

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

Community Discussion

UCSW

November 9, 2011

Round 1

- Waxman 5-year plan is not working – 520 AUM; 1% 1982-2007; 2009
- Off site removal of mine waste
- Health study: Environment/human with funding
- Need completed reports
- Data warehousing – shared by all
- Need money to do the work (funding by Gov)
- We have been talking – we need action
- We can listed with some action
- Report back from all Gov Agency – USEPA, DOE, NRC, BIA, IHS
- Concerns
 - Access to healthcare
 - Contamination of Groundwater
 - Public education
- Updates
- 5-year family
- Paucity of resources
 - 40% match for radon
 - 2 to cover reservations
- Advocate for Navajos
- Screening process
 - Sometimes people don't qualify
 - Confidentiality aspect
 - Strive for transparency
- Re-motivation
- Need sufficient information
- Navajos don't talk about death
- Needed to understand radioactivity & uranium
- Invited by Eugenia

Round 2

- Risk (convey it) Uranium – death
- Build trust, respectful; be believable
- Cutting people off
- Dangers – health effects
- Government did not warn the Diné People
- Screening Process @IHS

- Respect – communicate on the dangers of Uranium
- Educate the people, fears
- They don't want to talk about it
- BIA has trust responsibility
- Saying "not my job" means "I don't care".
- No Navajo words for uranium and associated processes
- Culturally: "Fix" feels not right
 - Things are handled in a different way
 - Have to be sensitive to people living in area
- Large expanse of land
- Scope of land – 520 sites/large portions of Rez crosses states/jurisdictions
- Layers of governments, Agencies
 - Standards
 - Practices
- Hazard levels (minimums) – vs – Health Impacts
 - Can't change minds of people
 - Health related issues
 - GAP: current living situation - - funding
- Restrictions – Agency Regulations
- Agency - Government fragmentation by territorialized duties
- Invite more native people
- Limited avenues of leadership/growth for Navajo youth
- \$\$\$\$ funding for Uranium – magnitude – potent – "the biggest bang"
- Challenges – complex; chemical properties - i.e. health implications; very mobile once disturbed
- Oral histories – language/Vocabulary (both ways); the baggage of uranium, the word, history, etc.
- Average "American"
 - Advantages
 - Military weapons
 - Electricity "Palo Verde"
 - Submarines
 - Aircraft carriers
 - Medical tracers
- \$ Cleanup Reclamations
 - Learn the community history
 - Know the culture
 - Barriers? – take the issue outside of the Reservations – make it regional

CAFÉ Discussions

- People ignore the problem until they are affected
- Too many studies – need assistance
- People went to mines as children. Family affected by mines and never informed.
- Building new houses in contaminated areas. People want to live in birthplace.
- Do we build infrastructure for people to live in contaminated areas?
- Some people move away due to contamination.
- Lack of cooperation between agencies. This is a challenge.
- Cultural considerations: lots of people worked at mines. People are beginning to learn of impacts to health. No assistance or advice available. Also effects on animals, which are butchered – contamination accumulates. Water wells affected.
- Gap between traditional medicine and agencies – in between area where there is no advice/assistance.
- Client asked him to go. Environmental consulting firm that worked on 160 site. Here to listen and learn, take notes for company.
- Working on community health assessments for uranium. Translating questionnaire. Getting information. Get the story from funding agencies. Will have answers now.
- Doing project on uranium for Senior Seminar. Cultural shifts from uranium.
- Liaison interagency “activities director” - Interagency exchange program for Xtrain and development - Utilize strengths of Agencies that can add to projects and visions.
- Other Challenges – Funding, ex. 7.2million - Why did the federal government cleanup only mill sites & mine sites?
- Trust – listening – following through – being accepted – say what you mean, mean what you say – imparting knowledge – build and rebuild relationships during transitions
- Follow Through – The “Erin Brokevich” Approach – Many of us would be able to build a trustful relationship but we are not the decision makers who can follow-through
- Use the info already gathered from AML – don’t reinvent the wheel – More stakeholders in 5-year plan – All stakeholders are “equal”
- Say what U do – Do what U say – Concern about their well being – Knowing Family – (Dis)Trust – PSD/AUM – Earn a reputation – Deep history of distrust of Gov
- Lawyers can’t be trusted.
- Basic Assistance – Listening – Inform public that current work is on larger part of your issue and focus – Follow thru
- Tech/Scientific/Legal = Community impacted
- Young Navajos don’t trust Navajo Government or again Trust – Goal win Process
- Young Navajo Professionals – Manage peoples’ trust –Work with Tribal Council – Make commitment to learn – Give up something
- VERY IMPORTANT!! Cultural risk invite illness
- Cultural Considerations –
 - Science/technical vs. knowledge
 - Invasion of family
 - Seasonal winter dances, ceremonies, fair

