Title: Public Scoping Meeting for the EIS for the Church Rock Uranium Mill Site McKinley County, New Mexico

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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING FOR THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT FOR THE CHURCH ROCK URANIUM MILL SITE LOCATED IN MCKINLEY COUNTY, NEW MEXICO

THURSDAY, MARCH 21, 2019

GALLUP, NEW MEXICO

The public meeting occurred at the Gallup Community Service Center, 410 Bataan Veterans Street, at 6:00 p.m., Chip Cameron, Meeting Facilitator, presiding.

NRC STAFF PRESENT:
CHIP CAMERON, Meeting Facilitator
TAMYRA BROCKINGTON
SCOTT BURNELL
ADAM GENDELMAN
ANGEL MORENO
PAM NOTO
BO PHAM
CINTHYA ROMAN
JIM SMITH
ASHLEY WALDRON
C-O-N-T-E-N-T-S

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MR. CAMERON:  Good evening, everyone. We're going to start with a prayer, a blessing. And we have Peterson Zah with us to give us the prayer. And Peterson was the last Chairman of the Navajo Nation, and its first elected President. And, thank you, Peterson.

MR. ZAH:  When I came in this evening Chip asked me to do a little prayer for everybody that's here tonight. And he says, we would like for you to do a prayer for the group. They're in big trouble, he says. So, with this prayer we'll go along with that idea. Because you're all in big trouble.

(Native language spoken).

MR. CAMERON:  Thank you, President. And we're going to hear from the President later on tonight too. And my name is Chip Cameron. And I'm pleased to serve as the facilitator for the meeting tonight.

And in that role I'll try to help you all have a good meeting.

And two objectives of a good meeting tonight are, first, for the NRC staff to give you clear information on what the NRC decision making process is.
And secondly, most importantly, to give the NRC staff an opportunity to hear from you on your advice on what should be within the scope of the Environmental Impact Statement. And that's why this is called a scoping meeting, which should be in the Environmental Impact Statement.

And I use the acronym NRC. That's Nuclear Regulatory Commission. Two acronyms you might hear tonight are NRC, and also EIS, that refers to the Environmental Impact Statement.

And we have, Dylan Stroman is right here. He's our stenographer. And he's going to keep a record of everything that was said here tonight. And that transcript will be available for all of you.

And we're keeping a record of the comments, because the NRC, like any other federal agency, is obligated to keep a record of the comments, and to respond to those comments on scoping, and on the draft Environmental Impact Statement.

And that's why our meeting tonight, and our meeting last Tuesday was very structured, with people coming up and giving comments, as opposed to what we would all like to do, which is to have a conversation with you.

And the NRC staff heard you on Tuesday.
They heard the call for conversation, or as Anna called it, training. Okay. And they're going to be out here.

You'll hear from the NRC staff tonight. But they're going to be coming out to talk to you, to listen to you.

And in terms of what to expect tonight, we're going to have two short presentations by the NRC staff. And then we're going to go to comments, to all of you.

And we do have an official from the Navajo Nation here tonight. Dariel Yazzie is right here. Dariel is the head of the Navajo Nation EPA Superfund program. And he's going to lead off for us. And then we're going to hear from President Zah.

And then we'll go out to you for comments. And, as on Tuesday, this is just a guideline. But it's going to be a five minute guideline for comments. But flexible. I think that we went to seven minutes for some people, whatever. But we can do the same thing tonight.

And as I mentioned last Tuesday, if you want to amplify on your comments tonight, or even if you don't talk tonight, you can submit a written comment to the NRC staff. And they're going to tell you how you do that.
And if you want to speak, please fill out a blue card back at the table. And then we'll know to call you up here to talk to us.

And let me do some intros of everybody that's here tonight. And first of all we have Cinthya Roman. And Cinthya is the Chief of the Environmental Review Branch in the NRC Office of the Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards.

And then we're going to hear from Ashley Waldron. And Ashley is the Project Manager for the Environmental Review on this licensing action at Church Rock. We also have Pam Noto back there. She's another environmental project manager.

Our senior NRC official is Bo Pham, who's right here. And Bo is the Deputy Director of the Division of Uranium Recovery and Waste Programs and Decommissioning. And I've got those mixed up. But those are the three.

The safety project manager for Church Rock is Jim Smith. And he works in Bo's division. And even though this meeting is on the environmental review, we wanted to have our safety people here to listen to what you had to say.

We have other NRC staff here. And we have Scott Burnell. Scotty is back there. He's with our
Office of Public Affairs. We have Adam Gendelman. He's from our Office of General Counsel. We have Angel Moreno, right there, Office of Congressional Affairs. And our administrative person is Tamyra, who's back at the table helping out.

We have Dave Nezzie and Jim Dumont, who are right over there. And they're from Senator Martin Heinrich's office. And thank you for being here. And thank the Senator for sparing you, and bringing you here.

And finally, we have contractors. The NRC has hired experts to help them develop the Environmental Impact Statement. And they're from the Center for Nuclear Waste Regulatory Analyses in San Antonio. And they're back here and other places in the room.

So, with that, can we go to, Cinthya, could you talk to us? And then we'll go to Ashley, and then go to Dariel. Thank you.

MS. ROMAN: Good evening. I'm Cinthya Roman. I'm the Chief of the Environmental Review Branch. Staff in my branch will be conducting the environmental review for the Church Rock license amendment request.

Today we want to talk to you a little bit about the Church Rock project, and about our licensing
process. I understand that our regulatory process is a little bit complex, and difficult to understand. So we are going to try our best to talk to you and explain it. But then, if you still have questions we, come and talk to us. We'll stick around after the meeting to talk to you.

You know, I recognize many of you from the meeting last Tuesday. Something that we heard loud and clear during that first meeting was that it's really important to involve the community. So, we want to say that we heard you. And we will be back and talking to you.

We also heard a lot of good suggestions on how we can do better. So, we are going to take all those suggestions and go back. And when we come back here we'll try to do better next time.

My staff and I are committed to working with you. We understand the importance of this project. So, we will look forward for more interactions.

I just want to clarify that we are just starting our process, our NRC review. So, there are going to be many opportunities for people to participate and provide comments.

But I hope that you take the opportunity
today to stand up and talk to us about your concerns, and things that you want us to consider during the environmental review.

So, first I'm going to start with the NRC mission, just because I know that you guys in the past have been working with several different agencies. And I want to clarify what is kind of the NRC role for this project, and what is our mission.

So, we license and regulate the nation's civilian use of radioactive materials, to ensure public safety, promote common defense, and security to protect them, and protect the environment.

So, in this slide I'm just showing a few of the facilities that we regulate. We have different regulations for the different type of facilities. But something that we often hear is that our regulatory process is too long.

We take a long time because we need to make informed decisions. As Ashley will explain later, we have to consider several things before we make a decision, in addition to conducting a safety review and an environmental review. We need to consult with tribes, for example. And we need to know what is important in terms of cultural resources, so we can protect them.
We also need to be transparent in our process, and provide opportunities of the public to provide comments. So, all that takes time. And that's why our regulatory process takes time. And we need to make sure that we make, we are ensuring safety, which is the ultimate goal of the agency.

So, for the NRC role, I'm going to try to go a little bit back on, to give you some background. As you might know EPA, Navajo Nation and the State of New Mexico decided to move the waste from the Church Rock mine to the mill.

The licensee, United Nuclear Corporation, which is owned by General Electric, or GE, completed a design for the mine cleanup. The design was approved by EPA. Now the design was submitted to NRC for review. NRC needs to review the design to determine if it's safe to move the waste from the mine to the mill site. If the NRC determines that it's safe to move the waste, the licensee can proceed with the proposed plan.

Ashley will now give you a little bit more details about the process, and what you should expect. And again, thank you for being here. And I hope to hear from you tonight.

MR. CAMERON: Thank you, Cinthya. And
this is Ashley Waldron.

MS. WALDRON: Good evening. My name is Ashley Waldron. And I'm the NRC Environmental Project Manager for the UNC Church Rock license amendment request.

As Cinthya mentioned, United Nuclear Corporation, which is owned by GE, has submitted a license application to the NRC for review. UNC is proposing to move approximately one million cubic yards of mine waste from the northeast Church Rock mine site, and dispose of it on the mill tailings impoundment.

This map shows the location of the mine and mill sites. And I want to note that NRC has jurisdiction over the mill site only, which is outlined in yellow. And the waste would be stored within the tailings disposal area, which is outlined in the purple line.

So, this graphic was taken out of the license application. And it's important to note that it's not drawn to scale. And it basically shows you the design of how UNC is proposing to dispose of the waste at the mill site.

So, as Cinthya mentioned, we realize that this process is very complex. But there are three main processes that go into the NRC's review. And
environmental review, which will produce an Environmental Impact Statement, a safety review, which produces a safety evaluation report, and an adjudicatory hearing if granted.

So, this chart discusses the environmental review in a little bit more detail. And the important parts to note on this site are the two blue boxes, which show you the opportunities for the public to be involved in our EIS process.

So, the first one is on the upper right hand side, which is the scoping process. And that is why we're here tonight, to determine the scope of the EIS.

And the other one is in the bottom left. And that is when the NRC produces a draft Environmental Impact Statement. And we will publish that for comment.

So, our environmental review is based on the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act. And it requires federal agencies to evaluate the impacts of its action on the environment. Your input is vital to our process. And we will engage the local communities as much as possible.

So, there are various ways that we gather information during the EIS process. NRC will
independently verify the information in the license
application submitted by GE, or UNC.

NRC has visited the area, the mine and mill
sites, including looking at the proximity of the local
community. We've started discussions with federal,
and local, and tribal representatives that have
interest in this project.

And NRC has to comply with the requirements
of the National Historic Preservation Act, which
involves consultations with the tribes. We will
consult with Navajo Nation. And we are at the beginning
of the process, and will continue to gather information.

So, these are the typical resource areas
that we look in our EIS. And we'll evaluate the impacts
of those resource areas. We know that there are several
areas of potential concern, including public health,
transportation, air quality, and environmental
justice, as well as cultural resources. These areas
will be looked at and considered as part of our review.

This slide shows our review schedule. So,
we will issue a draft around July 2020, and a final
by August of 2021. Our entire licensing process is
expected to take approximately three years. And this
will account for our environmental review and safety
review. And then we'll issue a final licensing
decision.

So, our goals with the scoping process is to ensure that important issues and concerns are identified early, and properly studied. We want to eliminate unimportant issues from detailed considerations. And most importantly we want to identify the public's concerns.

This is the type of input that NRC is looking for to determine the appropriate scope of the EIS. So, this slide describes how you can provide NRC with your scoping comments. You may submit them in written and oral form. And the comments provided here will be transcribed tonight.

Comments may also be sent by regular mail, online, and email, provided on this slide. And we've also, in one of the handouts that we had when you guys came in has all this information as well.

So, here's some additional information where you can find more information, where to find the license amendment application. And we'll be updating our public web page as we issue the draft EIS. It's a good source of information.

