

**Official Transcript of Proceedings**  
**NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION**

Title:                   Public Online Webinar for the Draft  
                                  Environmental Impact Statement for Mine  
                                  Waste at United Nuclear Corporation Mill Site

Docket Number:       04008907

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Pages 1-93

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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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PUBLIC ONLINE WEBINAR FOR THE DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL  
IMPACT STATEMENT FOR MINE WASTE AT UNITED NUCLEAR  
CORPORATION MILL SITE

+ + + + +

THURSDAY,

APRIL 29, 2021

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The Commission met via Video  
Teleconference, at 7:30 p.m. EDT, Joan Olmstead,  
facilitating.

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

KEVIN COYNE, Deputy Director, Division of  
Rulemaking, Environmental, and Financial  
Support, Office of Nuclear Materials Safety  
and Safeguards

JOAN OLMSTEAD

ADAM GENDELMAN

AMY MINOR

ASHLEY WALDRON

BILL VON TILL

BO PHAM

CHRISTINE PINEDA

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DOUGLAS MANDEVILLE

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## P R O C E E D I N G S

(8:02 p.m. EDT)

OPERATOR: Welcome, and thank you for standing by. At this time, all participants are in the listening only mode until the question and answer session of today's conference. At that time, you may press star-one on your phone to ask a question.

I would like to inform all parties that today's conference is being recorded. If you have any objections, you may disconnect at any time.

I would now like to turn the conference over to Joan Olmstead.

And, Joan, you may begin.

MS. OLMSTEAD: Good evening, everyone.

Slide 2, please.

I want to welcome everyone, and thank you for participating in today's public meeting to gather public comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the License Amendment at the UNC Church Rock mill site in Church Rock, New Mexico. The license amendment will allow the Northeast Church Rock mine waste to be disposed on the existing tailings impoundment at the UNC Church Rock mill site.

My name is Joan Olmstead from the NRC's

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Facilitator Program. I'll be serving as your facilitator for today's meeting, along with Lance Rakovan. Our role is to help ensure that today's meeting is informative and productive.

I would now like to introduce Joanna Manygoats to give the opening prayer for the meeting. She will also be available if anyone needs a translator during our meeting, too.

Joanna.

MS. MANYGOATS: Thank you.

(Speaking Diné.)

MS. MANYGOATS: Okay. Back to you.

MS. OLMSTEAD: Thank you, Joanna.

MS. MANYGOATS: You're welcome.

MS. OLMSTEAD: Slide 3, please.

This is a comment-gathering public meeting. The purpose of this meeting is for NRC staff to meet directly with individuals to receive comments from participants on specific NRC decisions and actions to ensure that NRC staff understand their views and concerns. This meeting is also being recorded.

After opening remarks, the NRC staff will provide information about the staff's environmental

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review, and gather public comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement that is currently out for public comment.

Normally, we have an open house before a public meeting where people can informally ask questions about the application and interact with the staff. Because of COVID restrictions, we are having a virtual public meeting.

The Q&A session of today's meeting provides an opportunity for you to ask questions about the application process or technical questions about the review document.

Following the Q&A session we will gather comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. The public comment period on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement ends May 27<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

You can provide comments during today's meeting or send in comments to the NRC after this meeting. The NRC staff presentation will tell you how to do this.

Slide 4, please.

I would like to introduce Kevin Coyne, who is the Deputy Division Director of the Division of Rulemaking, Environmental and Financial Support in

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the Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards. Kevin will give the opening remarks for today's meeting.

Kevin.

MR. COYNE: Thank you very much, Joan.

Good evening, and welcome to everyone. I'm Kevin Coyne, the Deputy Director for the Division of Rulemaking, Environmental and Financial Support. This is the group responsible for the development of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, the United Nuclear Corporation license amendment.

We regret that we cannot meet with you in person today, as we continue to face the challenges of the ongoing public health emergency. We also express our sincere sympathy and thoughts to all those affected by the pandemic.

Today we are asking for your comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement which is the result of the NRC staff's evaluation of the environmental impacts associated with United Nuclear Corporation's proposal to dispose of mine waste at the adjacent mill site.

It's important to note that any comments received in this meeting forum are handled in the

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same manner as those comments received at an in-person meeting. Comments presented here tonight are recorded and transcribed. Staff will review and analyze them and update the Final EIS Report as appropriate.

Comments received during this meeting will be made available in a transcript of tonight's meeting that will be posted to the NRC's Project Review website shortly after the meeting.

As a result of feedback received during the December 2020 public webinars, we have adjusted the time and format of tonight's meeting. This will allow for a question and answer period. During that time you can ask the staff questions on the NRC's process and Draft Environmental Impact Statement. Having this dialogue is an important part of the process, and we look forward to hearing your questions and concerns.

The NRC staff has and will continue to coordinate its Environmental Impact Statement review with multiple groups within the Navajo Nation, including the Navajo Nation Environmental Protection Agency and local communities.

We look forward to your comments, and

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value your feedback. It's an important part in our decision-making process.

Again, thank you for your time today. And I will turn it back over to Joan.

MS. OLMSTEAD: Thank you, Kevin.

Ashley Waldron from NMSS will give a presentation about the UNC Church Rock license amendment environmental review. And Joanna Manygoats will provide a short summary in Diné after the NRC's presentation.

As I mentioned before, she's available if anyone needs a Diné translator this evening.

And then Kevin Coyne will return to give closing remarks for the meeting.

Slide 5, please.

This slide provides some ground rules for today's meeting. Please log in to both the WebEx and call into the toll-free phone line, which arrangement allows us to minimize your band width to have a more stable meeting platform and help conduct a meaningful question and answer and comment session.

I want to add, no regulatory decisions will be made during this meeting. The meeting will be transcribed, and the meeting transcript and

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meeting summary will be available on the NRC website.

Because of the number of attendees, we may need to limit the time for an individual's question or comment to make sure everyone has a chance to participate. And if we have enough time for everyone to ask additional questions or provide additional comments, we can still sit back and allow people to ask these questions or comments as time allows.

If you are not on WebEx and you would like to view the presentation slides, they are in the NRC's ADAMS documents database and on our project webpage. The accession for the package today containing slides is ML21112A279.

The presentation slides are also available on the public meeting announcement.

This meeting is being transcribed, so in order to get a clean recording and minimize distractions during the meeting, we ask the panelists to mute their phones when they are not speaking.

And for attendees on the phone, you'll be in listening only mode until the question and answer portion of this meeting.

If you would like to speak, please

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contact the Operator by pushing star-one, and she will put you in a queue and announce when it's your turn. You will be asked to state and spell your name and affiliation.

If you don't -- Let's see. And if you decide you don't want to speak and want to leave the queue, press star-two.

We are always looking forward to improve our meetings, and your feedback is important to us. At the end of the meeting, please go to the NRC meetings webpage at [www.nrc.gov/pmns/mtg](http://www.nrc.gov/pmns/mtg), click on the recently held meetings button and look for this meeting. The meeting feedback will be at the bottom of the meeting's announcement.

Slide 6, please.

And with that I will turn this over to Ashley for her presentation.

Ashley.

MS. WALDRON: Hello, and thank you, Joan. Just trying to do a sound check here before I get started.

All right. Hello, and good evening. My name is Ashley Waldron and I'm the project manager for the NRC's Environmental Review.

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Before I get into the details of the proposal tonight and the Environmental Impact Statement, I want to first start by thanking those members of the Red Water Pond Road Community who were willing to meet with the NRC staff to provide us your valuable insights regarding this project. We are appreciative of the perspective you bring to this process.

Since our last public meeting, NRC aired a series of radio broadcasts on the local Navajo radio. They were recorded in both English and Diné. The Diné broadcasts were provided by Sarah Adeky. And if you'd like to listen to those broadcasts, they're available on NRC's YouTube page.

During tonight's broadcast I'm going to talk about the NRC's role and process; talk specifically about United Nuclear Corporation's license amendment request; discuss our Draft Environmental Impact Statement findings; and, finally, provide the ways you can comment on our Draft Report.

For those who are not logged into the WebEx meeting, we are on Slide 6, Background UNC mill Site.

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The UNC mill site operated from 1977 until 1982 under a State of New Mexico license. Ore from nearby mines, including the Northeast Church Rock Mine, was processed at the mill. During operations, a waste product called tailings were produced, and the tailings were stored in an impoundment on site.

In 1979, the tailings dam failed and it released about 94 million gallons of mill tailings into a nearby Pipeline Arroyo. And we realize that nearby communities were deeply impacted by this spill.

It's important to note that the NRC regulations for disposal of mill tailings were created in 1985. These regulations address siting of tailings impoundments, operations, decontamination, decommissioning, and reclamation of mill tailings. The NRC oversight of the mill began in 1986.

Next slide, please.

Slide 7, background on the Northeast Church Rock Mine Site.

So, the Northeast Church Rock Mine is one of the largest abandoned uranium mines on the Navajo Nation and it is a priority for cleanup due to the

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location of the residents living nearby. In 2005, the Navajo Nation requested that the U.S. EPA take the lead for the cleanup at the Northeast Church Rock Mine.

In 2011, the EPA, Region 9, selected the cleanup plan to remove the Northeast Church Rock mine waste, and place most of the waste onto the mill site. Any waste above 200 picocuries per gram of Radium-226 would be separated and disposed of at another licensed facility, in other words, not at the mill site.

In 2013, the U.S. EPA, Region 6, who oversees the groundwater cleanup at the mill site, made a decision for to accept the mine waste at the mill site.

Next slide, please.

Slide 8 is the current site environment.

So, the mill site is located on privately-owned land that's owned by United Nuclear Corporation. The mine site is located mostly on Navajo Trust Land. New Mexico Highway 566 is a 2-lane highway that provides primary access to the site. And there are approximately 34 occupied homesites within 2 miles of the mine and mill site.

Pipeline Arroyo is a dry streambed that

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flows with water after rains. It's located on the western side of the mill site, which we'll see on the next slide.

