This material was compiled by the developers of Candelas as information for its many current and prospective residents. The information and data contained in this brochure is public record and can be easily accessed by contacting any of the organizations listed above, most notably the Rocky Flats Stewardship Council, which is comprised of representatives from the area’s local municipalities, government agencies, academic institutions, health and environmental organizations, and others.

To easily access some of these resources online, please visit our website at www.candelasrockyflats.com.
CaNdelaS iS SiTuaTed moRe ThaN 1.3 mileS FRom WheRe The RoCky FlaTS FaCiliTy oNCe STood, aNd The TWo loCaTioNs aRe SepaRaTeD by ThouSaNdS oF aCReS oF pRoTeCTed opeN SpaCe — aN iNvaluAble eNviRoNmeNTal aSSeT FoR all oF ColoRado.

Created after the largest and most successful environmental cleanup in history, Rocky Flats National Wildlife Refuge represents a remarkable Colorado milestone. For decades, the center of Rocky Flats was home to a manufacturing plant supporting America’s nuclear program. But in the mid-2000s, following a massive 10-year cleanup project costing more than $7 billion, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Department of Energy (DOE), surrounding cities and all other representative authorities gave approval to transform the area into protected open space. Due to a lack of federal government funding, the refuge is not yet open to the public. That will soon change, however, as Colorado recently announced plans for bike and pedestrian trails connecting Rocky Flats to other open spaces (see right). In the meantime, the refuge provides a critical habitat for hundreds of acres of rare xeric tallgrass prairie. Populations of mule deer and elk that live on the refuge represent a crucial link between Colorado’s wildlife heritage and the Denver metropolitan area.

PLANNED BIKE & PEDESTRIAN TRAILS

Announced in 2013 and to be overseen by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the protected open space of Rocky Flats National Wildlife Refuge will soon be linked through bike and pedestrian trails to other federally protected open spaces in the area, including the Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge and Rocky Mountain National forest lands.

Candelas iS SituaTed moRe ThaN 1.3 mileS frOm WheRe The RoCky FlaTS FaCiliTy oNCe STood, aNd The TWo loCaTioNs aRe SepaRaTeD by ThouSaNdS oF aCReS oF pRoTeCTed opeN SpaCe — aN iNvaluAble eNviRoNmeNTal aSSeT FoR all oF ColoRado.
The Rocky Flats facility used only a small portion of the immense protected open space that is today called Rocky Flats National Wildlife Refuge. The former facility took its place in U.S. defense history when it opened in 1952 as a factory producing triggers for nuclear weapons. At its height, the U.S. Department of Energy facility employed thousands of local workers and had more than 800 structures. The small city even operated its own fire department. Public concerns and the end of the Cold War marked the closing of Rocky Flats, and in 1992 the U.S. government decided to completely dismantle the plant, beginning the nation’s most ambitious environmental cleanup.

**ROCKY FLATS: 1952–1992**

By 1995, cleanup activities had begun under the oversight of the U.S. Department of Energy, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, and representatives from the region’s city and county governments. In a span of ten years, the rubble of 800 buildings and 100 tons of material was safely transported and buried deep in federal nuclear waste storage facilities around the U.S.

In 2007, every government and quasi-government agency involved in the Rocky Flats cleanup pronounced the effort complete — the area now exceeded the environmental standards set as the cleanup goal. From there, almost 4,000 acres surrounding the old facility were transferred to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, an agency of the U.S. Department of the Interior, to create the wildlife refuge that exists today. The small portion of land where the actual facility stood is still maintained by the U.S. Department of Energy, which monitors the area around the clock as it does with every such site in the nation. Local governments, including Arvada, Boulder and Westminster, were also given ongoing oversight of the area.
THE RESULT: AN ENVIRONMENTALLY SOUND OPEN SPACE

The Rocky Flats cleanup is considered around the world as a case study for how environmental cleanup can and should be done. Through close public and private partnerships at the federal, state and local levels, Rocky Flats was transformed from a place of decades-long public controversy to a vital environmental habitat and public asset. In total, the effort involved more than ten years and $7 billion, creating an open space that exceeds every standard for being environmentally sound. Water streaming from the area, for example, is reported by the U.S. government to be 100 times cleaner than federal drinking water standards. And the DOE reports that the ground on and around the old site carries no increased risk of exposure to harmful contaminants for humans or animals. Rocky Flats has become a true American environmental success story.

ONGOING CARE AND CONSTANT MONITORING

As part of the federal government’s permanent commitment to protecting the Rocky Flats area, the U.S. Department of Energy operates three water-treatment facilities located at the center of the nine-square-mile parcel. The federal government constantly monitors the air, water and soil quality — then reports the data to the Rocky Flats Stewardship Council, an independent group of state and local representatives charged with the perpetual oversight of the area.