And I've also included my contact information, as well as the safety project manager's information, if you have questions about the NRC's
review.
And that's it for me. Thank you all for coming out tonight. And we look forward to your comments.

MR. CAMERON: Okay. Thank you, Cinthya. Thank you, Ashley. And we're going to go to Dariel Yazzie. Now, as I mentioned, he is the Director of the Navajo Nation EPA Superfund Program. This is Dariel.

MR. YAZZIE: Thank you.
(Native language spoken.)

MR. YAZZIE: Thank you. Thank you for inviting me. Thank you for asking me to come up and speak on behalf of my Navajo people, my family. The members that are here, I recognize them through kinship, through our clan. And it's one thing that we value with what we do. It's the basis of who we are.

We, I've shared with them that as Navajo EPA, and what we do, and where we're going, and the process of what has been done to date, that the science continues to change, continues to grow. We develop new methodologies. We are always progressing forward.

But one of the things that we have to identify, we have to recognize is this. When we go out to the communities, and you guys have heard our
family here seek and ask, the first thing that a lot of them will ask is when? When is this going to happen? When is it going to be cleaned up? When is it going to be taken off of our lands?

So, that question has been around for a long time. It's not being asked now because it's something new. It's being asked now, because other groups, other people have been here doing different analyses, collecting all kinds of data. When are we going to address it?

From a Navajo perspective, and talking with NRC today, I shared with you guys our cultural values, what we haven't looked at. Navajo EPA, we're in a position now, because we have within our laws legislated Navajo CERCLA.

And in doing that, that includes what we call fundamental law, which goes back to our natural law. Maybe that's what we've missed. We haven't included that in these processes.

Maybe that's why it's taking so long, and the road has been so difficult to get to where we are, to finally achieve the goal that we want to achieve. We're not there yet. We know where it's at. We see it. We all want it. But we're missing something.

So, I've asked my community here to share
with us, what else have we missed? The traditional values that exist there, let's include some of that. Let's look at what we need to include to fully heal our communities.

The science is, again, it's the science. The science is not going to change unless something comes up, and somebody develops something that just eliminates entirely, a spray-on eliminator, right. That would be great. But we don't have that.

So, here we are. We're looking at it. We're looking at the data that does exist. We're being realistic. What can we do? What are we going to do on behalf of the Navajo? That's what we have to look at. And is the thing that we're missing.

So, with that, welcome, community members. As you're listening (Native language spoken). What we need to consider is (Native language spoken). And take it across the road. (Native Language spoken.)

So again, I'm asking the community, what we share today, what we talked about. We talked about what the scoping meeting is. It's an opportunity to share what plans are coming, what options we have. And then to, again, collect more data through trust, to get a better idea of, is this acceptable in the eyes of the community? And is it safe?
So again, when we talked about that, I know it's a hard concept to grasp, to identify fundamental law, and the intricate aspects of it as a health and safety measure.

But for us, for our people it's waking up. And we know, and we understand we're not supposed to be around this. We're not supposed to be doing this. This will lead to this. And it has physical ramifications.

So, when we're talking about this, this is, these are some of the concepts that I want to share as Navajo EPA, as Navajo Nation, as somebody identified toward the community here. That's ultimately who I'm working for is the community that's here.

So, thank you. And I definitely appreciate the opportunity to have been invited to this community event to talk on behalf of my community, on behalf of Navajo Nation, as a governmental entity. And also, what we're doing moving forward, to include our own natural laws to address these type of activities.

(Native language spoken.)

Thank you. I'd like to also introduce, next is my (Native language spoken), former president, Peterson Zah. (Native language spoken.) He was the
last chairman. And he was the very first elected Navajo Nation President.

So, over the years, and then more recently, as we've started talking like this, and talking about the environment and its impacts, and for us as Navajo people to embrace what we're doing (Native language spoken).

I've come to value his guidance. I've come to recognize him as one of my mentors in what I do now. So, with that, I'd like to introduce him, Peterson Zah.

MR. ZAH: (Native language spoken.) I wanted to thank the people that are all here tonight, representing the federal government, the various regional office of the EPA, and then Navajo Nation is being represented also by one of the employees of Navajo Nation EPA Program.

Way back years ago, somewhere around 35 to 40 years ago I became the Tribal Chair. And I was very lucky as an individual to be working with so many dedicated souls, people who care, people that want to do good, people that were concerned about the land, the environment, and what our society is continuing to do to the Nation and to Mother Earth.

And back then, when you listened to people,
their thoughts and their philosophy, and some of the things that they had in mind was a little different than today.

Maybe it's a generational thing that we were hearing back then. There was a connection of people to the earth where they lived. There was a connection, spiritual connection to the animals that the Navajo people have as their survival. They needed that to continue to feed their families.

And there was also a connection, a great connection between one's own feeling and appreciation of air, and all of the things that we feel from year to year as the earth is changing, and seasons come, and seasons go.

And all of that was appreciated very much by the people back then. Navajo society is just like any other society. It's not static. It continues to move. To move in the direction that their heart says that we should be moving in.

And so, you can look at that either as in a negative way, or maybe in a positive way. Some people say that's a good thing that the Navajo society is that way, as other people do.

And then others say, no, I don't think we should go along with what the rest of the other society
is doing. We have our own culture. We have our own teachings. We have our own things that is so dear to the Navajo people, when it comes to language, culture, and all of the experiences that comes with those elements.

And so, we're going back and forth evaluating the position of those two groups. And it's very interesting having to live through all of that. Because some of us are members of the tribe that comes from the older generation.

And you're looking at a person who is 83 years old. And sometimes I get up in the morning and I feel like I'm going to live to be another 83 years. And that we shouldn't stop. We should keep on thinking. We should keep on doing things with the people to better the lives of the Navajo people, and then society in general.

So, you get the urge. And I guess that's what rest does to you. It recharges your body, your mind. And you want to do more. But, your body isn't really trained that way. Sometimes they have a tendency to be maybe four or five minutes behind what you're thinking. And that's the problem of the older people.

I was here on Tuesday. And I was happy
that many of the local people were here. Some of you have returned. But coming from Window Rock, and coming from the heart of Navajo land, I didn't want to interfere, and ask your moderator here if I wanted to say something. Because he was giving you only three to five minutes. And I said, I'll come back on Thursday. Maybe he can give us some more time. And so, that's why we're here.

And I was kind of experience a little anguish in my body. And I said to myself, way back 50 years ago, 40 years ago, during the war, when they wanted uranium off Navajo land, you didn't say, yes, take what you want, or take, in three minutes or five minutes. Navajo was so generous.

And they opened up their homeland. And they said, if you need it, it's here. And they took all the time in the world to do what they want to do with the land.

One of the things that happened was that they didn't clean up their mess. And as a result we still have 523 sites throughout the Navajo Nation. Imagine that, 523 sites that United States supposed to help us to clean up.

And Navajo Nation now is fully equipped through people like Mr. Yazzie, who works with EPA in
connection with the federal EPA, to do the things that we need to do, to clean up our land.

You are right now consulting with the Navajo Nation. We do have a Government, a legitimate Government. So, you should look at the Navajo Nation just like the way you look at other countries, like the Federal Government.

And when you go out to the Navajo, when you go out to the Apaches, or to the Hopis, you let them talk, and say what they want to say. And then, you have the mission as an observer.

So, my wife and I were doing that on Tuesday, and respecting the wishes of the local people. Let them talk about what should be in the EIS. That was our thought. We'll come Thursday, and we'll have a conversation, maybe have an opportunity to say the things that we need to say.

The reason why I'm saying that is that I really think that the Navajo Nation Government has various committees. They have four major committees. One of the committee is responsible for health and education of the Navajo people.

I think that committee should be approached by the Commission here, just as a courtesy. Say, this is the biggest site, it's the biggest program that you
have to deal with.

You represent the Navajo people. You represent the Navajo government. We are here talking with your constituents, because your constituents, in the Navajo Nation, delegates and constituents are both the same.

And so the constituents are saying to their leaders, you fix the problem. You created the problem. And the only way it could be done adequately is if you communicate. And you can't do anything if you continue to scream at each other, and hide things from one another. You can't really deal effectively with the problem at hand if you're going to do that.

So, my recommendation to the Commission is to go to the Navajo Government and tell them what you have in mind. Because it's very important how the EIS is done, and what it's going to say. And it seems to me that you need to ask the Government leaders that same question that you're asking the local people.

The other thing that I wanted to just briefly say is, bureaucracy, you have within your Federal Government huge bureaucracy. And sometime the bureaucracy is so big that it takes hundreds and thousands of people to move bureaucracy.

I think Donald Trump has learned that by
now. Maybe not. That you can't just go into an office like the White House, and then say one word on TV, or something, then everybody will follow you. Bureaucracy doesn't work that way.

Navajo Nation similarly has the same problem. We have people that come into the Government. They have grand ideas. And then when they get in there, it's hard to move bureaucracy, unless you have so many people that are following you.

And the reason why I'm telling you about bureaucracy is that you're having the same problem. And then, on the Navajo, we have a situation where a cleanup, the cleanup, not the assessment, the cleanup is taking so long. And the Navajo people have been waiting for that first cleanup to happen.

I've been waiting for over 30, 40 years. And I'm over 80 now. And I haven't seen one cleanup yet out of the 523. So, I'm keeping my fingers crossed that before I go into the next world that I'll see some cleanup. We haven't done that yet because of bureaucracy. And I'll give you one good concrete example.

The Navajo Nation has only two individual who are tribal member, two Diné that are qualified to become a trustee to assess and evaluate those sites.
(Native language spoken.) It's like having only two medicine men left on the Navajo Nation.

Because those two individual happens to be, most of them are Navajo ladies. They're fully equipped. They have all the experience. They work for the Federal Government EPA.

They work for the regional office in Denver, Colorado, together as a team for over 15, 20 years. And one of them spent four to five years on EPA project. So, she's considered an expert.

What I don't understand, because of bureaucracy, is this. The first 16 sites, the first 16 sites was analyzed by one of the Navajo ladies. And her contract was over in December last year. And here, January, February, March, we're going into April.

She finish her job evaluating all those 16 sites. But she's been at home not working for the last four months. What we should really be doing as Navajo people is, the day after she quit making assessments on those 16 sites, the next day we should give her another contract. They go to work, and they start the cleanup.

(Native language spoken.) That doesn't happen, because of bureaucracy. So, it raises the question of, we need to coordinate our efforts more
and more. And communicate with one another more and
more to get these things done.

At the rate that we're going, we're not
going to have any sites cleaned up for the next two
years, two or three years.

The elderly Navajo, what they tell me is,
I want to put my sheep back in that area down there.
Because I need more grazing land. Some of them say,
I want to move back closer to where I was born and raised.

(Native language spoken.) That's what they say.

But I don't want to be the one to tell them
about, and says, listen, that's not going to happen.
Because you don't want to break their heart. They're
up there in their 80s. They're like me.

And that's why I'm urging the people who
work with bureaucracy, that I hope we speed up the
process, and do the cleanup as fast as we can. Because
that's what the Navajo people are looking for.