- Challenges/Barrier
 - Not enough \$ & Resources
 - Burnout (Professional)
 - No proper education
 - Language (jargon)
 - Listen before responding
 - Residents can tell you, educate you
 - Churchrock – Fed., EPA – Post traumatic stress
- Concern – What is relative risk? – I am here to transfer my 5-year plan responsibilities to others. Thanks! - Tracy
- Brought to workshop
 - All NNEPA staff should know and learn about uranium issues and concerns. We are constantly asked when we are conducting community outreach events.
 - Be able to educate the community members on uranium relative risks.
- Say/Commit 5YR Plan vs. 20YR Plan fulfilling goals with \$\$
- Huge GAP between Western/Holistic; same process technical info
- Not enough \$\$
- Navajo Cultural – if you keep saying something about risk over and over, it can invite it in.
- Technical jargon – Navajo language
- Listen More!
- My concerns are the risks to uranium relative to other risks.
- I am here to attend this workshop because I am currently working with Navajo Superfund Program and get more information about uranium. Concern: removal of uranium contamination. Not enough \$\$ and resources!
- Been working with Navajo Five Year Plan since its inception – Gallup/Tuba City/Farmington as Hydrologist – mobility and transport. Concerns – People are feeling the effects, need advice... - Genocide/Environmental Injustice/Quality (U.S.) Poisoned/Fed. Agency – Mines, Water, No safe drinking water or lack of, testing (50/60)
- Scientific Research often leads to more questions and uncertainty
- Legacy of distrust –
 - Inaction
 - Inattention
 - Blaming
 - Passing the buck – agency jurisdictional limitations
- Genocide/Environmental Justice/Qty
 - Investigate Uranium mines
 - Radiation reading – USGS – uranium – Flagstaff
 - Coyote Canyon – NW Churchrock – Haz renovation – Water studies/development – Housing /development
- Transparency follow through – Privacy for families – Navajo language and culture
- The long walk + history – Truth and Reconciliation Commission to re-establish **TRUST**
- Validate NAVAJO experience – hear their experience – emotional healing possible

- Time – transparency means “broken promises” have a lot of faith, hopeful I have you back, you have my back. Elderly willing to trust vs. younger generation unwillingness to trust. Gaining trust from US Government especially from the work of USEPA – seeing the results of CSP projects. “Follow through what has been promised”.
- 1. TRUST means caring yourself, community and environment – sharing dependable data and info; 2. Transparency; 3. Build relationship – communication – follow up with results within reasonable time (short-term results).
- Possible Fixes?!
 - SQG or small home-owner disposal option (for found radio-active stuff)
 - Truth and Reconciliation Commission
 - Better Coordination among Navajo government agencies, for example.
 - Community members who “miss” a meeting or information have to take responsibility, stop harping or blaming. Otherwise, good energy gets depleted.
- 1. Environmental; 2. Regulatory; 3. Public Health
- Talk > Listen > No action >
- True Costs of Past & New Uranium Mining – Health > Comprehensive Studies – Eco - H₂O
- Dennison Mines presence in Grand Canyon – Feds, Tribes, Communities agree on no new mining of uranium until cleanup of past mining activities has occurred.
- Round 2 Challenges:
 - No one is aware of the severity on uranium – a. health workers be trained to educate the community on prevention.
 - Lack of personnel staff
 - Need to community members – assisting housing infrastructure materials – they still take contaminated materials due to economic status.
 - Home site lease – a. develop a map – Atlas, conduct workshop – superfund info; b. NLD to consult with NNEPA Office of Environmental Review before issuing out home site leases.
 - Chapter/Council leaders lack of understanding (Use the “glossary” developed by Perry Charley); educate; website: video in Navajo/English; No interest or lack of interests to be informed
 - Tribal leaders need to express issues and concerns beforehand after knowing what/which companies are planning to mine on tribal lands or near tribal lands.
 - Data management – consolidating data – same software
- Cultural: Round 2 - Elderly: “Don’t touch the site – leave it alone” Possibilities that may cause something in the future.
- Accountability – Listening and not just giving lip service. Provide follow-up and action.
- “Establishing Trust” - Trust: who defines what is SACRED; what is in a building “Sunday” Service; what is Nature “Sacred Peaks”.
- Adversarial system focuses only on Argumentation and Countering points
- Historically strong clan ties of helping broken apart by colonization – men working railroads, mining, industries, cash economies.

