



New Mexico State Land Office

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**RADIOACTIVE AND HAZARDOUS
MATERIALS COMMITTEE**

MAY 29, 2025

Agenda



NMSLO Legal and Regulatory Framework



Holtec “Interim” Storage Facility Status Update



Uranium Mining



Remediation and Reclamation Efforts



Questions

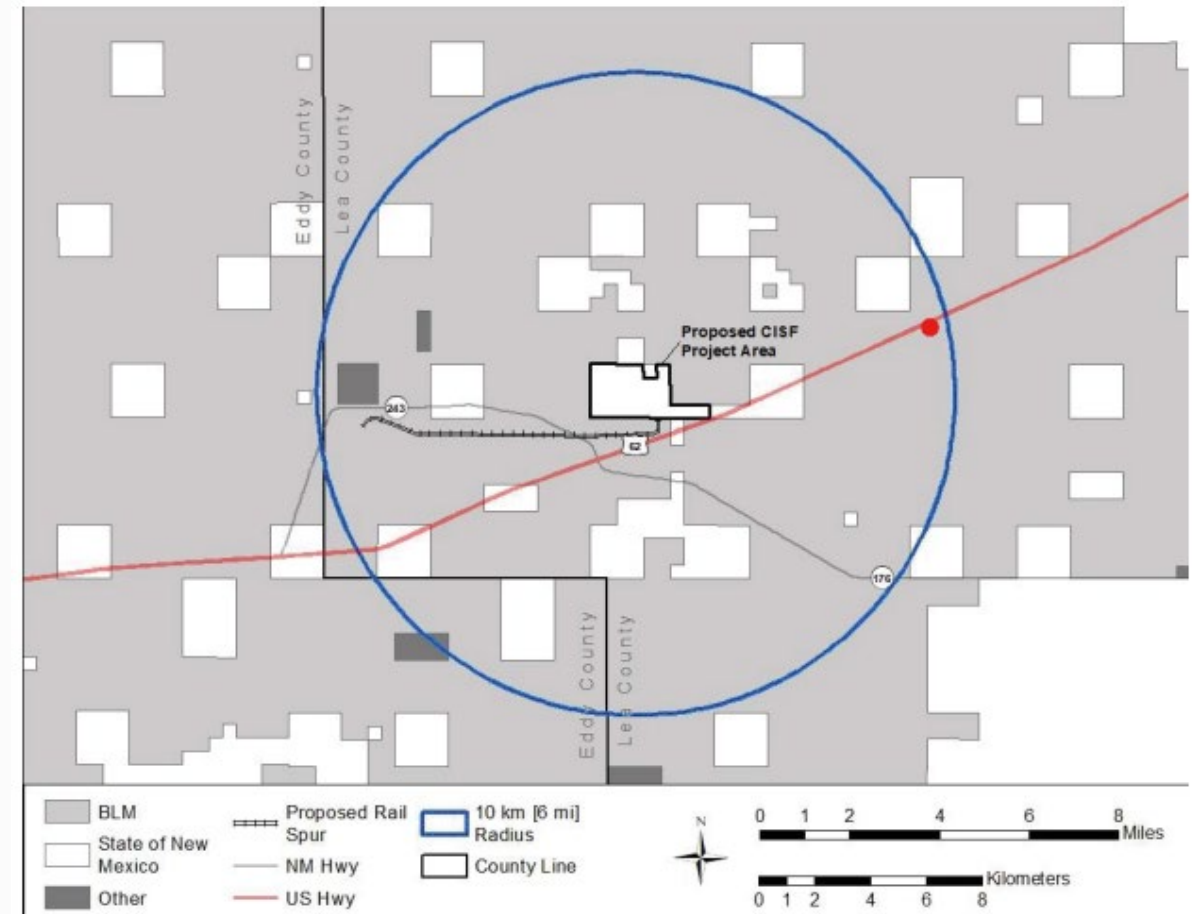
State Land Office Legal Framework

- Broad authority over the management and disposition of state trust lands (9 million acres of surface, 13 million acres of mineral rights)
- Leases (ag, commercial, oil & gas, renewable, mining, etc.) provide terms and conditions entities must follow regarding operations and site clean-up requirements
- Require compliance with other state and federal laws/regs (e.g., EMNRD, NMED, PRC, EPA)
- Enforcement tools – achieve compliance via collaboration or litigation