When I became the Tribal Chair there were
a lot of Navajo people that came. And they told me
on the campaign trail, do something about uranium.
I heard that every day. And when somebody tells you
that, and if you don't have an EPA program of your own,
what else can you do?

So, when we started EPA program back in
1985 on the Navajo Reservation, the first project we went to was rare metals in Tuba City, rare metals in Tuba City. And we had the Federal Government and the contractors come in and do the work assessing and cleaning up immediately.

The problem that persisted in that area was because of jurisdiction. That land, there was a land dispute between Hopi and Navajo. Navajo owned one half of the land. The Hopi had the other half interest. But you cannot divide it.

So, it was an undivided sharing of land. And both tribe had to say yes for these kind of nature program. That's why rare metal was there right by the highway for years, and years, and years. Because the two tribes kept on fighting. They wouldn't agree.

So, we went in and we solved that issue. And then, after the Hopi and Navajo agreed, then EPA in Washington moved in, and removed those sites. The next one was at Mexican Hat by Monument Valley. The same thing happened because of jurisdiction over those lands.

So, it could be done. It could be done. It's just taking so long that I think we need to really deal with the issues, so that the things can be done.

I had a meeting, Ben Shelly, remember, he
was a Tribal Chair, a Tribal Chairman. My brother, one day he called me in, and he says, I need help. People who get in their position, they never say that. But it was kind of strange for Ben to say, I need help.

Can you go see the Regulatory Commission in D.C., and plead with them that we need this place cleaned up? But before that we need environmental assessment on the site.

So, I went in to see the Commission that you're working for. And I remember seeing the Chairman of the Commission. And I was really pleading with him, making my case. And he was in full agreement.

Then at the end of our conversation he said, Mr. Zah, I really like the way you present this. I'm convinced. Except, I'm going out of office this year. So, come again when my replacement is here. (Native language spoken.)

And then I said, maybe I should deal with the other Commissioners. And then I went to the other Commissioners. And they say, our term is up two years from now. We don't want to tie the hands of the five other Commissioners going to be replacing. (Native language spoken.) Bureaucracy. And that's why nothing ever got done.

So, they use those kind of excuses year
after year after year. (Native language spoken.) And
I hope that those kinds of things could be handled in
such a way that we take that interest of the human beings
that live on those sites, the Navajo people.

I think that's the only way that you can
adequately live the position that you now hold with
the Commission to do a better job.

And then I'm going to tell you a little
story. I hope you can give me another three minutes.

Let me tell you the story.

I was in Phoenix, Arizona, on February the
19th. In Phoenix, Arizona, they have a state newspaper
called Arizona Republic. I picked up the Arizona
Republic, and then on the front page, all the way across
Arizona Republic, it said something like the tourists
that come and visit the Grand Canyon.

This is no news to some of you Commission
staff. It said that all these people who went to Grand
Canyon Museum, hundreds of them, they may all be
contaminated by uranium. Just like what uranium did
to the earth.

And then I started reading the article.
And they said they have been exposed to radiation, all
those people who come to see Grand Canyon, they go to
the museum. Because they discovered something like
a can, five gallon can. There were three of them, like a barrel. Inside there was uranium. And they were given this years ago.

When they got the uranium, they put into these three barrels. And then they store it down in the basement of the museum. And so one day, one of the workers came to the job site with their son, teenage son. And the teenaged son was really interested in Geiger counters. They were really interested in that.

So he was fooling around with it, working on it as a teenage kid. And it started going off. This can't be true. We're in a museum. So he started looking, and down in the basement was those three barrels full of uranium.

So your boss, the Commissioner, Chair of the Commission said, oh my God, we've got to call all those people back that went through Grand Canyon. They went to the museum. They have been exposed to radiation. You know what, the response to that was just like this. And they said if they had been exposed for 30 minutes, for 30 minutes to uranium, that close, it's going to affect their health.

Now that is, as I said, clearly if that was an American Indian that got exposed, a Navajo Indian that got exposed to that, what do you think that person
would have said?

PARTICIPANT: Nothing.

MR. ZAH: Nothing for 30 years, nothing for 50 years. So think about that. Maybe some of the Commission staff don't like to hear those kinds of criticism of the work of the federal government when it comes to uranium and radiation. You have to think that way, not that they react over here right away.

(Native language spoken.)

MR. ZAH: It's the same thing as when the federal government froze the land between Navajo and Hopi, Bennett Freeze, remember the Bennett Freeze, that land, they put it into freeze for 40 years. That means that nobody can go in there and do anything to remodel their house. That means they couldn't put schools there, roads there, water for 40 years. But then the federal judge came along and froze the land.

That was over 30 years ago, 20 years ago.

I was in one house yesterday the federal government puts up. But, you go to these other places in America where there are a lot of Belegana living. They freeze the land for a certain purpose.

But their effort is unfrozen either by court order or something. The federal government gets in there with their shovel rebuilding another house.
That's the kind of discrimination that the American Indian people go through. And that's what we experience. For me, we're experiencing the same thing. I'm 83 years old. I want to see a cleanup.

(Native language spoken.)

(Applause.)

MR. ZAH: That is something that we're looking for. These things do happen. And they happen right before our eyes. But sometimes we got blind, and we can't see those. So I hope these kinds of things would be addressed adequately, properly, and rapidly.

So I just wanted to conclude with that. Thank you so much. The prayer was really good, and I'm praying for you. Because we're all in trouble.

(Applause.)

MR. CAMERON: Thank you. Thank you very much, President Zah. Thank you. And Ray, Ray Banally, come on up. All set.

MR. BANALLY: My name is Ray Banally. I'm a (Native language spoken) from Red Pond Road. Before that it was Black Tree Pine Canyon. And all of a sudden, UNC decided to open the shaft on no man's land, they call it railroad land.

I think the tribe, during his time, had a lot to do with the right of way. We are responsible
for that as a Navajo. They promised us water, then
electricity. And I talked to Marshall Plummer, he's
a cousin to me. At that time, he was a vice president.

And then our tribe acknowledged that ever
since from the beginning, and I just watch, and all
of a sudden the Committee decides to set another shack
on the other side across from us. We notified the
Navajo tribe, tribe as a whole. You know what they
said? Well, you go see one of your own delegates, go
see EPA.

You have a location right at St. Michael.

It's an EPA office. And they also told us that you're
exposed to uranium. Go see a doctor. He's a part of
that bureaucracy that he is talking about. Hush, hush,
don't say anything. Let the EPA do that. Let the
politicians have their way.

I live right across that. If you guys been
out there today, that little white house, I'm just as
bad as Donald Trump, Mr. President of the United States.

He's my friend. And to tell you the truth, we need
a change.

Democrats are a bunch bureaucrats.
They're all responsible for you scratch my back, I'll
scratch your back. And if you see that little white
house that's set right across, if you want to see one
of my nephews, everybody's getting a raw deal from it. But one thing he's talking about the Navajo tribe was doing this and that. No, it was the chapter never bothered, the next chapter and (Native language spoken) chapter, these chapters are a combination of Navajo tribal program.

We voted for those people. You know what, they never listened to us. They don't have ears. It goes in the right side, goes out the left. Oh, he's nobody, he's just a sheep herder. But my vote did count when he went into office.

Yes, I voted for Donald Trump, because I needed a real change. And, to me, the federal government itself is persecuting Mr. Trump. Why? If we don't like somebody, we don't tell them right in the face. We'd rather do it way out there behind closed doors or something like that. They're good at it.

The tribe is really that way. They're spending all the money just like the new administration that they set in. I don't think he ever spent a penny of his salary. The tribe foots his bill. He's spends most of his time in Washington, D.C.

The problems here, just like EPA, the problem is the mine. I go along with it, because it's not -- the things I don't agree with, where you've got
to pick the site, I think it should have been in that
canyon where the mill is if you're going to do that.

I agree with it.

Perhaps the only thing that's an enemy,
the biggest enemy is when are you going to get started.

Quit talking. I've been saying this for the last seven
years, ever since the mine closed. Let's do something.

We can talk, talk, talk all we want to, still talking
doesn't solve the problem. Getting the shovel and the
pick is something that you do in the olden days.

All these politicians in my tribe, they
don't live in a hogan, they don't live in a shack like
me. You ought to see some of their houses, trucks,
cars. They're living off their own people. That's
what's wrong. You finally got through it. He came
in late, sneaked in. He waited for the last minute
when everybody goes. See, that's their voice.

MR. CAMERON: Ray, could you sum up for
us too, please?

MR. BANALLY: Okay.

MR. CAMERON: Thank you.

MR. BANALLY: Remember one thing, I'm only
asking you people do it. If we pick the site, do it.

Don't change your mind at the last minute. Thank you.

MR. CAMERON: Thank you. Thank you, Ray.
We going to go to Patricia Sheely next. Patricia?

MS. SHEELY: Thank you. I had a chance to be second. My name is Pat Sheely, and I've lived in Gallup for 26 years now. And I'm here because I want to support my friends that live in this area that's contaminated.

I'm concerned for their health. I'm also concerned for the environment. I have a lot of other concerns, but I'm going to address my comments tonight about the containment of the heavy metals and the radioactivity in this waste.

How confident are we that we're going to be able to contain these. When I think about containment, I think putting it in a lined vessel, and the lining is really, really strong, and they're not going to escape. I'd like to know what has happened to the heavy metals and radioactivity in the original tailing space. I think we need to know what's happened there before we put something else on top of it.

I'd like to know if the heavy metals and radioactivity are seeping into the ground water. Are they going into the soil? How far down are they going? Because I believe that water is sacred. And it is precious, especially in our area, because we don't have an unlimited supply of water. If we contaminate the
ground water, we can't drink it anymore. We can't use it for livestock.

Another issue is our extreme temperature fluctuations. It gets very hot here. It freezes here. What does this do to the stability of all that material you're going to put on top of the present tailings? It sounds to me like it's going to be a lot.

And what is the effect of the dry condition and excessive rain and snow melt? Last winter, we didn't get any rain or snow. This winter, we've had a lot. I think we need to study that.

Another issue is the weather patterns are becoming more extreme. What's going to be the effect of these extremes over time? I think this needs to be studied and evaluated.

And the time period needs to be for a long time, something like 1,000 years. We're already talking 40 years. We can't just go another 50 or another 100. We really need to think into the future. And I hope you've got the scientists who can do this.

Thank you.

MR. CAMERON: Thank you. Thank you, Pat.

(Appplause)

MR. CAMERON: Is Mirakhel Windsong here?

Oh, here she is.
MS. WINDSONG: Good evening, everyone.

I would like to thank you, the people of this nation, the Navajo Nation, for allowing me to be on your land, for this is your land. And I would like to also thank the members of the Regulatory Commission for your work.

I would like to say that Mr. Yazzie addressed that science is continually changing. So I would like to ask that part of the evaluation process for the Environmental Impact Statement include what other methods have you researched to determine possible safety considerations related to the ground and water, the wildlife, the impact to the health and safety of people. And are there other methods that are more contemporary that are safer?

