



# BUREAU OF BUSINESS & ECONOMIC RESEARCH

Presentation Prepared For  
The Indian Affairs Committee  
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# *UNM BBER Uranium Mine Remediation Study*

1. Importance of the Study
2. Gathering Information
3. Analysis/Deliverables
4. Study Progress
5. Timeline and Goals
6. Potential Future Actions
7. Summary

## *Importance of the Study*

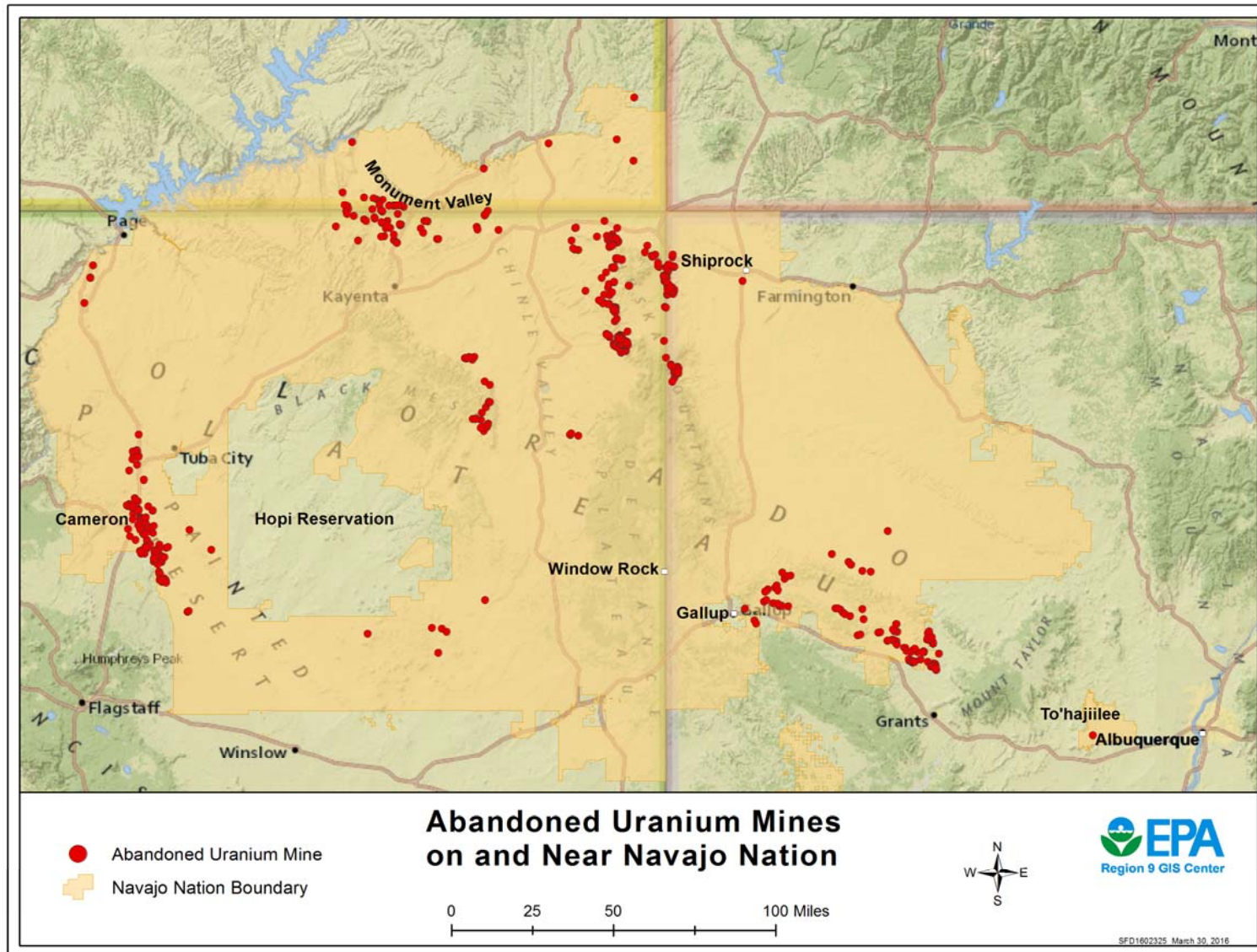
- There are **over 500 abandoned uranium mines** on or near Navajo lands.
- Within the State of New Mexico, **259 uranium mining sites** have been identified by the New Mexico Mining and Minerals Division; 137 with no evidence of reclamation efforts.
- The EPA and other government agencies have been working to generate funds to address uranium mine remediation, including **more than \$1 billion** in a recent settlement with Tronox (Kerr-McGee) for approximately 55 mines on or near Navajo lands.

*To date, only a small share of the remediation money has been spent – there is an opportunity to ensure that cleanup operations benefit local communities.*

# Importance of the Study

This is a generational project, potentially offering significant economic opportunities to affected populations in New Mexico.

The purpose of the BBER study is to develop strategies that maximize local economic opportunities.