Next slide, please.

Slide 9 shows the mine and mill site location.

This slide shows the proposed project, which is located outside of Gallup, New Mexico in McKinley County. The proposed project area is outlined in red. And within this area you will see the Northeast Church Rock Mine in the upper-left portion. This is where the waste will be removed from. And then it will be taken via the access and haul roads to the proposed disposal site, as shown in the shaded area.

Note that Pipeline Arroyo is also shown in the blue line running along parallel to Highway 566.

Also want to point out the red triangles are the homes within the Red Water Pond Road Community next to the Northeast Church Rock Mine.

Next slide, please.

Now I'm going to talk about the UNC mill site's current status.

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So, tailings from the milling operations are stored in the north central and south cells in what's called the tailings impoundment. And the tailings are covered by a radon barrier. There are two evaporation ponds on site that are used for the ongoing groundwater cleanup activities.

There is a memorandum of understanding between the NRC and EPA Region 6 who oversees the groundwater remediation for the Groundwater Corrective Action Plan.

Next slide, please.

I'm on Slide 11, the license amendment request.

United Nuclear Corporation is seeking to amend its NRC license. And, if approved, it would allow the transfer of one million cubic yards of mine waste from the Northeast Church Rock Mine and place that waste on an existing mill tailings impoundment for permanent disposal.

UNC's request and NRC's review does not include the higher concentration of waste that would be anything screened above the EPA's action level of 200 picocuries per gram of Radium-226. This waste would not be disposed of at the mill site. And EPA

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would identify an appropriate licensed facility to take this waste.

The picture shown here was taken in 2019, and it shows the tailings impoundment at the mill site.

Next slide, please.

I'm on Slide 12, NRC's role.

So, NRC's oversight is limited to the mill site and, therefore, we have the authority to approve or deny the license amendment request based on whether the placement of the waste at the mill site can be done safely.

The NRC does not have the authority over the mine waste, and it has no say in the decisions that were made for the Northeast Church Rock mine waste. As I mentioned earlier, that is the role of the U.S. EPA.

Next slide, please.

Slide 13 is the NRC's review process.

NRC is performing an environmental and a safety review evaluating the proposal submitted to us by United Nuclear Corporation. NRC documented its safety findings in a Safety Evaluation Report. That report was issued in September of 2020.

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NRC is currently working with the Department of Energy to address their comments on the Safety Evaluation Report. The Department of Energy is who the site would eventually be transferred to for long-term care.

We issued our Draft Environmental Impact Statement in November of 2020. This is the report we are currently collecting comments on tonight. We will continue to collect comments through May 27<sup>th</sup>.

NRC will evaluate all public comments received during the comment period on the Draft EIS and consider modifying it before issuing a final Environmental Impact Statement in December of this year.

A comment response summary will be included as an appendix to the Final Environmental Impact Statement. That will include all of the comments received on our report, including the ones received at this meeting. We expect to make our final licensing decision by January of 2022.

Next slide, please.

Slide 14 is Environmental Impact Statement.

So, NRC is required under the National

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Environmental Policy Act to disclose the environmental impacts of the proposed action. Those findings are documented in our Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

The Environmental Impact Statement evaluates the potential environmental impacts to inform the public about the proposal and to make sure we've considered all the relevant information in assessing those impacts.

The action before the NRC is either to approve or deny the license amendment request. So, this is what the NRC evaluates.

Here's a snapshot of how the report is organized. And it goes into detail about what United Nuclear Corporation is proposing to do. It talks about the current site environment and the impacts that the action would have on the environment.

Next slide, please.

Slide 15, proposed action.

The EIS evaluates impacts of the proposed action. And the proposed action is to amend the UNC's license to allow them to dispose of the one million cubic yards of mine waste on top of the existing tailings impoundment at the mill site. The waste

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consists of soil, waste rock, and mine debris.

United Nuclear Corporation is proposing to transfer the material by truck, using the haul and access roads. Cover material, which is material used to cover the waste after it's placed on the mill site, would be obtained from areas on site at the mill.

United Nuclear Corporation is proposing that the Pipeline Arroyo be stabilized using a riprap rock chute to replace the current rock jetty, which will address erosion concerns in that area.

Next slide, please.

Slide 16, EIS alternatives.

The Environmental Impact Statement also discusses alternatives to the proposed action, which include the no action alternative, which evaluates the impact if the NRC did not approve the license amendment and, therefore, UNC would not be allowed to dispose of the waste at the mill site.

We also looked at what we call secondary alternatives. These are essentially the same as the proposed action, but include modifications to specific activities. The first one includes a modification of how the waste would be transferred, which looked at using a covered conveyor system

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instead of by truck.

And the second one includes a modification of where cover material would be sourced from the jetty area.

Next slide, please.

Slide 17, impact evaluation.

Now that we've discussed what the proposal is, I'm going to talk specifically about the environmental impacts. We looked at impacts for three phases of the proposed project: construction, transfer, and finally, closure.

Most impacts, such as noise and transportation, would occur during the 3.5 years during construction and transfer, and would then stop.

Next slide, please.

Slide 18 is the results of the NRC's environmental review.

So, this slide captures the impact assessment for each of the resource areas. The environmental impact levels range from small to large. And for some of the resource areas you will see there's a range: SMALL to MODERATE. And this means that for particular phases -- the construction,

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transfer and closure that I just mentioned -- that there could be small impacts during one phase but moderate during another.

You could also have certain aspects of that resource area have different impact levels, for example, ecology and air quality as shown in the table here.

It's important to note that these slides are showing the impacts of the proposed license amendment itself. And the EIS also addresses the impacts of historical events as cumulative impacts. And those can be found in Chapter 5 of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

Next slide, please.

Slide 19 shows the remainder of the resource areas and the impact findings. For most of the resource areas the impacts from the proposed action would be SMALL to MODERATE. Most of the impacts would occur only during the approximate 4-year construction period when the repository is being constructed, waste is being transferred, and the repository is capped and revegetated.

Many of the SMALL impacts are considered minimal because of the environmental process and

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safeguards that would reduce any negative effects on the environmental resource.

Mitigation measures that have been identified can be found in Chapter 6 of the Environmental Impact Statement. I'll discuss some of these resources in more detail in the next few slides.

Next slide, please.

Slide 20, transportation impacts.

Traffic is expected to increase during construction of the proposed project. And as much as 68 percent of an increase in traffic is expected at the haul road crossing.

Haul roads would be constructed, including one at Highway 566.

United Nuclear Corporation estimates that there would be 280 truck trips per day, or 40 trips per hour. Road closures would be limited to 15 minutes or less, and school buses would not be delayed.

United Nuclear Corporation also plans to install a temporary traffic light at the crossing.

Next slide, please.

Slide 21, noise impact.

Noise would be generated from the use of

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construction equipment and from excavation activity. Increased traffic would also contribute to noise levels. The closest noise receptors are residents of the Red Water Pond Road community, which are adjacent to the mine site.

Next slide, please.

Slide 22, surface water impact.

Impacts to surface water during project activities may result from stormwater runoff and resulting erosion. As mentioned earlier, United Nuclear Corporation is proposing stabilization work in the Pipeline Arroyo or jetty area to address potential future erosion. The current design allows for improvements to stormwater drainage.

Next slide, please.

Slide 23, air quality impact.

Dust will be generated from vehicle travel on unpaved roads. There is a possibility for wind erosion in the disturbed areas. Emissions would be generated from construction equipment. And United Nuclear Corporation has proposed mitigation measures in its application for controlling dust.

Some of those include spraying of roads, covering of trucks, and wetting stockpiles.

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Next slide, please.

Slide 24, historic and cultural resources, and ecological resources.

Five sites have been identified within the areas of disturbance that are recommended as eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. There are four located on the mine site, and one on the mill site.

Impacts to historic and cultural resources would be SMALL to LARGE, depending on the implementation of mitigation measures to reduce land-disturbing effects on these resources.

The NRC, in coordination with the Environmental Protection Agency, the Navajo Nation Tribal Historic Preservation Office, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the New Mexico Historic Preservation Office, and United Nuclear Corporation are developing a programmatic agreement to mitigate adverse effects on these areas.

The agreement describes procedures to ensure protection of the identified sites and that proper protocols are followed. LARGE impacts would only occur if no mitigation occurs. And that is very unlikely.

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For ecological resources, no threatened or endangered species were identified to be affected by the proposed action.

Next slide.

Slide 25 is environmental justice.

Environmental justice impacts are those that affect disproportionately low income and minority populations. Nearby communities, which are primarily Navajo, have been impacted by historical mining and milling operations, and could be impacted by proposed projects -- by the proposed project from traffic; air quality changes, primarily from dust; and increased noise levels. No adverse human health effects are expected from the proposed project.

Chapter 5 of the Environmental Impact Statement describes impacts to the Navajo People in the context of past uranium mining and milling activities. We've attempted to accurately capture and describe the perspectives of the Navajo Nation. However, we recognize that they may hold different views from the conclusions presented in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

Next slide, please.

Slide 26, information resources.

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This slide contains a number of web links where you can find additional information on the NRC's website. The first one will take you directly to the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

The second link is to our reader's guide, which provides a summary of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement and some frequently asked questions.

And the last link is to the NRC's public webpage. And this is where you can find a copy of the safety evaluation report, as well as the NRC's schedule.

Next slide, please.

Slide 27, submitting comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

This slide lists all the ways we are collecting comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. You can provide oral comments tonight at this meeting. You can submit them in writing or by email -- by email or by letter via regular mail. Or, leave a voicemail at the number listed on the slide here.

Next slide, please.

Slide 28 is an NRC webpage snapshot.

So, this is what the NRC's webpage looks

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like if you click on the last link in Slide 26. And you'll see a box in the top right-hand corner of the page which contains a link to find all of the information on how to comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, and information regarding the meeting transcript for tonight's meeting, which will be posted shortly after this meeting.

Next slide, please.

Slide 29 is upcoming dates.

