

## Fitch, Abby

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**From:** Charlene Willey <pc.willey@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 15, 2024 6:39 PM  
**To:** DeMott, David  
**Cc:** McNally, Nancy; Ezeadi, Obi; Hott, Amber; Carmelia, Claire; Nurmela, Sarah; Ireland, Kristine; Public Comment; Katy Foley; Rachel Zenzinger; Rep. Shannon Bird; Monte Whaley; Andrews, Jody; Erb, Kodi; Frankel, David; Tracy Kraft-Tharp; Lesley Dahlkemper; Kyle Brown; akerr@co.jefferson.co.us  
**Subject:** Re: [EXTERNAL] Council Decision Regarding Standley Lake

Thank you for acknowledging that RMMA should take every measure to assure us that they are operating safely and cleanly. We can certainly agree on that. And as you noted, more information from third party experts is required. I only wish that the Council had agreed to engage Jefferson County at the beginning of this process, as Councilor Hott's letter had requested.

I look forward to the Westminster City Council take appropriate measures to protect our precious water supply.

Charlene Willey

On Aug 15, 2024, at 5:52 PM, DeMott, David <[ddemott@westminsterco.gov](mailto:ddemott@westminsterco.gov)> wrote:

I appreciate your views. I would say it is unfair to state to not take path you prefer is to not be concerned. I clearly asked staff to weigh in to vet out the concern. I think the approach I and others asked for is reasonable way forward.

Clearly we can find room to agree and disagree from time to time and still see we each can share concern but differ on approach forward as well as find some concerns are lesson as we learn about subject such as the staff provide information on how run off flows.

Clearly that does not mean that RMMA should not take every measure to assure as they do construction in any matter that they should do so safely and cleanly as guided by local, state and federal law.

Thanks,  
Dave DeMott  
City Councillor  
City of Westminster  
303-881-2728

On Aug 15, 2024, at 5:24 PM, Charlene Willey <[pc.willey@gmail.com](mailto:pc.willey@gmail.com)> wrote:

Dear Councilor Demott,

Again, thank you for your response. I'd like to point out two things:

1. Imagine what might have happened if prudent public leaders had been concerned about surface water flow contamination to Woman Creek from Rocky Flats decades ago and had taken preventative measures. Perhaps the known radioactive and other contaminants that now sit at the bottom of Stanley Lake from this surface flow would not be there.
2. I find it remarkable that you express willingness to revisit the letters as I asked and also "stand by" your earlier position on the matter, all expressed in the same sentence. It seems that your mind is made up before you engage in reviewing these materials.

Cordially,

Charlene Willey

On Thu, Aug 15, 2024 at 4:53 PM DeMott, David

<[ddemott@westminsterco.gov](mailto:ddemott@westminsterco.gov)> wrote:

Thank you for your email and including Commissioner Kerr.

I appreciate the opportunity to revisit the letter and stand by my opinion of approach I would like us to take with our staff and partners.

Thank you for your continued advocacy for safety of the community.

Thanks,  
Dave DeMott  
City Councillor  
City of Westminster  
303-881-2728

On Aug 15, 2024, at 3:24 PM, Charlene Willey

<[pc.willey@gmail.com](mailto:pc.willey@gmail.com)> wrote:

Councilor DeMott:

Thank you for your prompt reply. And I wish to also thank Mr. Andrews for the information he provided. I am confident that the city employs competent staff to do water quality testing and is aware of surface flows that feed into Standley Lake.

I ask that you re-read my communication and perhaps also the letter that Councilor Hott proposed for the Council. Note that the issue was one of **prevention, i.e., detection and containment of contaminants in soils, as well as both surface and groundwater, on airport property**. As I noted, by the time contamination levels become so high that they have reached Standley Lake, detection of those toxic substances will be very difficult (with the potential to cause great harm while they remain undiscovered) and will be **very expensive if not impossible to remove from water supplies**. A prudent course of action to deal with these known nearby contaminants was suggested in Councilor Hott's letter. The letter is neither threatening nor disrespectful. It is simply a response to those airport officials who had professed a "good neighbor" policy in dealing with community issues. The expertise required likely involves hydrologists and/or geophysicists who regularly perform these duties (or provide the academic training for them) for public entities like Westminster and Jefferson County.

I noticed that you had included two of the three Jeffco Commissioners on your response. I am adding Commissioner Kerr as well. I am sure that Jeffco Commissioners will be interested to know that this issue is one that the Westminster City Council is aware of and that most members of the Council agree that further information is required.

Thank you,

Charlene Willey  
Westminster, Jefferson County

On Aug 15, 2024, at 2:18 PM, DeMott, David  
<[ddemott@westminsterco.gov](mailto:ddemott@westminsterco.gov)> wrote:

Ms. Willey,

I have added our staff to thread and ask they address your concerns. We do have many experts tasked with the safety of our drinking water and I believe we need to work with them and our county partners to address your concerns.

Please see response to recent ask on topic from Manager Andrews.

“ Councillor DeMott,

Thank you for sharing this communication and asking for Staff’s input.

Staff advises that stormwater runoff from the surface of the airport in the direction of Standley Lake is intercepted by Walnut Creek and does not flow to the lake - see attached with ground surface contours.

With respect to groundwater, the City does not operate groundwater wells in the area. Moving forward, Staff will be engaging with groundwater authorities to better understand aquifers and the subsurface water table around Standley Lake in the context of this concern. That said, there has not been any water quality data from the lake that would suggest an interconnect with the airport.

The City of Westminster has a very advanced water quality testing and analysis program for Standley Lake – both the lake itself as well as the source waters - that ensures our water continues to be among the safest and cleanest in the state. We can and do confidently communicate this to our public and our Standley Lake partners.

