

# C.A.R.D. NEWSLETTER

October 16, 2007

## Coloradoans Against Resource Destruction

CARD, PO Box 271, Nunn, CO 80648, 970-372-0029 (leave message) [www.nunnglow.com](http://www.nunnglow.com)

### **Bipartisan Opposition to the Centennial Project as our Representatives Take a Stand on the Mining**

Congresswoman Marilyn Musgrave (R) surprised and delighted opponents of the proposed uranium mining at a forum she held in Nunn on Saturday, October 13. She announced to the 250-300 people attending that she wanted to come out with a public statement expressing her opposition to the project. She cited lack of experience by Powertech Uranium Corporation, population density, risk of groundwater contamination, effect on agriculture and declining property values as areas of concern.

In addition, Larimer County state legislators Randy Fisher (D) and John Kefalas (D) announced at a Capitol rally on Sunday, October 14, that they are co-sponsoring a bill to be introduced in January, 2008, that will bring outdated Colorado mining laws and regulations up to speed with 21st century mining. "We intend to raise the bar, the standards, to make sure public health and the environment are protected," said Fisher.

State senators Steve Johnson (R) and Brandon Shaffer (D) were also present and stated their concerns regarding uranium mining. Referring to about 30 other areas where in-situ leach mining techniques had been used, Johnson stated that, "in almost all of those areas, if not all of those areas, there has been serious contamination of the aquifer, of the water supply and of the environment."

Cory Carroll, president of the Larimer County Medical Society, strongly contradicted past Powertech claims that they will do no harm. "This is a fantasy," said Carroll. "They will do harm. How much and the extent is the only unknown." The society has passed a resolution opposing the mining and has approached the Colorado Medical Society to adopt a similar statement.

Please remember to contact your representatives and thank them for responding to our concerns. Go to [www.nunnglow.com](http://www.nunnglow.com) for contact info. Leave no doubt that we're actively behind them.

### **Don't Forget To Take Action On HR2262: The 1872 Mining Law Was Signed Into Law By President Ulysses S. Grant**

- before women could vote, before the invention of the light bulb, before environmental protection was even a consideration, states a petition sponsored by Earthworks. They point

out that this law, still in place today, **pollutes clean water** (It contains no environmental protection provisions. Because of the reckless law, mining has polluted 40 percent of the headwaters of western watersheds.) **It puts special places at risk** (A U.S. Forest Supervisor claims that because of the 1872 Mining Law, he can't deny a mine proposed directly beneath a declared wilderness area.) **It rips off taxpayers** (Since 1872, the mining law has forced taxpayers to give away more than \$245 billion in publicly owned minerals.) So far, the group has collected 17,000 signatures. Go to their [website](#) to see the full petition and if you haven't done it yet, urge Rep. Marilyn Musgrave to support HR2262.

## Listen to KRFC 88.9 Today!

CARD members Liliias Jarding and Robin Davis can be heard today, Tuesday October 16, on KRFC 88.9 community radio at 5:30. Tune in for the latest news on Weld County uranium mining and the efforts to stop it.

## Town Hall Meeting at UNC

CARD will hold their next town meeting about the proposed uranium mining on Wednesday, October 24th, 7PM - 9PM at the University of Northern Colorado campus, McKee Hall, Room L152, 1200 21st Street, Greeley, CO 80639. See you there! Join in the groundswell of support for our cause and take a stand against uranium mining in your neighborhood.

## Northern Colorado Business Report Article Investigates Mining Leases

Thanks to an investigation by Steve Porter of *Northern Colorado Business Report*, northern Colorado citizens now know that at least five companies are exploring for radioactive uranium in our area. With the involvement of additional foreign-based uranium companies, it is clear that our area, its water, and our way of life are threatened on a historic level.

Porter's article states that a review of mining leases filed with the Weld County recorder's office reveals that Powertech Uranium Corporation is not alone in its quest to cash in on soaring uranium prices, and that the other interested companies are based in the United States, Canada and Australia. The other mining leases are for property throughout northern Weld County, including areas near Grover and Briggsdale.

**Geovic Energy Corp.**, a Grand Junction-based subsidiary of Geovic Mining Corp. of Vancouver, British Columbia, signed 56 mining leases with owners of property in Weld County between April 30 and Aug. 27, 2007 according to a records search. Geovic calls itself "the cobalt company" because of its main focus on cobalt mining in Cameroon, Africa. William Buckovic, Geovic's president and founder, insists the company's interest in doing any uranium mining locally remains "highly speculative."

