

UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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MEETING WITH NAVAJO MEMBERS OF THE RED WATER
POND ROAD COMMUNITY

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FRIDAY,
APRIL 22, 2022

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The Commission met at the Shade House, located on Red
Water Pond Road, Gallup, New Mexico, at 2:00 p.m. MDT.

COMMISSION MEMBERS:

CHRISTOPHER T. HANSON, Chairman

JEFF BARAN, Commissioner

DAVID A. WRIGHT, Commissioner

ALSO PRESENT:

BROOKE P. CLARK, Secretary of the Commission

BERNICE AMMON, Acting General Counsel

JONATHAN NEZ, President of the Navajo Nation

EDITH HOOD, Red Water Pond Road Community Association

VALINDA SHIRLEY, Executive Director, Navajo Nation EPA

P R O C E E D I N G S

2:01 p.m. MDT

1 MR. LYNCH: Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. My
2 name is Merv Lynch, and I'm going to ask everyone to give me your ears for
3 a few minutes, as we do some opening of the meeting right now.

4 The front row seats are specifically designated for
5 Committee members.

6 Red Water Pond Community members, please take your
7 seats at the front.

8 (Translation of Native language spoken: Come, Come up.)

9 Again, we do have some public health orders in place on
10 Navajo Nation. All of you are required to wear a mask while inside of this
11 facility and remain a good six feet apart, if possible. It is okay if families of
12 the same household are allowed to group together in certain spots, wherever
13 you are at.

14 So, the weather is delightful here today, and we are
15 welcoming all of you here. Thank you for coming and participating today.

16 And again, if the Red Water Pond Road Community
17 members could come to the front of the room and occupy these front row
18 seats?

19 We had asked that guests, non-community members, kind
20 of take up positions on the outer perimeter.

21 So, we're welcoming the Nuclear Regulatory
22 Commissioners here today. And, you know, keeping with Navajo customs,
23 we're going to open up with a prayer. And the prayer will be offered by one
24 of our local dignitaries, Mr. Jonathan Perry.

1 MR. PERRY: Good afternoon, everyone.

2 (Translation of Native language spoken: Greetings.)

3 And if everyone can please bring your attention to the
4 program up front, please? We're going to get started here.

5 Visitors, please, everyone, pay attention in this location.

6 We are on a scheduled timeframe. We have the community members that

7 wish to have time to speak later on. So, we would like to give them that time.

8 Please be courteous, as visitors to Red Water Pond Community.

9 (Translation of Native language spoken: Greetings my
10 relative and my people for inviting me here and I'm Jonathan Perry, from
11 Crownpoint, (NM) I'm of the Bittewater born for the To'aheadl7inii.)

12 We'll go ahead and begin our program with a prayer.

13 Everyone, if you can please remove your hats and your
14 caps, please, for the prayer?

15 (Traditional Navajo Prayer opening: Not translated out of
16 respect)

17 We do have visitors here. Lord, we ask you to be with our
18 members here, as we discuss important issues regarding our homeland here.

19 We ask for the blessing, for you to be with us, as we have our important
20 discussions here. We ask you to be with our visitors who have made time to
21 be with us here today as well.

22 We ask you to allow us the strength and knowledge that we
23 need to have these discussions. We ask you to be with each and every one
24 of our community members and everyone here and those on the way.

25 We ask you to give us the understanding we need to have
26 and fulfill a good day before us. We ask you to calm these winds, Lord. We

1 ask you to grant us this opportunity to make this space because this is our
2 Mother Earth, Lord.

3 We ask you to go forth and be with this discussion we're
4 planning on today.

5 We ask for these blessings from the East, from the South,
6 from the West, and from the North, from our sacred mountains.

7 (Translation of Native language spoken: Mount Blanca,
8 Mount Taylor, San Francisco Peaks, Mount Hesperus.)

9 We ask for beauty around us. We ask for beauty before
10 us.

11 Lord, we ask for all these things, and we pray for those who
12 (audio interference).

13 (Translation of Native language spoken: In Harmony it is
14 finished; repeated 3 more times.)

15 With that, visitors, I guess you can take your seats here.

16 And we understand, with the weather, it's hard to get
17 everyone to hear what we're saying, but, please keep your attention to this
18 location for our program and our visitors and our speakers here today.

19 Thank you.

20 MR. LYNCH: (Translation of Native language spoken:
21 Thank you, Mr. Perry.)

22 Moving along, we are seating everyone at the front of the
23 room. These are the Commissioners of the United States Nuclear
24 Regulatory Commission: Chairman Christopher T. Hanson, Commissioner
25 Jeff Baran, and Commissioner David A. Wright.

26 Continuing on with some other housekeeping matters,

1 Navajo Speakers, please see Ms. Joanne Many-Goats here on the stage in
2 the back. We have 30 transmitters to assist Navajo speakers with translation
3 today. So, please make use of the service which has been furnished by the
4 Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

5 We are very fortunate today to have some toilets onsite.
6 The closest toilet, if we didn't have one, would be at the Fire Rock Casino,
7 some 20 minutes away. And the toilets were furnished by the vendor C&E
8 Toilets. The delivery man's name was Jesus. So, we've got to say, "Thank
9 you, Jesus." today.

10 (Laughter.)

11 And the weather's not going to improve. I did read the
12 weather announcement today, and it said that it may blow up until 3:15, God
13 willing.

14 And there's water and refreshments in the back of the room.
15 Please help yourself.

16 Don't mind Blue Eyes, the dog. He's one of the community
17 members, too.

18 DIRECTOR SHIRLEY: (Translation of Native language
19 spoken: Greetings. Good morning, yes, it's past the noon hours.
20 Greetings to all my relatives. I'm Valinda Shirley, [Identifies her traditional
21 Navajo clans] I'm from Rock Point, AZ. My relatives, greetings, and thank
22 you for coming out to this meeting. I'm the Executive Director for Navajo
23 EPA. I'm very thankful for all of you coming out to this meeting; our agenda
24 today is here, there's much to cover on the agenda.)

25 The Commissioners, the Nuclear Regulatory
26 Commissioners, go ahead and introduce themselves at this time.

1 CHAIRMAN HANSON: Thank you, Director Shirley.

2 My name is Chris Hanson. I'm the Chair of the U.S.
3 Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

4 I'd like to thank Director Shirley and President Nez, Ms.
5 Hood, and all the other members of the Red Water Pond Community for
6 having us here today.

7 We recognize the importance to the community and to the
8 Navajo Nation of this interagency federal issue that's in front of us with regard
9 to the Northeast Church Rock Mine and Mill Site. I think, as a Commission,
10 we recognize the importance, the vitalness of the government-to-government
11 relationship that we have with the Navajo Nation.

12 As we discuss today, we want to recognize the long history
13 that the Navajo Nation has here in this country and in this space, on this land,
14 and the significance, environmental and human tragedy of uranium milling and
15 mining that's occurred here over the decades.

16 We wanted to come out and hear directly from people in the
17 community about the issues facing us at the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.
18 And I want to thank, again, everyone for welcoming us to your home. We
19 look forward to hearing your stories and your concerns.

20 And thank you very much.

21 COMMISSIONER BARAN: Hi. My name is Jeff Baran.
22 I'm one of the Commissioners at the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

23 Thank you for hosting us today at the Shade House. It's
24 an honor to be here with President Nez and Valinda Shirley, and to spend time
25 with the Red Water Pond Road Community.

26 The uranium contamination in and around the Navajo

1 Nation is a tragedy. It should never have happened.

2 I started working on these issues in 2007, as a staffer for
3 Congressman Henry Waxman, who at the time chaired a House oversight
4 committee. After he held a hearing on the contamination, the federal
5 government finally started to take some coordinated action. Of course, there
6 is still a huge amount of work to do.

7 I had the chance to meet Edith Hood at that time. Larry
8 King also testified, along with Phil Harrison from Red Valley, and Ray Many-
9 Goats from Tuba City. Stephen Etsitty represented the Navajo Nation EPA.

10 The testimony, the stories were so powerful. I've seen
11 dozens and dozens of congressional hearings over the years, and I've never
12 seen anything like the reaction I saw that day. Members of Congress were
13 angry, sad, and ashamed of the federal government's failures, and I felt the
14 same way.

15 Today, we're here to listen to you. We want to hear your
16 concerns, your stories, your views, your ideas. Thank you for taking the time
17 to meet with us. We appreciate it.

18 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: Good afternoon.

19 My name is David Wright, and I'm one of the
20 Commissioners.

21 And I want to thank you personally for your hospitality and
22 welcoming us here to your home.

23 We are here, as you've heard, to listen to you. I'd like to
24 hear all of your stories. I'll be here as long as I need to be here with you.
25 We're not in a rush.

26 So, hopefully, we'll get some good outcomes from this. I

1 really want to learn about what has been going on out here for all these years.
2 I'm new to the system, new to the process. So, for me, this is very
3 educational, and I really appreciate it.

4 MS. HOOD: Good afternoon, everyone.

5 We're here with the NRC. You can go ahead and ask them
6 questions in a few minutes.

7 But we, as Red Water Pond, finally organized back in 2007
8 because of all the contamination and stuff that the mining people left behind,
9 and it's affected Mother Earth. It's affected human health. And I always
10 think that people died probably never knowing what it was that did that to them.

11 But I'm glad that you all are all here to listen to us again.
12 And we're just asking for, you know, the basic human right to have a clean
13 home, clean environment, clean water, clean air. That's what we're asking
14 for.

15 But, somehow, the dollars get in there, and they'll tell you,
16 "We can't do that. It's too much money." So, so far, we're still fighting
17 against with the Navajo agencies, the federal government. That's what we're
18 doing.

19 So, thank you very much.

20 DIRECTOR SHIRLEY: And I wanted to also introduce to
21 you Ms. Seraphina Nez. Here on the Navajo Nation, we have a Uranium
22 Remediation Advisory Commission, and then, she's a member of that
23 Commission.

24 Do you want to introduce yourself?

25 MS. B. NEZ: (Translation of Native language spoken:
26 Greetings, I'm Seraphina Nez [Identifies her traditional Navajo clans], I'm from

1 Black Mesa, AZ. We serve on the Commission; we've yet to be re-appointed;
2 however, we're still advocating on behalf of our people. I'm very
3 compassionate about my work. I'm empathic about your issues and
4 concerns as a member of the Uranium Commission from the central agency.)

5 And my mother is a grassroots organizer, and she's still
6 pushing the effort to have some cleanup done because it's taken eight of her
7 children, as well as her husband and her father. So, that tells me that I've
8 been in the shoes of what the community are going through as well. So, I
9 still speak for my people. I speak on behalf of my people because I have
10 been exposed to it myself as well.

11 And thank you.

12 DIRECTOR SHIRLEY: And then, Edith, is there anybody
13 else?

14 MS. HOOD: Maybe our lawyer, Eric Jantz.

15 DIRECTOR SHIRLEY: Eric, would you like to say a few
16 words, too?

17 MR. JANTZ: (Translation of Native language spoken:
18 Greetings.)

19 Good afternoon, everyone. My name is Eric Jantz. I am
20 the Senior Staff Attorney at the New Mexico Environmental Law Center.

21 I have worked with the Red Water Pond Road Community
22 since 2011, and I've worked with other communities here in Church Rock and
23 throughout the Eastern Navajo Agency for over 20 years. And I'd like to
24 share some of my observations with you over these last 20 years.

25 So, clean air, clean water, clean land, and cultural
26 expression, as Edith said, are human rights. And these are rights that are

1 embodied in international treaties that the United States has duly signed and
2 ratified. The principles also manifest themselves in the domestic law, civil
3 rights law, and in treaties with individual sovereign Indian nations, tribal
4 nations.

5 The NRC, though, over the course of its history, has
6 routinely violated these rights and continues to do so. In the context of
7 historic waste, we see the results of NRC's human rights abuses right here in
8 the Red Water Pond Road Community. The UNC Mill Site just down the road
9 is the locus of the worst nuclear disaster in the U.S. history, and it still hasn't
10 been cleaned up.

11 Shuffling uranium waste around within the community is no
12 remedy for the human rights violations that have happened over the years.
13 NRC's permissive treatment of licensees is the foundation of the NRC's
14 human rights abuses in this context.

15 So, for example, freely granting ACLs, Alternative
16 Concentration Levels, to licensees -- and I'm unaware of any time in which the
17 NRC has refused ACLs, has denied ACLs -- is an example of how the Nuclear
18 Regulatory Commission consigns communities like Red Water Pond Road
19 across Indian Country to groundwater sacrifices.

20 Secondly, allowing licensees to put up a fence, and then,
21 walk away -- again, consigning communities like this to a lifetime of
22 contamination.

23 Requiring meaningful and front-line community-driven
24 cleanup is critical to remedying the human rights associated with historic
25 uranium mining and processing.

26 So, listen to and believe the community when they talk to

1 you. Their expertise is unlike the expertise of anybody else. Living for
2 generations in communities that are impacted by uranium development grants
3 a particular privilege of expertise to the folks who live there.

