

PCEOC Newsletter

April 2009

P.O. Box 137
Kim, CO 81049

Phone: 719-643-5600
Fax: 719-643-5600
Toll Free: 866-426-7026

www.pinoncanyon.com

Email:
PCEOC@hughes.net



It has been an interesting start to 2009, to say the least. We were lead to believe, by Army spokespersons, that ‘a deal was done’ and a land lease was in the works. Never mind the fact that the Army has stated again and again that leasing is not an option. Later, the very same week, the Army was forced to back-track, admitting that there wasn’t, and never has been, any deal with a land owner. On the legislative front, House Bill HB09-1317 continues to work its way through the Capital. The bill, sponsored by Representatives Pace and McKinley, and by Senators Kester and Isgar, would help protect state owned land within the expansion area from being acquired by the Army. The Army wants our legislators and the media to push the ‘more studies’ approach in a continued attempt to justify the expansion. Contrary to public perception, all such ‘studies’ or ‘reports’, are not objective research searching for a higher truth, but a case study in working backwards from a pre-determined conclusion. Any further such studies or reports are simply not necessary. No means no. The completion of a study by the Army is simply the act of checking off a box on the to-do list en route to expansion.

In This Issue

- PCEOC Extends Heart-Felt thanks for Cattle Donations
- House panel calls Army on carpet
- Army’s dealing triggers wrath of lawmakers
- Once again, Representative Doug Lamborn misrepresents expansion opponent’s position
- House votes to deny any state land to Army
- PCEOC Acquires a Trailer for Mobile Art Shows and Other Events
- PCEOC Pens a letter to members of a U.S. House Committee
- Representative Rob Bishop (R, Utah) points to Army’s Misallocation of Resources
- Griego: Economy’s down, but La Junta isn’t
- Purchase a piece of Southeastern Colorado and help support the PCEOC!
- Current Events and Volunteer Opportunities – What You Can Do to Help

Please view past PCEOC newsletters at:
[Newsletters from PCEOC](#)

PCEOC Extends Heart-Felt thanks for Cattle Donations

The PCEOC would like to offer a heart-felt thank you to all of the folks who so kindly donated a calf to the PCEOC as part of a fundraising effort earlier this year. This is the second year that a calf sale has been used as a method of raising funds to combat the expansion of PCMS. Also, a thank you is in order to La Junta Livestock Commission Company, and Winter Livestock Auction. These two businesses have been a major part of La Junta's economic and cultural backbone for years; so from all of us, thank you.

House panel calls Army on carpet

The Army is being called on the carpet again this week over its effort to acquire 100,000 more acres for the Pinon Canyon Maneuver Site. This time the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee is investigating the Army's expansion plans.

*By Peter Roper
Pueblo Chieftain
March 31, 2009*

[Read the entire article](#)

Army's dealing triggers wrath of lawmakers

It was supposed to be the week the Army made the dramatic announcement that it had found a landowner willing to lease it 70,000 acres south of the Pinon Canyon Maneuver Site. When news of the potential lease agreement with Denver businessman Craig Walker was reported in The Pueblo Chieftain early last week, Colorado lawmakers jumped hard on the Army - particularly Reps. John Salazar and Betsy Markey, who said they would oppose the Army spending any money on leasing or purchasing land as long as local ranchers opposed the expansion.

*By Peter Roper
Pueblo Chieftain
March 14, 2009*

[Read this article](#)

Once again, Rep. Doug Lamborn misrepresents expansion opponent's position.

U.S. Congressman, Doug Lamborn's website, contains a statement regarding the PCMS issue. The Representative from Colorado's 5th Congressional District, based in Colorado Springs, seems to misunderstand, not only the position of the PCEOC and other expansion opponents, but the larger concept of private property rights. Mr. Lamborn accuses landowners, business people, and other expansion opponents of being inconsistent and hypocritical. Mr. Lamborn states: "*The one-sided view of property rights taken by opponents of this plan is inconsistent and hypocritical. A property owners' right to lease land cannot be trumped by outside neighbors and politicians. To do so is a taking of property every bit as objectionable as an eminent domain taking.*"

While we are glad that Mr. Lamborn finds the use of eminent domain to expand Pinon Canyon objectionable, we also feel that he is off-base with regard to private property rights. Yes, a land owner has every right to sell or lease his/her land as they see fit, under the law. For example, a fourth generation rancher can decide to sell or lease his ranch to another citizen, or make any other management decision they feel is best for them and their family. What the PCEOC and other expansion opponents are opposed to is this government agency, the Department of Defense and U.S. Army, being a *purchaser or lessee* of this land. This is a very, very important distinction, one which proponents of the expansion, including Mr. Lamborn, chose to ignore. This distinction is comparable to zoning laws that we are all familiar with. Would Representative Lamborn support the sale or lease of a city block in downtown Colorado Springs, to the Army, for live-fire urban warfare training? Even if the Representative did support this, would those in Colorado Springs who were in opposition to such a sale or lease be disregarding private property rights? Or, would opposition to such a plan support the rights of surrounding property owners?

