

## MESSAGE FROM MARSHA

### Property Rights or Politics in Motion

Governor Ritter signed HB1317, "No State Lands to Expand Pinon Canyon," into law on June 2, 2009, proclaiming it will protect the private property rights of families in Southeastern Colorado. However, this bill never mentions "private property" or "private property rights", but in my opinion, offers false hope and promises to the hard working families of Southeast Colorado that their property will be protected with the enactment of HB1317.

To briefly recap, HB1317 prohibits the Colorado State Land Board from selling or leasing ***any state land*** to the Army for the expansion of Pinon Canyon Maneuver Site (PCMS). It appears that from studying the state land maps, a majority of the property that may be considered for this expansion is private property, ***not state land***.

It has been my concern this bill is unconstitutional and that surrounding property owners may lose their ability to sell their property to one of the only buyers available, Fort Carson. Consider the following, a property owner due to family, financial reasons or failing health needs to sell or lease their land to Fort Carson, and a portion of state land sits either within their parcel of land or borders their property. Their property under HB1317 will probably lose its appeal, salability and value to Fort Carson. Even more damaging, the private property owner may have lost any future opportunities to sell due to the stigma and prohibition of any state land being sold for the expansion.

Over the past few years' some policy makers have made reckless and damaging accusations implying that Fort Carson has contaminated the land with uranium and has intentionally set fires within the existing maneuver site. These types of unsubstantiated, false comments and rumors clearly have a negative impact on ALL of the property values in the Southeastern portion of the state. Let's stop this political rhetoric and help develop a plan that will provide opportunities for those property owners who are willing to sell and protection for those property owners unwilling to sell. It is time for solutions that require transparency, cooperation and equity for all parties involved, not additional legislation at a state or federal level that negatively affects the property values and rights of individuals who may be interested in selling their land to possibly one of the only buyers available.

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