

STATE OF COLORADO
OFFICE OF THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

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Conceptual cleanup agreement of the Rocky Mountain Arsenal

Denver - The U.S. Army, the Environmental Protection Agency, the state of Colorado, Shell Oil Company and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service have reached a tentative conceptual agreement which will lead to an ultimate decision regarding the final remedies to clean up the Rocky Mountain Arsenal.

"Throughout the negotiation process there has been a lot of give and take between all the organizations. However, each of the parties agreed there would be no compromise on protection of human health and the environment," said Lieutenant Governor Gail Schoettler. "This negotiation process, with all the parties involved, will ultimately allow cleanup to move forward more quickly and will avoid lengthy disputes and litigation between the parties. I'm pleased that we have made this kind of progress, and while some issues still need to be resolved, I expect details of the settlement to be finalized by mid June," she said. Schoettler was asked by Governor Romer to take the lead in efforts to resolve Arsenal cleanup issues for the state.

This current series of negotiations between the organizations involved in cleanup of the Arsenal began in January 1994. Citizen stakeholders were brought into the negotiation process in November 1994 to ensure that all their issues were understood by

regulators and the Army and Shell, the two organizations responsible for the Arsenal's remediation.

Judge Richard Dana, a federal court appointed special master, has mediated these negotiations.

"Stakeholders have played a unique role in the negotiation process at the Arsenal," said Judge Dana. "Historically, the CERCLA process allows for citizen input after a cleanup recommendation has been made. They were brought into the process very early and provided extensive educational briefings on technologies and the regulatory process being followed. The citizens then provided the parties with their key issues for consideration."

Components of the agreement, besides continuation of the groundwater boundary treatment plants, include a variety of proven technologies such as excavation, landfilling, capping, solidifying and dewatering contaminated soil.

This agreement ultimately will be incorporated into the Final Detailed Analysis of Alternatives and proposed plan. At that time, opportunities for further public input will be provided within the Superfund process.

The Rocky Mountain Arsenal is a 27-square-mile Superfund site 10 miles northeast of downtown Denver. The Army produced chemical weapons there beginning in 1942, and later leased manufacturing facilities to companies including Shell. Shell produced pesticides at the Arsenal from 1952-1982. Water and soil contamination occurred over the years primarily due to waste disposal methods practiced at the time. Since that time, the Army and Shell have studied the site to determine the types and extent of contamination and have worked to remediate the areas that posed the most potential

risk to human health and the environment through a series of interim response actions.

The United States Congress has designated the Arsenal a National Wildlife Refuge upon completion of the cleanup.

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