There are a number of upcoming dates I'll note here:

So, the Draft Environmental Impact Statement comment period ends on May 27<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

We'll issue our Final EIS in December of 2021.

And we'll issue a Revised SER and license amendment decision in January of 2022.

Next slide, please.

Slide 30 contains the NRC project contacts. My contact information is listed here. And if you have questions regarding the NRC's environmental review, please contact me.

Should you have questions regarding the

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NRC safety review or the Safety Evaluation Report, please contact Jim Smith.

That concludes my presentation. And I'll turn it back over to Joan. Thank you.

MS. OLMSTEAD: Thank you, Ashley.

Ms. Manygoats will now give a summary of Ashley's presentation in Diné.

Joanna.

MS. MANYGOATS: Yes.

(Speaking Diné.)

MS. MANYGOATS: Back to you.

MS. OLMSTEAD: Thank you, Joanna.

MS. MANYGOATS: You're welcome.

MS. OLMSTEAD: And now it's time for our question and answer session. We showed the first slide again so people could see the bridge line number and the passcode in case they missed it before.

Now, this session will be for questions regarding the NRC's process for evaluating the UNC's request for a licensing amendment.

If you have any questions about one of the specific slides, please try to refer to the appropriate slide in your question.

We may need to limit the time for

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discussion to 3 or 5 minutes so everyone has a time to speak. And, if we have time, you'll be able to ask additional questions by going through the operator again.

We are limiting today's questions and comments to the NRC's review of the UNC Church Rock Licensing Amendment request. If we have questions or comments concerning topics beyond the scope of this meeting, we will try to provide you with a way to obtain the information for these other topics, too.

And now we'll ask the Operator to unmute everyone's phone. And please press star-one if you would like to get in the queue. And say your name and affiliation.

Operator.

OPERATOR: Thank you. We will now begin the question and answer session. If you would like to ask a question, please press star-one, unmute your phone, and record your name and affiliation.

If you would like to remove your name, please press star-two.

MS. OLMSTEAD: I believe it's press star-two, correct, if you decide later to leave the queue?

OPERATOR: Yes.

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Our first question comes from Marlene Perret (phonetic). Your line is open.

MS. PERRET: Yes. When you saw the -- when you did the EIS alternative I didn't see where removing all the mill tailings off the whole property onto a new site, I didn't see that as an alternative.

MS. WALDRON: Hello. This is Ashley Waldron.

So, when you're referring to the mill tailings being removed, so that, that is not part of this action in front of us. It's to remove the mine waste and place that waste on top of the existing mill tailings impoundment.

MS. PERRET: Okay.

MS. WALDRON: That's why that was not included.

MS. PERRET: Well, what about having the mine tailings removed -- mine waste removed totally off site and not on top of the mill tailings? Sorry about getting those confused.

MS. WALDRON: Sure.

So, that is beyond the scope of the NRC's environmental review. We are just looking at what's being presented to us by United Nuclear Corporation,

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which is to evaluate and approve or deny a license amendment request to move the mine spoils onto the mill site.

MS. PERRET: Thank you.

MS. WALDRON: Sure.

OPERATOR: There are no questions in queue at this time.

Again, if you would like to ask a question, please press star-one.

The next question comes from Tatiana. Your line is open.

Tatiana, your line is open.

(Pause.)

OPERATOR: There are no questions in queue at this time.

Again, if you would like to ask a question, please press star-one, record your name clearly, and state your affiliation.

Our next question comes from Larry King. Your line is open.

MR. KING: Hello, I'm affiliated with the Red Water Pond community.

It seems like your slide, one of the pages indicates that the Red Water Pond community is just

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being held hostage because if the license amendment is not approved and then it's going to take EPA approximately another 10 years to come up with another decision.

And then one of the other issues on the clean-up, I've been to several meetings with the community and we have stated, I have stated, strongly, that the mine was being moved off site even before the draft EIS came about.

And none of those communities' suggestions are listed anywhere. That is not right, and the other thing is environmental justice, no adverse human effect is expected on the proposed projects?

There is another community a little further up to the northeast of Pipeline Canyon, Pipeline Road community consisting of, I don't know, it might be 25 to 50 families, they are going to be traveling through all of this mine activity plus the remaining hold-outs from the Red Water Pond making up about five families.

So, how can you say there is no adverse human effects expected on the proposed project? There was, there is, and there will be.

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It's just very upsetting, it seems like if you don't go -- the community is being told if you don't approve this, if you don't cite, and if you don't get along and approve this amendment then you're going to be left alone for approximately ten years before another EIS is drafted.

That's not right, that's environmental injustice. Thank you.

OPERATOR: Thank you. I think we will have a response. Ashley?

MS. WALDRON: Yes, thank you Larry King for your comments, I think Sara Jacobs is going to say a few words from EPA Region 9.

MS. JACOBS: Can you hear me?

MS. WALDRON: We can hear you, Sara.

MS. JACOBS: Hello, everyone, Sara Jacobs, U.S. EPA. I am the Project Manager for the Northeast Church Rock Mine Site, I work out of San Francisco in Region 9.

And I'd just like to acknowledge that while my children are sixth-generation San Franciscan, I am currently living and working on the unseated land of the Ohlone people. And I want to thank you, Larry King for your comment and also the

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previous speaker. I can kind of give people a little bit of information and context for this decision, when it happened and how that process occurred.

So, U.S. EPA is responsible for the clean-up of the Northeast Church Rock Mine Site, and everyone on this phone is participating because everyone is concerned about the safety of the community.

And all of these sites in the area, the mine site, and the mill site, they can be maintained safely and safely disposed for permanent disposal.

And so I asked Ashley and she said there's 81 people on this line and I'd like to thank everybody for their interest in this project. Like Ashley said, the Northeast Church Rock Mine Site is one of the largest on the Navajo Nation out of over 500 mine sites.

And like Ashley said, it was ranked the highest in priority for clean-up. So, EPA's mission is to protect public health and the environment and I think that's what everyone on this phone wants. We want a safe site that's cleaned up as soon as possible.

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And so EPA, we work under Superfund law, you might hear it referred to as CERCLA, and we are bound by law to make clean-up decisions and they can be very hard, tough decisions because there's no perfect solution that's going to return the land to what it was and make the waste go away.

It has to go somewhere. And so how we make our decision about how to clean up the site is the law requires we look at three things. One is effectiveness, is the solution protective of public health and the environment? Are people going to be safe? The second one, implementability, can we make this decision? And then the third criteria is cost, how much will it cost? And those are the criteria that we have to pay attention to.

And so we put out our alternative analysis, we call it an EECA, an engineering evaluation cost analysis, we put that out in 2009 and many of the same people who spoke so eloquently in December of last year and who are on the phone tonight, and I'm sure are going to speak, voiced the same concerns about the option of bringing the mine waste over to the UNC mill site.

And people said that they didn't want

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that option because it's so close. And even though it removes the contamination from the mine site and allows that tribal trust land for unrestricted traditional uses, it does put the waste at the UNC mill site.

And the reason why we selected that alternative, EPA in 2011, is because it reduces the footprint and puts it in a place where there's already contamination, the mill tailings.

But before we made that decision, when we heard how much everybody did not want that decision, they wanted the waste taken to a much farther away licensed repository, we took a pause in 2009.

And we met with President Shelley, and we did a consultation with the President and he told us that he wanted to us to work with the Red Water Pond Road community and look at other alternatives that people had brought up during that public comment process, alternatives like Fort Wingate or other sites, other disposal sites.

And he asked us to address any technical concerns that were brought up during that time. And so we took two years, usually when you put out the alternatives it's about six months about then and

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when you make a decision.

But we took two years, and during that time we had consultations with the Navajo Government, we worked with the community, we had over 11 meetings during that time. I'm sure some people on the line were there, there were risk and health workshops, workshops on vegetation.

We had lots of meetings about interim clean-ups and so we took that time and there's a number of documents up on our website now looking at additional alternatives. What about other sites in the area? Is there anything else we can choose?

And we didn't find anything and if we had found other nearby disposal sites that met our criteria of effectiveness, implementability, and cost, we would have come out with an EECA and an evaluation for Quivira?.

So, we're still looking for nearby alternatives for other sites that are effective, implementable, and meet our cost criteria.

So, I just want to give people a little bit of background about why we made that decision and the history of those consultations with President Shelley and listening to the community.

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And the decision that EPA made was we had two more decisions that had to be made for the mill site, that was just the decision to clean up the mine site. One was by EPA Region 6 under superfund law, they had to accept the waste at the mill site, and some of you may remember those public meetings in 2013.

And then that decision was made and then now NRC is making their licensing decision. So, the Federal Government is back in our listening mode, we want to hear everything people have to say, if we should hear any concerns about safety or reasons why we could not proceed, we want to hear those.

But we have completed our evaluations, like Ashley said, and they're all out on the NRC website and the EPA website.

Ashley?

MS. WALDRON: Thank you, Sarah, and I'll turn it back over to Joan or Lance.

MS. OLMSTEAD: Thank you, Ashley and Sarah, and what we're going to do now is move on to the comment period and Lance Rakovan will be facilitating the public comment session for the meeting.

Lance?

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MR. RAKOVAN: I wanted to make sure I was unmuted there. Good evening, everyone, again, my name is Lance Rakovan and I'll be helping to facilitate the commenting portion of our meeting.

Just a reminder that we would like to keep the focus on comments on the draft environmental impact statement for the license amendment for the UNC Church Rock Mill Site. To accomplish that we'll primarily be in listening mode.

We ask that you try to keep your comments brief so we can allow as many people to provide comments as possible given our time. It's not my preference to cut anyone off, but at the same time we'd like to make sure that everyone who would like to a chance to provide comments can do so.

If everyone who wishes to speak has a chance to do so and there's time left, we're happy to allow folks another chance to have the microphone. Just keep in mind that as Ashley mentioned during her presentation, this is not the only way you can provide your comments.

