

Official Transcript of Proceedings
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Title: Results of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory
 Commission Draft Environmental
 Impact Statement for Proposed Disposal of
 Mine Waste from at the United Nuclear
 Corporation Mill Site in Mckinley County,
 New Mexico

Docket Number: 04008907

Location: teleconference

Date: Wednesday, December 2, 2020

Work Order No.: NRC-1229

Pages 1-106

NEAL R. GROSS AND CO., INC.
Court Reporters and Transcribers
1323 Rhode Island Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20005
(202) 234-4433

UNITED STATES NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

+ + + + +

TO PRESENT THE RESULTS OF THE U.S. NUCLEAR
REGULATORY COMMISSION (NRC) DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL
IMPACT STATEMENT (EIS) FOR PROPOSED DISPOSAL OF MINE
WASTE FROM AT THE UNITED NUCLEAR CORPORATION MILL
SITE IN MCKINLEY COUNTY, NEW MEXICO

+ + + + +

CATEGORY 3 PUBLIC MEETING

+ + + + +

WEDNESDAY

DECEMBER 2, 2020

+ + + + +

The Category 3 Meeting convened via
Teleconference, at 4:00 p.m. Eastern Time, Chip
Cameron, facilitating.

NRC PRESENT

FRANCIS "CHIP" CAMERON, Facilitator

ADAM GENDELMAN, OGC

JILL CAVERLY, NMSS

KEVIN COYNE, NMSS

KELLEE JAMERSON, NMSS

DAVE MCINTYRE, OPA

ANGEL MORENO, OCA

CHRISTINE PINEDA, NMSS

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

JESSIE QUINTERO, NMSS

JIM SMITH, NMSS

BILL VON TILL, NMSS

ASHLEY WALDRON, NMSS

ALSO PRESENT

RONNIE BEN

JOANNA MANYGOATS, Interpreter

DARIEL YAZZIE, NNEPA

CONTENTS

Introduction - Francis "Chip" Cameron, NRC.....	4
Facilitator	
Opening Prayer and Remarks - Ronnie Ben,	6
Navajo Nation EPA	
Opening Remarks - Kevin Coyne, NMSS.....	16
Draft Environmental Impact Statement	25
Overview Presentation - Ashley Waldron, NMSS,	
NRC Project Manager	
Public Comment Period.....	38
Meeting Adjourned.....	106

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

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

4:06 p.m.

MR. CAMERON: Thank you very much, Lorraine, and Yá'át'ééh. Good afternoon, everyone. Thank you for joining us. My name is Chip Cameron and I'm going to be the facilitator for today's meeting.

This is a virtual Nuclear Regulatory Commission public meeting to listen to public comments on a draft Environmental Impact Statement on the United Nuclear Corporation site in Church Rock.

We're going to try to keep the acronyms down, but one thing you will hear is you'll hear "NRC" for Nuclear Regulatory Commission. And you'll hear "EIS" for Environmental Impact Statement.

I'm going to go through the meeting process in a few minutes, but at this time I'd like to turn it over to Ronnie Bell, who is the acting director for the Navajo EPA, to say a prayer to help us all.

And, Ronnie, are you there?

(Pause.)

MR. CAMERON: Lorraine, do you have someone named Ronnie -- Ronnie Bell in line or Dariel Yazzie? Ronnie? Dariel?

(Pause.)

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

MR. CAMERON: Ronnie or Dariel, you may have your lines muted. If you unmute them, we may be able to hear you.

(Pause.)

MS. WALDRON: Lorraine, are you there?

THE OPERATOR: Yes, I'm here.

MS. WALDRON: Okay. Can you unmute -- do you have a Dariel or Ronnie Bell?

THE OPERATOR: No. If they are a guest, please press star-0.

(Pause.)

MR. CAMERON: So, we don't have Ronnie or Dariel yet. And we usually like to start these meetings with a Navajo prayer and I'm hoping that Ronnie and Dariel will be back on in a few minutes.

MR. BEN: Hello. This is Ronnie Ben.

MR. CAMERON: Hey, Ronnie Ben.

MR. BEN: Yeah. I guess I needed an additional step to do -- in order to get online.

MR. CAMERON: Okay.

MR. BEN: So, I could hear you guys. So, I can go ahead and start off with an opening prayer and just say a few words afterwards.

MR. CAMERON: That would be wonderful, Ronnie.

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

And this is Ronnie Ben. I think I said "Ronnie Bell," but it's "Ben," B-E-N-N.

MR. BEN: Just one N.

MR. CAMERON: B-E-N.

MR. BEN: That's correct.

MR. CAMERON: Okay. Thank you, Ronnie.
Go ahead.