- Natives have long memory – a long time for no trust. “Federal Agencies” say there’s a lot of \$\$ going into this. “Personal Histories” affect present Actions. Do Navajo agencies listen better? = NO! Complete the dialogue with ACTION.
- WORKING BETTER – We can work better together by training a Navajo workforce to perform the radiological clean-up for the remediation projects on the Navajo Nation.
- What are your concerns about uranium?
 - HEALTH Aspects
 - Private Demand
 - Lack of knowledge of radiation worldwide
- What brought us here today?
 - Mr. Waxman
 - Mining
 - Contamination our cars
 - Desire to learn more
 - Uranium in drinking water
 - The book “Yellow Dirt”
 - Concerns about water on a large scale/Colorado River
 - Desire to work on Environmental Justice on the Navajo area.
- Compensation financial management
- Need more communication in Navajo – including results of stakeholder meeting. Use Chapter house meetings?
- Where is the leadership?
- Ideas – risks = harm; no collaborative effort – need unity; outreach; NW wide; barriers!
- BIA, HIS and DOJ can be hard to work and communicate with. Do regional presentations about the uranium problem. Communicate in Navajo. Also get on the radio – get the word out in Navajo.
- More community outreach + education in Navajo language so larger community (especially elders) are aware of efforts to date future plans, and have an opportunity to be heard. More at Chapter House level.
- Providing financial advisors for families receiving compensation either thru RECA or other programs, including for structures compensation.
- Cultural issues – Don’t like to discuss death or planning for it. If you talk about it too often, you “invite” it into your life.
- Need more action not just listening.
- After 5-yearplan: Congress come into the Navajo impacted communities and have hearings and listen to community voices about uranium. Navajo people are not being heard. Is the uranium problem really being addressed? Need to do more outreach to larger community (many agencies and 110 Chapter Houses) and gain trust.
- Slow process and frustration with long process like @ Tuba City Dump. Red tape issues, funding limitation and dwindling
- Navajo understanding of Uranium and science around it. Need vocabulary for uranium cancer.
- Working with radioactive waste; fear and perceptions of radioactive materials

- Contractor for Hwy 160 . . . Health analysis and remediation DOD work (looking for work for Tribal companies). Gain info + learn about progress
- Do good health in disadvantage community
- There are positives about uranium . . . not just the problems. Need to clean up the past so the industry can move forward.
- EPA employee interested in knowing what community interest is about.
- Plan for response – Incident command – Memo of Understanding – Memo of Agreement
- Carl Holiday has experience with radioactive waste disposal.
- Man found radioactive material in truck – what to do? Need to know who the point of contact is at NNAML, NNEPA, IHS, USEPA, NNDOJ. Who has jurisdiction? -Emergency Response –Radiation exposure –Homeland Security -FBI
- Training for radiation – DOE, BIA, IHS about Sandia Labs and Los Alamos offered training. Is this a practical level training?
- \$ - Mention 1st AUM & who is here. 5.MR contact; 10X5 50 MR; 10X50 500 MR; 10X500 5000 MR + 30 MRs
- Kudos for SF Office for not just being “Talking Heads” – Good change of culture
- Funding – supporting the people who help THE PEOPLE; vehicle/support/personal contact/accommodation to be “on-site” for those that “want” to be on Dinetah.
- Facilitate 7 empower the need for crosspollination; Navajo: Bellagona +/- cultural/material reparations + reciprocal learning; i.e. Dine have a lot to teach about respectful relationship with Mother Earth
- How can we protect our children from uranium?
- “Artificial Borders” can get services when just outside the line; example Bennett Freeze, Institutional/Agency, Barriers as well Case Managers for individuals to handle all the agencies.
- Navajo people not taught their own history i.e. Long Walk Bellagona also not taught. “Real History” – we’re all uneducated.
- No Proof? Why is the burden of Proof on the “victim”?
- Navajo families or clans advocating from each other; i.e. my elders don’t have running water but I have a good job.
- We talk about Navajo culture. Let’s talk about “White” historical behavior and why their culture allows this?
- Navajo say, “You just want information but I never see you again or “get results” or remediation.
- IHS = Needs home care & rehabilitations services with an eye towards local i.e. (uranium/resources vs. issues defined by National Insurance companies
- Reservation residents didn’t know about the contamination
- Combine outreach efforts with Lisa Allee; Mobile Office for outreach
- IT basic contact/central info – where can be posted and/or sent at i.e. if an agency or community group is going to do a meeting, others are alerted/invited
- Actually looking together builds trust i.e. do community meetings together

