



United States Department of the Interior



FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
 Rocky Flats National Wildlife Refuge
 c/o Rocky Mountain Arsenal, Bldg. 121
 Commerce City, Colorado 80022

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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The U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) announced today that the comment period for providing comments on the draft Comprehensive Conservation Plan and Environmental Impact Statement (CCP/EIS) for the future Rocky Flats National Wildlife Refuge has been extended to April 26, 2004. In light of a recent court-ordered shutdown of the Department of the Interior's access to the internet, the website for accessing information about the plan is not available at this time. The Service does not know when the site will again be accessed available.

Over the past week, the Service has held a series of public hearings on the draft plan. Additional meetings are scheduled for Wednesday, March 17th from 6:30-8:30 p.m. at the Arvada Center, Ballroom C, 6901 Wadsworth Boulevard, Arvada and Thursday, March 18th, 6:30-8:30 p.m. at the Broomfield Recreation Center, Lakeshore Room 3, 280 Lamar Street, Broomfield.

Refuge Manager Dean Rundle said "While the internet shutdown may be an inconvenience for some, we encourage the public to call or write us and stay involved in the planning process."

The draft plan outlines strategies for managing wildlife and habitat and for providing the public with opportunities to enjoy wildlife-dependent activities for the next 15 years. In addition to a proposed action, the document evaluates and compares three additional alternatives for managing wildlife, habitats and public uses of the future Refuge. It also analyzes the impacts of habitat restoration and visitor use on the Refuge's important physical, biological, social and cultural resources. The Services encourages the public to make their comments specific to the draft plan.

The Service developed the alternatives based upon public input, guidance from Congress in the Rocky Flats Refuge legislation, and the policies and mission of the National Wildlife Refuge System.

The future Rocky Flats National Wildlife Refuge was established by Congress in December 2001. The 6266-acre site at the foot of Colorado's Front Range was formerly home to U.S. Department of Energy's Rocky Flats Plant, a weapons components production facility. The majority of the site was managed as a security buffer around the Plant and is home to a variety of wildlife species. A remnant piece of rare native tallgrass prairie is found on the site. Following completion of cleanup and closure efforts, scheduled for accomplishment in 2006, part of the site will be transferred to the Service for refuge purposes. The U.S. Department of Energy will retain portions of the site for monitoring and management of remedy facilities.

The public is invited to learn more about the draft plan by calling (303) 289-0980 to request further information. Written comments may be submitted by writing or fax to:

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