

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

Uranium milling from the Cold War era created a legacy of contamination in the United States. On 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 conducts stewardship of the four former uranium milling sites on the Navajo Nation and evaluates and implements groundwater remedy technologies.

Outreach

In June 2016, LM and LM's Support Partners opened an outreach office in Window Rock, Arizona. The Window Rock Outreach Office provides a place for the public to learn about LM and its sites on the Navajo Nation, the Navajo Nation 10-Year Plan, and LM's work to address uranium issues on the Navajo Nation. The office, staffed by three full-time

employees, provides community outreach and coordination support to LM and Navajo Nation and Hopi leadership, coordinates Tribal programs, and offers public affairs services throughout the Navajo Nation.

LM routinely visits and presents to community members and leadership during Chapter House meetings. Oftentimes, when work is being performed, community members are informed through different avenues such as door-to-door notifications, emails, phone calls, public service announcements, paid advertising, and mailers. Community meetings are often hosted by LM when larger nonroutine projects are scheduled. These updates inform agency leadership, stakeholders, community members, and Chapter officials about the former mill sites and LM stewardship activities, such as groundwater monitoring and sampling.

LM holds a long-standing 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 Navajo Nation sites. LM also has a cooperative agreement with the Hopi Office of Mining and Mineral Resources to assist

with activities associated with the Tuba City site. The agreements include working collaboratively with the Navajo Nation AML/UMTRA Department and the Hopi UMTRA Program on activities such as public relations; science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education; and outreach.

Engaging Students

LM and its Support Partners provide internships every year to help further the next generation of students interested in STEM. In the past, LM worked with college students in the following communities:

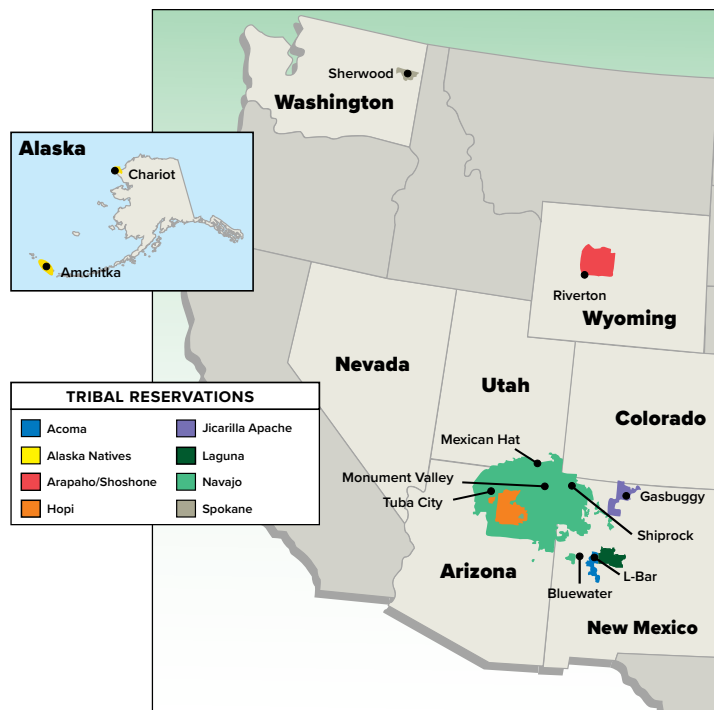
- Monument Valley, Arizona.
- Shiprock, New Mexico.
- Tsaile, Arizona.
- Tuba City, Arizona.

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 mill sites located on the Navajo Nation. It is LM's hope that Tribal students will continue their studies and provide technical assistance and capacity building for the Navajo Nation.

STEM outreach on the Navajo Nation and Hopi Reservation is a central part of LM's outreach. LM participates in over 10 STEM events each year, interacting with thousands of students all over the Navajo Nation. The hands-on demonstration and programming bring to life the awe-inspiring



Students conduct experiments during STEM events.



and world-changing advancements of the nuclear age. Many of the demonstrations include day-to-day work that LM performs to show students that, through education, there is future work for them in their own communities. LM 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.

The 10-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, DOE, U.S. 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 their environment. Congress issued a directive to the federal agencies to create a Five-Year Plan to address uranium contamination on the Navajo Nation.

In February 2021, a 10-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 multiagency efforts to protect human health and the environment.

The 10-Year Plan establishes specific goals the agencies, in collaboration with the Navajo Nation and the Hopi Tribe, work to achieve. LM actively participates in 10-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 Reclamation/Uranium Mill Tailings Remedial Action Program.
- Navajo Nation Division of Health Community Health Representative Program.
- Navajo Nation Environmental Protection Agency.
- Hopi Tribe.

LM is dedicated to honoring its trust responsibilities to the Navajo Nation and Hopi Tribe while relying on valuable input and feedback from community members and local Tribal residents to do its work effectively.



CONTACT INFORMATION

IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY, CONTACT 911

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

For more information about upcoming events, please contact:

Kayla L. Bia, Outreach Coordinator
Navajo Nation Outreach Office
HWY 264 & Indian Route 12 - Suite 10
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 mill 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

10-Year Plan:

<https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2021-02/documents/nnaum-ten-year-plan-2021-01.pdf>

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



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