- Contact list: who/where for each agency, federal, state, tribal, local – Maintain it!! - Someone is responsible to keep it up-to-date
- Communication: Fed > Tribal Agency > Community
 - People expect you to do what you said. You would by verbal agreement, keep confidentiality if requested
 - Education and trust go hand in hand
 - Need to explain what will happen now and in future; e.g. future costs for electricity in a new home
 - Tell people up front what the criteria are (for RECA benefits). Help people with the paperwork. Need to recognize cultural aspects when we do work in areas (e.g. – we might drive over important plants). Explain why you are here.
 - Restore to harmony – “cancer”; sore that cannot heal
- Question 4: How can we work better together?
 - Better Communication – contact list; electronic posts for meetings
 - Be consistent – take action; follow-up with answers; results – sharing the results important
 - More outreach across Navajo reservation; get more stakeholder involvement
 - Agencies: Field Office on the Navajo Nation
 - What does cleanup mean?
 - Navajo caterers – invite them to help with food at future meetings – Navajo can help.
 - Maybe do the next stakeholders meeting in Gallup or other big city early in month so people have their pay & can get groceries, do laundry as well as attend the conference
 - Next conference – Kayenta near Monument Valley: do next meeting there? Chinle? Gallup? Window Rock?
 - More sessions – not agencies just presenting but more hearing from community/stakeholders
 - Fundraiser – can help bring food in and sell it. Chapter houses – sell food?
 - Newspaper announcement – early of stakeholder conferences and community meetings – RADIO IN Navajo
 - Get more youth involved!
 - Call the Stakeholders meeting something else? Something that is easier to understand.
 - Know the issues
 - I’m from the government and I’m here to help. What brought about the change in orientation i.e. the Government to listen first then tell... We feel we have been doing this.
 - This year seems like more agency people. Last year, more effort made to bring more community people in.
 - How can agencies “Work Better with IHS” – IHS is complex. They don’t all know each other just like other federal agencies don’t know each other.
 - Dwindling attendance at workshop
- What do we need to do to make changes

- Come together to learn about each other via personal/human relations
- Listening to people – learning practical know how
- Go beyond the minimum
- “Slow Down” – change from linear to circular thinking (learn from Navajo)
- Local Presence
- Commitment
- Recognize mutual affinities so we can work together
- What is respect – demonstrations may be different in each culture/region
- Priorities MSS6
 - Local Field Office on Rez – NECR Homes
 - Feds work on commitment/Trust
 - How can we work better? Respect – What is it? Learn what it is. Practice. Trust - build
 - DISTANCE – Makes our jobs difficult
San Francisco (M) TWR (F) limited time
Understand each others agendas (priorities
USEPA decision making depends on Navajo
Scientific/professional bureaucracy – Navajo Nation ill-equipped *limited staff
hinders our work
Interagency exchange
 - My way vs. your way – let’s think about this!!
 - Cove Community (impoverished area) home assessments \$10 M – Ostentatious
– HDQRTRS Command Center
 - Mine cleanup
 - English Linguistics