

NRCREP Resource

From: Frank Belcastro [frankieb@toroidalsnark.net]
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To: NRCREP Resource
Subject: uranium recovery GEIS

If you live downwind from the proposed uranium mines, you might want to pay a little attention to what's happened to Navajos in the United States living on a 26,000 square mile reservation that spans the Four Corners region where Utah, Arizona, New Mexico, and Colorado meet. For three generations now, they have been breathing uranium-laden dust from mine tailings and drinking from wells tainted with minute traces of radioactive mining waste. From 1946 into the late 1970s, more than 40 million tons of uranium ore was mined near Navajo communities.

More than a thousand mines were abandoned on the reservation. For every 4 pounds of uranium extracted, 996 pounds of radioactive refuse was left behind in waste pits and piles swept by the wind and leached into local drinking water. In addition to the hundreds, perhaps thousands, of Navajo miners who sickened and died of cancer and respiratory illnesses -- it's hard to say just how many, since nobody in power bothered to keep track -- epidemiological studies reveal a terrible ongoing toll. Navajo children living near the mines and mills suffered five times the rate of bone cancer and 15 times the rate of testicular and ovarian cancers as other Americans. Exposure to uranium has also been linked to kidney damage and birth defects.

Recent research indicates that, in addition to being toxic and radioactive, uranium is also an endocrine disruptor and can have a devastating effect on health -- even when only scant traces are present in the air we breathe or the water we drink.

Approve of uranium mining at the certain risk of your health and those of others.

Frank P. Belcastro

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