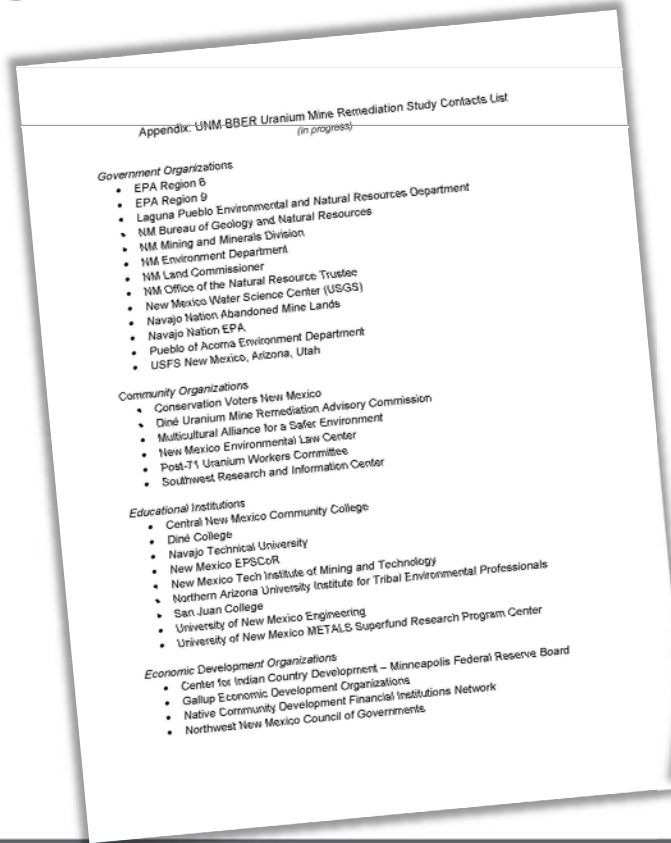
# Gathering Information

- Engineering Evaluation/Cost Analysis (EE/CA) for uranium mine and mill sites
- Removal Site Evaluation (RSE) reports for uranium mine sites
- Post-cleanup documents from various State and Federal agencies
- Interviews with key stakeholders, such as community organizations, and governmental organizations
- Workforce and occupational data
- Discussions with colleges, businesses, and unions regarding existing and potential workforce development and placement



# Gathering Information: Contacts

See the  
Appendix



# *Analysis/Deliverables*

1. Economic Impact Analysis
2. Workforce Gap Analysis
  - Skills requirements
  - Current capacity
  - Workforce opportunities
3. Identification of further economic opportunities related to cleanup

## *Timeline and Goals*

- |                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| <b>November 2019</b> | Identification of Uranium Mines with Potential Cleanup Dollars in New Mexico |
| <b>December 2019</b> | Preliminary Description of Workforce Skills Requirements and Constraints     |
| <b>January 2020</b>  | Preliminary Economic Impact Analysis   |
| <b>March 2020</b>    | Workforce Gap Analysis   |
| <b>June 2020</b>     | Final Report to the Indian Affairs Committee                                 |





# *Study Progress*

- July 2019**
- Began initial contacts with community organizations and the EPA
  - Conducted an inventory of uranium mines within the state of New Mexico, focusing on management, cleanup status, and mine features
  - Attended 40th annual Uranium Tailings Spill Commemoration in the Red Water Pond Road Community
  - Began contacting local and federal government organizations
  - Initiated conversations with various educational institutions about training programs
  - Collected and inventoried cost documents regarding past uranium mine cleanup efforts

# Study Progress

- Aug 2019**
  - Visited NM Energy, Minerals, and Natural Resources Division to exchange information and gather documentation
  - Collected and inventoried documents specifying job tasks needed to engage in assessing and remediation a uranium mine site
- Sept 2019**
  - Created a template to turn federal cost estimate cleanup data into an analyzable format
  - Began Economic Impact Analysis
- Oct 2019**
  - Initiated conversations with businesses for greater insight into workforce skills requirements and capacity to compete for federal contracts
  - Meeting scheduled 10/04 with the Diné Uranium Mine Remediation Advisory Commission

## Potential Future Actions

In our discussions with stakeholders, the following needs for future action have been identified:

- *Further development of workforce training*
- *Working with businesses to establish placement and retention programs for New Mexico workers*
- *The creation of an information clearinghouse, ensuring Federal, Native, State, and local organizations can better coordinate cleanup efforts*
- *New technologies/insights for uranium mine remediation and how they may be better applied in New Mexico and elsewhere – uranium mine remediation is not a localized issue*
- *The cost of continued health impacts of uranium mine exposure, both to workers and to nearby communities*

***State action can help to ensure that New Mexico and Native communities benefit economically from the cleanup of uranium mines.***



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## Summary

- Beyond Federal, State, and Native governments, communities affected by abandoned uranium mines are working to implement environmental and social solutions to problems associated with the uranium mining legacy; *these voices should be prioritized in decision-making about remediation efforts.*
- There has been significant economic as well as environmental harm associated with uranium mining, therefore the remedies need to be both economic and environmental.
- This study focuses on the workforce development and placement to ensure that impacted communities in New Mexico benefit economically from uranium mine remediation.



Thank you!



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