To me, when I'm looking at your document that you passed out, the EPA Northeast Church Rock Mine Site update, under what has been done, Point Number 2, it says the mine waste pile has been temporarily covered and stabilized until it can be removed. Well, this to me implies that you are going to remove the old tailings and the old waste before you put new on top.

It seems to me you're doing what cockroaches do. They want to hide from the truth. And the truth is here it's like an operation cover-up.
You're putting disposed of waste that has years of radioactive fallout and then you're putting more on top of that. It just doesn't make sense to me.

But I'm new at this, I'm ignorant, so I don't know. But it just seems like you should be doing more research on the long term effects, as Pat said, 1,000 years. That's a short term in terms of radioactive waste that continues to have half-life.

And then also, I would just like to thank all of you people that live in that Red Pond area that have been struggling with this for years and waiting, and waiting, and waiting for something to be done. I just, my heart goes out to you.

My husband is a native, and he has reached the point where he says what does this matter, we won't matter. You know, and that hurts me to hear that from him. Because every one of you here matters.

And what the EPA continues to do is, yes, there are some specifications, there are some guidelines, but yet the choice almost seems to be preordained. And I would just say please listen to the people here. Thank you.

(Applause)

MR. CAMERON: Thank you. Thank you, Mirakhel. We're going to go to Sister Rose Marie
Cecchini now. Sister Rose Marie?

MS. CECCHINI: Good evening, everyone.

I'm Sister Rose Marie Cecchini. And I'm currently the coordinator of the Office of Life, Peace, Justice, Creation Stewardship.

And I too want to offer my really heartfelt gratitude for the great gift and privilege of sharing life here on the Navajo land as I have for the last 22 years, being gifted with the wisdom, the experience, the spirituality, the depth of the Native American people, the Navajo people.

And so tonight I bring before you the concerns of people of faith. And we bring the moral, ethical, environmental justice concerns to this entire issue. And hearing the stories of our neighbors, our kin, one in the family of God, knowing the suffering of the last 30, 40 years, it is a burden we all carry.

And we're all one human family. So what is impacting the community of Red Water Pond Road here in this region of Gallup, McKinley County, all the way to the Grants mineral belt, all of us are one in this.

And I would like to just point out, first of all, in the concerns we have, we see the diagram of basically the topography. But our concerns are how is this waste site, the original waste site, as others
have already pointed out, contaminating the actual
geology, the strata of the earth.

There have been countless, countless
underground mines, shafts that have been drilled and
mined out. And therefore, we're dealing with fissures
in the earth. So it would have to be, in the scoping,
a much more detailed diagram of actually what are the
components of the past waste.

Also, what are the fissures? How is the
engagement of the interfacing of this waste site on
the actual strata of the earth? And we know that the
alluvial underground waterways, when this earth was
being formed, had many, many complex rivulets. So
there's a lot of complexity to the underground surface.

And how is that hydrological system being impacted?

And I'd like to bring out the fact that
we all know we are facing climate change. We've seen
some extreme environmental disasters in our own country
and around the world. And we know that 40 years ago,
when this initial waste depository was designed, it
was probably very primitive compared to the present
designs that are technologically possible.

So in the scoping, it would be very useful
and helpful to see how this original design, with its
faults, and we know the dam broke because of the failure
of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission --- not them, no, the United Nuclear Corporation failure to repair that dam. So there is a basic weakness in the fissure of where this happened.

How is that being analyzed as far as the added weight of, what is it, 1,000 tons, coming on top of that? So what are the possibilities of an extreme weather event, and how will that impact this? And we're looking again for 1,000 years.

So if we look at ourselves as one human family, one human community, our lives have all interconnected. And the wisdom and learning that we're gathering from the Navajo people are for all of us. And I think if we love our country, and if we love the land, and if we love Mother Earth, these are very serious concerns.

So I would urge you to really do a very careful analysis and have that diagram in comparison with what new technology or what new models of depository are possible and being used at present.

So these are some concerns, but I bring the concerns of people of faith, we are very concerned about the threats to all the human family from extreme weather that will be coming. Thank you.

(Applause)
MR. CAMERON: Thank you. And we're going to go to Emily Ellison, and then we're going to go to Mervyn Tilden. This is Emily Ellison?

MS. ELLISON: Good evening, again. Thank you for allowing me to come here. So I'll introduce myself.

(Native language spoken.)

MS. ELLISON: We native people have had a long history with the U.S. government. In some respects, it's dark. Our relationship over the years has eroded. It's instead become a resource exploration economic model.

This needs to end. We have been economically exploited for far too long. Because of this history, we are here today. We have a treaty with the U.S. Government which was signed 150 years ago. It's a binding treaty, according to the United States Supreme Court, with the same valuation with the United States with any foreign government.

An interesting fact is the first non-native economy to this continent was based on conquest over us, the American Indian. It was a plunder economy. We were severely excluded from any of those benefits. When the arrival of those immigrants came, we shared our food. We provided skills for their survival. But
that wasn't given to us in exchange or in good faith. And we're still in that situation today.

By doing this, the Americans made the land into a central means of production for other continents' first bourgeois society. Bourgeois, that's a very big word. In economic terms, bourgeois is the capitalist class. That's the class that owns most of the wealth in society and the means of production. Each country has its own ruling class. We all know that. It's the same economic model that's been repeated over on all the continents throughout the world.

In capitalist countries, the rulers own the means of production and employ workers. The capitalist class is called the bourgeois, like I had mentioned earlier. Means of production are to produce goods such as raw minerals, machinery, ships, factories, are some examples.

Workers, on the other hand, have nothing to sell but their labor for a wage, their time. And that's where a lot of us are.

Because they privately owned most of the means of production, the ruling class, they keep the profits. They make higher profits by cutting workers' wages, which we've seen since the assassination of John F. Kennedy. Because of this, they're also able to
produce new technology and keep it within their families and circles.

Under capitalism, the owner or the boss get richer, and production increases. The working class gets poorer. But capitalists do not control the most important source, and that's power. That power is in the people. And that power is an energy. And that power is in uranium.

So this trust relationship, the rule of unequal private property that replaced our traditional Navajo life, which was communal and based around social equality, was destroyed. So this was the introduction to the US or to Turtle Island as we would say.

(Native language spoken.)

MS. ELLISON: And it's never departed. Deprived of our restored land holdings we, the 565 federally recognized American Indian tribes, also lost control of our traditional livelihood. Agriculture, hunting, and gathering all required land, the principal means of production. We could not do very much without access to land. The same holds true for the other tribes and other technologies that we had at the time.

So if we are to remain in our traditional areas, our homelands, our only alternative was to work for the new owners of the land. We became the
proletariats, the working class, meaning we now sell our labor for power. We sell you our time. But we were never given the schooling, and the skills, and everything that was promised to us in the treaty.

Language is pretty interesting. Language reveals a lot about how a culture uses it and it is for people. The top languages in the world are Chinese, Spanish, English, Hindi, and Arabic. I've only been exposed to Navajo, English, and Chinese. They're different languages with their own very colorful histories behind them, some nice, some not so nice.

I looked up the definition of nuclear as it's stated in your titles. The first definition is consisting and relating to nucleus. And it says something about it being an adjective.

Language is kind of funny. It's kind of like how the Chinese like their morfin (phonetic), which is making a language unit into the smallest unit. It can't be divided any further.

English, you can add a lot onto it, for example, like incoming instructuralization, you know, there's a lot of that. Whereas, for instance, with Chinese you can say ma. And it's how can you further divide ma? Well, you can say ma, má, ma, mà. All have different meanings, right?
So Chinese is a high context culture which means you have to be a part of the group to understand the conversation. Whereas English is a low context culture where you don't have to be a part of the group to understand what they're trying to say to you.

Well, Navajo, in my opinion, is invisible context culture. It's about balance. We use a lot of verbs in our language. It's the language of constant motion, a lot like energy in science.

One of the interesting facts about English is it's a very receptive language, you know, oh, it's really open. Well, it's really a result of its Colonialist background where they bark out orders without having to really interact with the group.

The Navajo word Hózhó, for instance, is the equivalent of beauty in English, but that's a very limited, very --- English is a very limiting language. But Hózhó, it talks about harmony, it talks about peace, and it talks about abundance, and it talks about cosmic rules of law of the entire universe. And so I'm not sure what exactly the definition of that is. And I'm still trying to figure it out, as well as our medicine people still are.

So in general, I think that Navajo is a very balanced society unless, of course, your in-laws
don't like you. Then it becomes, you know, extreme either way. That's a joke if you don't get that. It's lonely if people don't get your jokes.

So this feature of the English language being receptive is an extraordinary feature. It's accepted where it's Asian, European, African, Indian, Japanese, Chinese. English has kept an open door policy of accepting words with classical languages like Greek, Latin, Arabic.

And I'd just like to say, you know, consider adding the word Navajo or Hózhó, especially as it pertains to handling energy. You know, they say elements are placed in a situation for a reason. And they even say that the White culture is meant to be a culture of technology and action.

But I also -- I lost my train of thought on that. I'm going to skip to another portion which talks about your ancestors. Your ancestors came to this continent with a hope for a good life. When they arrived, our brothers and sisters of the East gave them food and skills. And this hope your ancestors brought to our land, they wrote on a document.

That document is the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. We the people have earned that promise and that right 1,000 times over, especially us native
people. We want our economic freedom. We want our economic rights. We want ownership. That goes for uranium, natural gas, rare earth minerals, water, and our right to clean air. This is Diné fundamental law, the people's fundamental law.

You guys are the United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission protecting people and the environment. I did a little bit of research on your organization.

Interesting is Navajo is my first language. I struggled with English, sixth, seventh grade. I was seven years old. So I hope you guys are a legitimate organization. There's been some controversy, concerns, and criticisms regarding it, such as intentionally concealing reports or being too cozy with the industry. I hope you are not. As the Belegana say,

(Native language spoken.)

MS. ELLISON: I'm not sure -- I'm surely using that English word correctly. English is still a weird language for me, it's somehow.

But these are very serious issues that you are dealing with, nuclear. I believe that we, as Diné, are the owners of this uranium that's here. We are the guardians, and I think we're supposed to tell you
how to handle it. And right now we're telling you to clean it. And this is a right that we were able to achieve through the treaty of 1868.

We trusted you, not freely or willingly, but now it's your turn to trust us. Look at our Navajo way of life.

MR. CAMERON: And could you just sum up for us too, Emily? Thank you.

MS. ELLISON: Our language is not only a sacred language, it is an ancient language. It's a spiritual and scientific language. It was used once to help bring peace. Let us share with you the balancing aspects of the concept of peace as we are able to express in our language,

(Native language spoken.)

MS. ELLISON: This is the way. So back the language. There's a lot that we can learn in communicating with each other. There is love, hope, and charity all rolled into one. And please add it to your dictionary. Let's have a smooth entrance into the literary world as we believe with this nuclear we have.

MR. CAMERON: Thank you. Thank you, Emily.

