

Law Offices of Randall M. Weiner, P.C.

3100 Arapahoe Avenue, Suite 202

Boulder, CO 80303

E-mail: randall@randallweiner.com

for further information, contact:

Attorney Randall Weiner 303 440-3321

mobile 720 217-8192

for immediate release, Wednesday, May 17, 2017

**COMMUNITY GROUPS SUE TO BLOCK TRAILS, VISITOR CENTER CONSTRUCTION
AT FORMER ROCKY FLATS NUCLEAR WEAPONS PRODUCTION SITE;
CLAIM FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH MAJOR FEDERAL ENVIRONMENTAL LAWS,
RISK OF LINGERING RADIOACTIVE CONTAMINATION**

Groups from communities near the former Rocky Flats nuclear weapons plant today sued the U.S. government for failing to comply with federal environmental laws in planning to build public trails and a visitor center at the former plutonium facility. Filed in U.S. District Court in Denver, the litigation charges that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), the site's current manager, has not completed a required analysis of environmental risks and policy options.

Plaintiffs include the Rocky Mountain Peace & Justice Center, Candelas Glows, Rocky Flats Right to Know, Rocky Flats Neighborhood Association and Environmental Information Network. Their lawsuit seeks to block construction, scheduled to begin next month, until the government completes an up-to-date, environmental analysis.

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires public involvement to review decisions that affect the human environment. Federal agencies must explain the impact of their plans and justify all reasonable alternatives to proposed actions.

Boulder attorney Randall Weiner, who is representing the plaintiffs, explained, "The purpose of NEPA is to require an analysis of environmental effects before the agency's actions are irreversible. By avoiding the NEPA mandate, FWS is virtually thumbing its nose at its obligations to consider the risks its plans pose to the public. The agency has waited too long to comply with its NEPA responsibilities." The suit also alleges violations of the National Wildlife Refuge Systems Administration Act.

Rocky Flats manufactured plutonium components for nuclear weapons. In 1989, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) raided the site for violating environmental laws, led by FBI special agent Jon Lipsky. The plant was shut down and never reopened. According to Lipsky, "For over four decades, manufacturing, nuclear criticality accidents, spills, fires and waste disposal released plutonium and other radionuclides. These materials were dispersed by wind and rain into the surrounding soil and water."

Parts of Rocky Flats are on the Superfund list of the nation's most contaminated sites. Soils and sediments are contaminated with radioactive materials, and questions have been raised about past sampling for plutonium as well as recently reported excess cancers among neighbors.

LeRoy Moore, a consultant with the Rocky Mountain Peace & Justice Center, added, "We want to make certain that pollutants in the soil at Rocky Flats, including plutonium, beryllium and uranium, do not contaminate members of the public, who FWS unfortunately plans to invite onto the site."

-- 30 --

A copy of the legal complaint is available from randall@randallweiner.com or bobschaeffer@earthlink.net