4 Secondly, ACLs should be the exception, as intended,
5 rather the rule. And more locally, we ask that you put the UNC license
6 amendment process on hold and consult with tribal, state, and federal
7 governments, and front-line communities to evaluate the viability of a regional
8 uranium waste repository.

9 In the context of new uranium mining, despite
10 BIPOC -- Black, Indigenous, and People of Color -- communities being
11 overburdened with historic uranium waste, the NRC continues to license new
12 projects, especially ISL projects, in those communities -- continuing the record
13 of human rights violation.

14 The NRC knows -- and we know you know because
15 everybody else knows -- that no ISL operation in the history of the United
16 States has ever restored groundwater to pre-mining conditions. As a result,
17 again, NRC is actively inviting widespread groundwater sacrifice zones.

18 To remedy these violations of human rights, the NRC should
19 implement a policy of free, prior, and informed consent consistent with
20 international law and norms for any new uranium operations in BIPOC
21 communities.

22 Secondly, the NRC should tie its environmental justice
23 reviews to the Atomic Energy Act's health and safety provisions, rather than
24 NEPA.

25 And finally, the NRC should discontinue issuing licenses for
26 new operations, and particularly ISL operations, in overburdened and

1 impacted communities. So, in other words, no startup 'til cleanup.

2 Thank you very much for this opportunity.

3 DIRECTOR SHIRLEY: And then, just a housekeeping
4 item. When you're going to speak, so if we're going to talk, we're going to
5 use -- if we could hold it here, that would be good.

6 (Translation of Native language spoken: They cannot hear
7 you way in the back of the room.)

8 So, if we could hold it here, and then hold the microphone
9 here.

10 I do want to ask Mr. Yazzie with the Navajo EPA to introduce
11 himself, and then, introduce some of our staff here today, because they were
12 certainly integral in getting all of this together.

13 MR. YAZZIE: (Translation of Native language spoken:
14 Greetings to all of you and thank you my granddaughter for coming here and
15 advocating on our behalf [identifies his traditional Navajo clans]. To establish
16 a relationship and kinship among the people here, I am from Monument
17 Valley. That's where I was raised. I am from the Red Mesa area. That's
18 where my mother is from.)

19 Thank you. Welcome. Thank you for the opportunity to
20 bring the community together and thank you for coming to Navajo and hearing
21 what we feel is just way overdue.

22 The overall story here is 80 years of impacts on Navajo, not
23 just here, but across Navajo lands. And these stories resonate to the very
24 core of who we are -- to identifying our cultural values and knowing that we've
25 compromised them because of what oftentimes will get called "Navajo waste."
26 It's not Navajo waste. We didn't ask for it. We didn't approve it. We

1 definitely didn't benefit from it. So, it's something that needs to be addressed
2 and as we move forward each day

3 We're out here today and I'm glad we don't have air samples
4 going because that might scare some people. But the reality is this: we
5 talked about this event being a history-making event. The history has been
6 being made here for all of these years with the families being exposed. This
7 is what they live in.

8 Prior to any running water, any facilities/resources being
9 made available to them, they were hauling their water, and they would be in
10 open containers. And guess what? You're sitting there with a little bit of
11 dust on you; everything had dust on it. Where does that dust come from?
12 Right behind us.

13 I can't say enough to the importance of what this event
14 is -- to hear Navajo people out; to hear their concerns out; to understand, as
15 Mr. Jantz had shared, there's more that can be done.

16 Oftentimes, as the bureaucratic decisionmakers will look at
17 things, it's always from one perspective: from the perspective of what's
18 written in text. How about the other side? How about the human side?
19 We've talked about and heard about human rights.

20 I thank you for coming. I really want to know and
21 understand that, when I walk away today, that we were able to do something
22 historical, and that historical event was NRC Commissioners coming to
23 Navajo to hear the true history of what exists here and why it exists. And
24 hopefully, go back, and then, come back with an answer that says, "You know
25 what? We have an answer, a truly historical answer that will help you,
26 Navajo." That's what we expect.

1 To my leadership that's here, thank you. Thank you to the
2 other members of leadership that's here.

3 My family from Red Water Pond Road, thank you for hosting
4 us (Translation of Native language spoken: Thank you.) for opening your
5 home and your hearts to us, to allow us to talk, to allow us to understand what
6 we've not captured in previous years to ensure that people understand what
7 these impacts are.

8 It goes beyond just knowing that there's dirt back here.
9 What does it mean? What has it done?

10 I've got staff here from Navajo Nation EPA Superfund
11 who've been actively participating in putting this event together with the Red
12 Water Pond Road Community. If I could, if they would come up and just join
13 me real quick, I'd like to introduce them.

14 I've got my RPN, LeeAnna Martinez-Silversmith. I'm got
15 Vivian Craig. We also have Merv Lynch, who has been an active participant
16 who's really spearheaded helping us make this event happen. I'm not sure
17 where he's at, but he was the one that introduced himself first.

18 We also have Darlene Jenkins. Where are you at, though?
19 She's way back there. Jump up and down, Darlene.

20 We also have Shelby Daisy, who's an RPN with Navajo
21 EPA. More than anything, thank you all, family, for being here.

22 (Translation of Native language spoken: Don't be shy, tell
23 your story. Don't be shy. Come on and tell your stories and tell your
24 concerns. Don't be hesitant. Tell the story to these coming. You can cry.
25 You can show your emotions about it.

26 This uranium mining and abandoned uranium mine has

1 affected our health. It's serious. That's how serious it is.)

2 I include my comments to not be shy and not be afraid to
3 share their stories because the impacts are very real; they're very deep;
4 they're very emotional.

5 I come from an area where the same issues that exist here
6 are what impacts my family. And we're impacted by the efforts in Cane
7 Valley. My paternal grandfather, Luke Yazzie, Sr., was credited with finding
8 the ore that brought the mining industry to our community. I grew up with
9 mine tailings a quarter of a mile from my home. I played in it. It was like
10 beach sand. Monsoon seasons, I was up there covering myself, thinking that
11 I was at the beach. Did I know there was a hazard associated with it? No.
12 In the summertime, we would herd our sheep up towards the mines.

13 I don't know if you've ever had cool water from a mine site.
14 It's delicious. But did I know that I was exposing myself internally to
15 radionuclides? No, I didn't.

16 So, at the age of 23, I came home from the military. I
17 absolutely loved being a soldier, an airborne medic. And I had to come home
18 because I had a skull tumor, and that was my first bout with cancer. I'm
19 fighting it right now.

20 Listen, please. That's all I ask. Help with a solution. We
21 can't afford excuses. We can't afford copouts and put it on somebody else.
22 It is very personal to all of us.

23 Thank you.

24 DIRECTOR SHIRLEY: Thank you, Mr. Yazzie.

25 (Translation of Native language spoken. Thank you, my
26 relatives, and my leadership.)

1 The president is running a little behind schedule so.
2 (Translation of Native language spoken: We'll start our program. Our first
3 speaker is Mr. Bell.) Mr. Bell. I have Peterson Bell. Sorry.

4 MR. P. BELL: (Translation of Native language spoken:
5 Greetings, I'm Peterson Bell.)

6 My name is Peterson Bell. I'm from Red Water Pond
7 Road. I live here.

8 I say this uranium waste is here for about 80 years now,
9 since 1970 -- well, 1974; 1980 is when they abandoned the mine.

10 From there, we tried to let these people clean it right there.
11 They haven't done it yet.

12 In 2006 and 2007, when we organized the Red Water Pond
13 Organization, I thought EPA was going to come and help us out here, but they
14 haven't done it yet. It's still here.

15 So, how long are we going to do this? It's a hard freaking
16 story for us, for all of us.

17 For me, I worked in the mine. I worked for these guys.
18 So, that's where I'm at now. My health is in decline. Everything about me,
19 it just accumulates.

20 And how long are we going to do this? How long are we
21 going to say, "Please help us." But you've got to do it now before all of us
22 are gone. You know, for me, I'm over 60, and most of us are in our sixties
23 now. All of us here need help. I know you look at us like we're healthy
24 people, but we're not. Our life is in bad shape with cancer, diabetes, and
25 everything else.

26 So, when you say you're going to clean up, the EPA and the

1 NRC, you guys have got to help us get that done. If you don't want to take it
2 off the reservation, just put it over there and cap it. Cap it so tight that it
3 doesn't leak. The bottom site should be looked at, too. Triple it. This wind,
4 like now, this is the way it is every day when it's in March. So, even during
5 the winters are like that. Even summer, the rain, it floods out.

6 So, Commissioners, do your part in cleaning up. You have
7 seen what we are today and yesterday. I know you were here yesterday.

8 So, sometimes it hurts so much that I don't want to talk. So
9 many times people have come around and said, "Let me interview you. We'll
10 let your story out." But it don't; we never came out. What did they know?
11 They just get paid; we don't.

12 So, please do your part and clean up. That's all I wanted
13 to say to you, Commissioners. That's all I wanted to say right now.

14 So, thank you.

15 MS. BENALLY: (Translation of Native language spoken:
16 Greetings, I'm Annie Benally. I'm from here. I was raised here. And from
17 here, I grew up.

18 Also, maybe I was 12 years old, maybe. They started
19 drilling. They didn't even tell us that they were going to do so. They told us
20 not to bother. They said, "Don't bother." They just tell us, "Don't bother."
21 They didn't say it was dangerous. Didn't even tell us that it was going to
22 affect our health.

23 Today, we've been exposed to it. And we made the house,
24 our homes of it. And so now, they're telling us it's dangerous. That is not
25 right.)

26 Okay. Thank you for coming. There are things I have to

1 say to you.

2 My name is Annie Benally, and what I just said was I was
3 12 years old when the mine drilling rigs came in. We were never told to stay
4 away from the mud holes. We were never told not to play in them. We were
5 never told it was going to be danger to your system, your bodies, all these
6 years.

7 Because, us, as Native American, this is our sacred -- we
8 treasure our bodies. And we pray this way every day. I live back here. So,
9 this pile of uranium here, I pray to that every morning while the sacred
10 mountain is over there. And I go back this way. There's another one right
11 there.

12 So, this is not right. It brings anger because I am 64 years
13 old now. When they first came, I was only 12.

14 And how long are we going to stand here and plead and cry
15 and make you understand? You're lucky you're only here one day; that you
16 get to go home. Now make sure you save the dust, so you can always
17 remember where it came from.

18 You want no washing here? Keep it up. Put it
19 somewhere sacred. Oh, yeah, this is where the sacred people are from.
20 This is the sacred dirt. I'm not trying to be sarcastic, but that's way it is with
21 us here every day.

22 And everybody, I appreciate you all coming and being here
23 in this crazy weather with us. But this is us -- wind, rain, shine, everything,
24 that's us. We make it work, even if the weather is this bad.

25 And thank you, Darrell, everybody.

26 (Translation of Native language spoken: Thank you,

1 everybody. Thank you, my mother, for blowing in. (teasing her)).

2 And you came with the wind.

3 COMMISSIONER BARAN: Can you talk to us a little bit
4 about the uranium tailings pile here? And I know at some point EPA did
5 some work. What's the status now? Do you feel like there's been progress
6 at all or has nothing changed?

7 MS. BENALLY: Okay. The cleanup was just a bandage.
8 They just wanted to make us feel that we were safe again. But, as you see,
9 the wind's carrying it back over our heads again. This is like this every day.
10 They say it's clean; it's okay. But we have more piles back there, and it is
11 blowing this way. You see the wind's going this way.

12 So, it's back to normal. We're back to what uranium does
13 again -- breathing it in, everything in. So, you're in luck and you can take off
14 every mask, so you can breathe the uranium.

15 Anything else? Did I answer your question? Okay.

16 Okay. Thank you.

17 MS. HOOD: Larry?

18 MR. KING: Good afternoon.

19 I'll be talking mostly about Section 17; 17 is where I live.
20 And it's back about three miles down the road. You went through Section 17
21 when you crossed a big Puerco wash bridge and a big metal building. And
22 on the opposite side of the highway, where that big metal building, in that flat
23 area, that's where I reside with my sisters.

24 Hello. My name is Larry King, and I still live on Section 17,
25 along with my sisters and their families, in the midst of a waste dump.

26 Growing up, we hauled water for domestic use from a

1 windmill that was located behind the old Church Rock Mine, lots owned by
2 Phillips Petroleum Company, then UNC.

3 Access to the windmill required driving through the mine
4 area, past the head frames, stockpiles of mine waste, new and discarded
5 mining materials, and equipment, to get to our water source.

6 As a youngster in the early '60s, I herded sheep around the
7 mine site, within the mine site, and played in the mine waste piles. No
8 security measures were in place around the mine site to ensure the safety of
9 the people coming in through the mine area to haul water for themselves.
10 Currently, the area is still an abandoned mine site with no cleanup plans on
11 the horizon.