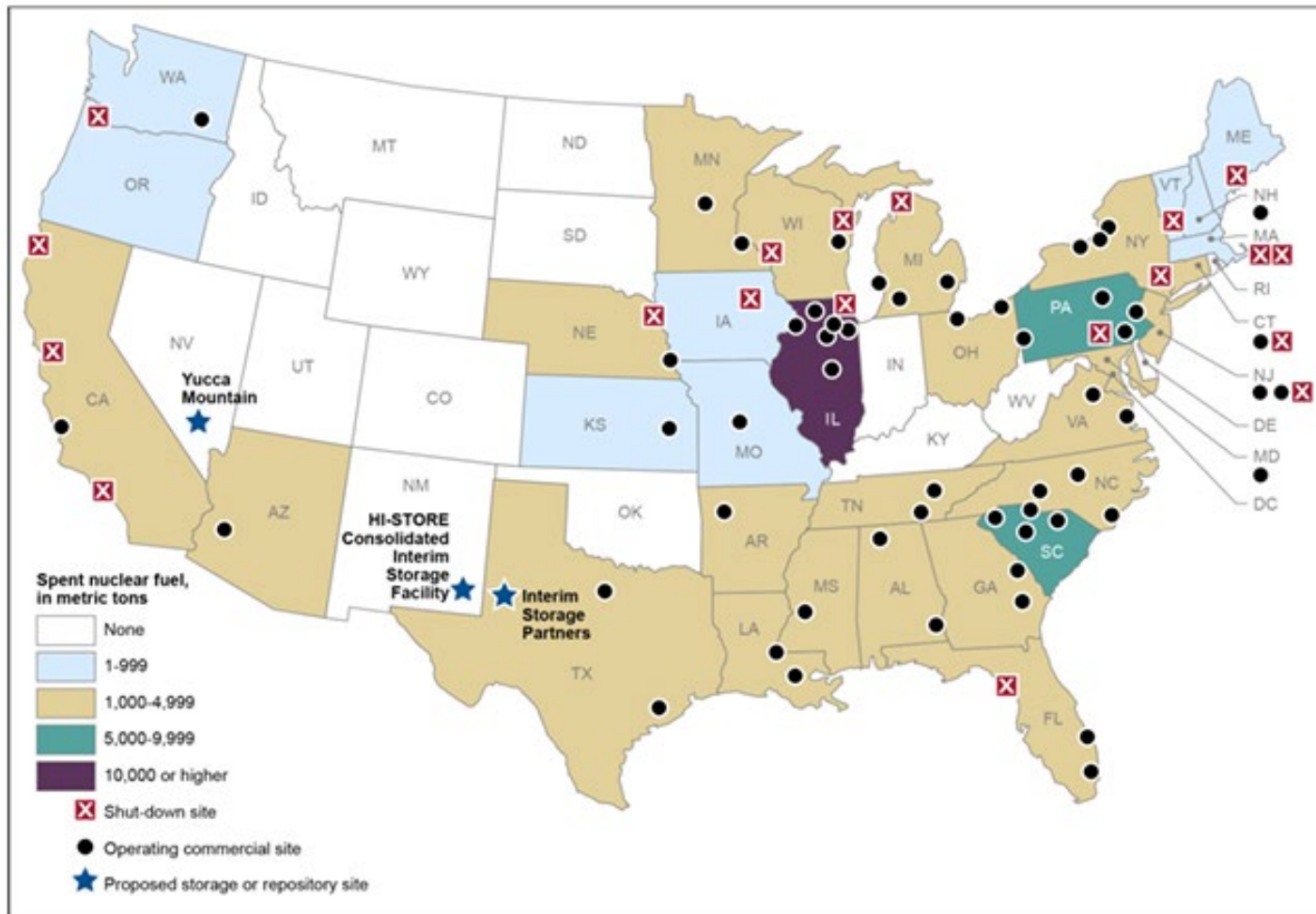


Holtec Status Update

- NRC issued license to Holtec on May 9, 2023 for “interim” storage (10,000 casks of high-level nuclear waste)
- NMSLO owns/leases mineral rights at site (no current restriction on leasing activities)
- EIS included faulty environmental & safety assessments; relied on misleading applicant info; failed to properly consider NMSLO mineral interests
- 5th Circuit Court of Appeals vacated Holtec’s NRC license for NM storage site (March 2024); **U.S. Supreme Court decision expected by end of June 2025**

