

# **The Nuclear Regulatory Commission's Role in the Management of Uranium Mill Tailings Radiation Control Act Legacy Sites**

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# What NRC Does



- **The NRC licenses and regulates the Nation's civilian use of radioactive materials to provide reasonable assurance of adequate protection of public health and safety and to promote the common defense and security and to protect the environment**



# NRC Oversight Authority



# Statutes & Regulations

- **Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended**
- **Energy Reorganization Act of 1974, as amended**
- **Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982, as amended**
- **Low-Level Radioactive Waste Policy Amendments Act of 1985**
- **National Environmental Policy Act of 1970**
- **Uranium Mill Tailings Radiation Control Act of 1978**
  - **Title I – inactive uranium mill sites before 1978**
  - **Title II – sites licensed by NRC in or after 1978**
- **Title 10 of the Code of Federal Regulations (10 CFR)**
  - **10 CFR Part 40.27: General license for Title I sites**
  - **10 CFR Part 40.28: General license for Title II sites**
  - **Appendix A: Technical criteria for licensing**

# NRC's Licensing Universe



- **99 nuclear power plants at 59 sites**
  - 20 reactors undergoing decommissioning
- **31 operating research reactors**
  - 4 reactors shut down and undergoing decommissioning
- **2,600 materials licensees**
  - 13 complex sites undergoing decommissioning
  - 150 licenses terminated each year
- **13 fuel cycle facilities**
  - 2 in partial decommissioning

# Uranium Recovery Universe

- **Active Licenses**
  - **UMTRCA Title II**
    - 10 *In Situ* Recovery sites, 1 conventional mill
- **Decommissioning**
  - **UMTRCA Title I – Legacy sites**
    - 22 sites
  - **UMTRCA Title II – Sites licensed in or after 1978**
    - 11 NRC-licensed conventional sites
    - 6 Sites transferred to DOE
    - 0 ISRs



# Uranium Recovery Activities that NRC Regulates

- **Milling – Any activity that produces byproduct material**
  - **Byproduct material is the tailings or wastes produced by the extraction of uranium or thorium for its source material (i.e., uranium or thorium) content**
- **Wastes produced by milling**
- **NRC does not regulate uranium mining**