Again, press \*1 if you would like to get in the queue, provide your name and affiliation, and provide \*2 if you decide later to leave the queue.

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So, again, operator, if you could go ahead and see if we have now started here and see if we have anybody who would like to provide comments.

OPERATOR: Thank you, our first public comment comes from Joan Brown. Joan, your line is open.

MS. BROWN: Thank you, and actually, I was in the queue for a question so I'll make a comment and question then.

The question I have is in the EIS it was stated that the environmental justice risk or accountability was very high and I'm just wondering, isn't that enough to stop the project as it is proposed from happening?

Or how do you weigh these things, and if it's very high that seems like it would stop a project so that the community voices would be heard and respected on this.

So, my comment is then that I believe the community voices should be heard and another alternative should be sought.

MR. RAKOVAN: Thank you for that. Operator, do we have anyone else in the queue at this time?

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OPERATOR: Currently, no public comments at this time. If you'd like to make a public comment please press \*1, unmute your phone, and record your name and affiliation clearly.

If you'd like to withdraw your public comment, please press \*2. One moment as the participants queue up for public comment. Our next public comment comes from Dariel Yazzie. Dariel, your line is open.

MR. YAZZIE: Good evening, thank you.

(Navajo language (Diné) spoken.)

I guess questions, comments, observations, talking about where we are and what we're doing. The first thing I'd like to point out is to my colleagues with NRC.

I find it very disturbing to put out a comment that says if we don't come to a consensus to approve this, this is going to take an additional ten years.

It's a very strong statement to make, in my mind a little inappropriate because it does put the perception out there of you either have to do this now or you're going to have to wait another ten years. I don't think that's the answer.

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When we're talking about environmental justice, I think we need to be able to listen and come up with real solutions and not put that perception of I'm taking my ball and going home.

That doesn't work; in the true definition of environmental justice, that does not work, so please listen to the community members, there is opportunity here to make amends with what we've already identified is a lack of a true effective means of communicating.

I would like to challenge you, NRC, to listen in that manner and respond in the same way. And I would also like to extend that to my federal counterparts at U.S. EPA. I understand the process that has been taken to get us to where we are, but clearly we've missed something here.

We've talked about the means and how we identify the options, effectiveness, implementability, and cost, and yet, to my knowledge, we've not truly had a real discussion about cost and what those options would look like.

I think there's methodology and technology that exist right now that would help us to bring them the cost as a true factor in limiting us

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from identifying another place to take waste material to. I would recommend strongly to this event and the host Agency to take every question and put it back out in Navajo and provide the response, the comments, also in Navajo.

I understand that might take a little bit longer with this setup but I know I have relatives in the Red Water Pond Road community that would benefit from hearing from the conversations in Navajo.

And I just want to bring to light that this week we had opportunity to hear that draft EIS be presented on KTNN in Navajo, but I think the timing leaves something to still want, I guess for a lack of way of putting it, it's light where we're already a month away from the comment period ending.

I would recommend putting it out more, I would recommend another public meeting with more back and forth conversations. I would strongly recommend going out and meeting with the community members in getting and giving firsthand information and receiving firsthand information.

I think that's all I'd like to say this evening. I take responsibility and I accept my role in the work that we have to undertake. And if you'll

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let me, if you'll allow me, I'd like an opportunity to help us, help the community, to help Navajo Nation.

There's a lot of information being provided, there's a lot of historical information provided that's a little skewed from my perspective because it only speaks to one side, not the side that is pleading to be heard. And that's the side that we have to listen to.

You and I, the agencies, we don't have to live there, the families do. We need to understand that, we need to respect that. Thank you.

OPERATOR: One moment while we wait for additional public comment. If you'd like to make a public comment, please press \*1, unmute your phone and state your name and affiliation clearly.

If you'd like to retract your public comment, please press \*2. One moment. Our next public comment comes from Edith Hood. Edith, your line is open.

MS. HOOD: Good afternoon, everyone, I am with the Red Water Pond Road community, and I'm just sitting here thinking about the ten years that has been mentioned if there was no action and if the license is not approved.

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It may be another ten years, the waste is already there. In my community, 60 years ago the building community came in, started drilling and looking for uranium and then the mining started.

So far we've been dealing with this, 60 years, and I'm just sitting here thinking another 10 years? We've lived here. If this happened somewhere outside the Indian community, we wouldn't still be talking about this.

So, that's all the comment I want to make, thank you.

MR. RAKOVAN: Thank you for sharing.

OPERATOR: There are no comments in the queue at this time. If you would like make a public comment, please press \*1.

MR. RAKOVAN: I'll make sure that we pause enough time to give folks a chance.

MS. WALDRON: Lance, this is Ashley Waldron. I think we just want to address the ten-year estimate that NRC included in its no-action alternative.

MR. RAKOVAN: Please.

MS. WALDRON: I'm sorry?

MR. RAKOVAN: Please go ahead.

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MS. WALDRON: That was an assumption that we made based on the process that EPA took to select the remedy but I'll give it to Sara Jacobs to talk more about what would be involved if the NRC did deny the license and what that process would look like. Sara?

MS. JACOBS: Thank you, Ashley. So, just to let people know, the option that EPA looked at generally for disposal of the waste at the Northeast Church Rock Mine Site was no action, and obviously we would never select that.

Because like Edith said, we need to address this site and we need to address it as soon as possible and that wouldn't be protective of public health and the environment.

The options that would be protective of the public and the environment and that we could implement are to cap the waste in place, to leave it at the mine site on the Navajo tribal trust land or to take it to the UNC mill site.

But if the license is rejected, we don't have that option anymore. And then the other alternative was to take it to a far-away licensed repository that exists already.

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And so the problem is in some ways we are lucky that there is the mill site nearby where we can move the waste off the mine site. EPA has something we call a presumptive remedy so in general when you have a mine site it's assumed, it's presumed, that you would cap that waste in place.

And so in this situation we have a mill site next door that's a licensed facility that will be overseen forever by the Federal Government. So, there's the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, it's a mill site under UMTRCA.

They're looking at a 1000-year timeframe, is this going to be safe for the next 1000 years that they're going to oversee it? And then it's also a national priority list mill site for EPA Region 6.

So, they're going to oversee it, the EPA will oversee that site going on into the future. And so we have a site that exists that is a licensed, existing repository for the mill tailings that's there now that the Federal Government will oversee in the long term.

If the license is denied, that's not an option anymore. So, what we would have to do is start over and go to the drawing board, and we know that we

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can put a permanent cover on the mine waste, where it is now, and that would be protective and implementable.

And when you compare the cost to that of taking it to far-away repository, then that would be the alternative we would need to select. Because it would be a lot less costly and it would meet our three criteria of protective, implementability, and cost.

The timeframe is we would hope that we would be able to identify another alternative. Unfortunately, we haven't been able to identify an alternative to date, but we would consider that.

So, we would be looking again at alternatives, we would hope that we would find another alternative besides cap in place. But a likely outcome if we wanted to move quickly would be the available alternative we know would meet our criteria, is to cap the waste in place on the Navajo tribal trust land.

And so we would again go out with an engineering evaluation cost analysis, we'd have to prepare that, all the analysis of alternatives, and then we would put that out for public comment.

And then we would make a decision or

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action memo for the site, and then we would go through the design process, which we went through already with this alternative we're looking to go to the UNC mill site. And then we'd have to start construction.

So, maybe ten years is too long of an estimate, but I know that we have made shorter estimates for the current process and people have always been disappointed that we have to keep extending our timeline.

So, we tried to pick a realistic timeline that we could implement this project in. Are there any questions about that?

OPERATOR: There are no questions in the queue at this time. Again, if you have a public comment please press \*1. We have a public comment from Joan Brown.

MS. PERRET: This is Marlene Perrett. My question is there will be some of the mine waste going off the site, is that correct?

MS. WALDRON: That's correct.

MS. PERRET: And what percentage of the waste will be moved off site?

MS. WALDRON: Sara, can you answer that question?

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MS. JACOBS: Yes, thank you so much for bringing this up. So, there is the highest concentration waste that Ashley mentioned, above 200 picocuries per gram of radium.

There's less than about 5 percent of the waste of the 1 million cubic yards so it's in the order of magnitude of maybe 30,000 to 35,000 cubic yards that has been identified.

MS. PERRET: And where will that go and how will it be transported?

MS. JACOBS: That would go to a licensed disposal or a processing facility and it would be transported by truck. And the exact location has not been determined.

It would be determined at the time of construction depending on which facilities were available for disposal at that time.

MS. PERRET: And since there is going to be removal offsite, what is really holding back removing all of the mine waste, which the community wants? And since they have already been subject to environmental injustice.

MS. JACOBS: The 1 million yards of cubic mine waste, you're asking why can't all that entire

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volume be taken off site to a far-away licensed facility?

MS. PERRET: Yes.

MS. JACOBS: We evaluated that alternative and in addition to being about seven times greater in cost, it also would take nine years for the facility we evaluated and it would also take many millions of miles of truck traffic resulting traffic fatalities. So, it's also not a perfect answer, we can't choose it because of the cost criteria.

MS. PERRET: Thank you.

MR. RAKOVAN: Ma'am, did you have any further questions or comments?

OPERATOR: We have no questions in the queue at this time. If you would like to make a public comment please press \*1. We have another public comment from Joan Brown.

MS. BROWN: Thank you, so it seems like mining and waste have created an untenable situation of environmental justice, of degradation, and so another question that I had is these same communities in the region continue to be concerned about future uranium mining and waste, because periodically there

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are companies who say they want to do this.

It seems like this should be stopped, period, and there should be no conversation about anything like this in the future and not put communities through the energy and the resources to have continually fight this.

It creates such dire situations that are unjust. So, is that something that you're looking at also?

MR. RAKOVAN: Do we have someone to address the question, or are we going to take this is a comment?

MS. WALDRON: Thank you for that comment.

MR. RAKOVAN: And Joanna, I wanted to check in to see if there's anything we should translate in real time?