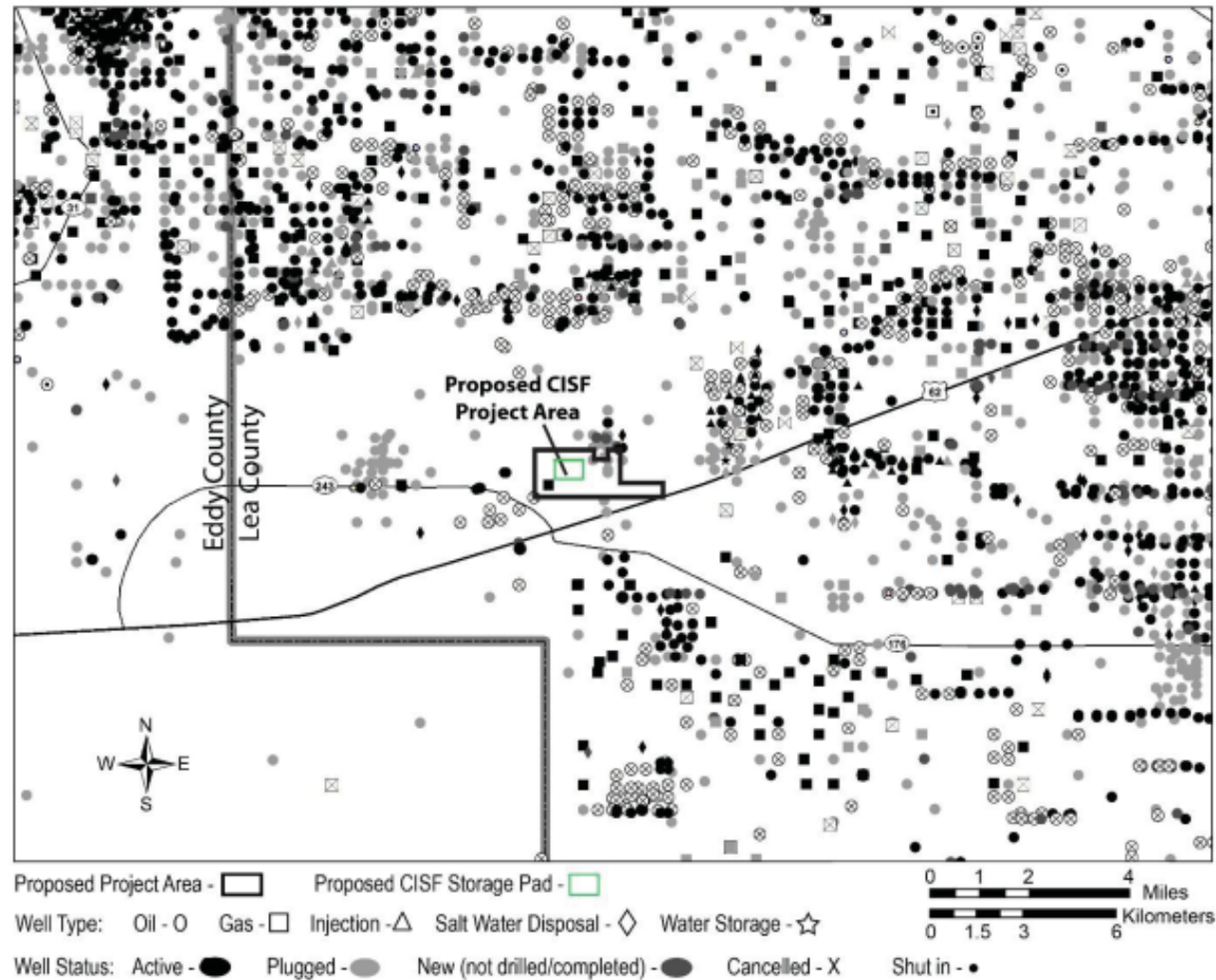


Spent Nuclear Fuel Amounts Currently Stored at 70 Sites in 35 States













Sources: GAO analysis of data from Gutherman Technical Services, LLC, the Department of Energy, and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission; Map Resources (map). | GAO-21-603

