

PCEOC Newsletter

May 2008

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Welcome to the PCEOC newsletter. We appreciate your patience with us as this newsletter gets off of the ground. The primary version of the newsletter will be electronic, in a PDF format. Each topic will be introduced, followed by a link to a website where you can read the entire article. Often, the web site will be the PCEOC site, other times the link will take the reader to a newspaper, magazine, an elected official's site, or any number of other organizations and individual web sites. There will also be content that is self contained on the newsletter itself, with no corresponding link. We will also work to develop a hard-copy version of this newsletter for those of you without internet access.

As time goes on, we hope to fine-tune and improve this newsletter. We understand that it is very important for you to keep abreast of what the Coalition is doing and where the Pinon Canyon expansion issue stands on a big-picture basis. As this newsletter matures, we hope that is exactly what we are able to achieve. Also, we may increase the frequency of the newsletter. Right now we have a bi-monthly goal.

Thank you very much for all of your support; and, as always, feel free to contact us with your ideas and thoughts.

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'Save our State' Public Meeting Scheduled for May 10th, in La Junta

There is a public meeting scheduled for 2:00pm, May 10th, 2008, at the Otero Jr. College Humanities Center in La Junta, Colorado. This meeting is sponsored by the citizens of Southeastern Colorado, represented by the PCEOC. There will be updates, videos, speakers, and refreshments. At the end of the meeting there will be a question/answer/suggestion session. Please contact Betty Williams at 719-738-2237 with any questions.

Army announces that Fort Carson will do another EIS Study

On Wednesday, May 7th, the Army announced that they intend to do another environmental impact study based on their plans to place a fifth infantry brigade (4,500 troops) at Fort Carson. This is in addition to plans, already in place, to add other brigades.

<http://www.pinoncanyon.com/alerts.html>

State Reps Tour Threatened Ranch

HUERFANO - Nine Colorado state legislators came down to Huerfano County last weekend (*editor's note: this event was the weekend of April 12th*) to tour Tim Williams' ranch, which is at risk of being gobbled up by the proposed Piñon Canyon Maneuver Site expansion. The Williams family homesteaded their ranch in 1914, and four generations still live on the property.

Article by Brian Orr. Published on-line, April 17, 2008.

<http://huerfanojournal.com/viewArchivedNews.php?p=index&cn=59>

Lawsuit seeks halt to Army's expansion in Pinon Canyon

Opponents of the Army's expansion of the Pinon Canyon maneuver filed suit today, trying to halt construction of a small army base on the existing site until the Army does a full environmental impact statement on the expansion.

Article by Ann Imse of the Rocky Mountain News

<http://www.rockymountainnews.com/news/2008/apr/23/pinon-canyon-suit-looms/>

High School Juniors and Seniors to Compete in an Essay Contest

Entries for a 750-word essay contest will be accepted until the end of the day on June 1st, 2008. Winners will be announced on June 15th, 2008. The winning writer will receive a \$500 scholarship. The runner-up will receive an iPod.

<http://www.pinoncanyon.com/scholarship.html>

Pueblo County joins opposition to Pinon Canyon expansion

The Pueblo County Board of Commissioners made official its opposition to the U.S. Army's plans to expand the Pinon Canyon Maneuver site Tuesday. In a resolution passed unanimously by the three-member board, the county joined ranchers and other opponents of a plan to expand the Army's training grounds by 414,000 acres. Commissioner Jeff Chostner, a retired Air Force colonel, expanded on his comments from a March 27 meeting in which the commissioners indicated they would stand with the ranchers and other county officials against the Army's plans.

Published in the Pueblo Chieftain on Wednesday April 09, 2008

<http://archive.constantcontact.com/fs017/1101682860186/archive/1102052020723.html>

US Representatives agree probe needed

More than one Pinon Canyon area rancher has been angered in recent weeks over a telephone call from an Army-paid public relations firm wanting to question them about their views on the proposed expansion of the Pinon Canyon Maneuver Site. Rep. Marilyn Musgrave, R-Colo., has responded by asking the General Accountability Office - the investigative arm of Congress - to determine if the Army is violating the 2008 federal budget law, which includes her one-year ban on the Army spending any money on the proposed 414,000-acre expansion. Musgrave and Rep. John Salazar, D-Colo., attached that ban to the budget legislation last summer and both the House and Senate approved it.

Published in the Pueblo Chieftain on Friday April 04, 2008

<http://archive.constantcontact.com/fs017/1101682860186/archive/1102047164609.html>

Colorado College Students are Active in Opposition

Colorado Springs college students are getting involved in opposing the Pinon Canyon Expansion. On Saturday, February 23rd Bill Sulzman, Director of Citizens for Peace in Space accompanied a group of 8 students, members of the Foundations of Nonviolence class at Colorado College on a visit to the ranches of Cathy Mullins and Tony and Connie Hass.

<http://www.thislandisourland.org/news.html>

History Corner

We hope to include some general history of PCMS in each edition of this newsletter. It is amazing how similar the news articles, and statements made by Department of Defense and Army officials in the 1970's and 1980's, are to what's being said today.

History tends to repeat itself. During the initial creation of the PCMS in the late 1970's and early 1980's, locals were misled regarding the economic implications of allowing the Department of Defense to acquire the land.

"Economic impact of the proposed acquisition continues to be a matter of high priority in our efforts. While an exact dollar amount impact cannot be guaranteed for any given community, the aggregate economic impact in Southeastern Colorado would be significantly positive. Acquisition, construction and development expenditures on the site would total nearly \$68 million over the period 1982-1985. One time impact of these funds upon local communities could range between 20 percent and 84 percent of the gross total. Additionally, once training begins, the annual local impact of operations and maintenance expenditures could range between \$1 million and \$5 million. The purchasing and contracting specialists at Fort Carson are preparing seminars for local business persons to prepare them to compete effectively for federal contracts. These seminars will be useful to the small business that have not been involved in government contracts."

***John W. Hudachek
Major General, USA
Commanding
June 9th 1981***

Make no mistake; the Department of Defense is interested in much more than the 400,000-plus acre expansion that they are currently admitting to.

*"I just came out of a meeting on future combat systems and the project manager for the unit of action (UA), which is a brigade-sized unit, told us that the radius of action of the UA is 75 kilometers. That is about a 150-kilometer square box**. It's a big area, much bigger than our National Training Center. We are now looking at expanding Piñon Canyon to a size that will accommodate this unit of action."*

***Robert Stack, former range officer at Fort Carson
Federal Facilities Environmental Journal, pg. 17
Summer 2003***

*****Editor's note: this is about 5.5 million acres.***

Current Events and Volunteer Opportunities

The following link will take you to a calendar of upcoming PCEOC events, or other events in which the coalition plans be involved with, to have a booth, or some other presence. Volunteers would be very, very helpful at many of these events. Please contact the PCEOC if you would like to offer your services.

<http://www.pinoncanyon.com/events.html>

PCEOC Mission Statement

The PCEOC has developed an updated mission statement. The link will take you to the entire statement.

We the people of Colorado have come together to oppose the unnecessary and irresponsible efforts to expand an under-utilized training site in Colorado, the Pinon Canyon Maneuver Site (PCMS). We have thus formed this broad-based coalition, the Pinon Canyon Expansion Opposition Coalition representing communities across Southern Colorado and the entire United States including business owners, teachers, students, elected officials, ranchers, environmentalists and many others.

<http://www.pinoncanyon.com/mission.html>