12 About half a mile south of my residence is the Puerco wash,
13 also crossing through Section 17, the tributary that carried the largest uranium
14 tailings spill in U.S. history on July 16th, 1979, 14 weeks after the nuclear
15 accident at Three Mile Island. The dam burst sent over 1100 tons of
16 radioactive mill waste and over 94 million gallons of contaminated liquid
17 flowing towards Arizona.

18 Except for the bomb test, Church Rock was probably the
19 biggest single release of radioactive poisons on American soil. Ironically, it
20 occurred 34 years to the day after the first atomic test explosion at the Trinity
21 site near Tularosa, New Mexico.

22 The old Church Rock Mine is now occupied by HRI. In
23 1998, the NRC approved license SUA-1580, which allows HRI to build and
24 operate a uranium ISL mine there.

25 In 2003, with the help of outside organizations and
26 agencies, Church Rock Chapter started the Church Rock Uranium Monitoring

1 Project, which revealed how contaminated my community was, beginning
2 from where I currently reside, along State Road 566 through the end of the
3 pavement, just right where you got off the pavement up here. And it included
4 Red Water Pond Community.

5 In 2005, NRC decided that the company didn't have to clean
6 up the mess at this site because the radioactive waste left behind by UNC are
7 now part of background.

8 ISL mining is not new technology. It has been used for
9 over 50 years. It threatens long-term contamination of our precious and good
10 quality groundwater. The ISL industry has an extensive record of excursions,
11 which have proven difficult to contain and clean up. Restoration of
12 groundwater to pre-mining water quality conditions has never been achieved.

13 HRI's Crownpoint ISL Project is unprecedented, per NRC's
14 own statement in 2007 because:

15 No. 1, it is planned in an aquifer that is currently used as a
16 high-quality drinking water source.

17 No. 2, the site will be located within a half a mile of two
18 municipal water supply wells and within a mile and a half of three other wells.

19 The central plan for processing the uranium into yellow cake
20 is located in the town of Crownpoint within one mile of four schools and
21 hundreds of residents.

22 ISL mining deliberately contaminates the groundwater to
23 extract and recover uranium from its host rock. HRI's Church Rock section,
24 at Section 8 and 17, mines will be located literally across the road from my
25 homes of my sisters and I.

26 Mine plans are to drill hundreds of injection and production

1 wells in Section 17. A portion of Section 17 is my grazing area. I have a
2 valid BIA grazing lease, and my family has homesite leases from the Navajo
3 Nation. But HRI says its rights to mine supersede my rights to use my land.
4 We will literally get kicked off and be removed from my land when they start
5 to mine.

6 On July 19, 2012, after HRI was cited by the Navajo Nation
7 DOJ for trespass on Navajo land, HRI entered into an agreement stating they
8 will clean up Section 17 before any mining actions by HRI begin. NRC has
9 not taken any steps to require HRI to do any cleanup before starting any new
10 mining.

11 The Navajo Nation will not receive royalties from any mining
12 proposed by HRI in our community. ISL mining is unsafe and is very risky.
13 The people are saying no to any new mining, and a grave injustice will occur
14 if HRI is allowed to operate.

15 Thank you.

16 DIRECTOR SHIRLEY: Teri?

17 MS. KEYANNA: Good afternoon.

18 My name is Teracita Keyanna, and I would like somebody
19 from Navajo EPA to help me out, please.

20 Pass that out.

21 Thank you, guys, NRC, for coming out and listening to us.

22 They already have some. So, just let me finish this first.
23 They already have it.

24 So, if you open those white binders (NOTE: the white
25 binders can be found in the NRC's Agencywide Documents Access and
26 Management System under ML22118A743), in the very, very back, this is my

1 presentation. Since we're not doing a mine tour, this is the closest thing I can
2 get to you guys. So, if you want to follow along with me, that would be great.

3 So, this is pictures of this area here that you can see, and
4 as well as on this side of the road here. It's just right across. That's the
5 second time-critical removal that had happened. And that young man in that
6 picture in the red is now 17 years old.

7 So, this is just showing you that perspective of just how
8 much this has been impacting the community and, also, not just the elders,
9 not just my generation, but my kids' generation. And you know it's going to
10 continue, unless we get together, all of us, and find a solution.

11 So, please just really, really listen, and don't just listen and
12 hear, but listen and understand that this is our lives. We have human rights,
13 and we need to be looked at as human beings and not be overlooked.

14 The environmental racism has gone on for far too long.
15 And so, I would like for you to really understand and listen. And that's the
16 reason why I'm talking loud -- because you need to hear this.

17 So, if you go on to the second page, it has a poster that I
18 had done with my aunt here, my Aunt Edith, my Uncle Peterson, my Aunt
19 Jackie, all my other aunts here, Jean. We have it actually posted in the back.
20 It's much bigger. And you also have it inside your binder. It's in the very,
21 very front.

22 So, it just gives you a brief history of the community and
23 how, when my aunts and uncles were children back in the '30s, they already
24 started. They started all the exploratory drilling -- I know, Edith -- and it
25 became a problem. And they didn't know.

26 So, unknowingly, my aunts, my uncles, my grandparents,

1 my great grandparents were all impacted. And that's one of the reasons why
2 we're trying to force this in right now, because we need to be heard. My great
3 grandma, Helen Nez, she needs to be heard. Her area has been impacted
4 for years.

5 There's too many mines on the Navajo Nation. That can't
6 be overlooked. If you really, really look at it, that is environmental racism.
7 Every single time that these guys have to deal with any kind of government
8 entity alone, it's just -- I'm sorry -- but it's just pissing in the wind.

9 We have to get together, all of us -- Navajo EPA, U.S. EPA,
10 NRC, people from the State, State representatives, county representatives,
11 grassroots organizers. We all need to get together to get this all cleaned up
12 and done properly. If that means we have to do bipartisan stuff and go to
13 Congress, we have to do it, because it's impacting too many people for too
14 long.

15 So, please just understand that. And if you have any
16 questions about this poster, you can come to me and ask.

17 If you can go on to the next page. We had the EPA state
18 that we were not here, and also GE stating that we were not here, before the
19 mining had started. And yet, we have photographic proof that we were here,
20 and pictures do not lie. So, you can read who these people are on these
21 pictures. On some of them, you don't know. And so, you know, there's a
22 face; there's a human being right there photographed, and they're sitting there
23 waiting to live their lives, but they don't know what's happening to the next
24 generation. And so, we are here now to tell you what's going on now is
25 wrong.

26 So, if you can go on to the next page, you can see that we're

1 still here in the '70s and '80s. And you can see the children and uncles and
2 aunts of mine all playing in this pile right here on Kerr-McGee. That's right
3 here, right on the side of you guys. That's the proximity, and we're living right
4 between two of them.

5 And now, you actually see and feel how the community has
6 felt for years and generations. So, this is only one day. Like my grandma
7 said, it's one day you're here. You're experiencing this for one day. We
8 experience this all our lives.

9 So, if we can go to the next page, that's going to page 5.
10 This is the mining era from '69 to '86. And that Kerr-McGee mine, that
11 A-frame, I grew up looking at that A-frame. It's no longer there, but I grew up
12 looking at that A-frame.

13 And you see the bottom corner picture on the right is the
14 Red Water Pond Road. That road has been fixed because it was radiated.
15 And I had no idea that every day when I was walking to school, to the bus
16 stop, which was up on top of the road, and coming back after school, all of us
17 kids were exposed to that. And, you know, I never knew. I never realized
18 why my legs ached, my feet ached. And now, I know.

19 And so, this is a situation that the children of my aunts, my
20 uncles, we didn't ask for this. And yet, we're impacted. And we didn't know.

21 When I was a kid, I was herding sheep for my grandma.
22 There was no fencing at all, nothing in sight. There was no boundary.
23 Nobody was there to say, "Hey, you can't go here. This is dangerous."
24 There was nothing like that.

25 I herded sheep up there into the mine area. On hot days,
26 if it rained, the pools of water that developed on the rocks, I had no idea that I

1 was doing the same thing as Mr. Yazzie there. I was, you know, taking my
2 drink because it was hot, and I didn't realize that.

3 So, let's go to the next page, page 6. And this is pictures
4 from the '79 spill. You can see the dam breach where it came from the dam
5 and went into the arroyo. And it shows you the tailings there before, and
6 then, it shows you the arroyo after, even the color. And basically, that was
7 the same acidity of battery acid, and there were people who waded through
8 that water to get to their livestock. They ended up with a lot of skin
9 conditions -- blistering, some amputations. There was no reason for
10 something like that to happen.

11 And so, being open-minded and understanding that uranium
12 is not the answer -- people say that uranium and nuclear energy, it's clean,
13 but nobody is looking at the actual entire cycle of it. We are living in that very
14 beginning cycle, and nobody sees that. So, please understand this.

15 Page 7. This is, basically, the view from the top of the
16 whole area of UNC, the milling area. And I just want to point out that, on the
17 top of the map, there's something missing, and that's the human element right
18 there. You're missing the community. You don't get to see that proximity of
19 how close those houses are.

20 You know, I don't want to be mean, but I have to be. That's
21 the U.S. EPA not putting that human element in the actual mapping of these
22 locations. And it's disappointing because I thought they were there to protect
23 us, but it looks like they're just taking away the actual human element from
24 their project here. So, oh, I don't know.

25 Let's go to page 8. So, the runoff along this Kerr-McGee
26 mine here, there's an arroyo that goes all the way down and it goes into an

1 area called High Blind Road. This picture shows you the erosion that
2 happens when it rains during monsoon season.

3 This is a picture of my husband kind of giving you some
4 perspective on how wide, how deep, the runoff is. This is monsoon season,
5 and supposedly, there's studies about how the rainfall here is, and everything
6 like that, but, as you can see, my husband is standing there. And he's about
7 the same size as me, the same height, the same build. And you can tell that
8 that water is pretty quick flowing. So, we ask, you know, what do you see
9 when it comes to that picture and erosion?

10 So, go, then, to the next page. And that page shows you
11 the most recent happening that happened, and this bridge was -- I ought to
12 put quotes up -- quote, "fixed." It was repaired. And then, riprap was put
13 there to help with the erosion. And as you can see, that erosion is very
14 evident. And you can see that all those stones, those big, giant stones, are
15 gone. So, we're trying to pound it into you guys' heads that you don't know
16 Mother Nature, and She's going to find a way.

17 The same thing with the proposed jetty that's right in front of
18 the mill. That area, right now, the water has started undercutting underneath
19 the already evaporation piles. So, who are you guys to say that that's not
20 going to continue happening again and again and again? Sure, there's
21 studies for a hundred-year flood, you know, but it's showing you that that
22 wasn't even 100 years. That was one day, monsoon season, it was gone.

23 And then, the last page here has a lot of paperwork that
24 we've done. And these are the most recent ones that we've done talking
25 about the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, the DEIS, and how we want
26 this pause. We want the DEIS to be paused.

1 And like I said, everybody needs to be at the table to talk
2 about what we can do that's not just safe for the community, but safe for where
3 we want to put it. We want to have our other communities safe like us, too.

4 But I bring this up a lot. I know it's environmental racism.
5 We've heard about Moab getting cleaned up. They got new homes. And
6 yet, when it came to the community asking for the same thing, it was "No."

7 So, I really want you guys to please pause it. Let us all get
8 to that table -- community members, Navajo Nation, Navajo EPA, U.S. EPA,
9 yourselves, DOJ. Everybody get to that table. Anybody who needs to be at
10 that table should be at that table, and not just sitting there because they're
11 getting paid for a meeting, but to be there and be present in the moment and
12 understanding and listening, and actually trying to resolve this situation, which
13 has gone on far too long.

14 Thank you.

15 MS. HOOD: Thank you very much.

16 Talía?

17 TALIA: (Translation of Native language spoken: Greetings,
18 I'm Talía Body, [identifies traditional Navajo clans], Gallup, NM is my
19 hometown and I'm from Tuba City, AZ.) Hello. Good afternoon, relatives.
20 Thank you very much for everybody who has come here today to support the
21 Red Water Pond Road.

22 These issues that we are speaking about today are very
23 much emotional, and they very much hit our hearts at the core.

24 I live in Gallup, New Mexico. My family lives in Church
25 Rock, New Mexico. I'm originally from western Tó Nehelííh in Tonalea,
26 Arizona.

1 Every day on my way to school, grade school, we passed
2 the Tuba City disposal site; also known as "rare metals." At that time, there
3 were no signs alarming us to the radioactive and toxic dangers, nor was it
4 fenced or capped.

5 Children would play on that tailings pile. When they would
6 gather, they would play on it like a sand dune when it was capped. Years
7 later, those families were displaced and relocated, and a lot of them died from
8 cancer.

9 My family, then, moved to Church Rock, New Mexico, home
10 of the 1979 Church Rock spill, the largest radioactive spill in U.S. history to
11 this date.

12 Our homelands and our Native peoples of this land have
13 been exploited and desecrated by the U.S. Government, the Manhattan
14 Project, in the name of the nuclear fuel chain and the Military Industrial
15 Complex.