Also on the playing field are **Black Range Minerals**, based in Perth, Australia; Vancouver-based **Energy Metals Corp.**; and **Contex Energy Co.**, a land brokerage company headquartered in Denver.

**Contex** has been brokering oil and gas leases in Weld County since 1990 but added uranium mining leases to its services this year when it obtained seven mining leases between May 21 and June 11. Ken Harris, consulting landman for Contex, said his company has been pursuing the leases on behalf of companies he preferred not to identify.

**Black Range Minerals** signed six memoranda of agreement with Weld County landowners between May 4 and July 5. Mike Haynes, Black Range managing director, said the company is currently focusing more of its attention on "minerals projects" in the United States, including Weld County.

Lane Douglas, Director of Powertech's Centennial Project in Weld County is quoted in the article saying that the company purchased "some" of the nine mining leases Energy Metals had acquired in Weld County. That transaction, which took place July 19, 2007, was just before Energy Metals was acquired by Toronto-based **Uranium One Inc.** Aug. 10.

Porter's calls to Uranium One to find out if the company planned to pursue uranium mining in Weld County were not returned. Uranium One's website claims that the company has extensive property holdings in Wyoming, Texas, Utah and New Mexico.

## **Weld County Commissioners' Position**

The following is excerpted from an article by Steve Porter, Northern Colorado Business Report, October 12-25, entitled "Powertech's Costs, Potential Profits Soar":

Weld County will have a voice in whether Powertech gets its permission to mine uranium, but county commission chairman David Long said the county can't arbitrarily prohibit mining no matter how much public opposition forms to the project. "There's a perception by the public that we could make it so burdensome that it can't be done," he said. "But that would be a taking of a development right." Although Weld County is one of the state's biggest producers of oil and natural gas, Long said the county has no specific policy on the regulation of uranium mining.

"We've been asked to put a ban on uranium mining but we can't do that." Long said. "We can't separate out mining uses. That is a state function."

The county will have a part to play in the permitting process when it comments on Powertech's Environmental Plan and in deciding on a Use by Special Review Permit for the project before any mining can begin. But Long said public opposition will not be the deciding factor in granting or rejecting any application. What county commissioners will focus most on, he said, is that an "applicant meets the code and the operation doesn't violate the health, safety and welfare of the county."

Commissioners:

David Long	<a href="mailto:dlong@co.weld.co.us">dlong@co.weld.co.us</a>
Douglas Rademacher	<a href="mailto:drademacher@co.weld.co.us">drademacher@co.weld.co.us</a>
Rob Masden	<a href="mailto:rmasden@co.weld.co.us">rmasden@co.weld.co.us</a>
Bill Jerke	<a href="mailto:bjjerke@co.weld.co.us">bjjerke@co.weld.co.us</a>
Bill Garcia	<a href="mailto:wgarcia@co.weld.co.us">wgarcia@co.weld.co.us</a>

## **Larimer County Orders Studies About Planned Uranium Mining**

The Denver Post reported on October 13, 2007, that representatives of Larimer County and the City of Fort Collins have ordered environmental studies to determine potential problems that could be created by uranium mining in nearby Weld County. Officials in Fort Collins and Larimer County have ordered studies on whether a mine will affect air and water quality in the region. Real estate values in the area also will be weighed, said Larimer County Commissioner Randy Eubanks.

## **Greeley Water Studying Uranium and Water Issues**

We have received word that Director of the City of Greeley water utilities, Jon Monson, has been directed by the Greeley City Council to study the impacts of Powertech and potential uranium mining on Greeley's water supply.

### **Shady Business?**

R2, Powertech's environmental engineering firm, has allegedly been calling people to ask about water testing, wanting to know who well owners are using for sampling and testing, what they are testing for, and how often. The typical line has been, "my mother is moving out to that area and would like more information."

If you get any calls like this, please let us know. We are logging this and turning them over to the Weld County Health Department. They are already involved and have called R2 on the carpet for this. R2 apparently told the Health Department that they are following up on a letter the County sent out that allegedly tells landowners what they should do.

It is not clear what R2's motives are, but it is highly recommended that you do not give R2 any information. Let them go to their client for information.

### **Ault Petitions Exceeding Goal**

CARD has received more than the required 500 petitions from Ault residents to have their city council consider a resolution against the proposed uranium mining.

