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USNRC

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Shirley Jackson, Chairwoman  
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Washington, DC 20555

OFFICE OF GENERAL INVESTIGATION  
HULL  
ADJUDICATION STAFF

RE: Proposed uranium mine in New Mexico

Dear Ms. Jackson,

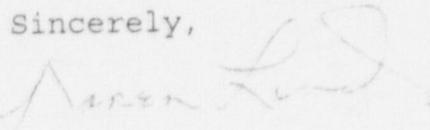
Hydro Resources Inc. (HRI) is proposing to mine for uranium via "in situ" technology next to the Navajo community of Crownpoint, New Mexico. HRI's proposed mine threatens the drinking water for more than 10,000 Navajos and the health of Crownpoint residents and surrounding areas. The proposed processing plant would be located upwind of the town of Crownpoint, posing human health hazards via exposure to airborne radioactive materials as well.

In situ leach (ISL) mining causes underground water to become grossly contaminated. Some experts estimate that uranium could reach the Crownpoint water wells from the ISL wells in six to seven years, rather than the 90 years estimated by HRI. While HRI is required to 'restore' the ground water after mining, some experts doubt they can meet federal drinking water standards, let alone restore the ground water to its current, pristine quality which is now better than drinking water standards. Further, HRI's parent company, Uranium Resources, Inc. (URI) of Dallas, Texas, has a long history of alleged license violations, leaks, and spills of process chemicals at its uranium solution mines in South Texas.

The proposed mine will not benefit the Navajo people nor provide sustainable economic activity. If the company continues its avoidance of Navajo jurisdiction, they won't be subject to Navajo Nation taxes or preference hiring laws. They won't have to comply with the Navajo Water Code nor the Navajo Safe Drinking Water Act. Most people in Crownpoint will receive few benefits and will be forced to accept the burdens - risks of contaminated water, diminished public health, strained public services, and a community stigmatized by uranium mining - while HRI of Texas makes all the profits.

I urge that the Environmental Protection Agency deny Underground Injection Control (UIC) permits to HRI and do everything in its power to stop this ill-advised mine.

Sincerely,

  
Karen Lind

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