16 The Dine and many other tribes, including Yakama,
17 Umatilla, and Nez Perce, are impacted by the Hanford site. Oak Ridge has,
18 also, many Native peoples that have been impacted. Cherokee, Sequoyah
19 Fuels Facility has impacted our Cherokee relatives. Yucca Mountain, our
20 western Shoshone relatives have been impacted. White Mesa Mill, our Ute
21 Mountain relatives have been impacted. All the 11 Associated Tribes of the
22 Grand Canyon have been impacted by the Pinyon Plain Mine. Our Kaibab
23 Paiute relatives, our Spokane relatives from Washington State have been
24 impacted by the Spokane Midnight Mine. Our Laguna and Acoma Pueblo
25 peoples have been impacted by the Jackpile Mine. And our Santa Clara and
26 other Pueblos along the Rio Grande have been impacted by the Los Alamos

1 National Labs.

2 Native Peoples, we know the cost of nuclear. We come
3 from those front-line communities. We have been experiencing this from day
4 one. We have been dehumanized. We have been displaced and
5 disproportionately impacted by adverse health disparities.

6 The Nuclear Regulatory Commission knows this. The U.S.
7 Environmental Protection Agency knows this. Yet, a blind eye is turned and
8 fingers are pointed. Why? To maintain the status quo?

9 We are tired of deception, secrecy, and bureaucracy. We
10 do not consent to being poisoned, sacrificed, and forgotten -- in the name of
11 the nuclear fuel chain and the Military Industrial Complex.

12 We demand justice, accountability, and transparency. For
13 decades, my elders here have repeatedly demanded for full and proper
14 cleanup. We want your waste, the U.S. Government's waste, off of our tribal
15 trust lands. We are not talking about moving it over the hill and across the
16 road. We want it away from our communities.

17 We demand clean air, land, and water. We demand that
18 our basic human rights be recognized and honored. We demand that our
19 children are protected from deadly radioactive and toxic contaminants. We
20 demand that our voices be heard, and that the cost for cleanup of abandoned
21 uranium mines all across the Napeequa –Din4 Bik4yah be completely covered
22 by the U.S. Government and not reliant on settlements to fund cleanup.

23 In the Southwest, we rely on our groundwater. We don't
24 have surface water here. We need clean groundwater.

25 The DEIS is horrendous. It's full of holes and red flags.
26 The example, the proposed area for that waste sits on a flood plain.

1 We want to use our traditional medicines; we want to eat our
2 traditional foods without fear of exposure, and to honor the lives of our
3 ancestors.

4 You are on Native land, whether you admit it or not, and we
5 know our rights. We are not going anywhere. We are not your scapegoats.
6 You are violating our basic human rights, and we will not give up. You need
7 to listen to the people.

8 And as a lot of my family members here and relatives have
9 explained -- you know, you asked, "What's the status of EPA? What are the
10 updates?" That is appalling. Why aren't your agencies communicating
11 amongst each other? Why do you have to come to the community to get
12 those updates? What the heck is going on in D.C. and wherever your offices
13 are? It's appalling. It's horrendous.

14 You know, we need to have this planning led by impacted
15 communities, by Native peoples that are impacted, and not this top-down
16 shenanigans that we've been seeing.

17 Nuclear, again, is not green or clean. We have to
18 recognize that it is a very carbon-intensive process, the whole nuclear fuel
19 chain from the front end to the back end. We are from the front-end part of
20 it -- from the mining, the milling, the transportation all the way to the reactors.

21 Almost all uranium mining has happened in the Western
22 States. We know that. We know New Mexico and the Grants Mining district
23 is rich in uranium. We also know that our relatives in Wyoming are also being
24 targeted. Our sacred mountain in Mount Taylor is being targeted. There is
25 the Roca Honda Mine that is still being proposed.

26 When our sacred landscapes are desecrated, that has a

1 direct impact on the psyche of Native peoples and hinders our ability to heal
2 from those places. And it decimates the integrity of those areas. We rely
3 on those spaces to heal. We have been here since the beginning. We have
4 regenerative relationships with the natural world. Our land does not speak
5 English. It recognizes Native languages and love, and that's what is needed
6 here.

7 We do not consent to waste transport or dumping. We
8 have a lot of qualms with the transportation routes. We know that it's shipped
9 through rail and major freeways. We know that there's been accidents in the
10 past.

11 We also know that the so-called new science can also be
12 broken, right? It's not forever. But this waste is a forever problem. My
13 children will have to deal with this. All of our children will have to deal with
14 this.

15 We are all impacted by the nuclear fuel chain. On the
16 Western States are all the reactors. The state with the most nuclear reactors
17 is Illinois.

18 What do they do when they're done with all that waste?
19 They try to ship it back here. That's why we have Holtec. We have WIPP.

20 You know, New Mexico is a sacrifice state. We recognize
21 that, too. We've seen all parts of it -- the mining, the milling. We know
22 Sandia has a research reactor. We know all of these things.

23 We're asking you to please listen to us. Hear us. We are
24 tired of pleading with federal agencies who have continually turned a deaf ear
25 to us. We demand justice.

26 (Translation of Native language spoken: Thank you.)

1 MS. HOOD: Very powerful.

2 Kravin, you're up next.

3 MR. KEYANNA: Hello. My name is Kravin Keyanna, and
4 I used to live here five years ago.

5 My parents moved all of us kids -- me, my little sister, and
6 my big sister -- all due to the uranium from there and, basically, over there as
7 well. We were, basically, cornered in between, pinned down, and
8 everywhere we went was, basically, near the contamination waste and in the
9 ditches; we'd go in there.

10 And I was looking at a map a while ago today, seeing that
11 some of the contamination was where we mainly played. We were in it, knew
12 it, sometimes fell deep in it. And on rainy days, we'd all play outside just
13 because, if there's enough room, we'd find a little, tiny pond, and then, we'd
14 swim in it. It was crazy.

15 And it kind of makes me frustrated because I love home.
16 This is where I like to be. It's quiet, no fussy neighbors like at home now. I
17 can't be loud or run outside, because when we did, there was a little spot;
18 when we moved, we'd play out there, and then, we got in trouble for it because
19 it wasn't property -- it wasn't even their property in the first place. But we got
20 in trouble. They fenced it off and it was kind of unfair.

21 And basically, everywhere we played, it would be with my
22 nieces, uncles, and aunties, nephews, and we'd all gather, play in the ditches.
23 It rained, basically, every day.

24 And moving away from them was hard for me, knowing that
25 I couldn't see them as much as I used to. Because sometimes it would be
26 every weekend I'd see them, every day after school. And then, ever since

1 we moved, I would always ask my Grandma Jackie, because she was still
2 there at the time, and then, I'd ask to sleep over, because, then, all my favorite
3 cousins, uncles, and nieces were there. And we'd all still hang out. We'd
4 go up in the mountains, in the ditches, multiple areas.

5 And I never knew that contamination was so far out where
6 we used to play. And it was kind of crazy knowing that now, that I could also
7 be affected, even as well as my nieces and nephews.

8 And it also affected my mother's health, too, as well, a lot.
9 She had many miscarriages, except for me and my little sister. And it kind of
10 makes me sad, knowing that I could have had a little brother, and maybe a lot
11 more. And it was very hard knowing that miscarriage is also a side effect due
12 to uranium. And we were just -- I don't know; it was crazy.

13 And then, moving away, I was just 11. I was still a child.
14 And I consider myself someone, even though I'm 16. And I still want to go
15 outside, but we can't do any outdoor stuff in town because there's rules,
16 curfews. Not much out there to do besides sit at home and just weep there.

17 And then, every time I have a chance out here, I always try
18 and take as much as I can, locate it. Because I know we stay in town way
19 too long, and I hate it because I love home. It's probably the best ones.

20 What I also miss about being home is being home like with
21 your Grandpa Peterson. We used to all, every time we'd wake up, we always
22 put on SpongeBob or something like that, and then he'd cook us breakfast.
23 It was the best. And I miss that a lot. And now I just wake up to bougie stuff
24 now. No more potatoes and beef and tortillas, none of that anymore.

25 But it was kind of hard moving because I miss my grandpa.
26 And it was all due to this waste that's around us. We're basically surrounded.

1 And I want to be home again. That's all I can say.

2 And I'm sure, for all of us that's sitting up here and back
3 there, I mean, I'm sure that we all want the uranium waste moving offsite.

4 Thank you.

5 MS. HOOD: Thank you very much, son.

6 Now I would like to call on someone from Pipeline Road,
7 Tony Tom.

8 MR. T. TOM: (Translation of Native language spoken:
9 Greetings, I'm Tony Tom, [identifies his traditional Navajo clans]). Tony Tom
10 is my name from the -- my grandmother and my grandfather were here. I've
11 been living here for 66 years. My grandma passed away in '96. She was
12 85. And (audio interference) parents and me, we lived (audio interference)
13 to be 90-plus. So the area right there is probably more than 200 years
14 resident. But on the map it seems like nobody was out there. That's you
15 guys up in (Translation of Native language spoken: Maybe that is why the
16 mines were opened here because it seemed no one live within the vicinity, my
17 notion.). have a great gift that God gives us. We don't ever say thanks
18 opening our eyes in the morning. That's a gift. I didn't see you all this
19 morning, so now I'll say good afternoon. And all four corners (audio
20 interference) thank you. Thank you for -- Commissioners, thank you for
21 listening each and every word.

22 I know you guys sitting there looking at your clock. How
23 much time these guys have left? We have a lot of time. We'll be saying this
24 duplicating words. It hurts. And you guys got nice clothes on. As soon as
25 you get home, get in your vehicle, you can throw them away. Today is a gift.
26 You all witness what the weather looks like. God said this is what they live

1 through. This is what they ate; drank water. Full of clothes that dirt. That's
2 how we lived it. Like I said, 66 years of this.

3 Where are we going with this? It's kind of like living in
4 heaven. There used to be ore trucks running down the road. The ore's
5 flying out the highway from here to Grants. Now we're kind of living in hell.
6 What are we going through, you know? So people are right. What hurts.
7 And who's going to pay for it? We lost a lot relatives, maybe due to this. But
8 people say "I don't think so."

9 So, you know, like they said, please listen. But I'm pretty
10 sure that you guys got something in your pocket to take home. And living in
11 New York or California totally different than living here. And you witness it
12 now today. It is hard. It is hard to see somebody -- you know, I went to
13 school with Larry, Annie, and Peterson, you know? Conditions of how some
14 us look like, 60-plus years. It's something that we got to deal with. I mean,
15 there's grandmas here, there's infants here, you know? It is really hard.

16 So where are we going? Which way are we going is what
17 we're saying. And we're trying to have these people listen to us.
18 (Translation of Native language spoken: It is truly difficult.) It's been going
19 on. I see Red Water Pond marching down the road and lot of us did work
20 didn't have time to seem like it. It's our fault. It's my fault for maybe coming
21 here once in a while. My uncle used to show up quite a bit, but back in June
22 he passed away. So lot of these leaders (Translation of Native language
23 spoken: are now deceased). Even in our chapter houses. I spent two years
24 with these -- I'll do this (Translation of Native language spoken: to entice us).
25 Two years is over. Nobody says hey, boo.

26 Our president, thank you (Translation of Native language

1 spoken: that you are among us here). It used to be chairman (Translation of
2 Native language spoken: what we called our past leader). They change that.
3 Our first lady -- our grandma's the first lady. So thanks for showing up and
4 thanks for coming.

5 And lot of info. Like I said, I live over here 66 years and
6 where -- I don't know how old you guys were in '79. Where and how all this
7 started. My grandparents used to be a permittee holder, right on this side of
8 the fence here. Cattle. Sheep. That's what is was for. Never knew this
9 is going to be happening. They live right where the mill was. Somehow one
10 day plan goes chapter settles. Okay. You all have to move. Where do we
11 move? Right across -- right across.

12 Promises were made. Electric. Good road. Never
13 happened. Never happened. They moved. Never happened -- nobody
14 looked at them. They live way back in there. The only road was up the road
15 here, across and over the hill along the ridge. So things like that we went
16 through.

17 So lot of chapters was involved, but I heard somebody say
18 nobody came around. These mines came through here without even waking
19 us up. We just know there was drilling like a carnival here. They had lights
20 on Big Reds. They leave their pond behind. Lost sheeps, cattles. I mean,
21 it was a rough life.

22 But all a sudden these mines came up. So we got to go
23 somewhere with it in a better way and with some handshaking. I mean, that's
24 the only way to solve it. Other than that it's a ongoing thing.

25 And I appreciate you all coming. I know gas is high now
26 and roads are smooth. And thank you all (Translation of Native language

1 spoken: to everyone that showed up here at the meeting). And ladies here,
2 thanks for showing up. We really -- well I kind of knew what was going on
3 here, but really not paying attention because just head home and -- and this
4 is part of my fault, not coming to the meetings and maybe hang with Larry like
5 we did back in high school.

6 I'm going to tell on you, Larry.

7 Where's Annie, too? I want to tell on Annie, too.

8 (Translation of Native language spoken: Thank you.) I
9 thank you. Although just kind of make it short and sweet and hopefully we
10 can get somewhere with this. Hopefully. And like I said, I was -- my parents
11 were a permittee holder. Grandparents was a permittee holder back there.
12 And where am going with that now?

