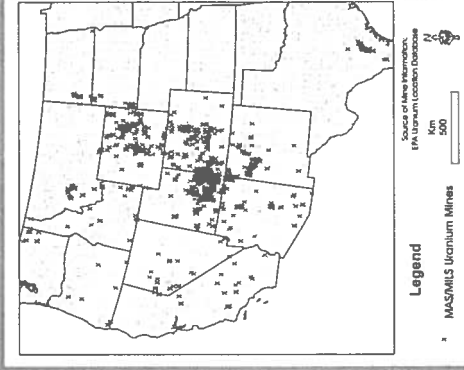


# URANIUM CLEANUP: JOBS AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES

## Is New Mexico Ready?

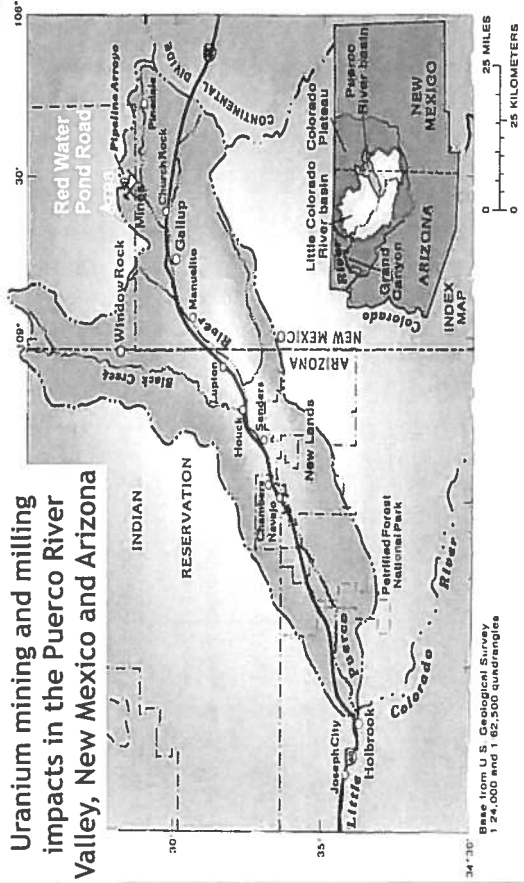
Presentation to the Joint Meeting of the  
Indian Affairs and Radioactive & Hazardous  
Waste Committees  
August 22, 2017

# Abandoned Uranium Mines

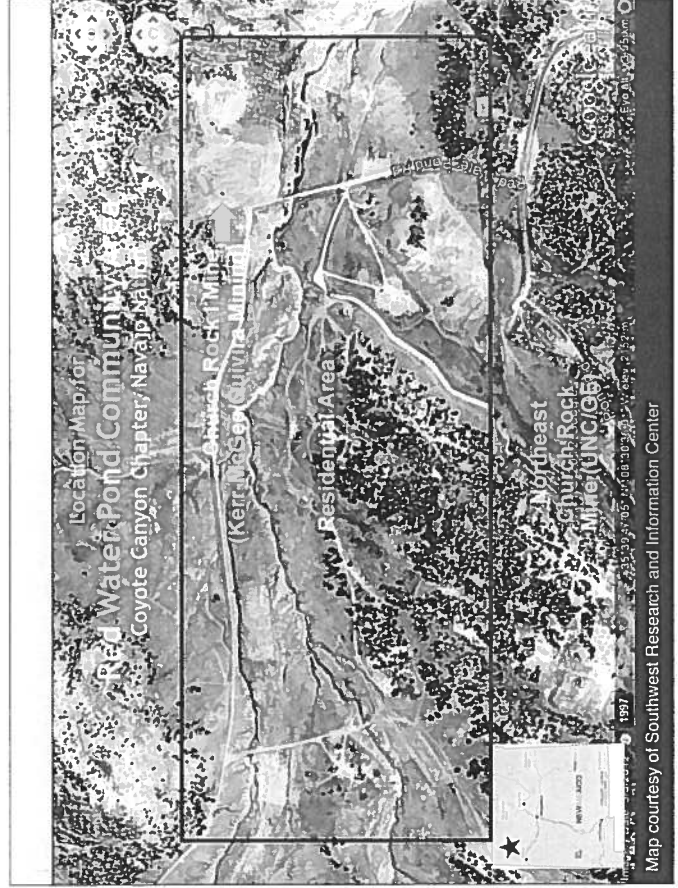


## 1960-1980s

Uranium mining and milling  
impacts in the Puerco River  
Valley, New Mexico and Arizona



*The Puerco River is a major tributary of the Little Colorado River. Recent population growth and changing lifestyles have created an increased demand for water in the basin.*

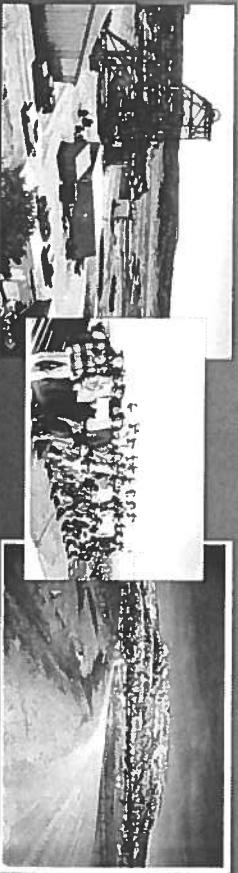


Map courtesy of Southwest Research and Information Center

Uranium Mining Era, 1969-1986



Top: United Nuclear Corp. Northeast Church Rock Mine (1972) and 1978 aerial view of NECR Mine water ponds with discharges to north.  
 Bottom: Kerr-McGee Mine under development (left), construction crew (middle), Red Water Pond Road to Kerr-McGee Mine (1972-1973).  
 An estimated 1.8 million cubic yards of mine wastes are present at these sites.