I know we've had a decent amount of Q&A and discussion here but is there anything we can translate or provide?

MS. WALDRON: Or if there's anyone on the line that would like something translated, please speak up and get in the queue to provide that comment. Thank you.

MS. MANYGOATS: I can translate if there

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is anybody that needs translation.

MR. RAKOVAN: Very good, again, if somebody would like to have something translated, \*1.

MS. MANYGOATS: (Navajo language spoken.)

OPERATOR: We have a public comment from Susan Gordon, your line is open.

MS. GORDON: Thank you, so I want to start by saying this format for a public hearing is really not working.

First, I'm Susan Gordon, I'm with the Multicultural Alliance for a Safe Environment, and we worked hard to get people on this webinar, this WebEx webinar tonight and the audio is not working. It's not working for any of us at any of the sites that we are calling in from.

So, that is a serious problem, it presented during even hearing the presentations, it started because we were busy trying to figure out how to get on. We've all had to call in through the audio number and not through the WebEx.

So, I think that means you should really start this whole public hearing over again because of the lack of accessibility.

In addition to that, I have been pushing

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\*1, since you asked for people to ask questions, on my phone like 20 times I had been pushing \*1 and not able to get through until this point.

So, my frustration level at this process and this format is extreme at this point, and you have to address it, NRC, because this is not working for the community.

Also, in terms of my comments on this process, it really sounds threatening to the community that if they don't accept this, you're just going to leave it in place. That's not okay, using the phrase sending it to a far-away place, how about looking at sending it to Blue Water?

There are places that it could go that it's not still in the community. It's intimidating, as Dariel was saying. Oh, it'll be there for ten more years and now you're saying it'll be there forever because there isn't a cost-effective alternative.

Well, the cost to this community has been immense and EPA in the process has destroyed this community by moving people away. It's such an environmental injustice to have divided this community to give them houses in various conditions. One elder moved into a house that was infested with

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rats.

What is that about? This process is completely unacceptable, the only acceptable alternative that has to be considered is moving the pile away from the community, not half of a mile down the road, moving it away and bringing restorative justice to the Red Water Pond Road community.

Thank you.

MS. WALDRON: Hi, this is Ashley, I just want to clarify something that might not be clear to folks, but the audio is only through the phone line. So, you cannot use the WebEx to access the audio. It's designed that way so that we can get people in the queue to collect their comments.

I just want to clarify that point for everyone, and if people are still having issues please reach out and we'll try to get you connected. Thanks.

MR. RAKOVAN: Operator, do we have anyone else in the queue at this time?

OPERATOR: There are no calls on the line right now. Again, if you would like to make a public comment, please press \*1.

MR. RAKOVAN: We'll go ahead and take a nice long pause.

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(Pause.)

OPERATOR: Edith Hood, your line is open.

MR. KING: This is Larry King, we're both on the same line, I was the one that pressed the \*1. This is Larry King again. How was that five percent determined out of that 1 million cubic yards of mine waste that was determined to be a high grade?

What about if there's more, how is that five percent determined? Once you start digging, I worked there for eight years at the mine as an underground worker and I came to expect that when the mine was in operation, there aren't tons of piles and piles.

And what if there's more than five percent that turns out to be high-grade ore? And others, that's not the only -- why can't EPA collaborate with other abandoned mine areas, just like Susan mentioned Blue Water or Homestake, I can't remember.

The tailings pond that are still looming above the village there and there's one other mine waste, abandoned mine waste, that's still in Red Water Pond the Kerr-McGee within a few hundred feet to the north.

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Once that is going to be addressed, why can't EPA get together with all these abandoned mines with mine waste still looming on the surface and come up with a better strategy? And set up a repository somewhere off reservation.

I'm sure there's a place somewhere that can accommodate all the mine waste in this region. And like I said before, I feel like that Red Water Pond community is being backed up into a corner. If this amendment is not approved, then you probably need to wait another -- why ten years?

If it's not approved, why can't you start all over with the EIS the very next day, the very next month, or a couple of months down the road. Why ten years? That's not right, thank you.

MR. RAKOVAN: I believe Sara Jacobs from the EPA wanted a little bit of time to respond to a bit of that. Sara, are you with us?

MS. JACOBS: Yes, hi, thank you, Larry King. I wanted to respond to I think the first part of your question regarding principal threat waste.

That is a term we use for the highest-concentration waste on the site and so during the investigation, they found certain areas that had the

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highest concentration.

So, some of those areas were in the pond that they had there, the settlement ponds. And so when they were investigating the site, there were certain areas that had these highest levels of concentration.

And so they know where in the waste piles or in the pond areas that they expect to find this highest-concentration waste. And so they're going to go excavate that and separate it for the offsite disposal.

MS. WALDRON: Thank you, Sara, and thank you, Larry, for your comments. Go ahead, Lance.

MR. RAKOVAN: I was just going to say the same thing. Do we have any other folks in the queue right now there?

OPERATOR: Yes, Terry Keyanna, your line is open.

MR. RAKOVAN: Are you there?

MS. KEYANNA: Can you hear me, hello?

MR. RAKOVAN: Yes, we can hear you.

MS. KEYANNA: Okay, I've been trying to do the same thing as Susan but it just wasn't going through for some reason. So, I'm also from the

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community, I've lived there all my life and I moved out of the community about four years ago.

And it had mostly downs but we tried to make the best of it. Having my family in my community having to deal with this whole situation basically all their lives is not fair.

Somebody somewhere with all these decision-makers and all this environmental protection agency, everything like that, they had to have known for a very long time where these different mining industries were at. It's not like saying, oh, we didn't know.

It's like me saying, oh, I have black hair I didn't know that, I have this hair all my life and yet I can just say, oh, I didn't know I had black hair. You can't just do that.

That's why just covering your eyes and saying, well, nobody knows, it brings up that whole thing of environmental racism and it's just been too long unrecognized. There's no reason for somebody to just keep turning that blind eye for so long.

Why did my family have to endure this for so long? It really does feel like we're just being pushed into a corner and told you took what you have

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and that's all you get.

If somebody decides that they're not going to move out of the community, the EPA has already stated that they will not help them either by winterizing their home or anything like that. They're just basically leaving somebody out in the cold, left to die.

We're a community and we've been pulled apart. Some of us have been pulled away because we have children and we've made that decision. It was a hard decision, let me tell you that.

It was very difficult for me to move away from home, and so with my family member who are still in the community. They're making their stand for the EPA to just say, you know what, that's your choice.

I'm usually not one to cuss but it just feels like the EPA is just saying a big fuck-you to those people that are just at home where they belong, where they know that they belong.

And over and over again, people keep mentioning safety and talking to the community and seeing what the community wants. In the very beginning the EPA told us, what do you want? Show us a wish list.

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And then all down that damn wish list it was no, no, no, no, no. And it's exactly what it is right now, it's environmental racism. If this happens in an Anglo community, that shit would have been cleaned up in no time at all.

This environmental racism is very real, it's not just make-believe, it's not just one of your bedtime stories that you tell your kids like, yes, we don't really listen to the Native Americans.

That's how it feels, I'm sure a lot of you guys have a heart, I'm sure a lot of you guys have a conscience, I'm sure a lot of you guys have regret, things like that. But for our community, we just have that, I wish it could have been different and it never changes.

Every time we try to bring up a solution or an idea, it gets pushed down and we're not given a chance to say anything, we're not given a chance to speak out and really look at the different things that we could accomplish.

There's different colleges that are willing to try to help and they're doing that on their own, yet the Government is the one that just keeps saying no, no, no. There's been treaties that have

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already been trampled on, you guys are talking about making sure that our historical and cultural impacts are low.

You guys already trampled over that whole thing long ago and it feels like it's just a joke that now it's something that's looked at. Because all my life it hasn't been looked at, there was nobody looking out for the indigenous communities and for so long, my whole generation might be at danger because of the places that we've played at.

Because there was no fencing, there was nothing, and so I was given an opportunity to get my children away from that area and so I took it.

And because I took that, it seems like there is that division in our family and I try not to let it get to me, I try not to be that person, I try to rise above it.

And I try to keep my home open to the community so that we can utilize my Internet connection and we can utilize this area for keeping ourselves in this loophole because for so long the communities have been left out.

I didn't even know that the EPA was meeting with Ben Shelley, I want to know who was

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there.

A lot of the times, you guys are stating that the community was involved, the community was there, and yet, I didn't even know that the EPA was meeting with the Navajo Nation President, and making decisions on our behalf without even giving us an opportunity to say anything.

We're not children and a lot of us have dealt with things like this since we were children and so we're not uneducated, we're masters in this whole thing right now. And it's not fair that people keep trying to talk above us and yet we come to that point where we start learning how to just adapt.

And so we want that offsite removal, it needs to be done, we need to have a community looked after when it comes to their medical, their health, because this has been too long.

And so I appreciate you guys giving me this time but just understand that it really feels unfair to the community. No matter what you want to say, how you want to twist it, it's been too long. Another ten years, another five years, it's already been too long.

And so the community has been already

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verbalizing that they wanted offsite removal. I don't know why nobody wants to listen to that. So, please just listen now, figure it out.

So many times people make all these different changes to laws to benefit themselves, it's not impossible so please listen to the community, they've been dealing with this for too long.

Other indigenous communities have been dealing with this for too long. It's not right and so please just listen, it's not fair.

Thank you.

MR. RAKOVAN: Thank you for sharing that. Operator, do we have anyone else in the queue? It's \*1 if you would like a chance and again, you can also hit \*1 if you would like something translated.

OPERATOR: We have no questions in the queue at this time.

MR. RAKOVAN: We'll go ahead and pause for some time to give folks a chance.

(Pause.)

Operator, any takers?

OPERATOR: No questions in the queue at this time. Again, if you would like to make a public comment, please press \*1 and record your name clearly.

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Vivian Craig, your line is open.

MS. CRAIG: Thank you. It's really heartbreaking that in this public comment period that another ten-year timeline has come up, I can feel the pain for the community of Red Water Pond.