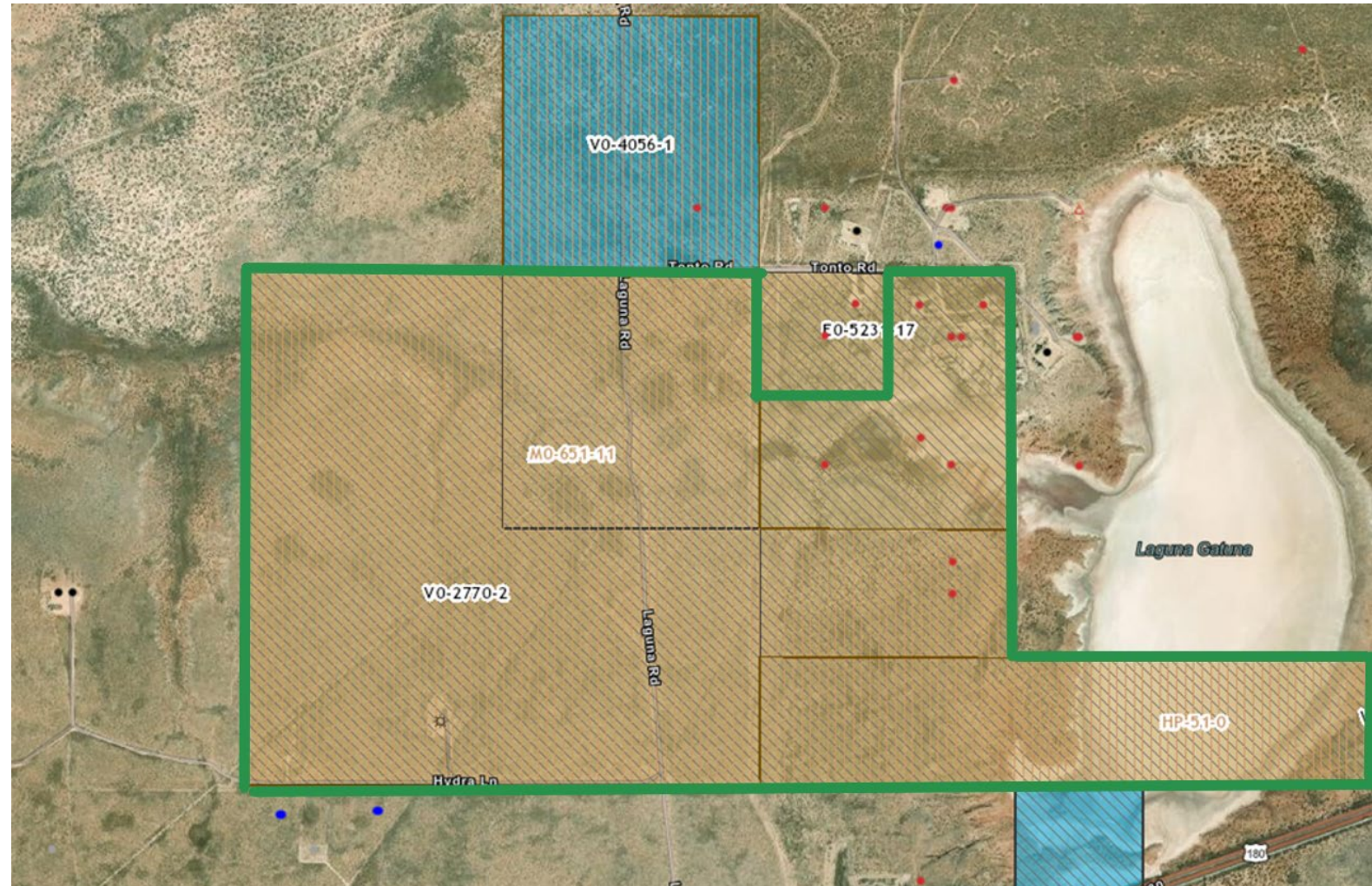
Oil & Gas Wells Within and Surrounding Project Area