13 I went to the ranch meeting. I was going to ask if they had
14 something available that maybe you all can have in -- to get into the ranch.
15 My cattle needs to live somewhere, too, you know? And we all go to -- like
16 the McDonald, to go to Lotaburger, steaks. So that's part of our revenue.
17 So I need to go somewhere with my family there, too. So you know, I'd like
18 to say please think about that.

19 And thank you. Thank you for showing up. And I'm going
20 to go ahead and introduce my brother. My other uncle didn't show today, so
21 I'll go ahead and introduce my brother Sider representing Pipeline over here
22 up the road. So thank you. You all have a good evening. We'll see you
23 all tonight again. Will we have room for this many over there?

24 Sider?

25 Thank you. (Translation of Native language spoken:
26 THANK YOU!)

1 MR. S. TOM: I didn't know I was going to say something,
2 but my other uncles didn't show today. So they're in meetings and they're a
3 part of the chapter councils, too. So they have meetings also.

4 But we grew up here in this area and I'm back there with my
5 brother Tony from Pipeline Road. And you know, everybody talks about this
6 land here. And why? Why did that dam break? Why did that dam break?
7 You guys know why it broke?

8 The reason why that dam broke, he just said right there, his
9 grandparents used to lease that land where that mill is set. They used to live
10 across on the south side. That's where we used to get your drinking water.
11 From there to where we live. That was our drinking water. And when they
12 shut that down, we had to go to Gallup to get our drinking water.

13 But that dam and that area there was traditional -- they used
14 to do a lot of traditional ceremonials there for winter and summer. Right there
15 where that dam's at, in that area of that dam. And that's a sacred place, too,
16 that mountain itself. When they were trying to round up all the Navajos they
17 used to hide up there and they used to say a lot of prayers up there. And
18 right before that, that place, that -- before that water ended there used to be a
19 burial ground there. There's some infants that were buried there from that
20 -- the elders that used to live there. So why? Now you guys know. Now
21 you know why that dam broke and caused chaos through here. It was
22 through -- it happened.

23 And here, even here, these mountains. When Annie was
24 talking about her prayers -- see these mountains, the mesas, those are
25 breasts of this earth. And that's who we pray for and who we talk to in the
26 mornings. And there's a lot of areas in this area that are used traditionally.

1 Right here in this area. Even where we live right up on top of this mesa here.
2 Right where that second mine shaft there's a lot of herbs there that we used
3 to use. And they told us to leave it. And they promised us. People will
4 come over and promise us.

5 Yes, we're going to build you that -- leave that hogan alone.
6 It's contaminated. Because I built that when I was 16 years old with my
7 grandpa. And he -- they told us to leave that alone and get out of there. So
8 this day. But 25 years now it's just sitting there waiting for somebody to come
9 over and build our hogan that I built and build a new one there. And it's just
10 sitting there. They said it's full of radiation. And a house that sits next to it
11 is the same thing, too. So they told us to move out. But nothing's ever been
12 done.

13 We been told, hey, yeah, we're going to help you people out,
14 this community, all of us that live here. Nothing's been done. They just
15 made their money and off they went and left us with nothing.

16 But you know, I say this, when you work in these mines,
17 there's 524 mines, uranium mines still that are not claimed. And people
18 come over and say hey, that's -- let's just work on this one area and cement
19 -- put cement on it and just cover it up. Why don't you just -- this is an idea
20 for you guys: Why don't you guys take it to one whole place and take care
21 of it all at one time instead of having it in all different areas? And people
22 complaining to you and saying hey, you know, do that for an idea. Make
23 something up where it can be all in one place, not in different areas where
24 people will complain. Put it in one area. And that's all I have to say.

25 MS. HOOD: Okay. I would like to have Jonathan Perry.

26 MR. PERRY: Good afternoon, everyone. (Translation of

1 Native language spoken: Acknowledging my leader). Mr. Nez, good
2 afternoon. Commissioners, good afternoon again. Thank you for inviting me
3 to speak to this body here today. I do appreciate the time given.

4 My name is Jonathan Perry and I live up the road not too far
5 from here, a few miles towards Crownpoint. And there are several points I
6 want to make today to our Commissioners. And I know earlier I kind of
7 started yelling, but I'm not a really -- I'm not a mean person unless you get on
8 my nerves with my people here.

9 So it's really hard because everyone here has been telling
10 the same account over and over and they have to go to meetings all the time.
11 You have government officials that come in almost every year and they have
12 to repeat their stories over and over again. And it hurts. It hurts them to
13 think about it. It hurts them to think of not only the pain they're going through
14 as individuals, but the people they lost, the family members that are no longer
15 here, those that can't make it out to events like this because of physical
16 disabilities. It's really hard.

17 And this base that we're here on today is very sacred in
18 terms of the people that are here, the community members. Earlier the
19 gentleman stated that the medicinal plants, the location, that's really important
20 when coming to a place like this, acknowledging our culture, acknowledging
21 who we are as Dine, the way we do things here, how we conduct business.
22 It's not the same as when you go off to cities or other places across the
23 country. When you come and you visit us here, make sure and please
24 acknowledge and respect our space as Dine. Make sure that we have time
25 to speak. Make sure that we have that ability to share what's really on our
26 mind, on our hearts.

1 As NRC Commissioners it's very important that you are
2 here, and I do appreciate you taking out time, but there's a responsibility in the
3 Federal Government. All of us here as Dine, even our past leaders and those
4 that came before us, upheld our treaty, 1868. We were here. Our Code
5 Talkers went off to war. They protected America. They came back. We
6 still have veterans here today who did that and who called -- who took that
7 call. We were asked to support and defend America. They've done it.

8 The other part of that, of the Treaty of 1868 needs to be
9 upheld by the Federal Government, and that's the protection of our people
10 here. Far too long we've been hurting. Far too long the companies and
11 corporations have been coming in here. They've been applying for licenses.
12 They've been applying for permits. They've been coming in identifying areas.
13 We would not go to a church and say we're going to build something in the
14 middle of the church. We would not dream of going to Arlington Cemetery
15 and desecrating that area of the cemetery. And that's the same respect that
16 we want here.

17 The gentleman here stated earlier, down there there's burial
18 sites up in the areas when they were rounding up Navajos in the 1800s.
19 There's areas that they stuck out, at that they hid, that they protected. Those
20 sites are still here. Those stories are still with us. The ceremonies that we
21 still practice, the songs that are connected, the stories are still there with us.

22 Our umbilical cords that we bury for our children to come
23 home to identify where they're from is still there with us. To this day a lot of
24 our people still have that. Our young people, the young gentleman that
25 spoke earlier talked about his place here when he grew up. He's going to
26 carry that throughout his whole life. His siblings, his relatives that are now

1 grown are going to carry that with them their whole life. So I'm asking NRC
2 uphold the treaty as a part of the Federal Government that you are. Protect
3 the Navajo people here.

4 The other thing I wanted to mention is that as visitors here
5 to this region we often talk about Navajo Nation or Navajo Reservation, but
6 what I want to talk about is looking back generations and generations of our
7 people that live in this region this is Navajo land, the Napeequa.—Din4
8 Bik4yah. We have stories that go back multi generations here. I'm
9 mentioning this because I want you to recognize and acknowledge not only
10 laws that exist within the books, but our Dine fundamental law that exists with
11 our people here as well.

12 The four components that you bring up: customary law,
13 traditional law, common law, natural law, these laws that we incorporated that
14 not only our grandparents, our great-grandparents, but going back centuries
15 -- these laws never changed. Today you have laws that are being introduced
16 by Congress. They get changed every few years. Dine fundamental law
17 never changes. It's been the same as it's always been in the past and it is
18 today.

19 So I'm asking you to consider that. And in that I'm saying
20 that to respect our relationship here and what we call (Translation of Native
21 language spoken: Kinship relationship to everything), our relatives, our
22 system of relationship, not only with the people here, but with the land, the air,
23 the water, these elements that make up who we are and our position, our place
24 on this earth. Because every person here, every person that's sitting in this
25 cha'a'oh, this Shade House, has a purpose and has a place. We each have
26 a value. I know the three of you understand that.

1 Now in doing so the Navajo Nation also has two other laws
2 I want you to guys to be aware of. The Dine Natural Resources Protection
3 Act, which was passed in 2005, is very important. We call that the DNRPA.
4 And that's to say that the Navajo Nation wants satisfactory cleanup of all its
5 sites before any discussion begins on any new proposed mining, whether
6 that's conventional mining or in-solute mining, or ISR as some of you might
7 call it.

8 The other one is the Radioactive Transportation Act of 2012,
9 the standards that we need to have in order to carry out these plans that you
10 are going to be presenting. How is that going to look to Navajo people, to
11 Navajo Nation, our leaders here, the position that they have with at the -- to
12 be at the table for these discussions, to respect our leader (Translation of
13 Native language spoken: Our leadership), to respect our other people here?
14 We have other leaders here as well. They might not be elected officials, but
15 these are leaders. They came. They're representing their communities.

16 We have people not only from here, from this region in
17 Shiprock. You have people from Tachee, Blue Gap. You have people from
18 Cameron. All of these locations across Navajo Nation. We are all
19 concerned about this.

20 There was that report and I'm wondering how NRC, if you
21 would report back on the GAO report from May of 2014 identifying the
22 shortcomings on why -- why do the people here have to hear updated five-
23 year plans every single year? Why is it failing? It's a failure. This report
24 stated that the IHS, U.S. EPA, NRC, Department of Energy, all of these
25 agencies are failing the Navajo people. But we don't hear reports about how
26 are they changing it? What are they doing different? We don't hear that.

1 So I'm hoping that after today you would come back and tell
2 us these are the corrections we're going to make, this is the course of action
3 we're going to do. That's more important.

4 And part of that, too, is the cycle. Now as individuals I want
5 you to look out at everybody right here. Look at everyone. Do you see
6 value in everyone here? Yes, you do. So do I. And I see value in the three
7 of you as well as individuals. But let me tell you, we can talk clean up, but
8 we're not being honest if we grant new permits. We're not being honest when
9 we grant new licenses. Whether that's in another location up the road down
10 here -- and let me tell you why. Because all of this is connected. Okay?

11 Earlier Larry, Mr. King brought up the HRI issue. That's
12 true. Because NTUA, our tribal utility authority that manages our water
13 infrastructure, passed a resolution years ago stating that they are in opposition
14 of ASA -- UA -- or I'm sorry, SUA-1508 because all of this area serves over
15 10,000 Navajo people for water. And it also serves multiple communities
16 going in that direction, northeastern direction. So NTUA was aware and they
17 said no, please don't do it. We don't support it.

18 So in being honest and going forward and saying that you're
19 going to help the people, the other part of that is making sure that no new
20 mining happens. Please.

21 It's really hard because for years I've been fortunate for my
22 relatives here and across Eastern Agency to look at me as a leader. I'm a
23 chapter official and I'm a former council delegate. But the work was always
24 hard because we don't get that time with the federal entities. We need better
25 communication. Our support for the Navajo communities need to be
26 improved.

1 These 5-year plans, 10-year plans that exist are failures
2 because number one component, our people here should be at the table at all
3 times. They are not. Some time, most of the time we get plans where there
4 -- it's being pushed on our communities. That's not the way it should be.
5 Okay?

6 Earlier Shadek, my older sister, mentioned the Uranium
7 Commission. When President Shelly was in office I remember him putting
8 that task force together. And I attended all of those meetings. When I
9 became a delegate that was my first legislation that I introduced, the Uranium
10 Commission. And Delegate Nez, or Mr. Nez at that time was delegate and
11 he was the second one to sign with me. I remember I walked out of the office
12 and he was coming in. So we talked about it.

13 But that legislation was important because it allowed the
14 people here to sit and be involved. That was the main intent behind doing
15 that. It needs to be revisited.

16 Mr. Nez, please revive that commission. Make that a
17 priority. (Translation of Native language spoken: Please my leader).

18 But aside from that, going forward I want to also
19 acknowledge that there was a proclamation in October that was signed by our
20 tribal leadership. October 21st of 2021, the proclamation by President Nez,
21 Vice President Lizer, Speaker Damon at the 24th Council, they acknowledge
22 there's human rights violation by NRC, violation of our right to life, our right to
23 property, our right to health, our right to our culture, our right to be Dine.

24 Human right violation is very, very serious topic. Whether
25 you're talking about the American Declaration of Right (audio interference),
26 whether you're talking about the United Nation Declaration of Rights of

1 Indigenous People, or you're talking about our own Dine fundamental rights
2 here in this area.

3 So in that proclamation and with the support of various
4 communities -- and I keep getting closer because is this making more noise.
5 So it's not (audio interference). But there's chapters, over 80 chapters that
6 signed resolutions and passed that supporting what the Eastern Navajo Dine
7 uranium mining and what the proclamation said.

