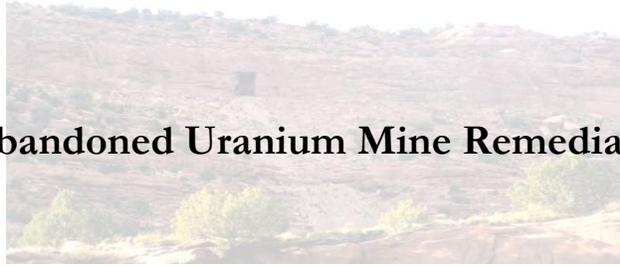




Abandoned Uranium Mine Remediation



Achieving robust abandoned uranium mine remediation is a critical priority for the region. Aggressive treatments across Northern Arizona to protect the public's health and natural environment of the region should be prioritized.

- **Coconino Counts asks for continued federal support to prioritize uranium cleanup and remediation as an environmental justice issue.**

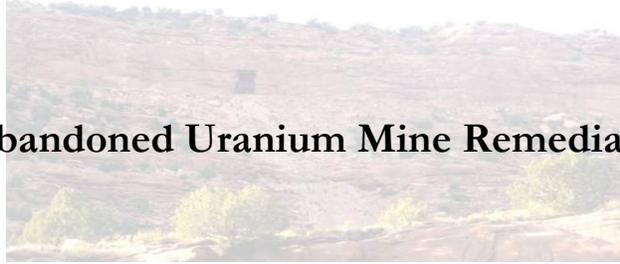
- **Background:**

Beginning in the 1940s, nearly 4 million tons of uranium ore were mined at various locations throughout the Navajo Nation's 27,000 square mile reservation. Uranium mining has resulted in elevated uranium levels at over 400 locations on the Navajo Nation, which will take additional time to address.

- In June 2008, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), in partnership with the Department of Energy (DOE), the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), the Indian Health Service (IHS) and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), finalized a five-year plan (2008-2012) for cleaning up the legacy of abandoned uranium mining on the Navajo Nation. The plan, requested by the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, was the first coordinated approach created by the five federal agencies. It detailed a strategy and timeline for cleanup over the next five years. Between 2008 and 2012 USEPA, BIA, NRC, DOE, IHS and ATSDR spent more than \$100 million to address uranium contamination on the Navajo Nation.
 - Six Federal agencies have drafted a Five-Year Plan (2014-18) to address uranium contamination the Navajo Nation. ATSDR is now involved.
- **Current 5-year Plan Objectives (2014-2018) include:**
 - Assessment and Cleanup of Contaminated Structures;
 - Assessment of Contaminated Water Sources and Provision of Alternative Water supplies;
 - Assessment of Abandoned Uranium Mine (AUM) sites with Detailed Assessments of those Most likely to Pose Environmental or Health Problems;
 - Cleanup of the Northeast Church Rock Mine Site and Additional High Priority AUM Sites;
 - Cleanup of the Tuba City Dump; and
 - Protection of Human Health and the Environment at Former Uranium Processing Sites Health Studies.



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- **Concerns:**
 - EPA Budget cuts threaten to slow uranium cleanup on the Navajo Nation.
 - Navajo Nation President Russell Begaye is worried that the cuts could derail the EPA's efforts to identify the companies responsible for the mine cleanups, supervise the projects and provide new housing for residents when necessary.
 - "We need budget increases, not cuts," Begaye said. "Children and grandchildren have been impacted today, and we want to see if it goes beyond that to great-grandkids and great-great-grandkids. We have to live with this for generations to come."
 - New scientific evidence has emerged that suggests the severity of the Navajos' exposure: Uranium has been found in the dust in 85 percent of sampled homes, and everyone tested, even the babies, has uranium in their bodies, with some carrying concentrations far above the U.S. average.

- **Promising Developments:**
 - Assessment of eight abandoned uranium mines will soon begin on the Navajo Nation. It follows a \$500,000 federal settlement with the company responsible for the contamination. Under the [deal](#) made with EnPro Holdings, radiation tests will be conducted along with surveys of biological and cultural resources at the sites in Cameron and Tuba City. Crews will also install fencing and signs that warn of possible radiation exposure.



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