

STATE OF COLORADO

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Dedicated to protecting and improving the health and environment of the people of Colorado

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Colorado Department
of Public Health
and Environment

Issues Concerning HB 10-1127 Concerning Information to be Provided to Visitors at Rocky Flats

Background:

Rocky Flats National Wildlife Refuge is a former Cold War site that was used to build components for weapons production from 1951 to 1989. Weapons component production at the Rocky Flats Plant involved plutonium and other radioactive and hazardous materials. Due to accidents and inappropriate handling of waste products contaminants were released into the environment. Rocky Flats was declared a Superfund site and required extensive, complicated cleanup efforts, which were completed in 2005. A bill passed by then Representative Udall and Senator Allard, created the Rocky Flats National Wildlife Refuge Act in 2001 and designated part of the property as a national wildlife refuge. It is anticipated that visitors will be allowed at some future date, although no funding exists at this time for this activity.

Information about Rocky Flats is available through the Department of Energy, the Fish and Wildlife Service, the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment and the Rocky Flats Stewardship Council. In addition, language for signs to be placed at future trail heads and other access points was adopted in 2007 by the federal government through a joint stakeholder process that included the DOE, Fish and Wildlife, CDPHE and the local governments surrounding Rocky Flats. It is anticipated that another stakeholder group will be convened to agree on other signs to be posted along trails and for collateral materials at kiosks and a Cold War Museum at the site.

HB 10-1127 proposes to adopt separate signage and collateral materials to be posted by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment.

Issues

- Implementing the requirements of HB1127 would be difficult for CDPHE. A stakeholder process was already convened to develop language for signs. New signs required by HB1127 would in some cases be duplicitous and in some instances have information that conflicts with already adopted language.
- CDPHE has no authority to place signs on federal property and could therefore not meet the requirement in the bill to place these signs at trail heads and refuge entrances. CDPHE owns no property surrounding Rocky Flats and would have to purchase land to post signs.
- The Fish and Wildlife Service anticipates another stakeholder process to develop kiosks and signs along future trails. The Department believes this process may afford an opportunity for other language to be adopted.
- Based on current data, standards and regulations, the Rocky Flats site meets or exceeds all standards for air and water quality for various contaminants and pollutants. The area that will be open to the public has been appropriately cleaned up to protect public health and the environment.

For more information please contact Karin McGowan (303-257-4674) or Jesi Dobosz (303-945-9006)