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COLORADO CHAPTER OF REPUBLICANS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION PRESIDENT’S NEWSLETTER

Hello and Happy Holidays to our fellow REP members from your Colorado Chapter Executive Committee. Several times a year we’ll send out a short newsletter letting you know about important environmental events happening in Colorado and nationally.

The Colorado Chapter is the newest state chapter of Republicans for Environmental Protection. As Republicans, we have a unique opportunity to counteract the current anti-environmental political climate and urge, encourage and cajole our state’s local, state and federal representatives into doing the right thing environmentally. Please read on for details on these current issues we are working on and what you can do to help:

STEVEN’S LAST DITCH EFFORT TO DRILL IN ANWR

ANNUAL NATIONAL MEETING COMING TO COLORADO IN 2006

STATE REGULATIONS FOR STORM WATER MITIGATION ON SMALL WELL SITES

BROWN’S CANYON WILDERNESS DESIGNATION

THE VILLAGES AT WOLF CREEK PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

STEVEN’S LAST DITCH EFFORT TO DRILL IN ANWR: Thanks to the efforts of REP America and people across the country to save Alaska's Arctic National Wildlife Refuge from oil drilling, Congressional leaders dropped this controversial provision from the federal budget bill last week. However, Alaska's Senator Ted Stevens is trying one last desperate move to authorize oil development in the Arctic Refuge by including it in the Defense Department's budget bill, which also contains emergency funding for Hurricane Katrina relief.

Drilling the Arctic is not related to either the war in Iraq or flood victims on the Gulf Coast but Senator Stevens is trying to get drilling in the Arctic Refuge by attaching it to a funding bill he thinks few Senators would vote against. This move has been ruled out of order according to Senate rules, but in an outrageous move, Sen. Stevens got those rules waived just for this bill. Senate Democrats will attempt to stall a final vote on this funding bill by filibustering (making speeches on the Senate floor) for the first two days, but a vote to move ahead could come as soon as Wednesday (tomorrow.)

ACTION ITEM: Drilling in ANWR is wildly unpopular among American citizens of any political stripe. Please help get the Arctic drilling provisions dropped from the Defense funding bill by letting our Senator Allard know how you feel ASAP. His numbers in Washington are: **Phone:** (202) 224-5941 **Fax:** (202) 224-6471. Be sure to mention that you are a Republican and a member of REP America.

REP AMERICA’S ANNUAL MEETING: We have a terrific opportunity to showcase our glorious state when the annual REP America meeting is held here in September, 2006. It would be thrilling to have strong attendance of our Colorado contingent here in Denver. The theme is “Energy”, particularly appropriate for a state which houses the National Renewable Energy Laboratory, the Rocky Mountain Institute and a plethora of cutting edge energy entities. **ACTION ITEM:** If you have suggestions for participant tours showcasing Colorado’s

contribution to the country's energy challenges, or would like to help out, let us know at lindmart1@hotmail.com (Chapter President Marty Sorenson). Know any environmental-minded Republicans who are feeling underserved by their current congressional representatives? Urge them to join us! Visit www.repamerica.org.

OIL AND GAS SITE STORM WATER MITIGATION: The US Clean Water Act was amended by provisions in the US Energy Policy Act of 2005 which incorporated exemptions for small oil and gas well drilling sites from storm water discharge regulations. Many states have stepped in to close this gap and protect their streams and land from degradation. Colorado's Water Quality Control Commission will hold a hearing on proposed regulations January 9, 2006 to "plug the hole" and require oil and gas companies to mitigate environmental degradations on even their small drilling pads. **ACTION ITEM:** Write a letter expressing your wish to have the CWQCC pass regulations to regulate stormwater discharge (via Rule #61) to:

Water Quality Control Commissioners
C/O Paul Frohardt
Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment
OED-OPPI-A5
4300 Cherry Creek Drive South
Denver, CO 80246-1530

To read the letter we submitted and what others have written, check out the state's posting of comments at: <http://www.cdphe.state.co.us/op/wqcc/OtherRegs/61-2006/Public-2006.html> (letter dated October 10, 2005.)

BROWNS CANYON WILDERNESS DESIGNATION: Republican Congressman Joel Hefley has introduced H.R. 4235 and Republican Senator Wayne Allard has introduced S.1971, identical bills to designate a 20,000-acre Browns Canyon Wilderness east of the Arkansas River near Salida. This area is remote, rugged, lower elevation arid country with lots of canyons. It will protect valuable wildlife habitat and preserve public land containing ecosystems not represented at higher elevations. Our chapter Vice-President Dick Scar says "It is the wildest country in this county that contains a dozen 14,000-ft. peaks."

The carefully thought-out legislation needs only one improvement. The current language prohibits any reserved federal water rights for the Wilderness. The conservation community is pushing for the same water language that was in the 1993 Colorado Wilderness Act that designated ten Wilderness Areas, which leaves open the possibility of ensuring future water to protect wilderness character.

THE VILLAGES (OR IS THAT PILLAGES?) AT WOLF CREEK: Several of our Executive Committee members have been monitoring this proposed development closely. In the late 80's, over the objection of the Rio Grande National Forest, officials in Washington approved a land trade giving what is now 287.5 acres of land at the base of the Wolf Creek Ski area to a development group now known as the Leavell-McCombs Joint Venture. Bob Honts, president and CEO of The Village at Wolf Creek Development Corporation and his partner Billy Joe "Red" McCombs, both of Texas, have proposed the "Village at Wolf Creek". This monstrous project includes over 1200 rooms in three hotels; 129 lots for single-family homes; 1,661 multi-family units; 222,000 square feet of commercial space and 4,525 covered parking spaces resulting in a year-round population of 10,000 people.

REP, along with other concerned environmental organizations, are fighting the developers' proposal, and this fall's decision by 12th District Court Judge O. John Kuenhold ordered Mineral County to withdraw their prior approval of the project with his finding that the approval was arbitrary and capricious since access to the project had not been given by the Forest Service. An EIS is nearing completion on the question of access and should be released shortly. Stay tuned.

For information on other national and state issues, please visit REP America's website at www.repamerica.org and click on Colorado to go to our web page.

We at the Colorado Chapter of REP America wish you the very merriest Christmas and a Happy New Year. ★