overall plan to further reduce the danger of contamination to the Colorado River and surrounding wells. Russell estimated at the meeting that a full cleanup of all of the chromium six from Arizona's groundwater could take 15-30 years.

"We're here for the long run," he said. "We're a big company, and we have money set in reserve for all of this."

Among the organizations overseeing PG&E's cleanup efforts are the U.S. Department of Interior, the Bureau of Reclamation, the Bureau of Land Management, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality.

Also at the CCRSCo meeting, Doyle Wilson, the city's water resources coordinator, announced that blue-green algae has been removed in large quantities from Lake Havasu. Wilson said that the algae persists near Havasu's marinas, and Chemehuevi Indian Tribe representative Steven Escobar reported a persistence of blue-green algae near the reservation's casino.

The algae, which releases phosphorous into the lake water, can potentially cause fish populations to die off, as they did recently in the Thompson Bay area near the south end of the Island. That die-off, according to Wilson, apparently has stopped.
The lake appears to be safe, and it retain its natural chemical balance, said Mayor Mark Nexsen.

http://www.thespectrum.com/news/

# Mesquite to invite US Fish and Wildlife reps to meeting

The Mesquite City Council directed staff Tuesday to invite U.S. Fish and Wildlife representatives to a council meeting so the city can determine exactly what it needs to do in regards to the Virgin RiverHabitat Conservation Plan.

The conservation plan stems from the 1986 Mesquite Lands Act, as amended in 1996 and 1999, which mandated that the Bureau of Land Management sell off 10,000 acres of land to Mesquite, said Development Services Director Richard Secrist.

That land was sold to the city of Mesquite, who then sold it to developers. Much of that land has since been developed into the Planned Communities where the City's recent growth has occurred, Secrist said.

Secrist said as a stipulation of the land sale Mesquite has to take measures to protect engendered species of two fish — Virgin River Chub and Woundfin — and three birds — Southwestern Willow Flycatcher, Yuma Clapper Rail, and the Western Yellow-Billed Cuckoo — along the Virgin River, per guidelines from Fish and Wildlife.

Another amendment to the Mesquite Lands Act is currently before Congress under Senate Bill 953. This Bill will allow Mesquite to use Mesquite Lands Act funds to finish the conservation plan and to implement it, Secrist said.

The problem City Council addressed Tuesday: The Fish and Wildlife department hasn't nailed down a plan with the city on what it needs to do to protect the endangered species.

So things are on hold for now with the plan due to lack of funding and a clear understanding of the type of plan the Fish and Wildlife Service will allow, Secrist said.

In the recent past, Fish and Wildlife has given mixed signals on what the plan should be, Councilman George Rapson and Secrist said.

In other business, the council approved a conditional use permit for an automobile permit where Harley's Garage used to be.

Secrist said the new owners intend to fix it up by replacing the sign out front and painting, breathing new life into the old business.

City Council also approved a contract with Meadow Valley Inc. for the design and build of Exit 118. Public Works Director Bill Tanner said construction is scheduled to start by early December.

City Engineer Travis Anderson also gave a sneak peek of the design which he said includes two arches, creating a bit of a tunnel on each side of the interstate.

http://www.thespectrum.com/news/

## Getting a handle on wildfires may be key to saving greater sage-grouse

Posted on September 11, 2015 by Bob Berwyn

### *Current wildfire trends could cut sage grouse populations dramatically*

**Staff Report**

Slowing the spiral of growing wildfires may be crucial to protecting greater sage-grouse during the next 30 years, U.S. Geological Survey researchers said after comparing wildfire, precipitation and sage grouse population trends.

Cutting destructive fires near key habitat areas would be most beneficial and could even help sage grouse populations rebound, the scientists concluded.

The new study  projects that, if the current trend in wildfire continues unabated, sage grouse populations will continue to plummet — by as much as half by the mid-1940s. The models used by the scientists  simulated different post-fire recovery times for sagebrush habitats based on soil attributes — soil moisture and temperature maps — that strongly influence resilience to wildfire and resistance to invasive grass species.

The findings also showed that greater sage-grouse populations increase following periods of above-average precipitation. But the long-lasting effects of wildfire in greater sage-grouse breeding areas negated the positive effects associated with precipitation.

Climate change may result in less precipitation and warmer, drier soils in sagebrush ecosystems, leaving greater sage-grouse habitat vulnerable to increasingly frequent wildfires. Fire is a natural process in sagebrush ecosystems, but burn size and frequency in the Great Basin have increased over the past few decades in response to the increasing expansion of invasive grasses, primarily cheatgrass.

Wildfires kill nearly all native species of sagebrush, which can transform the habitat into landscapes dominated by invasive grasses when soils are warm and dry. In turn, the presence of invasive grasses can prevent sagebrush from returning and, by serving as tinder, result in a positive feedback loop that promotes more wildfires in future years.

"Greater sage-grouse population persistence may be compromised as sagebrush ecosystems and sage-grouse habitat become more impacted by fire and a changing climate," said Peter Coates, a research scientist with the USGS Western Ecological Research Center.

"Our research shows that targeted fire suppression in core sage-grouse areas is vital to help conserve large blocks of the best habitat for sage-grouse in the Great Basin," Coates said.

Specifically, the study found that reducing the trend in annual cumulative burned area near leks sites by 75 percent would help slow greater sage-grouse population declines, even during periods of below-average precipitation.

Coates said more long-term research can help identify populations that are most at risk from wildfire or changing climate and lead to more effective targeting of management resources for conservation of sagebrush and greater sage-grouse populations.

*This peer-reviewed research, Long-term effects of wildfire on sage-grouse populations: an integration of population and ecosystem ecology for management in the Great Basin, was authored by Peter Coates, USGS; M.A. Ricca, USGS; B.G. Prochazka, USGS; , K.E. Doherty, USFWS; M.L. Brooks, USGS; and M.L. Casazza, USGS.*

http://summitcountyvoice.com/2015/09/11/getting-a-handle-on-wildfires-may-be-key-to-saving-greater-sage-grouse/

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