



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Rocky Mountain Arsenal's Lime Basins Project Complete *Refuge to Reopen June 14, 2008*

The Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge will reopen June 14 to public visitation, following the successful completion of excavation work and installing groundwater monitoring wells at the Rocky Mountain Arsenal's Lime Basins project. The only remaining work involves building a protective cover over the site.

The Refuge reopening is supported by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Tri-County Health Department.

"We are delighted to announce that public visitation and programming can resume," said Supervisory Park Ranger Sherry James of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. "It will be very exciting to have visitors back hiking the trails, participating in wildlife viewing tours and connecting with the great outdoors once again."

Completing this phase of the Lime Basins project marks the end of all major contaminated soil excavation projects at the Arsenal. The site is officially shifting into "clean construction" to build covers over on-site landfills and consolidation areas including the Lime Basins project, which will be retained and managed by the U.S. Army.

"We are pleased to have safely and successfully completed this phase of the project and look forward to the Refuge reopening," said U.S. Army Program Manager Charlie Scharmann. "This process demonstrated that the safety protocols we put in place in cooperation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and regulatory agencies worked as designed."

The Refuge closed on Oct. 31, 2007, when Lewisite was detected at the Arsenal's Lime Basins project and remained closed until the groundwater monitoring well installation project was completed.

Originally constructed in 1942, the Lime Basins were designed to receive wastewater from the production of chemical warfare materials, including Lewisite. The wastewater was treated with lime to neutralize the waste. Lewisite was produced at the Arsenal from April to November 1943.

Beginning June 14, the Refuge will be open Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. for drop-in visitation and scheduled Refuge programs. For more information about opportunities at

the Refuge, visit the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service online at { HYPERLINK "http://www.fws.gov/rockymountainarsenal/" }.

Community members with questions about the ongoing cleanup of the Arsenal are encouraged to contact the site's Community Information Line at [303-289-0136](tel:303-289-0136) or the Tri-County Health Department's Rocky Mountain Arsenal Information Line at [303-286-8032](tel:303-286-8032). Information is also available at www.rma.army.mil.

Site History

Currently, 80 percent of Arsenal lands has been removed from the EPA's Superfund List. The Arsenal continues with its ongoing environmental cleanup of the site's soil and structures, and has successfully completed all major contaminated soil projects outlined in the Record of Decision. Groundwater cleanup is expected to continue after the land area cleanup is complete. Most of the remaining cleanup work involves clean construction, which means moving clean soils and materials to build covers over the landfills and consolidation areas. For almost a decade, the Arsenal has repeatedly been honored as one of the nation's safest places to work by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration.

Cleanup plans were developed and approved by the U.S. Army, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Shell Oil Co., Tri-County Health Department and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Once the remainder of the cleanup is complete, the Arsenal's vast open spaces will constitute one of the nation's largest urban wildlife refuges. By fall 2006, more than 12,000 acres of Arsenal land had been transferred from the U.S. Army to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, officially establishing and later expanding the Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge. After the Arsenal's remaining cleanup projects are completed and areas are removed from the EPA's National Priorities List, the Army will transfer about 2,500 acres to the Service to complete the expansion of the Refuge. By 2010, the cleanup program will be finished and the Army will retain approximately 1,100 acres to maintain its landfills and groundwater treatment plants.

The Refuge now provides environmental education and interpretive programs, catch-and-release recreational fee fishing, nearly nine miles of trails, wildlife viewing opportunities and site tours for the public, and is a sanctuary for more than 330 species of animals, including wild bison, deer, coyotes, bald eagles and burrowing owls.

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