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UDALL APPLAUDS FINAL CLEANUP OF ROCKY FLATS

Westminster, CO—Congressman Mark Udall (D-Eldorado Springs) released the following statement regarding Kaiser Hill's announcement that it has completed the physical work to clean up and close Rocky Flats:

"The cleanup of Rocky Flats is a major achievement for which we can all be proud. I want to especially note the efforts of the workers and their dedication not only the security of this country, but their dedication to performing a safe and extensive demolition and decommissioning. This was very complicated and difficult work involving dangerous and toxic materials. The fact that it was done decades ahead of predictions and at a cost vastly less than expected is a testament to all those involved.

"Getting to this day has been long and fraught with obstacles. But the Colorado congressional delegation worked hand-in-glove with the local communities, DOE and the contractors to work through those obstacles. This nation continues to face daunting cleanup challenges at other sites in South Carolina, Tennessee, and Washington. The success here at Rocky Flats stands as a hopeful symbol that we can tackle the challenges at those facilities and turn bombs to birds, weapons to wildlife, and liabilities into community assets.

"There is still more to do here at Rocky Flats and we must remain vigilant to make sure this site is secure and that any residual contamination is contained and controlled. We have an obligation to make sure that workers' benefits are carried forward and that they are compensated for any work-related health problems. Although that is not insignificant, the fact that all buildings, wastes and infrastructure are down means that we can return this landscape to the wildlife of the open, high prairie environment and how it might have appeared to our ancestors and Native Americans.

"Walking through this site provides a remarkable view. You have the feeling of big, western skies. This is where the prairie meets the mountains.

"I look forward to the next major chapter--the future opening of the Rocky Flats National Wildlife Refuge--so that people can enjoy the open spaces and abundant wildlife at this site."

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8601 Turnpike Drive #206
 Westminster, CO 80031
 Phone: (303) 650-7820
 Fax: (303) 650-7827

West Slope Office

291 Main St.
 P.O. Box 325
 Minturn, CO 81645
 Phone: (970) 827-4154
 Fax: (970) 827-4138

Washington D.C. Office

100 Cannon House
 Office Building
 Washington, D.C. 20515
 Phone: (202) 225-2161
 Fax: (202) 226-7840