MR. BEN: Yeah. I'd like to say a prayer in my own words, the teachings from our grandparents.

The teaching is that it's -- we have our own ways of communicating with Mother Earth and all aspects of life's ecosystem.

So, with that said, let us pray.

(Prayer in Diné.)

MR. BEN: So, thank you. Basically just thanked the Creator in allowing us to come together and share our thoughts and ideas on how we can put together a comprehensive way of doing things to carry out and continue to protect the environment.

And to add some of the other things that are -- could be of concern that -- in my experience and -- I guess I should step back and provide a little introduction so you know who is speaking to you all.

Again, my name is Ronnie Ben. I'm the acting Executive Director for Navajo Nation EPA. And

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

since my inception in 1996, I've been inspector, surface -- under the surface -- water quality NPDES -- I know there was mention about the acronyms. So, the NPDES is the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination Systems Program.

And that's where I began my work and moved over to the Hazardous Waste Program and performed some hazardous waste inspections here within Navajo Nation boundaries.

And about a little over a decade ago I've been the department manager for Surface and Ground Water Protection Department overseeing three programs; the drinking water program, we have officially primacy for the program where we do our own permitting, enforcement, and issuing and signing all permits, if you will.

And then there's also the underground injection control program where we have -- also have Class II activities primacy. And similarly, we do all the inspection and enforcement and permitting for that particular program.

And the third program is the underground - - I mean, the water quality/NPDES program where we are seeking primacy for all discharges on surface water and hopefully we can do that here in the near future.

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

So, my background, I come from a science background. My initial background is in forestry and I got my BS degree at University of California, Berkeley, early '90s and came back to -- my goal was to come back and help my people. And in doing so, I've been blessed to have some good colleagues who have become experts in their own field within the division of Navajo Nation EPA.

So, I think one of the issues in reviewing some of the EIS, which is part of my task in ensuring the EIS with my colleagues in the different -- 14 programs within Navajo Nation EPA, is that I've -- the experience that I've had in some of these is -- some of the things that are overlooked is some of the BMPs, the best management practices, in establishing some of these permit structures.

Maintenance, there's no -- sometimes it's lacking on who's going to maintain the long-term and short-term BMPs.

And I know here on Navajo there's some tailings that have been capped and there's -- now we're seeing some leaches into our groundwater.

So, somehow, somewhere the discussion does happen that that's an area that is -- would be highlighted in our priorities for review.

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

So, with that said, I'd like to say "thank you" in allowing me to say a few words and the blessings for you all. Thank you.

MR. CAMERON: Okay. Thank you very much, Ronnie. This is Chip back again and I'm just going to quickly run down the process to the meeting so that you'll be able to understand what's going to be happening.

After I'm done, I will ask Dariel Yazzie, from the Navajo EPA, to say a few words about indigenous knowledge, fundamental law in the Navajo community.

And then we're going to go to Ashley Waldron, who is the environmental project manager, for the preparation of the Environmental Impact Statement.

And she's going to give all of you an overview of it, and then eventually we're going to get out to those of you who are going to hit star-1 to sign up to speak to us.

And let me just take a few minutes to explain the meeting process. NRC has received a license amendment request from the United Nuclear Corporation to allow it to dispose of hard rock mine waste at its mill tailings site in Church Rock -- mill tailings impoundment site.

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

And, as I mentioned, Ashley Waldron is going to give you an overview of this draft EIS and the license amendment.

As a basic part of the NRC's evaluation of the license amendment request, NRC is required by its regulations to prepare an EIS that identifies potential environmental impacts that might result from granting the license amendment.

Now, the EIS is prepared under the authority of federal legislation, the National Environmental Policy Act. You may hear that referred to as "Nee-pa," N-E-P-A.

So, the NRC has prepared a draft of the EIS in order to listen to and evaluate public comments before they prepare a final EIS.

And those public comments will be considered and evaluated in the process of preparing that final EIS. So, that's one key part of the NRC evaluation of this license amendment request.

The other key part is a safety analysis. Now, that's prepared under the authority of the Atomic Energy Act and it results in a safety evaluation report.

The Safety Evaluation Report, or SER, has been completed. The draft EIS will not be completed

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

until next year sometime, but I'll let Ashley tell you about that.

Now, in the room here at the NRC, and on the phone, we have the NRC staff that are involved in the environmental analysis, but also the NRC staff that's responsible for the safety analysis and let me just introduce them.

I'll start here in the room. We have Ashley Waldron, environmental project manager. We have Ashley's co-project manager, Christine Pineda. She's here.

We have Jessie Quintero. Jessie is the branch chief of the Environmental Review and Materials Branch and that's where Ashley and Christine work. They work in that branch.

