



Working with the Navajo Nation and the Hopi Tribe

This fact sheet provides information about the U.S. Department of Energy Office of Legacy Management working with the Navajo Nation and the Hopi Tribe.

Mexican Hat, Utah, Disposal Site



Monument Valley, Arizona, Processing Site



Shiprock, New Mexico, Disposal Site



Tuba City, Arizona, Disposal Site



The role of the U.S. Department of Energy Office of Legacy Management Site

Uranium milling from the Cold War era created a legacy of contamination in the United States. Within the Navajo Nation there are four former uranium mill sites located in Mexican Hat, Utah; Monument Valley, Arizona; Shiprock, New Mexico, and Tuba City, Arizona. The mission of the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Office of Legacy Management (LM) is to protect human health and the environment, and to provide long-term stewardship. Stewardship activities include information sharing and outreach to tribal communities where the sites are located. LM addresses continuing stewardship of the four former uranium milling sites within the Navajo Nation and evaluates and implements groundwater treatment technologies.

Outreach

LM learned that more information was wanted and needed about the four former milling sites and stewardship activities. LM responded by increasing its outreach efforts and holding

community open houses, site tours, outreach events, and meetings.

LM routinely visits and presents to community members and leadership at Chapter House meetings. Often times, when routine and non-routine work is being performed, community members are kept informed through different avenues such as door-to-door notifications, emails, phone calls and mailers. Community meetings are often hosted by LM when larger non-routine projects are scheduled. These updates informed agency leadership and chapter officials about the former mill sites and LM stewardship activities, such as groundwater monitoring and sampling.

LM has a cooperative agreement with the Navajo Nation Division of Natural Resources Abandoned Mine Lands Reclamation/Uranium Mill Tailings Remedial Action (AML/UMTRA) Department to assist with activities associated with the four Uranium Mill Tailings Radiation Control Act (UMTRCA) Navajo Nation sites. LM also has a cooperative agreement with the Hopi Tribe to assist with activities associated with

the Tuba City UMTRCA site. The agreements include working collaboratively with the Navajo Nation AML/UMTRA Department and the Hopi UMTRA program on outreach activities such as public relations and outreach activities.

Engaging Students

LM provides internships every year to help further the next generation of students interested in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM). In the past, LM worked with Diné College students in the following communities:

- Monument Valley, Arizona
- Shiprock, New Mexico
- Tsaile, Arizona
- Tuba City, Arizona

Tribal college students helped LM with scientific studies on contamination from mill tailings. The students collected data on plant growth and conducted water and soil sampling. Students have been able to apply their knowledge and learn soil sampling techniques on a test bed that LM built in Monument Valley. This educational collaboration helps students learn technical field skills and in return they help LM by learning more about the important work being done at the four former milling sites located within the Navajo Nation. It is LM's hope that Navajo students will continue their studies and provide technical assistance and capacity building for the Navajo Nation.

In addition to working with college students, LM participated in festivals that promote STEM-based education for grade-school students. LM participates regularly in STEM-sation events that are held at various high schools on the Navajo Nation. LM also created a STEM with LM website that has activities for students and teachers. Some of the programs are specifically designed around the four former milling sites.



Students conduct experiments during STEM events.



The Ten-Year Plan

In October 2007, the congressional House Natural Resources Committee and former Congressman Henry Waxman asked that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Department of Energy, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, and the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (Centers for Disease Control) address uranium issues on the Navajo Nation. Congress recognized that each of the federal agencies had specific responsibilities and should join their efforts to address the multiple issues related to site cleanup and stewardship, and to protect the health of tribal communities and the environment. Congress issued a directive to the federal agencies to create a Five-Year Plan to address uranium contamination within the Navajo Nation.

The hub of this coordinated multi-agency effort is the outreach office located in Window Rock, Arizona. An outreach liaison that works from this office coordinates outreach events and shares information with the multiple federal and tribal agencies, as well as with tribal communities.

In February 2021, a Ten-Year Plan was finalized that built on previous plans. It is available at www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2021-02/documents/nnaum-ten-year-plan-2021-01.pdf.

Together the agencies work to address:

- Supporting community outreach and information sharing.
- Participating in multi-agency efforts to protect human health and the environment.

The Ten-Year Plan establishes specific goals the agencies, in collaboration with the Navajo Nation and the Hopi Tribe, work to achieve. LM actively participates in Ten-Year Plan activities such as coordinating community meetings, hosting conference calls, taking part in joint agency and tribal planning, and sharing information. These efforts are extremely important for affected tribal communities where agency and tribal programs answer questions and provide information.

The six federal agencies involved in this effort are:

- U.S. Department of Energy
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
- Indian Health Service
- Bureau of Indian Affairs
- Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (Center for Disease Control)

The tribal agencies involved in this effort are:

- Navajo Abandoned Mine Lands/Uranium Mill Tailings Remedial Action Program
- Navajo Nation Division of Health Community Health Representative Program
- Navajo Nation Environmental Protection Agency
- The Hopi Tribe

LM is dedicated to honoring its responsibilities to the Navajo Nation and relies on valuable input and feedback from local tribal residents to do our work effectively.



CONTACT INFORMATION

**IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY AT THE SITE,
CONTACT 911**

**LM TOLL-FREE EMERGENCY HOTLINE:
(877) 695-5322**

For more information about upcoming events, please contact:

Kayla Bia
Window Rock Outreach Office
Navajo Nation Community Outreach Network Office
47552 State Highway 264 Suite D
Window Rock, AZ 86515

Office phone number:
(928) 810-2100

Email:
kayla.bia@lm.doe.gov

Websites detailing DOE stewardship at the four former uranium milling sites:

- Mexican Hat, Utah, Disposal Site:
www.energy.gov/lm/mexican-hat-utah-disposal-site
- Monument Valley, Arizona, Processing Site:
www.energy.gov/lm/monument-valley-arizona-processing-site
- Shiprock, New Mexico, Disposal Site:
www.energy.gov/lm/shiprock-new-mexico-disposal-site
- Tuba City, Arizona, Disposal Site:
www.energy.gov/lm/tuba-city-arizona-disposal-site

Overview of the current second Five-Year Plan:
www.energy.gov/lm/articles/second-five-year-plan-address-uranium-contamination-navajo-nation

For more information about LM activities, contact:

U.S. Department of Energy
Office of Legacy Management
2597 Legacy Way
Grand Junction, CO 81503

Email:
public.affairs@lm.doe.gov

DOE Office of Legacy Management
(970) 248-6070



www.energy.gov/lm



www.facebook.com/OfficeofLegacyManagement



www.linkedin.com/showcase/office-of-legacy-management