Understanding that this is a topic of conversation in the community, Staff will look for opportunities to provide this information and assurance moving forward.

Kind regards,

**Jody Andrews ”**

Thanks,  
Dave DeMott  
City Councillor  
City of Westminster  
303-881-2728

On Aug 15, 2024, at 1:31 PM,  
Charlene Willey  
<[pc.willey@gmail.com](mailto:pc.willey@gmail.com)> wrote:

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

To the Westminster City Council:

Please see this article  
<https://coloradocommunitymedia.com/2024/08/14/westminster-council-delays-letter-asking-for-details-of-potential-airport-water-contamination/> documenting the Council's decision Monday evening to AVOID responsibility for protection of Standley Lake, the primary water source for nearly 300,000 people in Westminster, Thornton and Northglenn. I witnessed this process in person and was truly shocked by the experience.

Councilor Hott had suggested a letter, read into the record, to Jefferson County Commissioners making a very reasonable request that the county engage with the city in a strategy of **detection and containment of a wide variety of toxic substances known to exist on the airport grounds**. The letter went on to explain that the airport lies just two nautical miles **UPHILL** from Standley Lake and that the following dangers are associated with airport activities:

- **PFAS Chemicals:** These chemicals are present on-site and will continue to accumulate due to ongoing firefighting activities.

- **Fuel Tank Leaks:** Leaks from fuel tanks, which are a common occurrence, pose a significant threat.

- **Runway Contamination:** Runways are contaminated with leaded aviation gasoline and other petroleum products, with the cross-wind runway being particularly vulnerable due to its age and deterioration.

- **New Business Operations:** RMMA has leased airport property to a business engaged in painting planes. There is no known mitigation plan for potential contaminants from this operation affecting groundwater.

- **Increased Flight Activity:** The expansion of training patterns has led to more flights over Standley Lake, raising the risk of lead contamination from exhaust dispersal over the lake.

***Dangerous levels of toxins, such as lead, PFAS, benzene, toluene, ethylbenzene, xylene, naphthalene, acetaldehyde, Benzo(a)pyrene, 1,3-Butadiene and other contaminants exist on airport grounds in unknown quantities. Councilor Hott's***

***request was an acknowledgement that airport management had agreed to consider such a strategy and that this was a follow up for that action from the entire Council.***

It is impossible for me to understand how any responsible public official could avoid endorsement of such a reasonable request. The letter was a polite ask for the county to engage experts, like hydrologists or geophysicists, in an effort to find both methods of detection and containment of these known toxins. By the time these toxins are detected in Standley lake waters, the cost of removal, even if it is possible, will be overwhelming. It is both morally and fiscally irresponsible for any water provider to avoid taking this simple action.

Comments that followed from those who voted against this letter were weak attempts to avoid this responsibility and included statements like:

- *“the staff are the real experts here” (staff had noted in their statement that they had few comments on the letter; to my knowledge, none possess the needed expertise noted here)*

*“we need to ask the real expert in a study session... We should invite the airport director to come to a study session and speak on the issue” (the airport director acknowledged that he did not have any relevant*

*knowledge needed for  
detection or containment)*

- *“we need another study session and much more time to consider this”*
- *“creek water flows downhill and then it flows uphill”*

Jefferson County commissioners will consider finalization of construction for taxiway O on August 20. This Council has but a few days to reverse its decision and take responsible action in this matter.

Charlene Willey  
Westminster, Jefferson County  
Save Our Skies Alliance  
([www.saveourskiesalliance.org](http://www.saveourskiesalliance.org))

I am writing to express my concerns regarding the construction activities at the Rocky Mountain Metropolitan Airport (RMMA) and the potential contamination risks posed to Standley Lake, which serves as a vital water source for our



community and surrounding municipalities.

I urge the city to Initiate a dialogue with Jefferson County Commissioners, Eric Dahl, RMMA Airport Director, and Abel Montoya, Development and Transportation Director for Jefferson County. This should include collaboration with the city councils of Thornton and Northglenn to commission a third-party engineering firm to assess the risks of the soils, as well as both surface and groundwater contamination from airport activities.

At a recent Jefferson County meeting, the airport director stated that the airport will abide only by FAA regulation and restrict their review of the environmental impact of RMMA activities to airport property alone. That means they will take no action to detect or contain contaminants from airport operations from reaching Standley Lake or any other areas outside of airport property boundaries. He also announced that construction of the new taxiway will not be paused pending any further assessment of environmental impacts. It is now scheduled to begin in October or November 2024.

It is unacceptable for the airport to dismiss the potential devastating environmental impact of contaminants on surrounding communities in this way.

The council should encourage the airport to halt all further

expansion activities, including the construction of Taxiway O, until a comprehensive plan of detection and containment of contaminants from airport operations is developed and resolved through a transparent public process.

**Specific Areas of Concern:**

- **PFAS Chemicals:** These chemicals are present on-site and will continue to accumulate due to ongoing firefighting activities.
- **Fuel Tank Leaks:** Leaks from fuel tanks, which are a common occurrence, pose a significant threat.
- **Runway Contamination:** Runways are contaminated with leaded aviation gasoline and other petroleum products, with the cross-wind runway being particularly vulnerable due to its age and deterioration.
- **New Business Operations:** RMMA has leased airport property to a business engaged in painting planes. There is no known mitigation plan for potential contaminants from this operation affecting groundwater.
- **Increased Flight Activity:** The expansion of training patterns has led to more flights over Standley Lake, raising the risk of lead contamination from exhaust dispersal over the lake.

As a water source provider for 300,000 residents in three communities, Westminster bears responsibility and potential liability for the protection of Standley Lake reservoir. I respectfully request that the city council address these issues with urgency to safeguard our community's health and resources.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

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