Literature Survey by John Redhouse

Abstract

Literature surveyed included, but was not limited to, the draft and final environmental impact statements and record of decision for the White Mesa Mill. Though woefully inadequate, the DEIS and FEIS supported the ROD which approved the license for the uranium mill. Other literature surveyed included the administrative record or records of mill license amendments issued or proposed to be issued from October 25, 2004 to October 30, 2006 or the approximate project period. Besides inadequate environmental impact statements and even more inadequate environmental assessments, there exists a dearth of independent technical and scientific information related to the radiological effects of the White Mesa Mill. Also sadly lacking in the mill licensing and license amendment processes was and is the existence of sound ethnographic data documenting the significance of the uranium mill’s impacts on Navajo cultural resources. However in the absence of adequate or independent environmental information and the paucity of sound cultural data, we were still able to survey and review the broad sweep of available literature appertaining to the unique history and geography of the uranium-rich Paradox Basin and Colorado Plateau.


Exposure: Uranium Radiation Among Miners and Millers by Claradina Toya, Dine CARE, Shiprock, New Mexico, 1996 was also surveyed.

Supported by a grant from the Citizens' Monitoring and Technical Assessment Fund.
Also surveyed were Uranium Mill Tailings Remediation Performed by the U.S. DOE: An Overview by Paul Robinson, Southwest Research and Information Center, Albuquerque, N.M., 2004 and “Reclaiming the Land: History of Uranium Mill Tailings Clean-up”, Voices from the Earth, Fall, 2004.

The White Mesa Mill is located within the aboriginal land claim area of the Navajo Tribe.


The complaint and decision in the case of Navajo Tribe of Indians v. United States of America were also surveyed.

The Kaiyella Band of Navajos also claim the land in the area of the White Mesa Mill.

The relationship between uranium mining in the Arizona Strip and the White Mesa Mill was explored in “Navajo Tribe Selects Land Sites”, Tribal Peoples Survival, Fall, 1981 and Geopolitics of the Navajo Hopi Land Dispute by John Redhouse. Redhouse/Wright Productions, Albuquerque, New Mexico, 1986.


The relationship between proposed uranium mining on the Navajo Big Boquillas Ranch and the White Mesa Mill was further explored in “Navajo BoGate Looms” and “Old MacDonald’s Ranch Causes Land Dispute”, Tribal Peoples Survival, Winter, 1988 and Researchs by John Redhouse, June, 1998.

The Utah Navajos and White Mesa Utes oppose the amendatory licensing of the White Mesa Mill.


The Utah Navajos and White Mesa Utes opposed a proposed Monitored retrievable Storage site in San Juan County. Their successful campaign was reported in “Utah Governor Vetoes Nuclear Waste Proposal”, Southwest Indigenous Uranium Forum Newsletter, September, 1993.

The Navajo Nation has issued and reissued moratoriums on uranium exploration, mining, milling, and transportation on its lands. The effect of the moratoria has been continued by the Dine Natural Resources Protection Act of 2005. The tribal law will have an adverse effect on the future of the White Mesa Mill.


Also included in the survey were the 1983 and 1992 tribal executive orders and 2005 act.

The 1992 Navajo Nation Energy Policy was also surveyed.

The Navajo Nation has also considered the designation of its lands as a nuclear-free zone. 30 tribal chapters have also passed resolutions in support of the proposed designation. If
approved, such a designation would have an adverse effect on the future of the White Mesa Mill.


Also included in the survey were a legal opinion by the Navajo Nation Office of Legislative Counsel and other related documents.

The corporate ownership pattern of the White Mesa Mill was traced in “Millionaire playing on wrong field”, Letter to the Editor by Mervyn Tilden, Navajo Times, May 11, 1995; Researchs by John Redhouse, June, 1998; and “UNM Grad, Uranium Magnate Was Rockies’ Part-Owner”, Albuquerque Journal, May 23, 2006.

Utah Indians opposed the White Mesa Mill Alternative of the Moab Uranium Mill Tailings Site Remedial Action Project.


Also included in the survey was the complaint in the matter of White Mesa Concerned Community v. Spencer Abraham.


Also included in the survey were the draft and final environmental impact statements and record of decision for the proposed Atlas Mill reclamation project.

The DEIS, FEIS, and ROD for the Moab uranium mill tailings site remedial action project were also surveyed.

The relationship between the approved Crescent Junction Site Alternative of the Moab Project and proposed oil shale development on the recently expanded Uintah-Ouray Ute