### **Fort Collins Meeting Video Available**

A video shot at CARD's Fort Collins presentation at the Lincoln Center on September 27 has been completed. It will air on Cable Channel 22 - Ft. Collins FC PAN - for the next 2 weeks. Air times are:

Sunday (October 14 and 21) - 4 pm

Monday (Oct. 15 and 22) - 7 am

Tuesday (Oct 16 and 23) - 5:32 pm

Wednesday (Oct 17 and 24) - 3 am

Thursday (Oct 18 and 25) - 4 am

Saturday (Oct 20 and 27) – noon

### **Resolutions - We Want Resolutions!**

Join other professionals, organizations and businesses who have adopted resolutions against uranium mining in our back yard! C.A.R.D. invites you to help stop the proposed uranium mining in Northern Colorado.

It is important to document the massive opposition to a project that threatens our environment, especially the water, and our way of life. Please act on our request now.

We want to make it easy for you. Email us at [info@nunnglow.com](mailto:info@nunnglow.com) and request sample resolutions, or just write what fits for your situation, sign it and send a hard copy to:

C.A.R.D. PO Box 271, Nunn, CO 80648. We would also like to receive an electronic copy at [info@nunnglow.com](mailto:info@nunnglow.com).

If you know of any other organizations that would be willing to adopt resolutions, please pass this on to them as well.

## **New Applications For Uranium Recovery Facility and Nuclear Reactors**

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has received an application from Metals Corp. US to construct and operate an in-situ uranium recovery facility at Moore Ranch in Campbell County, Wyo. It is the first application for a new uranium recovery facility submitted to the NRC since 1988. Energy Metals Corp. US, based in Edmund, Okla., is a subsidiary of Energy Metals Corp. of Vancouver, British Columbia.

Also, on October 15, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission made available the public version of a combined license (COL) application from NRG Energy and South Texas Project Nuclear Operating Company for two new reactors at the South Texas Project site near Bay City, Texas. NRG's COL application seeks approval to build and operate two Advanced Boiling Water Reactors (ABWR) at the site, approximately 12 miles southwest of Bay City. This was the first new-reactor license application in 30 years. The NRC expects companies to apply in the next decade to build about three dozen new reactors in the U.S.

## **Update On Goliad, Texas**

### **Undermining South Texas**

Below are excerpts from an article of great relevance to us, written by Greg Harman and published by the San Antonio Current, October 3, 2007.

Ninety miles downriver from San Antonio, the historic town of Goliad receives its share of tourists streaming to the site of Texas's declaration of independence. Almost equally as important to its Texan roots is the birth of North American ranching that occurred here. Cows are currency in these parts. Water, life.

Pat Calhoun, a towering former Marine and president of the Goliad County Farm Bureau, observes the roll of the land. After passing a few pleasantries about the weather, Calhoun is ready to talk uranium. He's irate over Uranium Energy Corp's pending application with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality to mine uranium from within the freshwater aquifer beneath us. It's simply the wrong place to safely mine uranium, he says. Such methods are for "closed" aquifers. The Evangeline aquifer, underlying most of Goliad County, recharges here. Fresh water flows through the uranium-bearing water sands UEC plans to mine before entering the greater Gulf Coast aquifer system.

Calhoun talks about the water that will inevitably be lost if the mine goes into production – a minimum of 73,000 tainted gallons shot daily through "disposal wells." He talks about the state's pattern of condemning aquifers to allow such mining to take place ("It's like having a peeing section in the swimming pool"). But his fears aren't for family and friends, not directly, they are for the cows.

He worries about the beef industry. A relative ranching near one of the state's only active uranium sites says he won't eat his own cows anymore. "He'll sell 'em, but he won't eat 'em," Calhoun says. Whether such a reaction is justified or not, the radioactive stigma is this cattleman's deepest fear.

Two years ago, UEC officials pledged to be a “good neighbor,” he said. So far, the evidence suggests they won’t meet that pledge. In May, UEC issued a press release announcing the uranium inside the Evangeline looked “favorable” for an in-situ leach mine. The announcement helped sell stock, but failed to mention that only a month before nearby residents complained to the local water district that UEC operations were polluting their wells with red, slimy sediment. Water sampling later found that four wells near the hundreds of boreholes puncturing the aquifer were also testing extremely high for radon 222 and radium 226.

Uranium mining is “particularly troublesome,” says environmental attorney Jim Blackburn, representing Goliad County, especially when it’s done right inside the aquifer. In agricultural Goliad, he says, a good aquifer is “all they’ve got.”

Responding to complaints by Goliad County residents, the Railroad Commission found that the company had not plugged the majority of its hundreds of boreholes as they had told state regulators. GPS coordinates supplied by UEC didn’t lead to any holes, either, confusing inspectors. “The holes that were located were found because there was some surface indication of the borehole location, not because they were at the exact coordinates provided,” the inspection report reads.