And we also have a senior NRC official here with us today and that is Kevin Coyne. He's the deputy director of the division responsible for the preparation of this Environmental Impact Statement, and Kevin is going to give you a welcome in just a few minutes. That division is the NRC Division of Rulemaking, Environmental and Financial Support.

We also have Jill Caverly here with us, who is another environmental project manager on another site.

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

On the phone from the NRC we have Kellee Jamerson. Kellee is helping us with all of the technology behind the WebEx presentation here.

And we also have Jim Smith, who is the project manager for the safety review, the SER that I just mentioned.

And we have his branch chief, Bill Von Till, who is in the Uranium Recovery and Materials Decommissioning Branch here at the NRC.

We also have Dave McIntyre. He's with our Office of Public Affairs and if people have any media interest, they can contact Dave McIntyre. And we'll try to get you his email address in a few minutes.

We also have Adam Gendelman, who's with the NRC Office of General Counsel. And finally we have Angel Moreno, who's with the NRC Office of Congressional Affairs.

So, they're here to listen to your comments, your concerns, your recommendations. They're not going to be responding to any questions tonight, but they are going to be listening very carefully so that they can evaluate what you say as part of the preparation of the final EIS and to change the draft EIS, if necessary, based on your comments.

We want to make sure that we hear from

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

everyone that wants to talk tonight. And we also want to ensure that we listen to those of you who only speak Diné.

So, accordingly, I'm not going to set a specific timeline for how long each comment could be, but I just want to let you know that after seven or eight minutes I may ask you to finish up.

You can always expand on your comments here at this meeting in written comments to the NRC, and Ashley will tell you how to do that.

Now, the second thing we want to do is we have a Diné translator with us, Joanna Manygoats. Some of you may know Joanna.

If we need translation, if you come on the phone and you start speaking in Diné, your comment, Joanna is going to listen to your comment and then she's going to give that comment back to us in English so that the NRC staff can listen to that and so that our stenographer, Sam Wojack, can capture that comment in English on the transcript, which will be available to all of you in ten days or so.

And, Joanna, can you say a few words to the people out there on how you might be able to help them? Can you say a few words in Diné to them?

(Pause.)

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

MR. CAMERON: Joanna, are you out there?
Are you there?

(Pause.)

MR. CAMERON: So, we will get Joanna back on. We were just talking to her. So, she will be back on with us.

And the NRC is doing these virtual meetings. We would love to be out there in Gallup in person, but obviously there are health issues with that all over the country. And we know that Navajo people have been hit hard with that.

So, we're doing virtual meetings, but we want to be as deferential as possible to the Navajo people.

And if we need to explain some of the technical issues that Ashley may mention in her presentation, we want to do that in Diné. So, we -- our -- we do have the technical staff -- Dariel Yazzie's technical staff with us.

And after Ashley is done, we're going to go to Dariel to see if there's anything that he and his staff want to emphasize for all of you in Diné. So, that will be happening in a few minutes.

And Dariel is also going to come on after we hear from Kevin Coyne, our senior official, to talk

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

to you about indigenous knowledge and the Navajo fundamental law.

Let me ask Kevin to say a few words to you now and then we'll see if we can get Dariel on the line.

Kevin?

MR. COYNE: Thank you, Chip. Welcome and good afternoon to everyone.

As Chip mentioned, my name is Kevin Coyne and I am the deputy director for the Division of Rulemaking, Environmental and Financial Support, which is the group responsible for the development of the draft Environmental Impact Statement.

The draft EIS is the result of the NRC staff's evaluation and the environmental impacts associated with United Nuclear Corporation's proposal for the disposal of mine waste at the adjacent mill site. Today, we are asking for your comments on that report.

It's important to note that any comments received in this webinar forum are handled in the same manner as those comments that we would receive at an in-person meeting.

Your comments presented here tonight are recorded and transcribed. The staff will review and

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

analyze them and will update the final Environmental Impact Statement report as appropriate.

Comments received during this webinar will be made available in a transcript of tonight's meeting and will be posted to the NRC's project review website shortly after the meeting.

As Chip noted, the NRC staff had planned for an in-person public meeting. Unfortunately, under the current public health emergency, these meetings cannot be held as planned.

The NRC staff is adhering to the New Mexico Governor's guidelines for public gatherings and are following similar guidance from the State to its own agencies for converting in-person meetings to a virtual format.

We are very disappointed that we won't be able to meet with you face to face and we also want to acknowledge that we understand the Navajo Nation has been hit particularly hard by the public health emergency. We want to extend our sympathy and thoughts to those affected.

