

Bill would warn Rocky Flats visitors of dangers

By Steven K. Paulson
The Associated Press

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A newly elected Colorado state legislator who led a grand jury investigation of the former Rocky Flats nuclear weapons factory said today he will introduce a bill requiring managers of the site to warn visitors of potential dangers once it is converted to a wildlife refuge.

Rep. Wes McKinley, D-Walsh, was the foreman of a federal grand jury that tried to indict private and federal officials over contamination at the site in 1992, but prosecutors settled the case with plea bargains.

"People do have a right to make a choice. There are a lot of dangerous activities like horseback riding and rafting and people do it, but they know it's dangerous before they do it. I don't think anyone should go out there," McKinley said.

McKinley, who was elected in November, said his bill would require visitors to the wildlife refuge to sign a statement acknowledging they had been warned about the potential dangers.

He said the federal government has lied about the extent of contamination at the site and that schoolchildren especially should not visit the facility.

Spokesmen for Kaiser-Hill Corp., which is handling the cleanup, and the Department of Energy, which oversees the site, did not immediately return phone calls.

Federal officials have proposed allowing hiking, cycling, horseback riding and other activities on 16 miles of trails at Rocky Flats once it is converted to a refuge by 2008.

A \$7 billion cleanup of the 6,420-acre site west of Denver is scheduled to be complete in 2006. Rocky Flats made plutonium triggers for nuclear warheads until 1992, when it was shut down because of safety concerns and because of the end of the Cold War.

Rocky Flats refuge visitors will be warned of nuclear past

STEVEN PAULSON
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Newly elected state lawmaker pursues fight against Rocky Flats

posted by: [Dan Viens](#) (Web Producer)

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DENVER (AP) - A newly elected state representative who was foreman of the Rocky Flats grand jury is vowing to continue his fight against the former nuclear weapons plant.

Wes McKinley is a Democrat and rancher from southeastern Colorado who won election in the Lamar area last month.

Grand jury proceedings are usually kept secret, but McKinley and a lawyer wrote about the panel's findings. They claimed jurors found evidence the government was covering up plutonium-contaminated waste at the site.

McKinley plans an announcement next week to discuss the contamination and unveil new legislation. A federal government official who's stepping down from office will join him.

A former federal prosecutor and Rocky Flats' former operator have dismissed McKinley's allegations.