

# New START—Nuclear Weapon Free Colorado

FACT SHEET FOR A RESOLUTION TO CONGRESS

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Prepared by Colorado Coalition for Prevention of Nuclear War  
[www.thecoloradocoalition.org](http://www.thecoloradocoalition.org)

## New START Treaty: A Colorado Legislature Resolution Supporting Prompt US Senate Ratification

### Special points of interest:

- *New START Treaty signed April 2010*
- *US Senate must approve for ratification*
- *Support Colorado Legislature resolution supporting START and*
- *De-alerting and decommissioning 49 nuclear missiles in Colorado*

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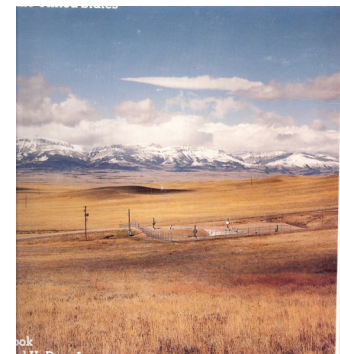
In April 2010, President Medvedev of Russia and President Obama took the next step toward elimination of the threat of nuclear war by signing the New START or strategic arms reduction treaty. The treaty awaits final approval from the U.S. Senate and the Russian Duma. The U.S. Senate has held Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearings, and with bipartisan 14-4 vote recommended ratification to the full Senate.

The New START treaty will further reduce the deployed strategic nuclear weapons arsenals of both nations to a maximum of 1550 deployed weapons, and 700 strategic delivery vehicles (ICBM missiles, SLBM submarine

launched missiles, and heavy nuclear weapon capable bombers).

The previous START treaty was initiated by President Reagan and ultimately signed by President G.H.W. Bush in 1991. It expired on December 5, 2009 and as a consequence, verification of compliance is no longer in effect. In 2002 President G.W. Bush signed another nuclear weapon reduction treaty with Russia (SORT aka Moscow Treaty) which is due to expire on Dec 31, 2012.

The New START treaty will further reduce weapons by approximately 30% beyond the previous treaties by 2017 and immediately restore and enhance safeguard and verifi-



**Minuteman missile silo on the high plains**

cation inspection protocols.

The Colorado Coalition is seeking to have the Colorado Legislature adopt a resolution to be sent to the U.S. Senate encouraging a prompt vote for ratification of New START treaty. This will make Coloradans, our nation and the world a safer place.

## New START—Opportunity for Nuclear Weapon Free Colorado

On the high plains of northeastern Colorado there are 49 Minuteman III nuclear missiles on continual high alert, a status started in the 1960's. Each ICBM missile is located in an underground silo and commanded from F.E. Warren Air Force Base in Cheyenne, Wyoming.

Compliance with the New START treaty will require reduction in nuclear bombs and delivery vehicles. One reasonable scenario could involve decommissioning from 50 to 150 of the Minuteman III missiles, as well as deployed weapons on subma-

rines and bombers, commonly called the nuclear triad.

The Colorado Coalition recommends that the entire flight of 49 Minuteman missiles located in Colorado be de-alerted and then permanently decommissioned.



# The Colorado Coalition

Envision a World without Nuclear Weapons

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**Our Mission-** The mission of The Colorado Coalition is to educate the general public and public officials concerning proactive and solution-oriented action on nuclear weapons. Educated citizens work with the U.S. Colorado Congressional Delegation to enact legislation that supports long-term aims of nuclear disarmament, national security, and redirection of military spending.

**ACTION ITEM:** Contact your US Senators to encourage New START ratification, & your Colorado legislators to encourage the resolution to decommission the Colorado nuclear weapons in compliance with New START.

**For More Information:**

1. New START treaty text & fact sheets, [www.whitehouse.gov](http://www.whitehouse.gov)
2. Bulletin of Atomic Scientists, May/June 2010 and July/Aug 2010
3. U.S. Nuclear Posture Review Report, April 2010, [www.whitehouse.gov](http://www.whitehouse.gov)
4. [www.fcni.org](http://www.fcni.org) for fact sheets and analysis
5. Nuclear Heartland: Guide to Missile Silos of the US

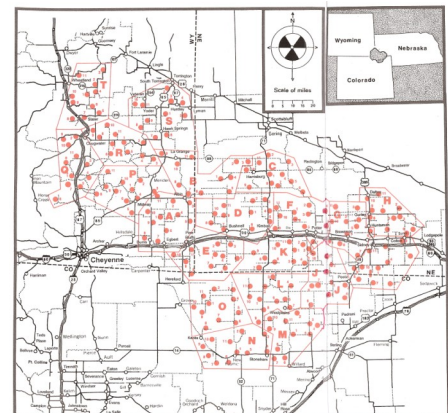
## Nuclear Weapons in Colorado: Benefits in Decommissioning

Few Coloradans are aware that there are 49 nuclear missiles in buried silos in northeast Colorado, in Weld, Logan, and Morgan counties, generally northeast of Greeley and north and northwest of Sterling (see map). These missiles are clustered in flights of ten silos with a buried launch center for each flight where the missileers are on constant duty. Each Minuteman III missile is armed with a nuclear bomb that is at least 20 times more powerful than the bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Between them, USA and Russia still have more than 95% of the nuclear weapons of the world and still hold vast overkill capacity despite nearly 80% reductions since the early 1990's with the signing of the first START treaty.

The command and staffing of the missiles in Colorado is from Warren AFB in Cheyenne, Wyoming. As a result there would be virtually no impact on employment within Colorado when these missiles are decommissioned and permanently removed.

Reducing the presence of nuclear weapons in Colorado can make Coloradans more secure. The presence of nuclear weapon facilities all represent potential targets in a strategic large scale war and, a major concern in today's world, random acts of non-state terrorism. While our nuclear forces are highly trained, the facilities and human elements are not fail-safe. In October 2010, Warren AFB had a power failure that disabled communication with a large part of their missile silos, including those in Colorado.

Overall, the reduction of our nation's nuclear arsenal can save billions of federal tax dollars which can be redirected to more effective security through meeting domestic social needs, deficit reduction, a stronger economy, and a less threatening posture to other countries which in turn reduces more nuclear weapon proliferation and counter threats.



**Missile Silo Map (above):**

Each red dot in the above map is a Minuteman III missile silo or a launch control center for a group of missiles, usually 10 missiles. In Colorado, there are all or parts of Flights J, L, M, N, and O with a total of 49 missiles.

Ref: Nuclear Heartland, S Day Jr. (Ed.), 1988. Note: some of the silos in Wyoming or Nebraska may have been decommissioned