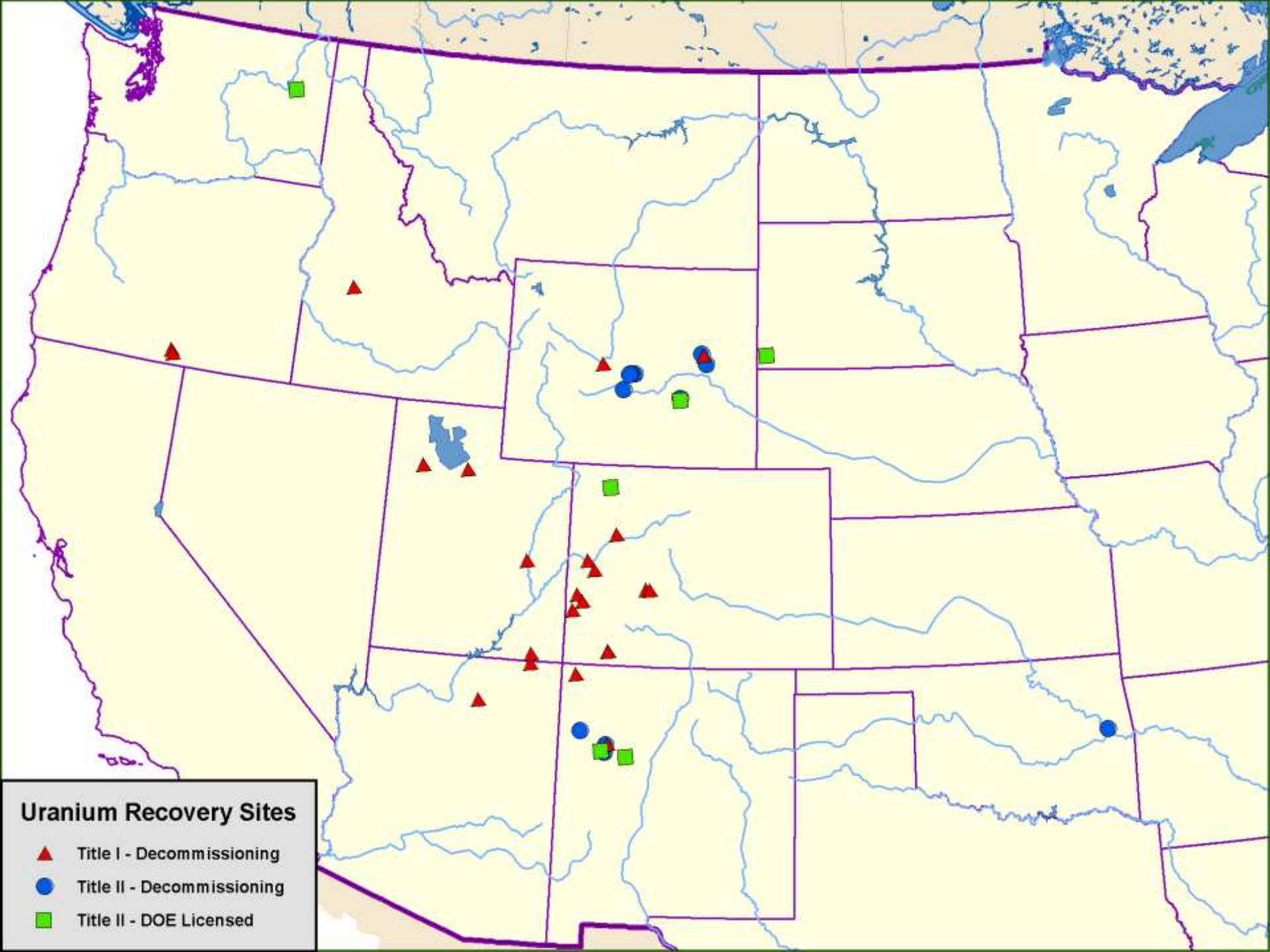
# **NRC's Role at UMTRCA Sites**



**Title I Sites – Oversight of the DOE as a general licensee responsible for long-term care and maintenance (LTS&M) of the sites**

**Title II Sites – Oversight of the specific licensee decommissioning the site and oversight of the DOE as a general licensee when the site is transferred for LTS&M**





### Uranium Recovery Sites

- ▲ Title I - Decommissioning
- Title II - Decommissioning
- Title II - DOE Licensed

# Current DOE Site Activities

- **Atlas Moab**
- **Falls City**
- **Green River**
- **Gunnison**
- **Lakeview**
- **Rifle**
- **Riverton**
- **Bluewater**



# **5-Year Plan to Address Uranium Contamination on the Navajo Nation**



- **Cleanup of the Northeast Church Rock (NECR) Mine Site and Additional High Priority Abandoned Mine Sites**
  - **NRC and the Environmental Protection Agency Region 6 have Joint Jurisdiction for Groundwater Contamination at the United Nuclear Corporation (UNC) mill**
  - **Work with EPA, New Mexico Environment Department and DOE to resolve regulatory, policy and technical issues to allow disposal of mine waste in the UNC mill tailings impoundment**





Navajo Nation  
Boundary



**UNC Mill Site**  
EPA Region 6 NPL Site  
NRC Licensed Site

**NECR Mine**  
EPA Region 9



# 5-Year Plan to Address Uranium Contamination on the Navajo Nation



- **Long-Term Surveillance and Maintenance at Former Uranium Mill Sites**
  - **Oversight of DOE, as a general licensee, at the 3 tailings disposal sites**
    - Review and provide comments on ground water monitoring and remedial action performance reports
    - Review and concur on Groundwater Corrective Action Plans (GCAPs) at former processing sites and review and accept Long-Term Surveillance Plans and GCAPs at disposal sites
    - Observational Site Visits
- **Cross-cutting Issue – Increased Outreach and Education**

# Tribal Liaison Program

## Mission

***The NRC Tribal Liaison Team will advance the NRC's mission by fostering effective consultation, cooperation, and communication between the NRC and Tribal governments.***

# Enhancing the Effectiveness of the Oversight of UMTRCA Sites



- **Quarterly Project Manager calls**
- **Quarterly Navajo/Hopi/DOE meeting**
- **Joint guidance for site transition**
- **Observational Site Visits**
- **Mill Tailings Cover Study**