

The Wellington

Volume 2, Number 35

June 10, 2009

Wellington, Colorado's Community Newspaper

State writing in-situ mining regulations

By JoAn Bjarko
The Wellington

The Colorado Division of Reclamation, Mining and Safety is continuing its work to write rules for implementing legislation passed in 2008 that will set standards for in-situ leach uranium recovery and other mining issues.

The division's second meeting, which will focus on proposed rules for prospecting operations and fees, will be held on June 11 from 1 to 4 p.m. at 1313 Sherman St., Room 318, in Denver. Regulations for in-situ mining, the process Powertech Uranium Corp. wants to use

Continued on page 4

Uranium

Continued from page 1

in Weld County near Nunn, will be discussed at a later date.

Three pieces of legislation preceded the current work on mining regulations. House Bill 08-1161 concerns reclamation standards for in-situ uranium mining. Senate Bill 08-228 establishes provisions regarding public information about prospecting operations. Senate Bill

08-169 concerns fees for certain hardrock mining operations.

The division is currently working on draft regulations before the Colorado Mined Land Reclamation Board enters into a formal rulemaking process. More information about the process is available on the division's web site <http://mining.state.co.us/Rulemaking.htm>.

In-situ leaching uses liquids,

which are pumped through the underground ore to recover the minerals. Wells inject the leaching liquid into the orebody, and then the uranium-bearing product is pumped out of other wells.

Colorado legislators moved to tighten laws on the process after an outcry from Larimer County and Weld County residents who feared local groundwater could become contaminated by in-situ

mining.

Powertech has purchased nearly 7,000 acres of uranium mineral rights in western Weld County, a few miles from Nunn. According to Powertech, the Centennial Project property has undergone approximately 1 million feet of drilling in 3,000 test holes. Testing has located two key deposits with inferred mineral resources of 9.7 million

pounds of uranium, the company said.

Powertech USA President Richard Clement said in a telephone interview that the company would not apply for its mining permits until the rulemaking is completed. The company wants to do an additional pumping test in August or September to further study the hydrology of the Centennial Project area, he added.