(Applause)
MR. CAMERON: And Mervyn, are you ready?

This is Mervyn Tilden.

MR. TILDEN: Thank you again to everybody and to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission for holding this meeting, opening it to the public.

I just want to add one more time that I think two meetings to draft the Environmental Impact Statement is not enough. This needs to go further to all the chapters that surround this site, at least within a 50-mile radius.

And I want to add to what Emily just added. You know, I hope this is not a dog and pony show which I have always seen it to be when the federal government comes in on Indian land giving us promise after promise, taking what they want, but leaving us nothing but waste, poverty, disease, and more hardship than we can bear, added to everything else.

I want to talk with the Board that I wanted to talk about, but I want to say that three minutes is not enough for such a crucial and important issue that impacts thousands and thousands of people. And in this case, the majority are Navajos.

The 1,000 year issue that comes about whenever nuclear waste is talked about, the covering that we've seen and what we're seeing over there, this
capping, what kind of guarantee do you have then. Do you know that there's a good probability that in 1,000 years the English language may not be able to be read. What kind of language are you going to establish that's going to last for 1,000 years. That is very important.

I think that one of the things that I'm really concerned about the lack of official representation here. I took the time to invite the Navajo leadership, McKinley County leadership, the Gallup leadership, and the state leadership. And I think the EPA is the only one that's here.

I'm sorry I didn't get your -- I didn't invite you. But I'm thankful that you're here. And that was one of the things that I spoke about, about speaking to this issue in our Diné language.

(Native language spoken.)

MR. TILDEN: One of the things that I think that we're going to have to look at is what was mentioned earlier again. And what I wanted to elaborate on, on Tuesday night, and that's the treaty of 1868 when we were subdued and placed in concentration camps, and forced on a long walk from our homelands to Bosque Redondo where we were held as prisoners until the treaty was signed.

The treaty is a contract, a contract that
is valid to this day. One hundred and fifty years later, you must acknowledge this treaty as the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, because you are a part of the federal government. The treaty must be included in the draft Environmental Impact Statement and in the final Environmental Impact Statement.

The communities, their voice needs to be involved but, more importantly, there needs to be an environmental assessment or maybe even better an environmental health assessment survey.

I'll take an example. When we were out on Big Mountain, in there on Big Mountain, and they were forcibly removing my Diné people from the land and placing us on different parts or into different cities, we took the time, and it took a whole year for us to do it, but we went door to door. And we found out who was there. How many lived in each household. What kind of animals did they have, the corn fields that they were growing, the crops, what were they going to be losing when the removal happened?

The census that we did was far different than what the federal government did. Because they just wanted to -- they missed out. They were going to way in the middle of nowhere.

They didn't do that, we did, we were part
of the land. And we took the time to go, and we traveled. And this was at our own expense. You have the money to do it yourselves. The cost of moving, where are they going to be moved? Are they going to move over the hill, into a city, into a faraway place? That has to be considered.

And then are the animals that they have, are they going to be left behind? That's very important. Because we have strong ties with our animals, whether it's our sheep, our cows, horses, or even our little kitty cats, very important.

The sacred sites that are out there, we don't tell you where they're at, but we know where they're at. And this is the removal of this waste, this nuclear waste, this radioactive waste. The healthcare of the people need to be considered.

Going door to door, you can find out who has health problems, who has diabetes, who needs a grocery, and who's walking on crutches, who is using a cane? These things are very important.

One of the things that needs to be included with the National Environmental Protection Act in this process is you need to include the medicine people, the traditional people who know the land, who know these places, who know the language, who know the community,
who know what kind of damages can be done if these places are disturbed.

I mentioned on Tuesday interpreters, translators, there was only one here. But he does not work for the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. You have the money to provide this. You've got tons of money, and you should use that money before Donald Trump takes it away.

And one of the reasons why is because a lot of these words, they're technical words. Some of these words in English that are technical, you cannot translate them into our Diné language. There needs to be a very important understanding of what is actually happening because of the damage that is going to be done when these waste products are moved.

The questions that I had in my mind, one was did the Nuclear Regulatory Commission invite the Navajo tribe in the mix of state government and McKinley County government, and Gallup city government? We're all together in this. We work as under a good neighbor policy. And we work together in a lot of things. A lot of what has happened this past year, that is what I used, and that is what they heard.

One of the things that I think that needs to be understood under the treaty relationship is the
trust responsibility that is in the treaties, the
government to government relationship that is required.

   Emily mentioned there's 565. The Navajo tribe is the largest tribe. You can set a very good precedent, a very strong example, if you work directly with the Navajo tribe. The gentleman that spoke up here, Mr. Yazzie, talk to him. Find out who is a part of this process. Get them involved, invite them to be a part of it.

   And the question that I would have to the NRC, another one would be would you allow your children to be playing in those hills, in the fields where all this waste is at? Would you allow that? I don't think you would.

   So why do you allow our Navajo children, our Navajo people, our Navajo elders, the sick, the disabled, to live in those areas that have been contaminated by waste that you allowed to happen by giving UNC Committee the okay to mine, and then dump, and leave, and abandon these sites? It came upon your approval. Would you do that to your own children?

   It not, if your question is no, then why are you doing that to us? And it is not just your children only. We, as Diné people, we speak to the seventh generation. What's going to happen to them?
That's the question that you should be asking for yourself.

MR. CAMERON: And Mervyn, could I ask you to sum up, please?

MR. TILDEN: In my summary, I would like for you to think of us as human beings as well, we're not just numbers. We're human beings, we're people.

We've got feelings, we've got families, we've got jobs, and we've got places to go, things to do, people to meet.

But more importantly, we're looking to a future for our children, we're looking for our community, for our nation as a whole, our great Navajo Nation. And that's who you need to communicate with.

Thank you.

(Applause)

MR. CAMERON: Okay. Thank you, Mervyn. And we're going to hear from Sarah Adeky now. But I just wanted to say that I heard the three minutes offered a couple of times tonight. And we never said three minutes. We said a flexible five. And I think we've been providing seven to ten minutes to everybody. And we will continue to do that. So get the three minute thing out of your mind.

And this is Sarah.
MS. ADEKY: Thank you.

(Native language spoken.)

MS. ADEKY: I just introduced myself as the, in my own language, to identify myself with my relatives here as to who I am, who I'm born for, my paternal grandparents -- my maternal grandparents and paternal grandparents.

That's how we identify with one another.

And that's how we find relationship, no matter where we go throughout our Navajo Nation. We always have someone that we can call as our relatives in kinship terms, as my brother, my sister, my grandmother, my aunt, my uncle. That's how close-knitted we are as Navajo people.

It was back in 2005 that I started to work with Southwest Research and Information Center as their community liaison person. And it was through the work that we've done, a lot of it, a lot of my work was really to help conduct health studies.

It wasn't only --- it was not just the Red Water Pond people that we work with. We work with several other communities throughout the eastern Agency. But when we came upon the Red Water community residents, at that time they were just now identifying themselves as to what their living conditions are like.
Things, matters were turning over from previous studies that were done in the area of contamination. And this is when they started asking a lot of questions. They were concerned what their water was like, their soil, the air, what have they done in the past when the mining was going on?

They themselves, they went from their homes to the mines to work. They didn't have to drive. They walked to work and came home from work. They knew that there was water coming out of the mines. Some of them said they drank the water. Some of them said they bathed in the water. And you heard that from Tuesday night and tonight.

This is a real close-knitted community by relatives. They're all related to one another, just like was as native people, we say we're related. All the way around we have connectedness with Mother Earth and the universe, anything in between. So that's who we are.

So I've come to know the families, especially the elders. And they were really quite concerned about their future generation when they hear that their water is contaminated, their soil is contaminated, their air that they're breathing in is also not good for them.
But yet that's their homestead. Long before the mining companies came in, that's where they lived. And they started to ask questions. What's going to happen to the future generation? Where will they have the safe drinking water?

And I've seen crews come in, companies, organizations, entities coming in and trying to help with the residents and trying to make a direction as to how the cleanup will be done.

I've seen families go on relocation on short term and even on the longer term. To them, it was a very long time they had to spend away from their home. I've seen soil scraped off around their homes and the hills they had with trees, they have uncovered some of their sacred sites.

And this isn't good to see. I've seen that beautiful community turn into something that is like you just scraped off maybe a cucumber, or you peeled an orange, and that's the way the community is right now. We still see where the scraping went. There is no vegetation, there's no new vegetation that has happened after the Band-Aid job that they had put in.

And today, after 2005, going through a lot of events that they have gone through, and it's hardship, because buses come in, their children walk
from their home through the contamination to get on the bus. And then they come back, and they do the same every day. They were concerned about that.

Now that the community looks very, very different from the first time that I've seen it. They want their homeland back, to restore it to whatever history it held, the copper valleys that it held. I don't know if it's ever going to be done.

They themselves, they withheld their environmental ethics before the mining companies came in. They didn't tear up their land, they utilized their land and planted their corn, they planted other foods that they could use. They knew how to handle that.

They also had their flock of sheep, they had their cattle. That was introduced a little bit later in our history. But they had horses. These are the animals that they value. These are the animals that were put there at creation time.

So they had and practiced the environmental ethics. They valued their existence and how they relate to -- to be with the animals, and even the plants.

You heard them, that they miss those plants that they used to use for their healing, for also as edible food, and also to use it to buy the wool when they do their weaving. This is what the women are missing. So just
an analogy to think about.

If you have a maid coming into your home to clean your house, do you want that maid to sweep the floor thoroughly, that cleaning is done? What if the maid sweeps all the trash under your bed. But you never know it's there. Years later, you find it.

You would be angry. This is what the community don't need. We don't want cleanup crews to come in and just put it into where it's now designated to on the illustration over there, on the poster, and how it's going to be done. It's just like sweeping it under their own bed. Years later, it's going to reappear. It's not going to go anywhere. Contamination's still going to be there.

And then there's people that live on the east side, we call them Pipe Line Road residents. They're not here, but they don't know about this. People living on the west side, along the Puerco, they don't know about the contamination going in right there in their back yard.

Look what happened when the spill back in 1979, a lot of them didn't know that that was contaminated water. They still put their sheet down into that water. Some of them walked in that contamination.
I've seen and heard people that they had ailments after that. Some people couldn't walk anymore. Some people had cancer. Some people had skin disease, because the contamination was so bad that it started to eat their skin years later.

So those kinds things I know is there. And I wish we could have done some oral history collection out of what we have heard from the residents or people in that community when we first did the house study in that area.

We're going to be kicking off another study in the same areas. And this is to see if we can improve their health.

MR. CAMERON: And, Sarah, could you sum up for us, please? Thank you.

MS. ADEKY: So, if agencies can work together, Navajo Nation EPA, U.S. EPA, the Navajo Nation Government.

There is another organization, I don't know where they would fit in, Diné Uranium Regulatory Advisory Commission. It's a newly created commission.

If all of you could get together and help the residents at Red Water Pond have someone come in and give them some administrative assistance so they can plan and move and have their community either create
it there where they have their homestead. So where it's not contaminated, contamination is lessened.