Oil, Gas and Mineral Site Activity

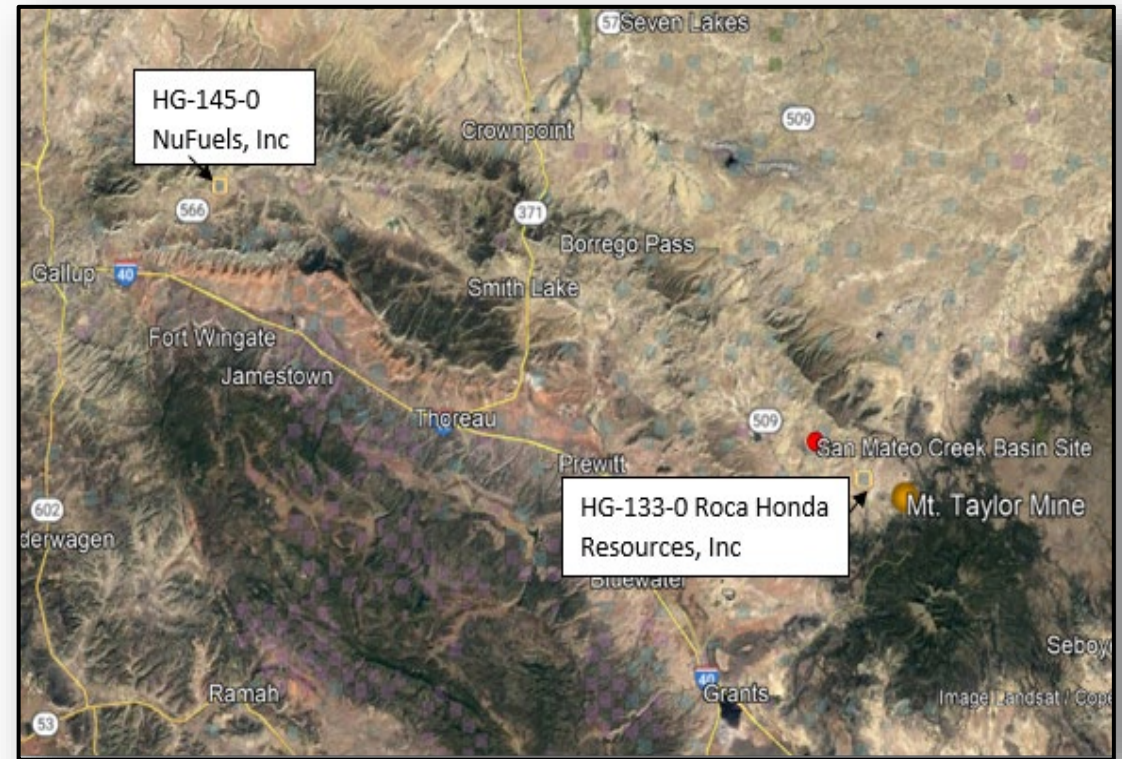
NM Trust Lands - By Estate

-  Subsurface
-  Surface and Subsurface
-  Oil and Gas Leases
 -  Gas, Active
 -  Oil, Active
 -  Oil, Cancelled
 -  Oil, New
 -  Oil, Plugged
-  Minerals Leases
-  Project Area