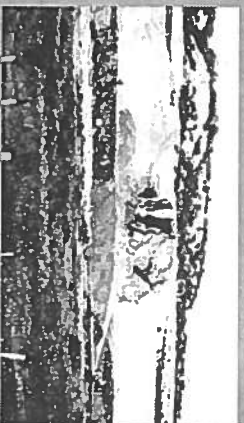
Photos courtesy of Southwest Research and Information Center

It has been 38 years since the spill with no health or environmental studies.



Photo courtesy of Scott Kovac

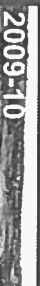
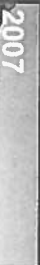
## Churchrock Mill Tailings Spill, 1979



Photos courtesy of Southwest Research and Information Center

## Environmental Trauma RWPR Community, NECR Mine, Temporary "Relocation"

Above: Community members working with SRIC helped document radiation levels around homes next to the NECR Mine, leading to a USEPA-mandated study in 2005-2006.  
 Below: USEPA ordered GE to remove radium- and uranium-contaminated soils from around homes in 2007, 2009-10, and 2012. Residents lived in hotels in Gallup for 3 to 7 months each time.



First soil removal (3 months)

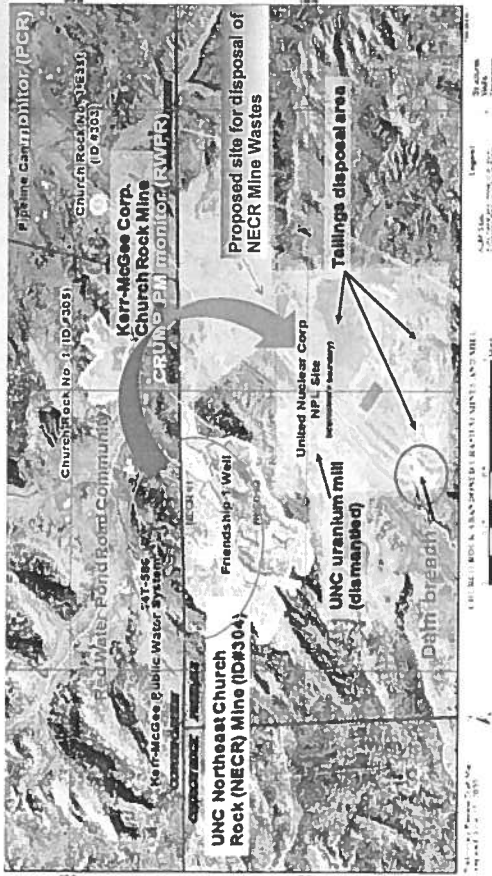
Second (7 months)

Third removal action (4 hrs)

Photos courtesy of Southwest Research and Information Center.

## EPA's Clean-up Plan:

Approved in 2011 and 2013, the plan would move the NECR mine wastes to the UNC uranium mill tailings disposal facility, a process that could take 7 years. The plan awaits approval by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. No plans have been proposed for the Church Rock 1 (Kerr-McGee) mine wastes.



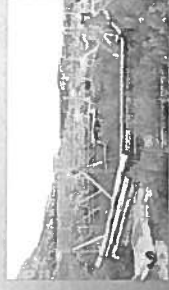
## To heal ourselves, we need to heal the land



Contaminated soils removed, 2007



Hundreds of pinon and juniper removed, 2009



Community hogan under construction, 2016

“We have waited far longer than other communities in the U.S. for this poison to be cleaned up. When is it our turn to feel safe? How many more generations have to wait?”

— Edith Hood, Red Water Pond Road Community, testifying at hearing of Inter-American Commission on Human Rights on the “Right to Water”, October 23, 2015

## House Memorial 117 53rd Legislature - STATE OF NEW MEXICO First Session, 2017

INTRODUCED BY  
D. Wonda Johnson and Eliseo Lee Alcon

WHEREAS, it would be beneficial to identify the kinds of jobs that need to be created to perform the cleanup and the training New Mexicans need to perform the jobs; for state institutions of higher learning to be prepared to teach the specific subjects that address those jobs; and for collaboration between state schools and colleges to develop specific programs to train students to fill the new jobs while avoiding duplicative training efforts; and

WHEREAS, it would be beneficial to explore possibilities for federal funding and related job opportunities for tribal members and New Mexicans;

## NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED ....

that the bureau of business and economic research at the university of New Mexico be requested to conduct an analysis of the possible economic effects of the state and local communities associated with uranium mine cleanup and conduct an assessment of the capacity of the existing New Mexico labor force to contribute to the cleanup of the legacy uranium mines:...



# Multicultural Alliance for a Safe Environment

Bluewater Valley Downstream Alliance  
Eastern Navajo Diné Against Uranium Mining  
Laguna Acoma Coalition for a Safe Environment  
Post 71 Uranium Workers Committee  
Red Water Pond Road Community Association



For more information: [www.swuraniumimpacts.org](http://www.swuraniumimpacts.org)  
Facebook: Multicultural Alliance for a Safe Environment