Or, they want to move up on the Mesa. And they have plans. They have some foresight as to what they want to do.

But who is there to pull all of the resources together for them. There isn't one person that, or a couple agencies that might be able to do that.

That's what they need. They need someone to really help them do some planning and organizing. So, you might also think about that when you have your meetings on the government to government.

And don't leave the residents out of your meetings too. Keep them informed so that they know what is coming up, because if they don't, they do their advocacy for themselves in the way that you've heard Tuesday night and tonight. It's still going to go on. So show some results to them.

MR. CAMERON: Thank you.

MS. ADEKY: Thank you.

MR. CAMERON: Thank you for the prayer the other night too.

MS. ADEKY: Thank you.

MR. CAMERON: Is Karlthial Kavasseri here?
Sorry, I didn't pronounce it correctly, yes?

MR. KAVASSERI: No.

MR. CAMERON: When you come up --

MR. KAVASSERI: Sure.

MR. CAMERON: -- just say your name for Dylan so he can get --

MR. KAVASSERI: Yes, sir.

MR. CAMERON: I mean, into the microphone.

MR. KAVASSERI: Okay. It's Karthik Kavasseri.

So, I appreciate getting called up, I didn't know I would be. Because I have more just honest questions.

I'm a physician, I've been a physician in this community. I work south of here in Zuni now.

But even as a physician who takes lives into my hands, I do not envy your jobs. Because, it's clear to me that the decision that you make from here not only affects a handful of lives that you might see, but generations to come.

And so, I'm new to this. And so I assume that you've put some thought into this plan. But I do just have some questions about it and really, that's the approach that I have for this is just, I have
questions about how reasonable of a plan this is.

When I look at the picture, and I've been looking at it ever since I came here, and I'm somewhat familiar with the plan. What I notice is that, I'm pretty sure that this is a flood plain, or at the very least, the arroyo there does allow for water to travel from the region, you know, through Gallup, and into the Sanders area and past that probably.

So the questions I have, just to consider, that I hope that you guys have considered are, what amount of rain fall would it take for that arroyo to carry radioactive waste further down, and how often does rain like that come?

Because honestly, I don't know the answer to either of those questions. I think that's something that would be good for everybody to know and for us to have an idea of before we kind of walk into this.

The other question that I have, looking at the map there, it doesn't seem like the physical distance from the, what is it, the NECR, somebody tell me, the site that they're moving from to the UNC site that they're moving to, it doesn't seem like the physical distance is that far. And so far, I just haven't heard of what the calculated risk reduction is.
And what I mean by that is, I assume that the reason that we're doing this, the reason that this plan even exists, is to have a positive health outcome in the surrounding communities. So what, what is the risk reduction?

It just doesn't seem like they've moving anything very far. The geographic distance seems very short to me.

So these are, honestly, they're just questions that I have. What's the actual risk reduction?

What are the risks that are being reduced and how are those assessed?

Yes, that's it. That's all I got. Thank you.

MR. CAMERON: Good questions, thank you. Thank you very much.

Leona? Do you want to come up and speak to us?

MS. MORGAN: Sure.

MR. CAMERON: Okay. We're going to go to Leona Morgan, and then Rose Bell and then Edith Hood.

MS. MORGAN: Thanks, Chip. So, I just wanted to introduce myself to my relatives here.

(Native language spoken.)
MS. MORGAN: I'm here, again. What some of the things that you all heard on Tuesday night and tonight I think are really necessary to tell you, but I'd also like to address some of my comments to the residents here.

So, the issue, I'm going to repeat from Tuesday, is that there's a lot of stuff that's left out of the proposals. First of all, the proposals by UNC are, they're just ridiculous.

I mean, this is not an adequate job they did to come up with their best fit for their pocket book. So, UNC, whatever they're proposing is not good enough.

NRC needs to work with the, as Sarah mentioned, the Diné Uranium Remediation Advisory Committee, or DURAC. And NRC needs to also communicate all of these things to all the appropriate agencies.

So all the chapters in eastern agency, the Eastern Land Commission, the Eastern Navajo Agency. In addition to the EPA and then also, the Navajo Nation Council, the Natural Resources Committee, the Health and Human Services Committee, the Law and Order Committee. So all these things.

The scope of the cleanup also is lacking, they're proposing to do a little bit of moving some
waste to another site. But I don't think this is the full extent of the mess that UNC made. So we know there is still contamination at Section 17. And then on Tuesday I also mentioned the entire length of the 1979 Church Rock spill.

This has gone, this went all the way, 100 miles into Arizona, when 90 million gallons of radioactive waste broke from the dam and 1,100 tons, none of that has been cleaned up. And EPA Region 6 said they're only required to look at the property boundary. You all need to require UNC to clean up the whole mess. Which is everything that went all the way into Holbrook and beyond.

And in addition to that, some of the stuff you've heard is about the health. How can UNC clean up the mess they made with our health?

Does UNC, can they come in and scrape out our lungs like they're scraping out the earth? I mean, these are serious problems.

My family has a lot of health problems. We know that a lot of these are caused by different uranium mining companies. And how much does, how much is UNC responsible for this?

What type of reparations can they make
beyond just this little band-aid?

This is an insult to our people. These proposals should not be accepted. NRC should reject their license amendment because these are not good enough.

These proposals are, have not been fully studied, they're not considering a lot of the things all of our people are talking about. And I think NRC needs to require UNC to work with the communities, and the different agencies, to come up with a better plan.

Because this is just not good enough.

So now, I want to talk to my relatives here. So, the NRC is not just going to go to you or UNC is not just going to say, hey, this is what we're doing.

So Tuesday I was looking at the book that was at the back of the room, and in that book there is a letter from the Pinedale Chapter staff person that said, hey, this is to their contractor, the letter in there said, our chapter officials want to sit down, face-to-face meeting.

So after the meeting Tuesday night I asked the NRC staff who addressed this. So because the community wrote the letter to the contractor, the contractor is not legally bound to give this information to NRC to say, hey, these people want a face-to-face
meeting.

So, if you want a face-to-face meeting, get your chapters to request a face-to-face meeting. EPA, request a face-to-face meeting.

People that talk to DURAC, get DURAC to request a face-to-face meeting. All of your connections to your different agencies, your hospitals, your whatever, request these meetings. Request additional hearings. You have until May 14th, I believe, to request additional hearings.

NRC also needs to go to any of the communities that are referenced in these proposals. So if you're going to look at even considering shipping the waste to White Mesa Mill, you need to have a hearing around White Mesa Mill with the Ute Mountain community folks in Blanding and Bluff, Utah.

If you're going to ship it to Andrews, you got to have hearings down there Eunice, New Mexico. They're going to ship it up to Utah, have hearings at Salt Lake City and all of those surrounding communities.

You can't just be allowing UNC to make these proposals without notifying all of those communities that are going to be affected. And of course, put announcements about these things along all of the transport routes.
I know that some of you know me because we're fighting Holtec and you guys are allowing Holtec, you're looking at bringing all the nuclear waste from every reactor to New Mexico. And for us, as Diné people, that means transporting it on the railroad by two of our sacred mountains.

How do you even study that or require protection for that?

I don't think you have any clue. You need to come to our people to figure these things out. So if they're going to move waste, just from one site to another, that's not good enough. But if you're going to ship it somewhere far away, you really need to look at the safety of our communities, our environment and our sacred sites.

And to some of the other things in your book, the company, the contractor, they sent all these letters to different offices to say, hey, are there any endangered species over here, and then the company or the UNM, whoever, they sent the letter back saying, oh no, we don't have any record of those endangered species out there.

But, by the way, we don't go out there so we can't really say, honestly, that there is or there are not endangered species. So, you need to require
UNC to study all of that and work with the local people to look at the animals, the little plants and any impacts.

If this thing is supposed to be good for 1,000 years, that's also something to consider.

The last comment I want to make is, I'm going to continue making comments, but this, by letters and that kind of thing, and we'll get other folks to send comments, but this proposal, it's very lacking in how it's supposed to store waste.

So, when we're talking about radioactive waste, these dangerous, potentially threatening wastes need to be permanently isolated from human populations and the environment. You can't just put it on top of another waste pile and cover it with some clay and some plants. It needs to be permanently isolated.

And these need to be marked adequately, like Mr. Tilden was saying. What kind of language are you going to use.

Because right now, when we pass by contaminated sites, most of these places are not fenced, there's no signs or the sign is all faded down there under the weeds. So these are all things that need to be considered by UNC.

They're not looking at the real problem.
They're not even working with the local people. This all needs to be considered. And you need to redo the whole, all the proposals need to be redone. So, this is all I wanted to say.

MR. CAMERON: Okay.

MS. MORGAN: Thank you.

MR. CAMERON: Thank you, Leona.

(Applause.)

MR. CAMERON: And we're going to go to Rose Bell, Edith Hood and then we'll go to Larry King. Ms. Rose. Rose Bell.

MS. BELL: Good evening. My name is Rose Bell and introducing myself.

(Native language spoken.)

MS. BELL: And I just have a question about the risks that is going to, how if you transport the material, the contaminated material from where it's at now to the UNC site, how are you going to do that when you're transporting the material?

Are you going to use the trucks, are they going to be covered, are they going to be encased?

The reason why I'm asking this, I worked on a project out there a few months ago, and I saw firsthand for myself, the workers were not from around here, they were from Idaho. The drivers and the loader
operators were from Idaho.

So anytime you bring in workers from elsewhere that don't live around here, that don't utilize the land here, they're just there for the money.

So when they did this, there was, I've observed spillage. They didn't load the material right, it was offset. So whenever they went through the lower water crossing or on slight curves, I could see the spillage.

And I did report it to the people in charge but it's no big deal. I mean, when they picked up stuff, there was five sites where they had higher contaminated uranium, when they picked it up and taking it up to the pile, it had to go through my family's resident.

And I saw the spill.

I took some pictures. So, when you are transporting these materials, I mean, you really need to consider how you're doing it.

And not only that, we, through the Navajo Nation, we do have qualified operators and we do have trained people that was, there was like five groups that went through the Navajo Nation with HAZWOPER.

And they were trained, but they were never considered. They pulled people from elsewhere, so when we do this, I mean, you need to consider some of these.
The reason why another, it's personal, is because my husband has worked in the uranium mine and has lived there all his life. And then my daughter did, and I have grandchildren that live there. And now they are dealing with health issues.

So it comes home back to me where if it's going to be done the right way, it needs to have a lot of studies, a lot, just like Leona said, you need to go back and review the whole thing, how are you going to do all the transporting, the lining.

It was addressed by somebody, that they have to do the study underneath where it's existing.

We just can't say, let's put it on top.

So with that, that's one, some of my questions. How are you going to do the transporting of the contaminated material? Thank you.

MR. CAMERON: Okay, thank you. Thank you, Rose. And the NRC has heard these questions from you tonight. Edith, and then we'll go to Larry.

This is Edith Hood.