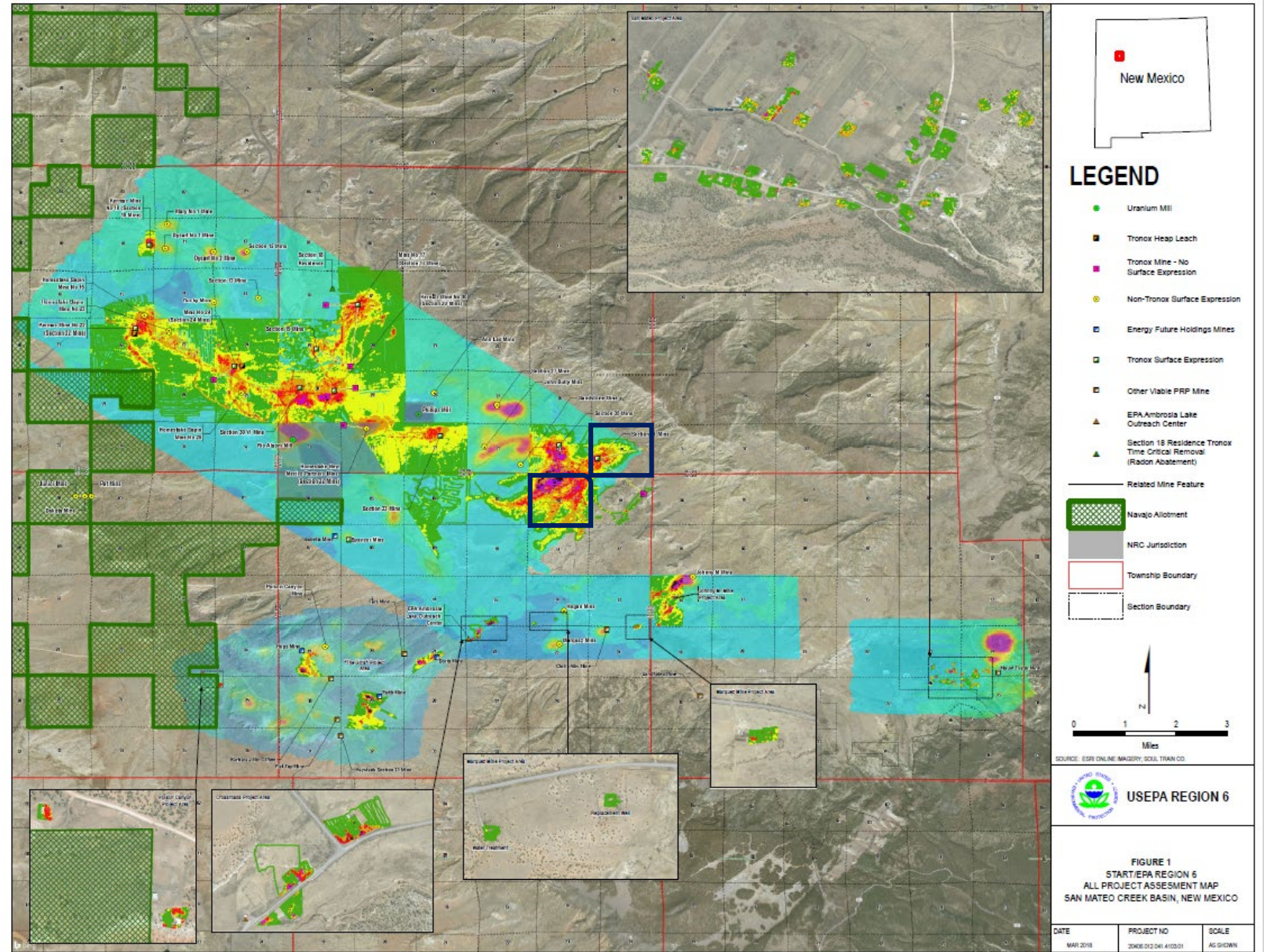
Uranium Activity on State Trust Lands

- Two active, legacy uranium leases (neither producing)
 - NuFuels, Inc. (signed 2018; expires 2033)
 - Roco Hondo Resources, LLC (signed 2015; expires 2030)
- Major legacy contamination (San Mateo Creek Basin)
- No new uranium leasing on trust lands