8 There is also resolutions from the school boards, McKinley
9 County, the BIE schools, other entities that exist in our community saying do
10 not approve new licenses. You see the devastation that we have. We don't
11 want to carry it on for another generation.

12 And I'm going to plead with the three of you because the
13 Federal Indian policy is still genocide. It still exists very much today as it did
14 in 1864. Our young people are still being born with health discrepancies.
15 Our people cannot even rely on IHS for quality health care. These were all
16 entrusted in the Treaty of 1868, but the Federal Government failed us.

17 Now in this we're asking, recognize our human rights,
18 recognize that we are individuals, and recognize that the Federal Indian policy
19 is grossly inhumane. And you three, along with the other Commissioners,
20 can go in the right direction with that. You can end racism. You can end
21 environmental genocide destruction with your choices, and we're asking you
22 to do that. Please revoke license SUA-1508, protect our people, do what you
23 can to make sure that these plans are going to be functional and that they are
24 going to benefit our people. That's what we're asking for. And look at -- into
25 the eyes and faces of everyone here of the journey that they've been through
26 so far in life, how hard it's been.

1 You're seeing how our average spring day is here. From
2 February to May this is how it looks. I woke up this morning and said it's a
3 nice spring day. Some of us get accustomed to it. But even the wind is
4 holy, our holy people that's acknowledged, that has its purpose. It's trying to
5 clean out. It's trying to take away the evilness. Maybe they knew you were
6 here. Maybe they're trying to say this is what we want you to do. Get
7 everything out from these communities.

8 So with that, Commissioners, with respect, I do ask for you
9 to please make the necessary choices and changes that will impact everyone
10 here and their relatives, all the communities in the Eastern Agency
11 (Translation of Native language spoken: Thank you leaders). I thank you
12 again for taking time out today. Thank you.

13 MS. HOOD: Thank you so much, Jonathan.

14 I would like to have Chris Shuey come up.

15 MR. SHUEY: (Translation of Native language spoken:
16 Greetings everyone, greetings to our leadership here and thank you.) It's
17 good to see you again.

18 Members of the Commission, none of us remember (audio
19 interference) Nuclear Regulatory Commission visit this area. Madam
20 Director and my friend and mentor Edith here. I have just a few things to say
21 that will focus on some of the health studies that we have done, but I wanted
22 to take you back a little bit to the history of the tailings site up here.

23 It was the -- Section 2 was acquired by United Nuclear back
24 in 1969 for about \$29,000. And the records are in the McKinley County
25 courthouse. In 1974 they prepared the site. There were people, as one of
26 our friends had mentioned, who had been living there because it had been

1 state land that the state leased to BIA, which leased to grazers from the area.
2 But they were not -- had title to the land, so United Nuclear came in to prepare
3 the site and the people had to leave.

4 The dam was built in '74 and '75, a clay core facility on the
5 site of the arroyo, which was not an appropriate place for any kind of long-
6 term management and containment of radioactive waste. It would not be
7 permitted today. The tailings spill had multiple causes including differential
8 settlement at that transition zone between the starter dam, which was
9 overladen, both on the bedrock and on the alluvium of the pipeline arroyo.
10 But operational errors occurred. The south pond was overfilled. It's
11 freeboard was supposed to be limited to five feet; it was two feet. There were
12 cracks in the dam that were photographed a year before the spill. These
13 things all contributed to that.

14 It's been alluded to that people were taken aback by the spill
15 and people walked in the river not knowing and they were exposed to that
16 battery acid that Teri Keyanna talked about. It had a pH of one and a half.
17 That caused burns on the skin. But all the potential and actual health effects
18 were not -- were just ignored and really not even attentive to -- by the federal
19 agencies.

20 The work that we have done -- and when I say we, I'm
21 talking about my organization, Southwest Research and Information Center in
22 partnership with our colleagues at the University of New Mexico. We started
23 to be able to find the federal money needed to study the health of the people
24 around these areas, but it was probably 20 to 30 years too late. We should
25 have been doing it then.

26 But what we have seen since then is startling. People ask

1 us -- I'm part of the Navajo Birth Cohort Study staff and people ask us wait a
2 minute, you guys have found uranium in newborn babies? Yes. Before that
3 nobody thought that the heaviest of metals on the face of the earth could go
4 beyond the placenta. It does. And unfortunately those concentrations
5 increase in the first year of the child's life. We have seen as a result of 1,800
6 women and children in our study that there is a widespread increase in
7 uranium and other metal concentrations in people's blood and urine
8 throughout the Navajo Nation. It's a cross-sectional study, so we accept
9 anybody who comes in. You don't have to live in a uranium-impacted area.
10 We've had to develop reference levels for metals in biological fluids that
11 exceed that of the national NHANES studies that the CDC does every three
12 years. Only about 14 percent of the people in our study live within five
13 kilometers of an abandoned uranium mine. So there's exposure going on all
14 the time out here and that's what makes this history so unbearable.

15 In this particular area as a result of doing a cross-sectional
16 study called the Dine Project in which we surveyed 1,304 people; one of the
17 largest studies ever attempted on Navajo, and we got -- collected blood and
18 urine from 267 of them as volunteers, we've essentially found that the closer
19 that you live to mine waste, the higher your risk of hypertension, kidney
20 disease, especially during the mining period, and autoimmunity. And we're
21 finding that there's this combination of metabolic chronic disease that is
22 pervasive among people who live within these mining districts.

23 We don't necessarily follow cancer; not that it's not
24 important, but it's absolutely critical to understand that the mines are
25 contributing to the extensive health disparities that already exist in
26 marginalized communities like these.

1 It's important to know that -- and part of this exposure is from
2 the -- we believe from the redeposition of materials off these waste sites.
3 These sites have sat around for several decades. They have weathered and
4 they have developed a thin layer of super fine sub-micron particles on the top.
5 And sub-micron -- a micron is a million of a meter and it's very small. But you
6 can inhale these things deep into your lungs, into the breathing sacs of the
7 lungs. They don't get caught up here in the upper respiratory tract. And
8 they can lead to cardiopulmonary toxicity that we've observed now in
9 laboratory animal studies.

10 This is why it's absolutely critical, as Jonathan Perry and
11 others were noting, to figure out how to speed up the process of cleaning up
12 these 500-and-some-odd mines. And as one of the gentleman said, it makes
13 a lot more sense to try to consolidate mine waste into a few sites because
14 they need to be monitored forever, right, rather than piecemealing each of
15 these places that -- it's going to take 100 years -- our great-grandchildren are
16 going to be -- maybe sitting here in 100 years talking about the same thing if
17 we don't come up with a comprehensive plan that the Federal Government
18 gets in back of.

19 Let me remind you that uranium was located on the Navajo
20 Nation and in the southwest and the Colorado Plateau as a result of the
21 government's need for fissile material for the Manhattan Project, later for the
22 Nuclear Weapons Program. All of this came from that point.

23 This mine, the Northeast Church Rock Mine, was actually
24 an early contract between UNC and the Atomic Energy Commission in '65 and
25 was part of an agreement between Santa Fe Pacific Railway and the Navajo
26 Nation that allowed uranium development on odd numbered sections back in

1 1959. And that was signed off on by BIA. And so we have federal
2 responsibility that has never really been acknowledged and accepted.

3 We have lots of folks that we've collaborated with, with the
4 Navajo Nation, with U.S. EPA, NRC, DOE, and largely good people. But it's
5 really at the highest level of the Federal Government that action needs to be
6 taken to give the justice that people in these communities need. And this is
7 just one of many that we've worked with.

8 You know, I'll just leave with a comment that -- I've been out
9 here for 40 years. That picture of the dam break that my colleague Paul
10 Robinson took the day after the tailings spill is the only one you can find. If
11 somebody else can come up with a ground level picture of the breach, we'd
12 like to see it. But during that time I always felt as kind of an environmental
13 assister to these communities' guilt going back home to Albuquerque, my little
14 comfortable home. And I didn't have a tailings pile or a couple of mine waste
15 out in the back yard.

16 So out of that adversity comes opportunity, and that
17 opportunity for you folks is to bring this message back to the Federal
18 Government, to your own staff and back in the scoping meeting in March of
19 2019 that the staff was at in Gallup. I said to them get out of the Twin Towers
20 of Mordor -- that's your building -- and come out here and walk the arroyo.
21 See the force of Mother Nature and the water that comes through here. We
22 have a very serious problem of guaranteeing that that repository will not fail if
23 this plan goes through.

24 And so I stand with the community to recommend that you
25 withdraw the EIS and commit to a multi-agency, multi-jurisdiction process to
26 find solutions to this uranium mine waste problem with people from the

1 communities at the table. Otherwise, like I said, we're going to be talking
2 about this -- our grandkids are going to be talking about this 100 years from
3 now. Yea.

4 MS. HOOD: Thank you, Chris. Next one.

5 MS. H. NEZ: (Translation of Native language spoken:
6 Yes, greetings to all of you here. We came to this meeting. We came here
7 a long time ago and many areas where there's impact of the same type of --
8 of various type of hazard to human health risks that we've, we maybe
9 unprivileged peoples (audio interference). Let me introduce myself first, I am
10 from Black Mesa, Blue Gap Tachee is where I'm from. A plateau mesa like
11 This table -- like mesa -- Black Mesa is like this table. With valleys stretching
12 in different direction among other mesas. There are many, many people in
13 that area. Different ethnic groups of people, there for work, or hold business,
14 some people don't seem to care too much about the environment any more
15 therefore it's difficult. We are in an area where it's difficult -- has difficulty
16 because people act and think differently as well and impacts from this area is
17 hard to deal with the issues without being educated on it.

18 I am thankful that you are here. You are my children's and
19 including people that are from the Federal Government. You finally thought
20 of us down here. Please listen to those people that are speaking. From
21 there you're able to take this information and do something and assist us in
22 the cleanup of the uranium waste risks and impacts. And thank you.

23 My son Jonathan, the president, is here. We are -- your
24 last name is -- your last name make you our son. Thank you for being here.
25 We have been impacted by the environmental injustice that is occurring at this
26 time. You are here. I am Helen Nez. This is my daughter and this is my

1 son. I have a son that lives out of the Reservation. I have one sister. We
2 are -- we have had a lot of shortcomings. And many of my children are gone,
3 them they passed away, who were past the age of fifty years. This is the only
4 children that I have right now that are living. The others have been -- have
5 deceased. It's very hard for me.

6 It really moves me when -- it's emotional when I hear people
7 speak about the impacts from the uranium mine. But all these concerns are
8 very emotional, the very aspects of hazards in the body. I want to see this
9 happen. That the meeting does have a positive outcome. I want to see that
10 you are able to help us from the Federal Government. You have to sit and
11 listen and turn this into something that is useful for the people that you are
12 listening to.

13 Where is it that you will be able to contribute? Just like this
14 Black Mesa that I'm talking about, these the Navajo people, the other Native
15 Americans that we live with beyond. We live with the Hopi Tribes and we
16 have the White people as well as the White Mountain Apaches that we live
17 with and we're intertwined. We are the Navajo people. We want to be able
18 to see this cleanup, because we have compassion for life, the -- compassion
19 and reverence for both people and the earth. Why can't we come together
20 for to work together and see a result-- in the prior years we have come together
21 to really sit down and see how we can contribute to create a plan that will be
22 used to initiate cleanup of the mess.

23 The Blue Gap area has some uranium mines as well.
24 We've made some mistakes in the past. We don't know how to carry out a
25 cleanup, those of us that live out there. It's very emotional for me because a
26 lot of my children have passed on. I remember them during their birthdays.

1 I just cry because it's emotional for me.

2 What kind of impact are out there, and we are just we sitting
3 around and waiting. You federal government didn't tell us that this was risky.
4 We didn't get the safety aspects of uranium mines. Nobody told us this. It
5 was so -- it was the Federal Government that took the resources and paid
6 others for money. We feel -- I feel people are more empathic I know we Din4
7 are that we're more compassionate than that.

8 I think all of us in the prior years when the exploration was
9 happening --that we should have ask questions about what is it that they want
10 that brings them here? We should have sat down with them to determine
11 what they were looking for. We want to know the miner's historical past -- we
12 want to go back and find the historical issues that would have been a problem,
13 but we didn't. We have educated people here that will see to these issues
14 because they're educated.

15 Now we're at the table. We are now sitting with an
16 overwhelming problem. So we need to come together to do this together so
17 we can create a successful program, projects that will clean up our land. We
18 went to Fort Sumner on the Long Walk because the federal government
19 alleged that we were infringing on others. Our medicinal medicine are
20 disappearing, we were not able to get the medicine. Some herbs are very far
21 to find; we went to the ocean for herbs. We were told that we were
22 marauding tribes. We were able to come together with other Indian tribes to
23 be able to save our own people. These are some issues that we live through.
24 It was overwhelming at that time.

25 I am 80-plus years old. Maybe 12 years -- maybe this
26 meeting will be lost to my mind because I'm getting older, we better record all

1 this. I don't know if this meeting is even being recorded. I would like to see
2 this be -- to be recorded. I think many of you are in support of this idea.

