

October 10, 2008

Western lands uranium gopher for October 11, 2008

An occasional column on money and mining news items

The rise of nuclear energy, a second act if ever there was one, has given uranium a shot in the arm in western states in the U.S. Interest in uranium mining is growing and with it comes another growth industry - the production of press releases about the uranium mining industry. The purpose of this occasional column is to separate the really interesting stuff from promotional fluff.



The choices of the subjects is based on what looks interesting mostly in states that are "west" of the 100th meridian, but this isn't hard and fast. The states of interest are WY, CO, UT, TX, NM, AZ, & NV. For this reason the series is titled the "western lands uranium gopher." These are news notes and the content is not to be considered investment advice.

~ This column is an expanded version of an article published in Fuel Cycle Week V7 N298 on 10/08/08 by International Nuclear Associates Inc., Washington, DC. ~ Portions of this blog post did not appear in FCW. ~

And so it begins - Blue Rock comes up short

The global financial crash crunch will have an impact on uranium mining and here's one of the first signals of what may be coming down the pike. BlueRock Resources Ltd. ([CVE:BRD](#)) is [shutting down](#) development work for two weeks as it struggles to find adequate working capital in the midst of the current credit crisis.



The company said it continues to hold discussions with several public and private companies to get capital for its operations and to advance it's strategic plan to become a uranium producer in the U.S. Southwest. It currently produces uranium at its mine in Montrose County, Colo.

In a separate development, BlueRock Resources [said](#) that it had pulled out of the joint venture to build a new uranium mill at the Mancos site in a industrial park in Green River, Utah, and that Mancos had refunded \$200,000 in expenses to Bluebird. (*More news on the proposed Mancos uranium mill below*)

International Isotopes scouts for \$55M

Steve Laflin, (right) CEO of International Isotopes, is tenacious and he has to be looking for \$55 million to build a plant to extract fluorine from depleted uranium for use in high tech electronics and pharmaceutical manufacturing.



His work as the CEO of a small eastern Idaho company aiming to build a \$55 million plant to extract industrial gases from depleted uranium has narrowed its search to four sites, including two in Idaho.

International Isotopes Inc. ([OTC:INIS](#)) Laflin said last Tuesday in Idaho Falls that one of the Idaho sites is near Idaho Falls, where France's Areva plans a \$2 billion uranium enrichment plant. The other Idaho site hasn't been disclosed.

The company also is considering sites in Lea County, NM, where Louisiana Energy Services / Urenco is building a separate uranium enrichment facility, and in nearby Andrews County, TX, which has a low-level waste dump.

Laflin told the AP his proposed facility could be anywhere on transportation routes between uranium enrichment plants that produce depleted uranium and the facilities where uranium waste is disposed.

"We're meeting with all the elected officials and all the economic development officials" in areas where the plant could be built, Laflin said.

International Isotopes aims to take depleted uranium from the enrichment process and extract the fluoride gas into a very pure form for use in high tech industrial applications such as micro chip etching and pharmaceuticals. The 13-year-old Idaho company has 35 employees and sales of \$4.5 million in 2007. It and produces isotopes such as cobalt-60 used in medical treatments.

The company is evaluating several ways to raise cash for its plant, a process Laflin said hasn't been easy in the current economy.

"There can be no guarantee the capital will be available, or available under acceptable terms," he said.

-- Prior [coverage](#) on this blog of INIS.