There also is another community, which is the Pipeline Canyon people that share the same road with the Red Water community to get back to their home.

Leaving their home in the morning and returning to that home in the evening, the effect that it will have on the additional community on traffic, the delays of getting to work, telling your boss you had to wait for a truck hauling the waste across the road and being late or probably even being reprimanded for being late, or losing your job.

These communities need to be heard, both of them, Red Water Pond and pipeline communities.

I work for Navajo EPA superfund, you do not know, the NRC does not know the hurt we go through to accommodate our Red Water Pond families in trying to get home sites and trying to get right of ways and trying to get easements for them to apply for the voluntary alternative housing.

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And it's a lot of work, we have people on the voluntary alternative housing who are dedicated in trying to move everything forward to make the families feel comfortable in moving from their homeland, where they were born, where they were just raised.

Now, there's fences that are keeping them away from the site, that they have known to roam. This is very emotional for me but I'm there for the community to help them, everybody just to come together and listen to the community, especially for the Red Water Pond community.

We have the Gallup utilities to work with, we have NTUA to work with, we have Navajo land Department to work with, we have BIA to work with, we have Fish and Wildlife, we have Navajo historic preservation.

We just have hurdle after hurdle to try to make our family members of Red Water Pond comfortable in moving to another site that they were raised and I'm glad I'm there to help many people move, even though they don't want to move.

But I really, really think that U.S. EPA Region 9 needs to involve the pipeline community as

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well because as stated before, we have Quivira Mines, which is just right there.

So, this is my comment, thank you. I have a lot more to say but my time is limited, thank you.

MR. RAKOVAN: Thank you. Hey, Joanna, could you call one more time and let folks know that if they need something translated they can hit \*1.

MS. MANYGOATS: Yes, I can do that.

(Navajo language (Diné) spoken.)

Back to you.

MR. RAKOVAN: Thank you very much.

MS. MANYGOATS: You're welcome.

MR. RAKOVAN: Operator, anyone else in the queue?

OPERATOR: We have a person in the queue, I do need to reach out to them to get their name. One moment, please.

MR. RAKOVAN: We'll pause. Operator, are you with us?

MS. SILVERSMITH: This is Lee Anna Silversmith, I work with the EPA Superfund. I'd like to say that I really don't think that the community from Washington D.C. and San Francisco, in terms of

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NRC and U.S. EPA, will truly ever under where Navajo people are coming from when they say home.

Our home is the Navajo Nation, our home is where we grew up in terms of the Red Water Pond community. That's where their ancestors are from. The other day I was in a meeting and somebody from Red Water Pond had indicated their granddaughter is going to have a Kinaalda, a Navajo puberty ceremony.

It's a major event for a young woman which in the Navajo Nation is a puberty ceremony. It's the major event for young womanhood and the community comes together, families, there's a celebration and a ceremony that takes place.

And this grandmother doesn't have a home to prepare the ceremony for her granddaughter and that hits home, that hits the heart to a lot of us. And it was sad to hear that in a meeting and to realize that they'll never be able to call Red Water Pond a home again due to the fact that of the uranium waste that is there.

So, that comes to light with the draft EIS. The selection for the repository is highly questionable, why was it chosen next to an arroyo? Why was the 100-year flood plain not included in the

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DEIS? The 50-year was but not within the map, water meanders, it thinks on its own.

Eventually, that 1 million tons of waste may end up like Gold King mine. The DEIS indicates there's studies from 1996 about the existing UNC mill-tailings but what about the present day? Where's the studies on that?

What's the conditions of the existing UNC mill center? Sara Jacobs mentioned the safety of the people, why does the DEIS have no information about studies that have been done on the Navajo people that lived in that area, their health impacts, what they had to endure.

There's the APSVR in the U.S. EPA building but the studies aren't included in that. Thank you.

MR. RAKOVAN: Thank you. Operator, do we have anyone else in the queue at this time?

OPERATOR: There are no comments in the queue at the moment. Again, if you would like to make a public comment, please press \*1.

MR. RAKOVAN: And again, we'll pause.

(Pause.)

Operator, any takers? Operator, are you

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there?

OPERATOR: Yes, I'm here, there are no public comments in the queue at this time.

MR. RAKOVAN: We'll pause a little longer. We want to make sure folks have a chance to speak if they wish to. We'll go ahead and wait.

Kelly, could you bring up the slide that lets folks know how to provide their comments in different ways?

Thank you.

OPERATOR: We have a public comment. Darleen, your line is open.

PARTICIPANT: Hello, can you hear me?

MR. RAKOVAN: Yes, we can, please.

PARTICIPANT: Yes, this is Darleen, I work with Navajo superfund. I guess in general I just have a question, that being why do we even have the two options, the two extremes, one being that the waste could be all hauled away somewhere and the other one being that it could just stay as is.

I think it's misleading to all of us, especially the community members to even talk about the two options when they're not really an option at all. And the idea of hauling it all away, we know

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it's a financial issue and why can't that just be brought up.

We're people too, the Natives. I just don't understand that. If we're really talking about the middle ground of the two options, why don't we just discuss that rather than talking about the two extremes when those two are really realistic for any of us, especially the people that live in the community.

And like Vivian Craig said, we need to maintain all of the community members around there. We've got the pipeline community members and then we have the folks that live downstream into Church Rock.

So, I think those folks need to be included too because if there was to ever have a dam break or whatever, a natural disaster that's where it's going to flow if the waste is to be put back in the same spot as where it was in the 1979 flood.

Those are just my thoughts, my question and thoughts, thank you.

MR. RAKOVAN: Thank you for that.

OPERATOR: Our next comment comes from Laurie Williams.

MR. RAKOVAN: Laurie, are you with us?

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MS. WILLIAMS: Yes, I am, my name is Laurie Williams, I'm an attorney with U.S. EPA and I have been listening in but I hadn't prepared anything to say.

But I just want to join Sara Jacobs in thanking people for attending and caring and trying to communicate with the agencies.

And I do I want to say that I feel very moved by everything that everyone has said and I feel badly that I think it is so difficult for people to understand the decision that's been made, except as seeing it as environmental racism.

As somebody who comes from a family where racism has been -- I am not Native American but my family has been subject to a lot of racism in the past.

I understand that is a horribly painful way to feel and to feel that the people at the agencies are not fully considering that is a painful fact.

But I do want to say that in terms of the issue of whether people would get to return home to Red Water Pond Road if the proposed action, if the license amendment, is granted and the remedy goes

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forward, that the 125 acres where the waste is now would be removed.

And I think as Sara said earlier, just to make sure people understand, the area would be restored to unrestricted use. People could use it for their traditional activities on the Navajo Nation.

The UNC Mill, while it's very close by, is outside the Navajo Nation and I think there's a couple of big reasons that it was selected over leaving the waste in place and capping the waste, as EPA often does.

And that includes the fact that it was combining two areas so that there would be a smaller footprint of the waste, and the strong preference of the Navajo Nation to have the waste removed from that community.

I do feel both of those are important factors in the decision and I understand that people have not been convinced that the disposal at the creation of the engineered repository at the UNC Mill would be safe, would be protective.

And that is the standard that the agencies are using and that the engineers are trying to meet and give an opinion about whether that

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standard has been meet.

And certainly, any new information that people are providing about things they feel have not been taken into account will be seriously considered. That is a big part of the public process that we're currently engaged in.

But yes, the decision not to send the waste further away, as Sara said, was based on the CERCLA criteria and those are the limitations that Congress has set within the law.

So, I'm just making this statement in order to hopefully help people understand the criteria, what the outcome would be in terms of the 125 acres, most of which is on the Navajo Nation that would be cleaned up.

And people also understand that people currently working for the agencies do care about all that you have to say. Thank you.

MR. RAKOVAN: Operator, do we have anyone else in the queue at this time?

OPERATOR: There is no one in the queue at the moment. If you would like to make a public comment please press \*1.

(Pause.)

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Vivian Craig, your line is now open.

MS. CRAIG: Thank you, I just have one more additional comment.

I would like to know if we have a response or comment or any type of statement from our Navajo Nation president regarding where the waste is going to go from the mine site to the mill site, which is only less than a quarter of a mile away.

Thank you.

MS. WALDRON: Hi, this is Ashley Waldron, we have received a letter from the Navajo Nation giving their comments on the draft EIS and that's publicly available in our Agency-wide document system. And we are considering their comments and we'll be replying to the comment.

MR. RAKOVAN: And that will later be a public response, Ashley, correct?

MS. WALDRON: Yes, it will.

MR. RAKOVAN: Okay, I just wanted to make sure. Operator anyone else in the queue at this time?

OPERATOR: There no public comments in the queue at the moment. If you would like to make a public comment please press \*1.

MR. RAKOVAN: Joanna, I hate to hit you

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up for this again but would you mind letting folks know that they can request a translation?

MS. MANYGOATS: (Navajo language spoken.)

MR. RAKOVAN: Thank you so much for your efforts tonight.

MS. MANYGOATS: You're welcome.

OPERATOR: We have a public comment from Dolores Lisbon, your line is open.

MR. LISBON: Hello?

OPERATOR: We can hear you.

MR. LISBON: So one thing you've talked about is all that topsoil waste and people wonder where it came from. It came from underground and it's been living in Mother Earth untouched so there's a lot of contamination in that land already.

That's why the (inaudible) Canyon is a reminder that's there and the people that live there didn't know that. So, I know there's miles and miles of tunnels underneath, but I was wondering where all of that waste came from.

It's underneath where they live. I think that whole place is contaminated, it was already contaminated before even the mine company started going in and taking it wherever they took up. That's

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my comment, thank you.

MR. RAKOVAN: Operator, any other folks in the queue at this time?

OPERATOR: No public comments in the queue at this time.

MR. RAKOVAN: We'll do our usual pause.

(Pause.)

OPERATOR: Edith Hood, your line is open.

MS. NEZ: This is Bertha Nez and I was wondering if you don't know where or what to do about this uranium pile, why don't you just put it back where it came from, back into Mother Earth where it was before and where it belongs?