“Surface indication” turned out to mean piles of radioactive tailings, drilling fluids, and soils left exposed on the open ground. Of the 117 boreholes checked, only 14 had been plugged – and these were either plugged too deep or too close to the surface to protect groundwater supplies.

Gamma-radiation survey results didn’t surprise the RC’s surface-mining director. Melvin Hodgkiss wrote on May 9 that the discovery of elevated radioactivity “confirms our previous visual observation and determination that drilling mud/cuttings were left on or near the surface at some drill sites.”

Stories about neighboring Karnes County fuel the Goliad resistance. A tick upriver, Karnes County was host to intensive uranium mining from the 1950s to the 1980s and dumps and pits remain across the county.

One story about black cows with a bad habit of turning white sounds like a tall tale until you meet one of many who claim to have seen the bovines. Goliad County Commissioner Jim Krenick, a fifth-generation rancher with cattle grazing both in Karnes and Goliad counties, doesn’t so much as smile when you mention the anomaly. Straightaway he’s telling you about how his Karnes County herd frequently suffers unexplained death. When a 10-year-old bull passed, he asked a local vet to help him investigate. They found a large tumor inside the animal.

The U.S. Department of Energy has taken over most of the milling and processing sites that littered Karnes County when the industry rolled up in the ’80s, and continues spending millions on long-term reclamation operations at sites once run by companies like Exxon, Conoco, and Chevron. The radioactivity beneath these mounds likely won’t dissipate for tens of thousands of years.

A plume of heavy metals and radioactive materials beneath a former Susquehanna-Western Falls City site will be allowed to drift, however, since DOE officials determined that at least one of the three known plumes “cannot be effectively cleaned up for drinking water use” with current “reasonable treatments.”

A stone’s throw to the east, farmers are baling hay across the edges of a waste pit outside Panna Maria that holds 6.8 million tons of radioactive tailings. South Texas Mining Company employees are working a short distance away to reopen a uranium-processing house they hope will soon start churning out refined “yellowcake” uranium for the first time in decades. The company’s La Palangana mine in Duval County is expected to start trucking as much as a million pounds of ore per year to the Karnes County processing site in 2008.

Yolanda Naranjo's memories of the uranium mining and processing that swept Karnes County the last time are forever tainted. She remembers her dad, who cowboied all around the mill sites of Panna Maria and Falls City. She remembers driving up to see him and helping clean his Helena home. As soon as she would finish dusting, a semi hauling uncovered uranium ore would inevitably thunder by, replacing the dust with a yellow powder.

Her father was one of about 50 area residents that eventually sued Conoco and a coalition of energy companies over the range of ills they blamed on uranium exposure.

"They can tell you and tell you and tell you they're being safe and doing all they can, but we're all human and people run these machines and accidents happen," Naranjo said. "They're not going to come over and tell you they did that. They're not going to tell you they screwed up."

The companies quickly agreed to a "no-fault" settlement, though her father wouldn't live to see the money. He passed away from an inoperable tumor lodged in the upper reaches of his sinus cavity in 1999.

At the groundwater district they tell you there are more than 4,000 water wells operating in the county, with more than 100 being drilled each year. So when they read of spills at nearby uranium mines, such as the one outside Kingsville, they know enough to be nervous. Uranium Resources Inc. mined the Kingsville Dome from 1988 through 1999 [Ed. Note: Powertech CEO Dick Clement worked for URI]. Last year they reanimated the in-situ operation after the TCEQ overruled the State Office of Administrative Hearings, which wanted to stop new operations until the company had cleaned up their pollution at abandoned wells. The numbers involved in URI's spills are impressive: 3,000 gallons in 1997; 20,000 gallons in 1998; 11,000 in 1999. Company reports indicate these spills were contained on-site, something Kleberg County officials and some local residents dispute.

While URI officials deny they have contaminated the groundwater, they did follow the pattern of such operations across South Texas by requesting less stringent cleanup standards for the water it left behind at closed wells.

## Who Are We?

CARD (Coloradoans Against Resource Destruction) was formed by a diverse collection of citizens concerned about the health, environmental and economic impacts of a proposed uranium mining activity, spread out over as much as ten square miles of Weld County, will have on Northern Colorado. We are convinced this project will have dire consequences for our area and set a dangerous precedent for the entire state of Colorado. Our goal is to prevent uranium mining in Colorado and protect our valuable resources, especially our water, for future generations.

The CARD website, [www.nunnglow.com](http://www.nunnglow.com), has a wealth of information about the proposed mining, the processes and the potential impact on our air and water. On our website you can learn what you can do to stop the proposed uranium mining, sign an online petition and make a donation.