MS. HOOD: Good evening, everyone. And I'd like to thank the NRC and the EPA for coming out yesterday, out to Red Water Pond area.

I thank you for looking at the site that we talk about, that you can only imagine in your mind.
Now you've seen it. Thank you.

The first thing I would like to say is, yes, here, we natives always say we are interrelated with nature, mother earth. Even when life starts for our kids, the children's umbilical cord are cut, buried in the land, in the hopes that the child will always come back to that land. And a lot of this has happened the Navajo way, in our own back yards.

And we take the herbs, even the sandstones, to be made into sand painting. We used the herbs from the earth. And in doing this, we only take what we need. We say a prayer. We only take what we need.

But in other societies, look what happened, they left a mess and left it there for us to deal with.

I think Tuesday night we had all voiced the frustration, the stress of living in a uranium impacted community. But yet, we still hope that it gets cleaned up, despite all the struggles and the things we have to go to.

Especially when you're dealing with your own government. I often wonder, at these meetings, where are my Navajo leaders. Where are they?

We invite them, we call them. We tell them, Red Water Pond has a meeting every month. The second Wednesday of each month, where are you.
Okay. In thinking about this, I would like to stress the wants, the needs of the community as I have heard it and as for myself. Since you're doing the scoping.

I think that, Number 1, if we have to have the waste pile to remove the very first one, the very first preference was to move it off Indian land. Off the reservation. Take it somewhere else.

But it seems that we were always told no. It's too much money to move this. And so it seems like they're going to take it a mile down the road and put it there.

And also, in doing this, this waste that they're moving is from Northeast United Nuclear, which is named GE now, will be taken a mile down the road. But at the same time, as you've seen it yesterday, across the way on the north side, there's that pile from Kerr-McGee, that's going to be sitting there.

And from what I know, UNC does not want to take that pile and put it with theirs down the road.

What the community wants is that they both be cleaned up at the same time so we don't have to go back and do it the second time. Re-contaminating.

(Appause.)

MS. HOOD: And then when they do clean this
up, if they ever clean it up, that they do a very good
job of monitoring the people that are doing this work.

   And when this happens, if that cleanup ever
happens, I'd like to say that, you know, people have
moved out, some of them have moved out, because we kept
getting told that we cannot afford to foot the bill
so you guys can move up, further up on the Mesa.

   So, just as a device of method. People
have moved out. There's still some of us there though.
   And we're going to stay there until it cleans up.
   Until it gets cleaned up.

   And when this happens, if we get relocated
upon the Mesa, and I don't think we're asking for much
when we're asking for homes. We're not asking for
mansions, a castle. We're not asking for a freeway
up that road. All we want is a dirt road, maybe with
a gravel that can be maintained.

   We can have a one frame, well, for me,
   that's what I say. I said, I can just live in a one
frame house up there with a kerosene lamp, with a water
barrel. That's how I grew up. It will be just like
camping out. So I feel that I'm not asking for much.

   And as, you know, all human beings are
entitled to live in a safe environment regardless of
ethnicity. And with all this, the justice, the
equality and the pursuit of happiness.

Sometimes I ask, where is this pursuit of happiness when I cannot get what I want. I didn't ask the mining company to move in. I was a child then.

We were in the safety of our grandparents.

We had three medicine men living there. And it was very safe for me at the time.

And I always wonder, I wonder, what my three grandkids would say today when they see this mess.

So, thank you for listening to us, NRC.

Help is get back the Hózhó, as we talked about. The Hózhó that we grew up with. And treat us with the respect that we deserve.

And if this could please be cleaned up in a timely manner. Because, I, myself, have worked in the mines, 2,000 feet below ground, 18,000 feet, working alongside with the miners.

And when this mining came into our community, a catastrophe has started with mother earth and with the health of all living things. And it caught up with me 20 years later.

I was diagnosed with lymphoma and I had to go through all that chemo, which killed me. And I still the effects of it today. So I've lived with that.
MR. CAMERON: And could you just sum up for us, Edith, please? Thank you.

MS. HOOD: Okay. I wanted very much to show you a PowerPoint, but we don't have the equipment for it right now. And thank you for listening to me.

MR. CAMERON: Okay, thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. CAMERON: Thank you, Edith. And now we're going to hear from Larry King and then we're going to go to Anna. Anna Benally and to Bradley Henio.

MR. KING: Good evening, everyone.

(Native language spoken.)

MR. KING: Red Water Pond community are my internal relatives. There was two elderly sisters that live up there.

The Red Water Pond community, Edith and her family are from one elderly sister and the other grandma, the other elderly sister, are from that lineage. My grandma is from that side.

So, I have close ties with the community.

And my concerns are the safety of the community. When this, whenever the time comes around, I hope to see that in the very near future, when the cleanup starts.

Right now, it's proposed, it's been
proposed to 2023. And I hope the date is still set as is, or even earlier.

But, my concern is the safety of the community. When the transportation, the removal of mine waste across the street, towards the mill to be placed on top of the mill waste, the other forgotten community, the pipeline community, will be directly affected.

Because the turnoff to the mill site, the pipeline community utilizes the same turnoff. And they're downwind from all this removal that's going to take place.

Although the notice has been published everywhere, but I don't think the community are, they're probably tired, just like the Red Water Pond community is. And I feel the same way that I'm just tired of hearing. And I don't want to listen to any more of this.

These lies, these things that are being said but never carried out. So, I'm sure the pipeline community people are just the same.

But I think the NRC, the agencies that are spearheading this cleanup, needs to meet directly with both communities, the pipeline community, which is further, a little further up north with several...
residents. With members probably polling close to 100.

But the NRC, EPA needs to start meeting
directly with each community, or both at the same time.
And explain, not using your big words, come down to
the grass root level. I'm sure you guys have liaisons.

I was just looking at the pamphlets back
there and I made a comment, and I've always felt that
way. When these pamphlets are published or is
translated to the Navajo language, how do you expect
elderlies that don't know how to read English to read
those pamphlets published in the Navajo language? It
does not make sense.

The Navajo language is designed, or was
created, the way I look at it, from the beginning of
life for the Navajo Nation, to be carried out orally,
not written.

So, I'm educated. I worked with the
government sector until I retired, and I still can't
read that pamphlet. So, I made that comment to those
ladies back there.

So I take that into consideration. If you
want to really tell the community what you need to tell
them. Get your translators, your liaisons by you and
have them do the translation.

But my concern, like I said, is the safety
of the both communities. You need, I don't know if that's addressed. I don't think it's addressed in your, any of your documents. But that should be one of the, that's one of my concerns.

I can't even read my own writing. And the other thing, this past Tuesday, I made a comment too, and I'm going to reemphasize that again, the whole area where the tailings pond weir is in a flood plain.

And I'm not satisfied, and I haven't been reassured that there is going to be no ground movement where the waste is going to be stacked. I finally looked at the diagram, the second diagram.

That's not right. You got your mine waste, actually it says tailings waste, and then you got your tailings nicely separated.

That's not the case from one of the former workers that's stated time and time again over the years. He was part of the reclamation crew when they were cleaning up the mine waste.

And actually, that's not the mill waste on the furthest right-hand side where it's kind of colored red. It's the mine waste that was buried, that are buried in that tailings pond.

He says that those are wastes that came out of the mine, out of the mine area that they were
not able to decontaminate. They're buried there.

So, that tailings should, to me that diagram is not right. And I looked at the diagram again. And I know the community, the first priority, the first thing they said was to move the waste off Navajo land, out of the community.

But of course, like we said, EPA already had their mind made up. But they just came out and said, well, what do you want to do, when in actuality they had already made their mind set to just move from one waste to the, and a mile down the road to the tailings pond.

So, in that case, we emphasize that those liners be double in size, triple in size. And the way that diagram is, there's going to be no added additional liners, no extra layers, it's just going to be pile, the mine waste is just going to be piled right directly on top of the tailings pond.

MR. CAMERON: And can you sum up?

MR. KING: To me that's not right. And then the, and rerouting the channel, mother nature does its own thing.

Even though the channel is rerouted to avoid all of that, it's going to find its way back to where its original route was. So, to me that's not
really, that's not right.

And then to propose, it was mentioned, well, last thing. That EPA, the Trump Administration is proposing to cut 31 percent of the EPA budget in the 2020 budget.

It was mentioned to you, to this group Tuesday, to do everything you can to hang on to all the budget and not to get any cuts if you can. But, if that's impossible, I work for the government sector. Anytime there's a cut, the government sector is always top heavy.

The real workers are the field staff. So if there's going to be cuts, make sure it's not top heavy. You keep a lot of your field workers out here that needs to work with the community and ensure that their work is done properly. But get this cleanup done ASAP. Thank you.

MR. CAMERON: Okay, thank you. Thank you, Larry.

(Applause.)

MR. CAMERON: Did someone leave their book? Edith, okay. It's right here, we'll have it for you.

Anna. Okay, for the record, this is Anna Benally.
MS. BENALLY: Okay, I want you up here with me so we can make The Independent again, from today's paper.

(Laughter.)

MR. CAMERON: Oh, you want to have another picture?

MS. BENALLY: I want another picture for today's paper. Hi, my name is Anna Benally, I am a resident of Red Water Pont community association. And for me, I had an interview this morning and I felt very hurt. Because when, Ms. Q, Ms. Q?

(Native language spoken.)

MS. BENALLY: Come on, move. This is my granddaughter.

When I was her age, she's 9 years old, that's when the mines came in. I'm 61 right now and she's 9 years old.

I don't want her to be worrying about the next 50 years, when it's going to be cleaned up. My grandma, I never saw her, but my mom had always instructed me, take care of the land.

(Native language spoken.)

MS. BENALLY: We're taking care of each other, we're watching over each other. But Archaea is all messed up.
And this really hurt me because my ancestor, I still have sheep counts, 500 goats, 500 sheeps, 40 rams, 50 goats, cattles. All that is gone. And even to this day we don't have nothing out there because there is no vegetation due to all the waste that has been left behind.

And to me, it's hurtful for me because I drive the tailings from the UNC every morning. And it's hurtful for me because it's a reminder how she's going to deal with it when she grows up to be my age.

And this is what really hurt me, because my parents, my father was a medicine man, his dad was a medicine man. And they're prayers were very sacred. And in them is, they always told us -- (Native language spoken.)

MS. BENALLY: -- be good to each other, help each other.

And that's what we're doing. We're trying to help Archaea to get back to normal. And I don't want her to be saying, my grandma came up here and told me to do this.

I don't want her to be 61 years old and trying to get this all cleaned up. I'm doing it for her. I have two other grandkids that I have guardianship of.
So please, I'm just, I'm pleading with you to take care of it. And it hurts to drive by every day because it still sits there.

I look at it every day. And so now the front yard, the back yard, I mean, we, Red Water Pond, have become strong to live with this toxic waste that's in our yards.

But like I said, I don't want her to be looking at it when she's 61 years old. And she's 9.

Thank you.

MR. CAMERON: Thank you, Anna.

MS. BENALLY: Yes.

MR. CAMERON: Thank you Anna. And is Bradley, Bradley.