That's what I was thinking. Another thing is people moving from their home site, is this going to take longer than ten years why are we moving (inaudible) they say until it's ready to be worked on to be removed?

So, right now, we're not very sure what to do sometimes. If it was you living there, what would you do?

So, moving us people around and you don't know how long it's going to take or if it's not certain how long it's going to be, why are you moving

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people? That's all I have to say.

MR. RAKOVAN: We appreciate your comment.

OPERATOR: Our next comment comes from Laurie Williams.

MS. WILLIAMS: I was just thinking there are a few points that have been brought up that perhaps Sara Jacobs as the EPA Project Manager could address that I haven't heard a response to.

One is the question of what was the condition of the Red Water Pond Road community soil before mining? What do we know about that?

Why do we think another spill like happened in 1979 would not happen if the mine waste is placed at the mill? And then this last question about why did we begin moving the community before the final decision had been made to go forward with this remedy of putting the mine waste at the mill.

So, I'm just wondering, Sara, perhaps if you could briefly describe the answers to those three questions.

MS. JACOBS: Ashley?

MS. WALDRON: Sure, go ahead.

MS. JACOBS: I'll try to hit all three topics. I think somebody called in and said that the

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community was already contaminated before mining because of the existence of the ore body that was already there of uranium.

And I just wanted to let everybody know there are some areas where there's surface expressions of ore and there is highly radioactive material at the surface, but this is not one of those areas.

The ore body is over 1000 feet below the ground surface, so very deep, and it's that underground mine. And so the contamination that is existing at this site is all from the mining activities.

There was not contamination before the mining, so that's one point I think that Laurie was talking about for me to clarify.

There's another comment, somebody was concerned, it might have been Lee Anna, about the technical information that we had and making sure that the environmental impact statement accurately characterized all of that.

And I just wanted to respond that the way that the ultimate site, the mill site, will go forward is that when all cleanup activities are finished, the

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license would be terminated and would go to the Department of Energy.

And the Department of Energy would be the one maintaining the site in the long term under UMTRCA. And so the Department of Energy has been involved all along, in fact, on the design team we had a big group.

We had representatives from EPA Region 6 and Region 9, these are engineers and scientists. We had representatives from the New Mexico Environmental Department from the Navajo Nation Environmental Protection Agency, and from the Department of Energy.

And also, actually, Teracita who spoke so eloquently earlier participated on the design team, the Red Water Pond Road Community Association, appointed her.

But all of these questions about whether this could be done safely and how to design it so it can be safe for 1000 years and into the future were addressed by this team.

And the Department of Energy said we don't want you to even think about designing this without having information about what is there today? What is the state of the tailing impoundment today?

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Where is the ground water underneath?

What is the state of the tailings? How much water is in there? What are the geotechnical properties? How strong are they to support the weight? What is the state of the cover?

They wanted all that information and so United Nuclear Corporation, a subsidiary of General Electric, they drilled into and through the tailing and into the ground below, all the way down to the ground water table to look at what exactly is the state of it and can we do all of this safely and create a safe design?

And so we called those the pre-design studies and they are available, we have all of our design documents on our EPA website and I think the question Laurie brought up is could there be a another '79 spill, a catastrophic event such as that?

And so when the '79 spill occurred, that was during milling operations, so the mill was an active mill at that time and there were millions of gallons of tailing ponds, liquid tailings behind dams.

And one of the dams broke and that liquid, 94 million gallons I think Ashley said, went down the

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Pipeline Arroyo and into the Puerco River and down into the Gallup and Sanders and into the Little Colorado. But now we have a very different situation. The milling is not currently happening, the mill has been closed, the tailings have been covered, the liquids drained out of them. So, it's not a situation where there's liquids there anymore. So, it's a different situation now with the closed mill site than we had this situation of an operating mill during the '79 spill. So, there's no chance of another spill like that happening at the site. Let's see, the other question was about moving. We made this decision and it's voluntary housing so we only have offered -- the reason we have offered housing is because we expect this project that we selected, EPA made the decision in 2011, to take four years to construct.

And so we knew that for the people who lived right at the foot of the waste pile, that would be a long time to live right by a mine site, with all that noise and construction and traffic.

And then right across the valley is the Quivira mine site, which we also need to clean up to protect public health and the environment in the long

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term.

So, both sites are protected in the short term, we removed the contamination in the residential area, over 200,000 tons of contaminated material out of the residential neighborhood so that it would be safe for the people living there now.

And we re-graded the pile and covered it with clean soil and re-vegetated it so that it would be safe in the short term so people would be safe now. So, both the Quivira and the Northeast Church Rock piles are covered but we know that we have a lot of work to do in that area.

And like Vivian said, if community members want to move, have the option to move, they can request to move and move to a different location on the Navajo Nation.

That takes a lot of time, it's a very complex process and that's what Vivian was talking about when she was describing that process and all of the work that takes.

So, it takes a lot of time to implement and so that's why we need a big lead time to be able to provide housing for people away from Red Water Pond Road while the construction happens.

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Now, once the construction is completed, if they want they can move back because the work will be done and the site will be free for residential use, traditional uses, so people can move back if that's what they choose to do.

So, that's why because of that long lead time and because of the possibility of continuing with this action, which we think construction would start as early as 2023, that's why we offered the alternative housing now.

And not everybody has chosen to move but some people have, so hopefully I think I answered the questions that Laurie had asked me to and that community members and others have called in and asked.

MR. RAKOVAN: Thank you for that. Operator, do we have anyone in the queue at this time? Operator, are you with us?

OPERATOR: Can you hear me?

MR. RAKOVAN: Yes, thank you.

OPERATOR: Yes, we have Lee Anna Silversmith in the queue.

MR. RAKOVAN: Okay.

MS. SILVERSMITH: Hi again, this is Lee Anna. In terms of the breach happening, I wasn't

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referencing that the mine is active. Old King Mine was not active.

There were cells that were holding the mine waste up there, and the soil here in the area may have gone through testing and such but it's questionable who actually did the science on that and has actually lived in the area.

A lot of these areas within water, like I said, water thinks on its own, it meanders, the soil scours, the soil moves, it erodes, there's wind erosion, there's scouring that happens.

The context of the draft EIS doesn't indicate or inform the public that's reading this of a 50-year flood event, of a 100-year flood event that can happen. That's within the 1000-year timeframe that you guys are granting this permit.

And then you indicate that there's much research and there's much time that takes precedence for these homes, voluntary housing to be established for the Navajo community. Yet we're going to be responded to with our comments within a month.

Is it even going to be taken into account the public's comments or is the decision already made?

You say that you're going to get it and

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then in a month, in December of 2021, you'll have a response to comment and then January 2022 there's going to be a response as far as designating if there's a yay or nay vote on the permit.

Thank you.

MR. RAKOVAN: Thank you. Operator, let's go ahead and get through the folks that we have in the queue at this time and then we'll move to close. So, please go to the next person in the queue.

OPERATOR: Edith Hood, your line is open.

MS. HOOD: Good evening again. I would like to talk about someone saying that the mine was already contaminated. Well, not according to me because I was raised there, I herded sheep across the land, and it was very clean.

We had cornfields, we had herbs that were clean and used by the medicine people. We used sandstone and rock to make the beautiful rocks that the Navajo women make and also, the medicine man took herbal plants from the ground and they used that.

So, you cannot sit and tell me that it was already contaminated. It was contaminated when the mining industry came in and released that monster called uranium. It affected the water, the soil, the

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air, and our very lives.

And for anyone to say that, no, don't say that because that is my home, that's why I'm still here and I do what I can to speak for my home. Thank you.

MR. RAKOVAN: Thank you for sharing that. Operator, do we have anyone else in the queue?

OPERATOR: Yes, Dariel Yazzie, your line is open.

MR. YAZZIE: ( Navajo language (Diné) spoken. Translation of Mr. Yazzie's comments in Navajo to meeting attendees is provided below.)  
Dariel Yazzie. It is Dariel. Hello, my relatives again. My name was said right by the lady. Dariel Yazzie is my name. I will speak to you in Navajo. My mom, Joanna Manygoats, I want you to interpret for me. So, I will say hello again my relatives and people. I am thankful for meeting like this. Also, you are talking about yourselves. When we meet at Red Water Pond Road, when we meet there I say the same thing. Tell me in a good way it is like that again. Talk about it in a good way. Tell about yourselves in a good way. Some do not have a full understanding. There was a person who talked, I think

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they were one of us. The land was already damaged, they said. It is not right. Things became bad from the work that was done here. As Navajos we did not request it and the work was done. We did not give approval back then. They worked Washington and those call BIA. Now, they are following it. It is related to uranium mining it is called. Why is it called that? Back then here was a war. That was what was happening. They wanted to dig this ore for what use? There is a big explosive. I do not know what it is called in Navajo. The one called the atomic bomb. And the vehicles and guns and hats, that is how it was mixed and made, that was why they were doing the mining. And today our own people became soldiers and they went there. Some did not return back to us. Also, it was our language which was used to win. And they made our land like this. How can they not think of us? There is no one who will speak like that, the ones who are White people. That is not right with me. This land is our land. These White people I do not like. This land is our land, it is our prayer, songs which are very sacred we were told how to take care of it and carry on with it. That is what they used to say a long time ago. The land is really used.