[See Lamborn's statement](#)

House votes to deny any state land to Army

DENVER - The State Land Board cannot sell or lease land to the federal government if it helps the U.S. Army expand the Pinon Canyon Maneuver Site, under a bill approved in the Colorado House on Wednesday. The measure, which passed on an overwhelming 47-17 vote, is designed to block the Army from expanding the site by the 100,000 acres it has said it's seeking.

By Charles Ashby

Chieftain Denver Bureau

April 09, 2009

[Read this article](#)

PCEOC Acquires a Trailer for Mobile Art Shows and Other Events

The PCEOC has acquired an enclosed trailer for mobile art shows, fund raisers, and other outreach activities. The majority of the labor required to re-furbish this trailer has been generously donated by local businesses and citizens in the Trinidad area. Hopefully, this trailer will be on the road by late summer.

PCEOC Pens a letter to members of a U.S. House Committee

The PCEOC wrote a letter to the House Armed Services Subcommittee on Readiness. This was in response to some misleading statements spoken to the committee by Keith Eastin, Assistant Secretary of the Army for Installations and Environment. The letter is as follows:

“On Tuesday, February 24, 2009, Mr. Keith Eastin, Assistant Secretary of the Army for Installations and Environment, testified before your Readiness Subcommittee on the subject of Acquisition and Disposal of Military Lands. A review of Secretary Eastin’s testimony brings out two points regarding the Pinon Canyon Expansion in Colorado. First, Secretary Eastin misrepresents the content and source of arguments regarding the scale of expansion proposed in SE Colorado. Second, questions posed to Secretary Eastin from Representative Rob Bishop (Utah) illustrate that existing Army training facilities go under-utilized even as they try to expand Pinon Canyon Maneuver Site (PCMS). This communication expands on those two points and requests legislative action placing a moratorium on the expansion of PCMS.”

[Read the rest of this letter](#)

Rep. Rob Bishop (R, Utah) points to Army’s Misallocation of Resources

On February 24, 2009, Assistant Secretary of the Army for Installations and Environment, Mr. Keith Eastin, gave verbal testimony to the House Armed Services Subcommittee on Readiness, of which Rep. Rob Bishop of Utah is a member. Mr. Eastin is a major player in the attempt to expand the PCMS. During Mr. Eastin’s testimony, Republican Representative Rob Bishop advised Mr. Eastin that there are alternatives the Army isn’t looking at.

“I recognize that in your written testimony you talked about the need of having four and a half million acres for training purposes that are there. I do though, find it unusual, that’s the best word I can say, that you have facilities that I think are still under-utilized by the Army. One of the things of which I am proudest of in my district is the Utah Test and Training Range in the Dugway facility. It’s a huge area out there which we have taken great strides both the State as well as the congressional delegation to make sure that there are no encroachment issues. You would not be sued by private property owners in the Dugway Training Area and you have a whole lot of land there that is simply under-utilized... What I really would like to ask is that sometimes I get the feeling that the Army simply has blinders on and you fail to look outside the box. We would love to work with you to try and find some of your needs but I don’t think you’re looking at the right area to find those needs. This is a wonderful space to solve some of your problems and I would specifically like the Army to try and look, with some kind of seriousness at that vast area of land with no encroachments issues in an area that the state totally supports those types of endeavors... What I’m trying to say is, Mr. Eastin, I recognize the serious issue that you have and I would like to help you to solve that problem but I feel frustrated because time after time we seem to run up against a stone wall saying we have solutions that can help you to address some of the issues in which you have, and I would like you to look more seriously at those particular issues. This is a place that can be one of the solutions you have, once again in an area without encroachment and with popular support for use out there.”

Griego: Economy's down, but La Junta isn't

To give you a sense of the mind-set of some of the people of the Arkansas Valley in regard to the current economic crisis, allow me to introduce Gary Shane. His farm produced 240,000 40-pound boxes of cantaloupe last year. "First of all - and you can put this on the record - I'm not going to be part of this recession. I refuse to allow it to get us down. I'm going to do what we always do. I'm going to plant what I planted last year, and if we have too much food, we'll leave it in the field."

By Tina Griego

Rocky Mountain News

February 6, 2009

[Read the entire article](#)

Purchase a piece of Southeastern Colorado and help support the PCEOC!

For \$10.00 you can become a Southeastern Colorado landowner and support the PCEOC! An acre of land has been donated and is being sold by the square inch. Purchasers will receive a legal deed to the property. The property is located on the historic Circle Diamond Ranch once occupied by 19th century cattle baron Frank Bloom and is located near Thatcher, Colorado along the historic Santa Fe Trail. The actual acre is across Highway 350 from the Pinon Canyon Maneuver Site.

[More information](#)

Current Events and Volunteer Opportunities – What You Can Do To Help

The PCEOC can always use volunteers to help fight off this unneeded expansion. Any help would be greatly appreciated, so please contact the PCEOC to offer your services. Among the most important things you can do is to attend public meetings, routinely write or call your elected representatives, and pass PCEOC information on to your email contact list. These things really make a difference.