And please introduce yourself too, I wasn't sure if I pronounced your last name.

MR. BRADLEY: Good evening. I can see you guys are all tired and kind of lazy. Why don't you all stand up for us? Stand up. Stand up. Stretch out. Stretch out. There you go. Now you guys all wake up, you can go ahead and sit back down.

Now, I just got a few things to say. Like, EPA, we're missing a lot of EPA officials at our meetings. I haven't seen you all there yet. We'd like to invite you there.
And I think it's very important that you are the liaison between our committee with the tribal official. Make them come over. I have invited them to come over to our meeting, our situation. That's what I'm asking for.

You said you are supporting the Navajo tribe, the Navajo people. I would ask you to do that. Help us to make a connection with the tribal officials and the tribe, to come to these meetings and support us.

We need guidance from a lot of this stuff that we're trying to do. Like we went up to the Black Mesa, we have a lot of, we told you that needs to be met. The road, the infrastructures, water, electricity, stuff like that.

We have no, told travel authority that we can work, something has to be worked out. How you can help us out with that, working with that.

And the new administration, or I don't know if you've been here before, Nuclear Regulatory Commission. How long have you guys been here in that, where you're sitting in your position?

Are you going to be here next year?

Are you going to be holding that same position in two years?
It changes. You guys change all the time and it seems like we start all over again. That's the whole thing, we drop our plans trying to move.

The EPA came in here with the UNC and did a plan and all the graph and everything else was put out, all along here, all beautiful. This is the plan.

This is going to happen 2014. This is going to happen. This is going to start planning, we're going to start moving, be prepared.

What happened? We're starting all over again. Whose plans are we under now? And I hope you guys push this project to take place right away.

And I live in Red Water Pond road and I know my in-laws, what they deal with. I'm just married to that community.

So, like I said, the bureaucracy gets in the way a lot of times. We like to continue moving this project, these loads right away. Even before 2023.

I know they say not to rush it but I know there's a way that's already been planned. There's a way that you can duplicate some other projects that's happening out there already, that take place. That we can use or adopt that.

Now, I've been in the Military for 33 years.
So I know how the government works. I know how the federal works. I got out when I was a sergeant major, so I've been to Iraq three times. So, I hope you guys help my in-laws, my --

(Native language spoken.)

MR. BRADLEY: And the same thing with the Navajo Tribe, I hope you push that up. And I count on you. And come to our meetings every second Wednesday of the month. That's all I got to say.

MR. CAMERON: Thank you.

MR. BRADLEY: Okay.

MR. CAMERON: Thank you, Bradley. Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. CAMERON: And Teracita Keyanna. No? Well, Emily said that English was a low context language, so I'm sorry.

MS. KEYANNA: That's fine.

MR. CAMERON: Go ahead. And, Emily, is our last speaker, and then Dariel Yazzie is going to come up, say a few words and then Bo Pham is going to close the meeting out for us.

MS. KEYANNA: Okay. Okay, so, my name is Teracita Keyanna. I come from the Red Water Pond Road
community.

And I wanted to help out my aunt. There was, you know, she has a lot to say and there's not enough time in the world for everybody else to say anything.

So, there was points that she wanted to make. That the NRC, you guys need to get some cultural sensitivity training.

You need to make sure that you understand everything about all our culture and why. Not just hear it, but understand it. And come to the community and learn it. Don't just ask us to send you an email about what it's about.

And she also wanted me to bring up, when you do send out, do your licensing and you issue these licenses, please make sure that you actually go out to those communities and you make sure that those community members are being taken care of.

Because, sometimes the EPA doesn't listen. And it's very frustrating for the communities to have to deal with that and constantly being told no or we can do that.

What we're doing right now is changing a law. It's an amendment. And these things can be changed.
And I we don't understand why these
different issues that we're having where we're
constantly getting the constant no about is why?

You guys are changing laws to make
billionaires richer. You're changing laws to the
lining of people's pocket even more.

And who's the one that gets stepped on?
The little people. I'm a little person. I don't have
a million dollars, I don't have a mansion.

But I have a home that I constantly can
go to. I have that traditional tie, I have that
physical tie. And that's what my aunt was talking
about. It's not just, we don't want to move, it's
because we're physically tied to the land.

Another thing she wanted me to bring up
was a quote that she wanted to read but she wasn't able
to get a chance to. And it goes, "we went to Geneva,
the sixth nations Iroquois and the Great Lakota Nation,
as representatives of the indigenous people of the
western hemisphere.

And what was the message that we gave, there
is a hue and a cry for human rights. They said, for
all people.

And the indigenous people said, what of
the rights of the natural world. Where is the seat
for the buffalo and the eagle.

Who is representing them here in this forum. Who is speaking for the waters of the earth, who is speaking for the trees and the forests. Who is speaking for the fish, for the whales, for the beavers, for our children."

This was said by a gentleman in 1990 named Oren Lyons of the Onondaga tribe. And that's what we're doing right now for our Navajo Nation, for our children, our future generations. Because they don't have a voice yet.

But it's not only them, we're also speaking for people who have no more voice, for those who have passed because they died from cancers, respiratory diseases. So, we want their voices to be heard.

We want our children's children, children's, like Tilden said, seven generations. This is not our land, we're borrowing it from our children.

Thank you.

MR. CAMERON: Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. CAMERON: Thank you, Teracita. And Dariel, you want to close us?

MR. YAZZIE: Sure.

MR. CAMERON: And we'll go to Bo after you
MR. YAZZIE: Okay. I want to literally take off my hat and put on a different hat. Something I want you guys to understand and want you to know.

I'm talking to the NRC panel, I'm also talking to my family that sits out here. The reason why I'm involved with this goes beyond a paycheck.

Looking at me you probably wouldn't know that at an early age in my life I had cancer. I don't ever cut my hair short, short because I've got this big scar on the side of my head that goes from here all the way to the back. And I'm very self-conscious of it.

But it's gone. Through a lot of treatment, being sick, feeling just awful. But I dealt with it. I got through with it.

It took western medicine, it took my traditional teachings, the traditional practitioners, to get me to where I could function in a capacity where hopefully, as my eternal grandfather said to me, do something about this now. Don't be afraid of it. You fought with it already.

(Native language spoken.)

MR. YAZZIE: So, I got involved and I started working with different agencies to, first and
foremost, educate myself as to what it is that we're doing. As I moved forward and started to understand the science, then I had to go backwards again and figure out, okay, what is it traditionally.

(Native language spoken.)

MR. YAZZIE: Where does it come from? It has a name --

(Native language spoken.)

MR. YAZZIE: So, in my earlier comments, that's what I shared. The NRC group, the panel. We talked earlier today and I said, okay, here's what I want you to think on.

There is a traditional value that needs to be integrated into what we're doing. You heard it here this evening a number of times.

So, for me, again, wearing my Navajo, just a regular person, wearing that hat, the impacts are great and they affect me.

My father is in his mid-70's. Late 70's. Still a young man. I see my wife's father whose still up and capable to move around, and my father is younger than him, and he can't function in the same capacity.

Because, one, we grew up right next to the mines. Two, he worked in the mines. Three, as a young man he grew up with the exposure. The science tells
us that's where we're most susceptible at.

So now, he gets around with a walker, he's got lung damage that's going to shorten his life. We've dealt with three strokes. We were told four years ago, prepare your family. Three months is what they told us.

I believe with the love that my sisters, my family, what we do for him, what we provide for him, he's still here with us. Through prayer.

The impacts of prayer, the impacts of what we can do as traditional people and making the offerings that we make, are very powerful. We've not included that with our solutions with how we're going to address all of this.

We look at it and there is questions for the designs. There's questions in the process. There's questions with the information sources, are they legitimate.

There's questions to the partnerships that exist. Are you going to be the same group that we're going to work with to finalize this or is it going to change.

For my family that's here, the community members --

(Native language spoken.)
MR. YAZZIE: Thank you.

(Native language spoken.)

MR. YAZZIE: I want to say thank you for asking me to stay, I was hungry. I still am. But hearing everything that everybody had to say, I am very moved. And I hope the comments that we share, the ideas that we're sharing with you now, I hope you're moved. I hope you moved to do something, to include something.

A couple of weeks ago I went to Phoenix to attend this symposium where we talked about these types of issues across the world. This idea of including fundamental law, traditional law, natural law, hasn't been done yet.

And the processes are complicated, even there. And so, let's include that. This might, this just might be the very thing we need to be successful in addressing these longstanding issues.

Mr. Tilden said it. Let's include that.

Let's look at that.

There was a young lady that was here earlier, I think she left, she was very, what's the word I'm looking for. I loved the way she stated things in regards to what we need to be doing, again, with the cultural values.
My brother, thank you, you're right. I need to be more involved. I need to be the conduit from this group to the community. If they're not available, then come and talk to me.

If anything, that's happened here, I would like for you guys to understand that I want to be that conduit. Share that information with me.

Because if you're going to share something one way, let me get it out to the community in our own language so they understand it completely. They're not second guessing their own understanding of the English language. Thank you.

MR. CAMERON: And thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. CAMERON: Thank you again, Dariel for being here. And Bo Pham is going to close up for us.

MR. PHAM: Thank you again for those of you who came back out, but also first timers. Thank you for coming out tonight.

And also, thank you to the community for your hospitality, to our team whose been, since we've been here this week.

I thank you for also opening our eyes. Tuesday was a really awakening for us. We've realized that we've sort of, we're in a foreign place and we
didn't really know how to talk to, to the community. And we still don't. I'll acknowledge that.

But part of that eyes opening for us is, we were able to get to the site, while we were here this week, after the meeting on Tuesday. We were able to look at the proximity of where the community lived within the, where the mine spoils is and where the site is. Including Edith's family.

And we also were able to take a look at the jetty that was a source of many comments that we heard Tuesday night as well. So we thank you for helping appoint us in those directions.

This is exactly what the purpose of scoping is intended for and we'll continue to reach out and get more information from the community with that respect.

I will also acknowledge that there is a great deal of trust that needs to be earned from us to working with the community. This is an example I was listening to some of the speakers tonight. And there were questions.

For example, like the, any leakage from the tailings impoundment that exists there. And I'll be honest, as an engineer and a long time NRC regulator, my initial instinct would have been to say, okay, yes,
I know exactly what the limits are and I know what the status is there.

But to tell you the truth, what have we been hearing this whole week is that I can tell you until I'm blue in the face, and if you don't trust what I'm saying, all those graphs and what we say and all our figures mean nothing. So we do acknowledge that, as part of this process we need to figure out how to earn that trust.

When we were with, met with the EPA, Navajo EPA this morning, I think we all admitted that we are clueless in terms of how to reach out to the community and how to talk with the community through the correct process.

I'll be honest with you, I don't think we'll perfect it, but we're going to try really hard and we're going to keep working through every channel that we have to try to get it right. So, I give you that commitment from the NRC.

So with that, again, I thank you for being here and I wish you all a goodnight.

(Whereupon, the above-entitled matter went off the record at 9:21 p.m.)