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Take care of it. No one has talked like that for us. It is not that way. What they are talking about Draft [EIS] that does not have the language like that. The location, UNC repository it is called. It is clear it was made for the mill tailings. Design and engineer are made that way for it. You probably remember (inaudible) how it was. The sand there was not always like that. That is how it is. It is like sand on the beach is how it looks. It just slides around. That is different, that is what it is called. What else was put there was metal and trash. They don't talk about that. Draft [EIS] does not have that language in it. It does not have it. So, the way that it is, they do not explain it right. That is why this Draft [EIS], what do you think of that? Talk about that. That is why we have met like this. So, I want to say thank you my relatives. These workers who are Navajos are talking for us, also. And the Navajo government, the one who sits first, Johnathan Nez, he also prepared papers like that for us. We will support that. That will be our journey forward. Let's do it in a good way, we say. As I stand here I will talk like that for you. You tell how and it will be that way. So, I want to say thank you in a big way. Also, there is

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time for us now up to May 27th. Just keep, just keep talking about it. Talk to each other in a good way when we meet. That will take us forward. What we have spoken now, how can that be, the way we know it. They have to understand it. They're here, the ones call the Whiteman. If it stays the way it is, it is not right. It should take a year to clean up. For us it is taking 60 years. And some more if you don't support them. Then it will take another 10 years is what we were told and that is not right. Also, we have to use our prayers to move forward. A big thank you and that is all I have to say. Okay. Thank you.

MR. RAKOVAN: Okay, thank you.

OPERATOR: I have Talia Boyd.

MS. BOYD: Hello?

MR. RAKOVAN: Yes, go ahead.

MS. BOYD: Good evening, thank you, relatives, everybody who is with us this evening. I'd like to thank all my relatives from the Water Pond Road and all the relatives who have spoken up this evening.

My name is Talia Boyd.

(Navajo language (Diné) spoken.)

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I reside in Gallup, New Mexico, but I have family that lives in Church Rock, New Mexico. I appreciate everybody's wisdom and insight this evening, there's a lot that I would like to echo.

As far as the environmental impact statement, this is supposed to be the most rigorous, but oftentimes it's rushed and there's a lot of public comment that isn't included.

I think in Gallup especially there's a lot of people here that are impacted that don't have an opportunity to speak tonight or throughout this whole process, especially during a global pandemic.

So, I want to highlight that and I want to highlight the fact that there is a deep mistrust from our Native communities working with governmental entities and you can't blame us for that.

There is environmental racism and environmental injustices that are still alive and well in our communities. We get fed over and over again that this clean-up is going to get taken care of but then you all come back and constantly extend those timelines.

And so this is a part of the problem. Also, the two options of removing it completely and

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leaving it on site, again, we need to pause on this and we need to step back and have more public comment.

We need to think of other alternatives, the so-called science behind this, why wasn't the 100-year floodplain considered?

All of these things. Again, there's a deep, deep concern of groundwater contamination and that transfers into some of the KTNN radio listening sessions and over and over again, groundwater contamination came up over and over again.

And you all talk about putting it back to pre-mining conditions that has never been done, especially with groundwater, that has never, ever been done. So, how dare you all feed us that nonsense?

We know it's nonsense, we've been living with this contamination for decades, we've been dying, our people are dying. I live with the fear of some day getting cancer, I drive to the city disposal site every day passing a uranium mill.

We moved to Church Rock, come to find out it's the largest site of radioactive contamination in U.S. history, people don't know about this and it's infuriating.

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Yes, to this day people don't know about it so this whole thing about restoring it back to pre-mining conditions, we know that's bogus, we know it's never been done. The science is questionable, oftentimes the science that is done is paid for by the companies that are poisoning us.

So, these are all concerns and they're very valid concerns. I want to express the fact that, too, that we have a lot of cultural sacred landscapes within that area and surrounding it, and that has to be considered at all times.

There's a balance that needs to be held with us Native people and that's something that non-Native people will never understand, and that's what my relatives have been trying to highlight this evening.

And so this goes back to our core values of Dine people and our cultural identity, and so I just really want to appreciate everybody who spoke up this evening.

There's a lot to say, there's a lot to talk about, again, this process, it's not fair, it's never been fair especially towards Native people. And so we need more authenticity, we need more

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transparency, and we need more accountability from all entities.

So, thank you very much.

MR. RAKOVAN: Thank you very much for that. I believe we have one last person in the queue and then I think we're going to move to close. Operator?

OPERATOR: Yes, no questions or comments in the queue at this time.

MR. RAKOVAN: Okay, why don't we go ahead and move to close then? Kevin, I think Kevin Coyne -- sorry, I'm slaughtering your name, but it's late.

(Simultaneous Speaking.)

I'm sorry.

OPERATOR: We do have two questions in the queue at this time.

MR. RAKOVAN: Okay, we'll take two more since they're in the queue but we'll move to close then, please.

OPERATOR: We have Alyssa Arviso.

MS. ARVISO: Yes, that's me, good evening, everyone.

I think my comment from this whole thing, there's a lot of good comments made from our community

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here on Navajo and I'm one person that lives over and has family over the hill to the north of the site, the mine site, but I've always used that road to go into Gallup.

My father worked there at the mine and he did end up with stomach cancer, which was the hardest thing to see someone waste away, your patriarch. But my comment is regarding the groundwater, it seems like in a lot of the documents groundwater is just a big no, a big slap in the face.

In all the documents I review, in NECR, draft EIS, a lot of the feedback I get is that it's not part of the consent decree or part of CERCLA. Every federal law put into this EIS or other EISs, it seems like it's made and designed in such a way so it best suits how and where the money is spent.

And I keep giving the reasoning behind why groundwater is not studied but that's not enough, that's not enough for our community, it's not enough for me personally being a resident of the area in Coyote Canyon.

I like to see more money in water studies here, how did the San Mateo water study get approved? How did it get approved? When you live on Navajo,

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deep in your heart, your mind, your soul, everything, everything is connected, the animals, the insects, the earth, our stars, air, water, wind.

There's so many living things that we hold in reverence in holding us and there's so much respect every day that you wake up every morning and it's up to you how you make that day. And how you treat and grow and breathe and walk on this earth.

Do you walk on it softly? Yes, with respect and reverence, but all the options that are there, all I see is noise and all I feel is that cut deep into the earth, that deep incision that was made years ago. And it's like being ripped open again.

I know groundwater, I understand it, I know there's a lot of recharge.

This Morrison formation, we have the Gallup sag to the south of the area, it continues even over to the Nutria Monocline and it enters the Zuni uplift and then to the north we have the San Juan basin and we have the Pinedale Monocline right there at the northernmost part of that basin.

And I understand how groundwater flows and right there at the Pinedale Monocline, that's where all the Morrison is exposed. You drive in

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towards the NECR mine, the UNC mill site, all that area of Pinedale, and you pass through all those rocks.

Then you get into the (inaudible) and right then and there that's where that Morrison formation goes deep into the Earth. This is how I think when I go to the place.

This is my heart, this is my home, I go beyond science when I think about these things and I really believe the precipitation there was meant to be clean from the sky and enter these rocks where they're exposed as recharge.

Now, it's all a big soup of contamination and like it was said earlier by Ms. Talia Boyd, how are you going to clean it? There's nobody addressing it, nobody wants to. It's a big hard no from the Federal Government and I'm tired of it.

I think these issues need to be addressed and if you keep saying, well, they can't be because it's under the CERCLA criteria or that it's set by Congress. Well, let's make a way.

When there's a will, there's a way and I think there's some things that are not -- yes, the U.S. EPA and Federal Government, they provide these

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guidances, but where's the guidance on how to get that groundwater study done?

Where is that time to put the money spent where it should be spent, in cleaning up the area, in cleaning up the groundwater?

I think we spent too much time and money on this thing of moving the waste across the road. Nobody wants it across the road, they want it out of there. That's all I have to say.

MR. RAKOVAN: Thank you for sharing that. Operator, do we have anyone else?

OPERATOR: The queue is now closed. You are encouraged to send questions to the NRC.

MR. RAKOVAN: So, there's no one left in the queue.

MS. OLMSTEAD: Operator, I do see another person in the queue.

OPERATOR: Yes, we do.

MS. OLMSTEAD: Can we have her?

OPERATOR: Certainly, Vivian Craig, your line is now open.

MR. RAKOVAN: Vivian, are you there? Okay, maybe she slipped away.

OPERATOR: We do have Laurie Williams,

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your line is open.

MS. WILLIAMS: I just wanted to respond on the one question about CERCLA addressing groundwater and I do want to say that I don't want anyone to be confused about that.

CERCLA does allow EPA to address groundwater and that is a big part of what we do in the superfund program.

And the groundwater at the UNC mill site is one of the things that U.S. EPA has been working on. So, it's a complex topic and I appreciate Alyssa bringing it up, thank you.

MR. RAKOVAN: Operator, I'm assuming the queue is clear?

OPERATOR: No, I have Vivian Craig.

MR. RAKOVAN: She is there? Okay.

OPERATOR: Yes, she is, your line is open.

MR. RAKOVAN: Ms. Craig, are you with us? Hello? Ms. Craig, are you there? Operator, are we sure her line is open?

OPERATOR: We are sure her line is open and now she did just leave the queue. And so right now I do not have anyone else in queue.

MR. RAKOVAN: I think we'll go ahead and

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move to close then. Kevin, are you going to close us out tonight? Okay, if you would please?

MR. COYNE: Okay, thank you very much, can you hear me okay?

MR. RAKOVAN: Yes, your volume is very good, thank you.

MR. COYNE: I want to thank everyone for taking time out of your evening to participate in this meeting, and particularly sharing your comments and perspectives and experiences.

Obtaining your feedback is an essential part of our process and we will give your input thorough consideration as we finalize the environmental impact statement.

As we mentioned earlier the public comment period will end on May 27th. I want to remind everyone there are multiple ways to provide your comments.

In addition to the comments we've heard and recorded tonight, we have a dedicated voicemail line that has been established for this project. You can provide comments to either [regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov) website on docket NRC 2019-0026.

We can accept comments through the U.S.

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mail and you can also email comments to the dedicated project comment email address. You may also reach out to Ashley Waldron directly, whose contact information is in the meeting announcement on the NRC's webpage, for assistance or any questions you have.

Thank you again for your participation this evening and I hope everyone has a good evening.

OPERATOR: Thank you, and that concludes today's conference. I want to thank you for your participation, you may disconnect at this time.

(Whereupon, the above-entitled matter went off the record at 11:17 p.m.)

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