

The Editor,  
Boulder Daily Camera

March 23, 2004.

I was a senior soil scientist for EG&G Rocky Flats (1990-95) studying the transport of radioactive actinides in the soil, which yielded fourteen publications in leading scientific journals. I mapped the contaminants around the defunct plutonium plant and studied the mobility of plutonium and americium in the soil. The actinides were mostly from the fires of 1957 and 1969 and the oil drum spills, and were windblown across the site. Once deposited they were less mobile unless the topsoil was disturbed and dust generated, thus any such activity in the east, southeast and northeast of the former buffer zone should be avoided.

Normally the actinides are stable and will not travel far to groundwater and/or streams, but in the wet spring of 1995 we saw runoff in the May 17 rainstorm that caused at least ten millicuries of plutonium to travel over 100 meters downslope; Woman Creek had increased plutonium and americium. When reported to DOE they terminated my project, using the excuse of the Kaiser-Hill layoffs. The capture of this rainfall event in and on the soil was my best research on-site, using an advanced monitoring system designed for such an event.

This work was never published because Kaiser-Hill and DOE refused me geological data vital for my groundwater simulations and mass-flow calculations. Actinide soil transport is still an open question at Rocky Flats. During my extensive soil sampling in the buffer zone and beyond I commonly found that my personal protection equipment (PPE) was 'hot' by day's end and was discarded into the 'hot' contaminated bin. On this basis I strongly recommend that the buffer zone/wildlife refuge be highly limited for public use. I favor Alternative C that allows ecological restoration, environmental studies and limited supervised public access, mainly in the Rock Creek drainage. I sent this recommendation to US Fish and Wildlife Service March 10.

Sincerely,

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