San Mateo Creek Basin EPA Project Map Surface Uranium Contamination

NMSLO Sections 2 & 36



Uranium Task Force Participation

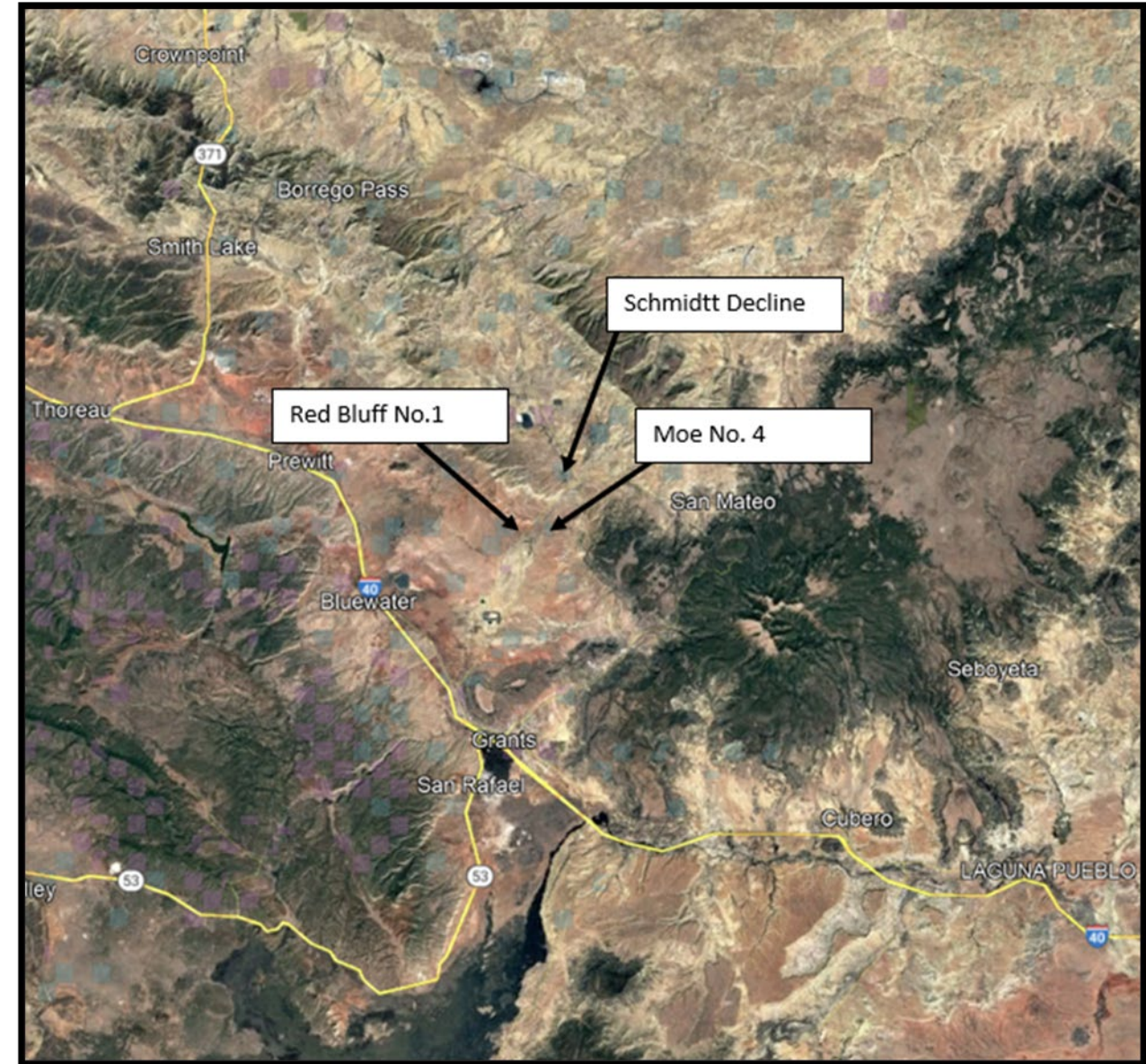
- Cross-agency collaboration (NMED, EMNRD, OSE, ONRT and EPA)
- Identify potential sites using the NMED uranium GIS dashboard
- Verifying state sites with agency contractors to rank the sites for action (initial focus on smaller sites with no responsible parties)
- Working with private land owners to facilitate access
- Developing scope of work for each site with associated right-of-entry permits
- Working on resolving complex issues, such as where to put the radioactive waste (e.g., onsite intombing, offsite disposal facility or send to mill)

Initial Uranium Reclamation Sites on State Trust Land

Moe No. 4: Headframe, collapsed decline/shaft, at least 3 waste rock piles and a reddish silty settling pond-like area of high radiation readings; may include adjacent private property. Three acres located about 25 miles east of San Mateo Creek (underground workings is unknown).

Schmidt Decline: Large underground mine entrance decline, waste rock piles and mining equipment. One acre located about 4.5 mile south of Ambrosia Lakes on state, BLM and private lands (underground workings unknown).

Red Bluff No. 1: About 3 acres on state/private lands, have not surveyed due to access limitations. Satellite imagery shows an open cut on the top of a mesa and prospecting areas at the base of the mesa.



Moe #4 and Schmidt Decline



Remediation and Reclamation Efforts



Created New Environmental Compliance Office

- Added three environmental specialists in 2023
- Stepped-up remediation & reclamation expertise & activities



Enforcement and Accountability Program

- 686 oil & gas wells plugged (at industry's expense)
- At least \$70 million in remediation costs NOT shouldered by taxpayers
- 38 lawsuits filed



Bonding

- Ensure all leases are bonded
- Protect taxpayers and land trust beneficiaries

The Big Picture, Challenge



On the Ground Example

Sanmal Queen Unit: Smith & Marris / MMCP Leasing Lawsuit (\$7.5 million Damage Judgment)



QUESTIONS?



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