3 We are Native people of different tribes who have lived
4 through some of the horrendous injustice we've lived through here. There's
5 people living all the way from the beaches of Western Pacific Ocean and more
6 people up this way. We are compassionate peoples. We are a people of
7 reverence. We believe in the sacredness of the natural resources. Maybe
8 that is why we are talking about it and you don't understand what we mean.
9 You don't understand us, but if you can pick it up so we both can pick up what
10 we each mean, you and I want to understand each other's -- we have to talk.
11 That's the only way that we will all understand each other.

12 Our children, our future generation, that is a big, big issue
13 that I want you to take home with you. Our children. No matter how much
14 you've cried about it, you can never overstep these issues that I feel they will
15 live with if nothing becomes of this meeting. It will always remain, whatever
16 mistake you've made or leaving something incomplete. These leaders are
17 presenting to you what they believe will assist in the cleanup.

18 My father although he was not educated went to work.
19 There are times when you feel like you're just defeated and there are things
20 that are not done the way you want it done. These are -- you should take
21 care of these things that are in our way. Now we've got uranium. When it
22 first came how come we didn't get any paper? And they all moved away
23 without letting us know. Why did they leave in such a hurry? So from my
24 point of view that is a real concern for me. How come? Where is those
25 papers that show us why they left and how -- and what their names were?
26 They should redo -- do things to correct things for us. They should make it

1 -- some changes for us so that our lives are much better, somebody that can
2 speak to us in a good way and our children and my grandkids and my relatives
3 and my leaders, people from all distance you're coming from. It is hard. It
4 is difficult.

5 We don't do things like that. When we do stuff -- when
6 we're going to go for yucca to wash our hair, we know how to do that. And
7 we know how to weave and to make rugs. That's all we dig for. We don't
8 go -- to go dig down into the ground and we don't do those things. That's
9 why it's difficult for us to understand these things from here.

10 I feel like I could talk for another -- and so my throat -- and
11 for me to talk from a distance so it does affect me. So that's all I want to say.
12 Thank you, my children. Thank you.)

13 MS. HOOD: Thank you. Grace. (Translation of Native
14 language spoken: Your comments will close at 5PM according to our agenda
15 keeper, so make your talk shorter.)

16 MR. HOOD: (Translation of Native language spoken:
17 Greetings my people/relatives.) I'd like to say hello, my relatives and all my
18 young fellows and young women and all of you that have come. Tony is my
19 name.

20 Singer of songs, before the Bureau of Indian Affairs
21 threatened my parents with jail time for me to go to school. So English is my
22 second language so bear with me. Sometimes I get tongue twisted.

23 I am a Vietnam-era veteran. I have two older brothers that
24 went to Vietnam. They are still in the battle from Agent Orange. There is a
25 list of our veterans right there. Take time to look at it. (Translation of Native
26 language spoken: Thank you for being here.) Today, I was scheduled to go

1 in for surgery.

2 They found some polyps in my kidney and a crystalized
3 object in my kidney. It might be uranium or gold. So it's a good thing they
4 postponed my appointment and I have another day to fight.

5 I work in the uranium (inaudible) for 11 years and I work on
6 the surface and down in the mine. I was involved in a rock fall. Some rocks
7 came down and pinned me in a squatting position like this.

8 I don't know how long, but when I came to I had a 2x3x2
9 boulder sitting on my back and my coworker was a fresh recruit and I told him
10 to take a lag, and it's a 3x12x6-foot piece of lumber, I told him to put that
11 lumber under the rock and try to pry it up, but was to no avail.

12 So he went to the lunchroom and brought back some
13 people. Four guys had to push that rock over and they dug me out. So it's
14 true, what doesn't kill you makes you stronger.

15 When I was small in the late early '50s, some geologists
16 came around and back then, way back, our elders used to bury people in rock
17 crevices and fill it with rocks and sticks, apparently that archeologist, geologist,
18 found that body and he dug it out and he brought it back and it really made my
19 grandma mad.

20 She said get that son of a bitch out of here. But that's mild
21 compared to what she said in Navajo. So we have been exposed to that
22 desecration of burials, desecration of archeological sites, desecration of our
23 shrines. I have witnessed it.

24 I used to herd sheep here. My parents, they live right here
25 near the mine. My dad had COPD and my mom had a piece of her ascending
26 colon removed. There were some polyps.

1 So it's true, (Translation of Native language spoken: it's
2 dangerous,), it's dangerous. (Translation of Native language spoken: It's a
3 very aggressive serious and chronic ailment), very dangerous. So thank you
4 for coming out here, the Commissioners, and everybody.

5 We need to get rid of this, not prolong it. I live up here and
6 my children used to walk to the bus stop and that's a contaminated area over
7 here now.

8 (Translation of Native language spoken: It's true it's a health
9 hazard and it's here within our community.) I would like to thank my mom,
10 Shima. (Translation of Native language spoken: You gave a very illuminating
11 well prepared comment here; very thankful for it.) and then all the other people
12 that spoke before me. So I just wanted to take this time out to say a few
13 words. Thank you.

14 MS. HOOD: Go ahead. Thompson.

15 MR. BELL: (Translation of Native language spoken:
16 Greetings). Thank you for putting me on the list. My name is Thompson
17 Bell. That's my brother, Peterson, and my wife there, Rose. She deals with
18 a lot of stuff that I deal with.

19 One of the things that a lot of my family don't talk about is
20 the health issues, because mine is different. I don't know if it's the same as
21 theirs, but mine is a skin issue.

22 Even IHS or RMCH, they don't recognize my issues. Why
23 it's always lung disease? But I was going to make it a word picture, but there
24 is a museum in Grants about what a uranium mine looks like.

25 One time I took my family over there and, here, I told them
26 this is too clean. But I have been in the mine for five years. I worked with

1 my brother there and Tony would be working up there in the slopes and I will
2 be down here fixing things, because I was a mechanic, but my brother he
3 stood right there where the wind was.

4 The wind was constantly like this where they called it a
5 station where the shaft comes down and they'll be the, the cage, which is the
6 elevator, and you'd be standing right there taking all the supplies in and I'll
7 take the stuff back in the back to the mechanic shop, but he stood there and
8 that's what I think his health issues are.

9 You know, my sister couldn't talk much because the
10 allergies is getting to her right now. Her name is Jackie, way in the back in
11 the brown. That's my sister.

12 She can't really talk right now because her asthma is kicking
13 in. A lot of the things that happened to her could be the results of what this
14 uranium has done to our bodies.

15 Right now, she adopted six children, six. Many times we'd
16 never think about other children because we are busy doing our life, working,
17 but she had an opportunity to affect six lives, but my, myself, my wife and I,
18 we adopted four boys, and then my daughter and the other daughter, she
19 adopted one, Teri, and then my other daughter adopted two.

20 So why can't we take an opportunity to allocate some money
21 to help get all of these stupid uranium mines cleaned up?

22 A lot of times you talk to a family that says how did manage
23 to budget for your family? We just did it. That's what they say. They don't
24 say we have this much money for him and her.

25 No, families are made right there and the money comes
26 when you make it, and you make it happen. So if the NRC is the one that is

1 making EPA not help us, then it's time that we opened that door.

2 We, as a family, know that generally will not hold because
3 me, my brother, know how this water can come down. See, the three mesas.
4 When they get rain the perky here fills up and it tears up everything down the
5 road.

6 It buried a 16-foot pipe that the mine put in for a bridge. At
7 first the pipe builders only burial place and then the whole weight of it just
8 shoved it right into the ground and here is only four feet sticking out. That's
9 how powerful the water is.

10 On top of that, if you see this little trailer out here, that's
11 considered a 1,250 pound trailer. Why are we putting an elephant on there
12 and trying to drive it around when we do the same thing with that tailing and
13 put on that mineral site that's already covered and now we're going to uncover
14 it so we can put some more stuff on it.

15 We know what's gotten underneath there. We know what
16 that line is going happen, what's going to happen to it. We don't have to be
17 educated. We know what weight does.

18 If you guys look at things like the Hoover Dam, the Grand
19 Canyon Dam, those weights of the water causes earthquakes. People don't
20 realize that. That's probably what will happen to that thing, too.

21 We do not know what the weight of things do. We're not
22 under there. So when we take time to try to tell people something, like
23 grandma here was talking, why do we get taken to the Fort Sumner.

24 It was the government that did it to us. Why are we waiting
25 for the government to help us again? Please help us by the sense of (audio
26 interference). Why, is it the color of our skin? Are they just something that

1 we can throw away?

2 No, let them all die off and maybe we can be quiet then. Is
3 that where this kind of situation is going to lead to? I remember Mr. Ben
4 Shelly standing, sitting at an office down in Gallup, he said get this tailing out
5 of Navajo Nation.

6 Oh, okay, we'll move it right across. And that's what
7 happened. That's what they are wanting to do now. I know Tony Tom lives
8 down the road there and all that dust is going to hit him again.

9 This is not far enough for us. I'm sorry to say it's not only
10 one pile; there is a second pile. What are you going to do with the second
11 pile? We haven't talked to you about that.

12 This is the first pile. Nobody is looking at things in the
13 sense of future. They are waiting for us, like I said, to slowly die off.

14 In 2012 my mom died, lung complications. Guess what?
15 She said this thing will never be resolved and she died. I can still smell her
16 tortillas cooking in their kitchen. That was my mom.

17 So I am just telling you people what are we waiting for? We
18 are waiting for them, because I hear EPA saying what is NRC going to say
19 first. That's what I hear. I don't see them saying, oh, we're EPA, we can do
20 this. No. Let's see what NRC says first.

21 That's where a lot of things are being held up but they, we're
22 regulated by certain things. Mr. Joe Biden can make a lot of money to do
23 with a lot of things, why don't we start making that money so we can have a
24 bigger inflation so we can help our mines get cleaned up.

25 Maybe it's a political stunt that they are here. I don't know.
26 But I'm just saying what my heart says, okay. This is me. You can say

1 things about me, but I am just saying that these are in my mind what I'm
2 thinking.

3 So, please, like my daughter, Teri, here, she gave you a
4 mine tour. I really appreciate you young people, educating themselves so
5 we can talk to these people. I thank you for that.

6 Back then when I was growing up, we didn't know what
7 these words were. We didn't know what the -- see, even when we tried to
8 tell them we got exposed, the land is exposed, oh, that's no problem, that's
9 okay, and here the right word we are supposed to use was contaminated.

10 Even that they were on a scale to a one to ten you guys are
11 only a one because you're just exposed. We didn't know we were up there,
12 eight, and nine, ten.

13 See, even that. We don't use the right words then we are
14 just a by-something, you know, just get out of the way, you don't matter. So
15 that's all I have to say, because, why. What else can we say?

16 Maybe you could have came three years ago, four years
17 ago, ten years ago, but why now, you know. So help us. Thank you.

18 DIRECTOR SHIRLEY: Ladies and gentlemen,
19 (Translation of Native language spoken: my relatives), just so you know that
20 we are going to be wrapping up here at 5:00, so (Translation of Native
21 language spoken: it's getting to five almost).

22 So we have a few more speakers and then the speakers,
23 you can kick me later, but two minutes and on topic would be appreciated.
24 Thank you.

25 MS. HENIO: Hi. Good afternoon, Commissioners and
26 Navajo Nation. My name is Grace Henio. I live here for the lifetime that I

1 have been here put on this earth.

2 Commissioners, all I want to say is, please, listen to us.

3 Listen to my family. We have so many health issues on this because of the

4 uranium pile that we live in.

5 Do we want to leave? No, we don't want to leave this

6 beautiful land that we came to. We were born and raised here and we love

7 this land and we are not about to leave.

8 Some of our families have left already, but we want to stay

9 here and we are asking for help. We want you guys to clean up this toxic

10 waste and get it off our land, please.

11 I have grandkids who have asthma. I've got brothers and

12 sisters who have health issues. I've got my mom who died of cancer. This

13 is not a laughing matter. Clean our air. Clean our plants. Clean

14 everything around here. That's all I ask.

15 The other thing I also would like to say is, you know, toxic

16 waste does not belong here on the Indian Reservation. It's toxic to our

17 health, air, animals, plants, and our water.

18 So listen, please, remove it. From God's ears to my heart

19 I am begging you, please, remove it. Just like my brother said, Thomas,

20 Mother Earth will find a way to destroy what you guys want to put in our

21 backyard.

22 You are talking about a contamination repeat again. The

23 floods here are very drastic. They are going to demolish what you guys are

24 going to put in our backyard.

25 You guys are going to have a repeat, not only that, we've

26 got, the first time when this mine, I mean the waste broke, what has happened,

1 it went down the ditch all the way down to Puerco.

2 I have friends and family that live in Arizona whose family
3 have passed away because of cancer. We have got people that actually go
4 into the ditches taking a tractor, loading up dirt, and placing it into people's
5 backyards, playgrounds, baseball fields.

