

NNEPA Administration & Departments

- Administration
- Criminal Enforcement Department
- Air & Toxics Program (Radon, Pesticide)
- Air Quality Control Program, Fort Defiance, Az
- Surface & Groundwater Quality Program
- Public Water System Supervision Program
- Waste Regulatory Program (RCRP, UST/Leaking Sites, Superfund)
- Underground Injection Control Program (Shiprock, NM)



NNEPA Mission Statement

MISSION:

The Navajo EPA is committed to protecting Mother Earth and Father Sky and all living beings through environmental laws and regulations by honoring traditional Dine teachings and culture.

Vision:

Restoring harmony and a sustainable environment among all living things.

NNEPA works with USEPA R 9

- Memorandum of Understanding - USEPA Region 6, 9 and the Navajo Nation
- 1. Region 9 works with Navajo Nation on all environmental protection authorities.
- 2. Region 6 ceded authority over Navajo lands located in the state of New Mexico.
- NNEPA is a regulatory agency
- NNEPA has its own set of environmental laws
- Three branch government (Executive, Judicial and Legislative)
- Navajo Nation passes laws and regulations to protect the air, land and water resources.

Abandoned Uranium Mines

- Over 500 abandoned uranium mines throughout the entire Navajo Nation
- Navajo Nation has 4 uranium processing mills – Rare Metals, Cane Valley, Shiprock and Church Rock. All the sites are undergoing groundwater remediation overseen by Dept. of Energy Legacy Management.
- Church Rock is a Superfund site. Northeast Church Rock mine (the largest uranium mine) and the Quivira Mine nearby fed the mill.
- Sky Line mine waste was re-buried but solution is an interim measure.

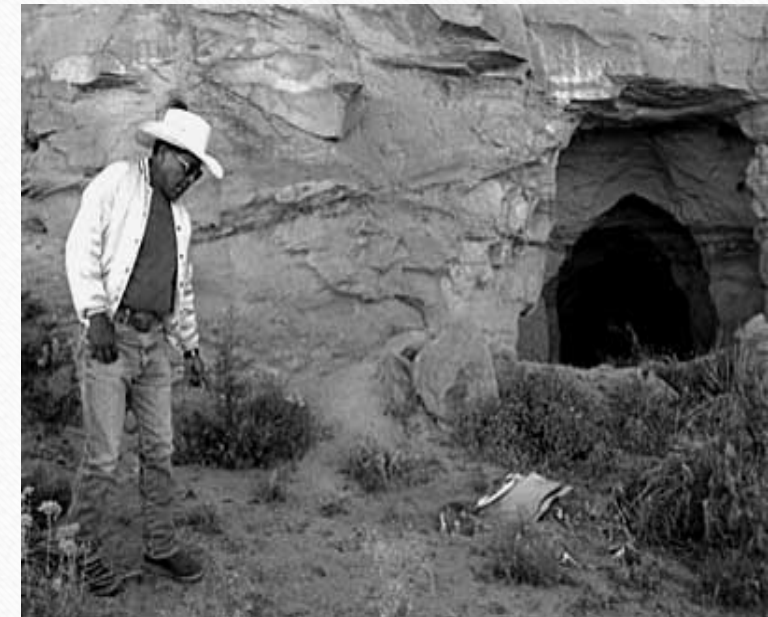
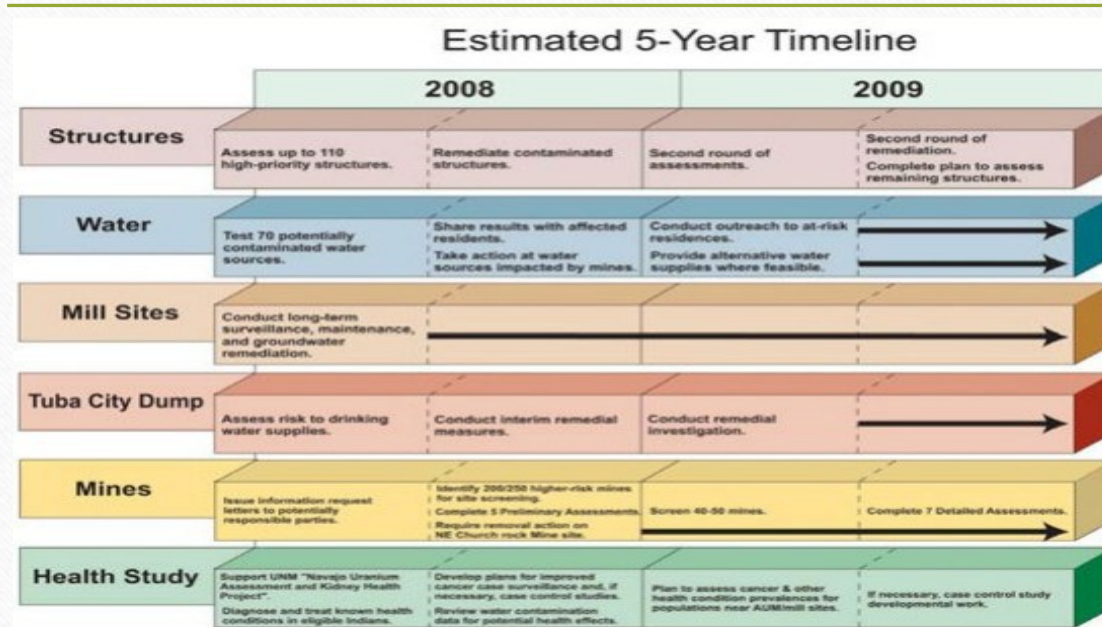
Tronox Bankruptcy of 2015

- Tronox bankruptcy settlement yielded \$ 1 B for cleanup of mines
- Settlement is for cleanup of approximately 55 mines in Cove, Arizona and eastern Navajo Nation in New Mexico.
- USEPA Enforcement is on-going as they negotiate with responsible parties who can fund cleanup of uranium mines.
- Approximately 390 uranium mines have no responsible parties

More Settlements with R. P.s

- USEPA Region 9 Enforcement settled with six responsible parties.
- Freeport McMoran
- Kinder Morgan (formerly El Paso Natural Gas)
- Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway
- Coltec
- Cypress Amax
- Enpro Industries

46 Mines are on Priority List for Cleanup



Prioritization is based on mine impacts to nearby environmental resources and people.

Some mines near residence and communities, surface water sources, endangered species habitat, and cultural resource properties.

Preliminary radiological investigations indicate 46 abandoned uranium mines are readings that are over 10X background, some have homes nearby and others are near water ways.



Uranium Commission Established

- Comprised of 12 Navajo tribal members
- Duties – Make decision on cleanup options, disposal, and other difficult questions.
- Issues – Disposal is the most complex because of laws that are in place i.e., Dine’ Resources Protection Act, Limited hauling of uranium waste per tribal legislation
- Not in my back yard - uranium mines have posed hazards for decades and communities do not want repositories for uranium mine waste piles.
- Dine’ Fundamental Law stresses the importance of coexisting in “harmony”, “balance” and “clean, pristine environment”.



Protect the air, water and land resources while respecting the traditional values of Mother Earth and Father Sky.



... hozhoogo nasha...shikaadee,
shiyaadee... shi'naagoo...



Navajo Nation Environmental Protection Agency

- Cleanup of abandoned uranium mines will require many resources – funding, technical expertise and working with Navajo people and their communities.
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