6 We're not going to be the only one that's, you know,
7 contaminate. Gallup is probably contaminated. The sports field,
8 everywhere. Just like now, everything is blowing. Look at our shirts.

9 Look at everything. We are all dusty. So, please, have a
10 heart. Thank you very much for listening to me.

11 MS. HOOD: Mr. Martin?

12 MR. MARTIN: If I may, Madam. (Translation of Native
13 language spoken: This one?). Okay. (Translation of Native language
14 spoken: Greetings gentlemen, greetings. Hello, all of you men and women.
15 I am from Pinedale.)

16 Larry, we stand with you brother. That's all it is.

17 Now we have been involved with this since 1979, July 16th,
18 when it broke. The first meeting we were told, we were promised, hey,
19 brother, don't worry about it, we're going to get you done in five years.

20 What the hell happened the next five years? Nothing.
21 What happened? Tonight you are going to say we are going to kick this can
22 ten more years down the road.

23 That's what you are here for, right? Hopefully you are
24 educated enough today with all of the comments that if you pack them take it
25 back, take it back to your office and get to work.

26 Environmental Protection Agency. (Translation of Native

1 language spoken: You too,) Superfund. Navajo Nation Superfund. Let's
2 get to work on it. All we hear is people fighting, fighting, fighting and nothing
3 gets done while we lose people here and my relatives from over the hill.

4 There is more water, underwater contamination issues
5 down in Pinedale. Brother Chris Shuey knows all about it, been serving the
6 chapter officially for 30 plus years and this place is going on 40 plus years.

7 Let's get it done, folks. Are we trustworthy? Are we
8 trustworthy? Are we trustworthy? Well, if you are, if you think you are, show
9 us, get this damn thing done.

10 MS. HOOD: Thank you. Mr. Robinson?

11 MR. ROBINSON: Thank you very much. (Translation of
12 Native language spoken: Greetings.) I appreciate the opportunity to talk to
13 you. Don't think we're talking about an engineered dam here.

14 This is just a pile of sand on a starter dam. No ground
15 penetrating radar. No concrete core. It's just a pile of sand on a pile of sand
16 and that is what GE is proposing as the best method.

17 No wonder people have trouble trusting the NRC who says
18 prime option, below grade, not on a flood plain, doesn't pass the test. There
19 is an operating uranium mill and disposal site in Utah on Federal land,
20 Crescent Junction, plenty of room for all of the tailings and the mine waste.

21 You don't like that, try Segundo Coal Mine north of the
22 Grants Mineral Belt, also 75-foot deep trench still being built, plenty of cover.

23 You can consolidate all of the monitoring costs at one site.
24 These operating costs are going to eat you up. This wind and this sun are
25 energy sources. We can pay for the cleanup by generating energy at the
26 sites where the cleanup is needed.

1 No sense buying gas. My car is a hybrid plug-in. You can
2 get the trucks to haul this stuff without burning gas.

3 One last thought, the EPA has refused to put a grade
4 separation in for the road that is going to carry the mine waste to the tailings
5 all under their plan. Thirty thousand trucks, 30 tons a piece, that's a million
6 tons and that's before you even find the bottom.

7 So that's a road that the kids that Tony Hood was talking
8 about take to school every day. Can't put a grade separation in, not
9 innovative technology.

10 Come on, we can try harder. We can set a higher
11 standard. People don't trust the uranium industry because they don't act like
12 good Boy Scouts. They won't put things away better than they were before.

13 You can help them. Again, thank you very much,
14 appreciate your time.

15 MS. HOOD: Thank you. Linda?

16 MS. WILLIAMS: (Translation of Native language spoken:
17 Greeting, I'm Linda Williams.) I just live like down the road along the wash
18 about 11 miles west.

19 So I just am thankful for giving me this time. The
20 Commissioners, please, I am just here to plead with you guys to help the
21 community, my people. We have been pleading with you for years and it's
22 far too, gone too far pleading with you guys.

23 It seems like it's just the cost is holding up. So there was
24 a guy that said about allocation and stuff like that, I know that is going to be
25 done, that can be done.

26 So we are, my people are really emotionally, mentally, and

1 physically affected by this and to this day I was just wondering now and every
2 day almost, we are still nervous.

3 Is it safe to cross the ditch, which we do every day. We live
4 down there. We use the wash every day, especially like now it has blown
5 into our areas. So, you know, you just wonder what do we tell our kids, it's
6 okay to play?

7 Like we used to play in the ditch when we were growing up
8 and I'm telling my kids, my grandkids, to stay out of the ditch. So we're just
9 waiting for the day for you guys to say it's safe, the waste is taken far away
10 from you guys.

11 So we are pleading with you, we are eager, and going to
12 answer. Please, I beg you, so my people, my community, will be whole again
13 and the land will be beautiful again.

14 We should be having a party, birthday party or something,
15 instead of having this issue here. So we -- It's about time we put a stop
16 somehow. Let's work together and find a way, find a solution.

17 And just like grandma, she has been at it for years and her
18 years are, she is up in her years, she wants an answer, too. So I thank you,
19 Commissioners and Mr. Nez, President Nez, thank you very much.

20 (Translation of Native language spoken: Every one of you
21 who are present, I thank you. I appreciate you. Stand strong. We stand
22 together and reunite. That's the only way it will happen and so thank you
23 again.)

24 MS. HOOD: (Translation of Native language spoken:
25 Everyone of you who are present, I thank you very much. Okay. A big
26 thank you. So we saved the best for last, Jonathan.)

1 PRESIDENT NEZ: (Translation of Native language spoken:
2 Greetings to you Edith, and greetings to you, my relatives and people. Yes,
3 thank you, to our relatives and those of you that have gathered here and Edith
4 and you stand here and your relatives, you stand for your relatives.

5 That's how this was brought together, Mr. Keyanna, and
6 those of you that live here, Red Water Pond Road community. You have
7 shown us all the information and all the proof here today.

8 You have shown us what your concerns are by speaking to
9 the federal government. Shown them what the proofs are. So you guys are
10 all working at the grassroots level to let us know what is going on.

11 Mr. Perry, thank you for giving us the information and
12 speaking up to represent your people here in the Eastern Agency and the
13 Commissioners for being here.

14 I don't know, and I apologize for being late. Many of us say
15 something about being late, which is just an excuse, however, there is a fire-
16 wild fire blazing near Flagstaff, AZ, which you know about. I was in Flagstaff.
17 There is a big fire going and we are also working on some highway, that there
18 was an accident on the highway as well.

19 So we're doing a good job. This is your day to speak and
20 talk about your concern. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission is here to
21 listen to you and you spoke to them and thank you for all of this.

22 We are very thankful and supportive of you. This is the
23 President and he is the Chair and he was appointed recently by Joe Biden,
24 the President of the United States. He was appointed by President Biden.
25 That is why he is here.

26 That is why we met here. You have asked for it. You

1 were able to get these people down here and now that you have spoke to
2 them the whole day, you have pleaded with them, and they will meet again
3 tonight and you will also be, there is another meeting this evening where I will
4 represent you again.

5 I will also present your concerns. There are so many
6 health problems related to this uranium mine and the pandemic caused the
7 virus and we are also taking some steps to bring those numbers down.

8 Also, the cancer-related issues. There are so many people
9 that passed away. So we talk about those issues and you are still working to
10 abate the problems.

11 Work with your leadership. They will know. They will
12 know what your concerns are.)

13 Now I didn't want to take too much time, I just wanted to
14 express thank you to our Navajo citizens, again, in our own language.

15 I think Jonathan Perry mentioned, you know, the Navajo
16 nation, and I probably have some time later on at the Commission meeting,
17 so I won't be too lengthy here, but there is two ways the Navajo people helped
18 keep democracy here in this globe on Mother Earth.

19 One is through our language through the Navajo Code
20 Talkers and you saw many of our veterans sitting here today as well. Who
21 honors that sacred document, that sacred agreement, the Treaty of 1868,
22 where we all agreed, right.

23 We said, hey, U.S. if you are ever in trouble the Navajo
24 people got your back, and it's supposed to be reciprocal, right, and that's what
25 you heard today.

26 Chairman, Commissioners, there is a lot of, yes, frustration,

1 and maybe there is some harsh words that were here, but it's also about
2 healing. Many of them have been living with this frustration and this anger
3 for many years.

4 Today was an opportunity to let it all out and let this dust just
5 sweep it away, and that's all a part of healing. (Translation of Native
6 language spoken: Harmony/Balance restore our kin relationship with
7 everyone, that's our teaching). That's balance and restoration, and so I
8 applaud the community for their resilience.

9 You know, we've been in an era in Indian Country called
10 self-determination for, what, Jon, over, almost 50 years? Self-determination.
11 If it's true self-determination, then let's fulfill those promises that were made.

12 But I am hopeful, Chairman, I am hopeful, Commissioners,
13 with the new Chairman here, you know, President Biden put you in that
14 position, the Navajo people came out in large numbers, as you know, to put
15 that President in the White House.

16 And you know what, ladies and gentlemen, today, as was
17 mentioned earlier by Chris, we have never seen the NRC here on Navajo land
18 and we thank you and we know there is a brighter future for us and the people
19 who live here.

20 Now this is just one of many more areas on the Navajo
21 Nation. Twenty-seven thousand square miles of land, over 500 open
22 uranium mines. As a matter of fact, Congressman Tom O'Halloran is on the
23 other side of the Navajo Nation today to tour some mine sites.

24 And so we are vast but we are strong and we are resilient
25 and we are proud and we appreciate you all coming here on a beautiful spring
26 day, is that what we heard, and this is what our Navajo people live through.

1 Just imagine, with 500 open uranium mines on a windy day
2 a lot of that is probably in the atmosphere going eastward and it's no wonder
3 we need to re-authorize and put some amendments to the Radiation Exposure
4 Compensation Act as well.

5 But that's another fight that we have to do in Congress as
6 well. But there shouldn't be no reason, it shouldn't be a money-saying that,
7 oh, it's going to cost way too much to ship it elsewhere.

8 The Navajo people in this area have lived with this, lived with
9 this for a very long time. And so we plead with you, I plead with you as well,
10 Chairman and Commissions, let's get this waste and get it way far away from
11 the Navajo Nation. Am I right, everyone?

12 All right. Well, thank you again and we'll look forward to
13 speaking with you all again this evening at the Commission meeting.
14 (Translation of Native language spoken: Thank you.).

15 So I will turn the time over to you, Chairman. I appreciate
16 you.

17 CHAIRMAN HANSON: Thank you. Thank you,
18 President Nez, and, you know, thank you all for being here today. I am
19 deeply affected by what we heard today.

20 I think someone started off, maybe it was Mr. Yazzie, it was
21 certainly Mr. Shuey over here who mentioned the historic nature of the NRC
22 Commissioners, you know, venturing out of Washington or Rockville or, you
23 know, the Two Towers of Mordor, I think somebody mentioned that, and I
24 regret that very much on behalf of past Commissions.

25 I am sorry that this is a historic occasion. It shouldn't be a
26 historic occasion for leaders of a federal agency who have the sacred trust of

1 the American people, all of the American people, to protect people and the
2 environment, to come out of our offices in Washington and hear directly from
3 people in their homes.

4 I am deeply grateful and I appreciate, President Nez, the
5 comments of your mother asking us what we can contribute, because I think
6 that is part of our responsibility as public servants to ask ourselves that every
7 day and to ensure that we are fulfilling our mission to protect people and the
8 environment.

9 I would regret very much if someone came away with the
10 impression that the three of us being here was a political stunt. I think we
11 recognize the magnitude of the issue and the decision in front of us and we
12 take it seriously and that's why we wanted to come today.

13 Again, I just want to thank everyone for sharing your time,
14 the tremendous amount of effort that has gone in. I know there was new
15 construction associated with this meeting so we could get more people in and
16 we deeply appreciate that and this opportunity for you all and for us to hear
17 your stories and to learn.

18 You know, the other comment Mrs. Nez had for us was that
19 we don't understand, and I thought, you know, she's right, I don't. As
20 someone said we're here for a day and you all live with this every day and I
21 think we have to recognize the magnitude and the importance of that.

22 But we want to understand and that's why we are here and
23 I look forward to hearing more tonight at the meeting. We are going to hear
24 more from you, Mr. President, more from you, Director Shirley and Ms. Hood,
25 among a number of others, our partners at the Environmental Protection
26 Agency and the Department of Energy.

1 I look forward to continuing our discussion. So thank you
2 very, very much again.

3 DIRECTOR SHIRLEY: Okay.

4 (Off-microphone comments.)

5 DIRECTOR SHIRLEY: Yes, we do. (Translation of
6 Native language spoken: That is the length of our meeting here my relatives
7 and people here, we are very thankful for your participation as well.) I am
8 very thankful that you are all here and we will see you again this evening.
9 Maybe she is getting ready for the meeting.

10 MS. HOOD: Okay, guests, so when you are driving out
11 when you are leaving please drive very slowly because you don't want all that
12 dust in our face. Thank you.

13 (Whereupon, the above-entitled matter went off the record
14 at 5:04 p.m.)