Regarding the format of our meeting today, based on advice from others in the NRC that have held similar webinars, we've learned that the added requirement of video may put extra burden on servers

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

and internet connection.

So, the staff has made the presentation materials that will be presented during this webinar available on the NRC project website.

This is the United Nuclear Corporation review webpage on our public website. And if you scroll down to the bottom of that webpage, you'll see a link to draft EIS public comment and that will get you to where the slides are available.

You can download those materials and review them or follow along with the presentation on the telephone.

Finally, the NRC staff has received multiple requests to extend the public comment period for an additional 60 days and to hold public comment meetings during the evening hours.

Currently, the public comment period was set to expire December 28th. We are in the process of extending the public comment period consistent with that request and will hold an additional public meeting early next year.

Again, thank you for your time today and I'll turn it back over to Jim.

MR. CAMERON: Thank you, Kevin.

And is Joanna on?

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

THE INTERPRETER: Yes, I'm here. I'm here.

MR. CAMERON: Okay. Thank you.

THE INTERPRETER: Can you hear me?

MR. CAMERON: Yes, we certainly can.

THE INTERPRETER: Okay.

MR. CAMERON: Before I ask Dariel Yazzie to tell us about Navajo fundamental law, Joanna, could you say a few words to the people out there, in Diné, just telling them that if they need translation assistance, that you will be able to help them?

THE INTERPRETER: Sure. I'll be able to do that.

(Diné language spoken.)

MR. CAMERON: Thank you very much. Thank you, Joanna.

THE INTERPRETER: You're welcome.

MR. CAMERON: We will get back to you and let's see if Dariel Yazzie from the Navajo EPA is with us.

Dariel, are you out there?

(Pause.)

MR. CAMERON: And, Lorraine, for Dariel to get on, he has to press star-1?

THE OPERATOR: Dariel's line is open.

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

(Pause.)

THE OPERATOR: Dariel, your line is open.

MR. YAZZIE: Good afternoon.

Can you hear me?

MR. CAMERON: Yes, we can, Dariel.

THE OPERATOR: Yes.

MR. YAZZIE: Wonderful. Wonderful. I thank you all and greetings to everyone on the line. We extend that greeting to all of NRC, all of your staff, Chip, to helping to facilitate this event.

It is very much appreciated and thank you for inviting us to not only listen, but to participate on this call.

So, with that, I thank you and, again, just to extend and want to begin with that greeting.

(Diné language spoken.)

MR. YAZZIE: Thank you, Chip. I provided to the listeners who I am, what I've done, a little bit in my work history, my involvement with uranium efforts across Navajo, and provided a brief explanation that we do have technical staff who have been involved on various levels with different types of environmental impacts throughout the Navajo Nation.

And what we want to do is, we want to provide a listening piece, but also a mouthpiece, for

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

the communities that are out there that may not completely understand or comprehend the context or subject matter that's being presented.

So, with that, thank you, and I want to share that I do have several of my staff on the call with us.

I have Valinda Shirley, our senior RPM. I have Elisa Arviso, our senior hydrologist. Lee Anna Martinez, also a senior RPM. Pam Maples, another RPM. Tennille Denetdeel, another RPM.

And we also have our engineer, Mr. Danny Lee. And we also have our GIS analyst, Ms. Darlene Jenkins.

Everybody on my team is aware firsthand what the impacts of these uranium mining events, uranium mill sites, what they've created in the sense of disharmony to our Navajo people.

And so, as we continue to engage and discuss what the efforts will look like to address all of the longstanding issues, right now if we look at it by date, by history alone, we're looking at 80 years of impacts that need to be addressed.

And so, we have a short time frame, in my opinion, to do this because we can't go on and let another generation be impacted adversely as they have

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

been for the 80 years that this issue has been in place on Navajo land.

And so, as we embark on this process to address not just the AUMs [Abandoned Uranium Mines], but work with our federal counterparts -- in this instance, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission -- in addressing the waste material at Northeast Church Rock, we want to flag that in this process we need to be mindful of who we are as indigenous people.

We need to be mindful and be respectful of what our people have as the first guiding laws that lead the everyday life of all of our Diné people.

We have those laws identified and they're enacted and, by name, they're called Fundamental Laws of the Diné.

And these laws that -- different aspects of our lives are identified. The Diné traditional law. The Diné customary law. The Diné natural law. The Diné common law.

Through these laws, it tells us how we need to exist with each other as well as the environment that we live in.

And I think the simplest concept I can share in identifying what that means is there is a standing relationship that exists.

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

There's a relationship that exists between each of us. When we identify ourselves through our friendships, we identify ourselves to the families that are out there.

We then extend our kinship through that friendship that identifies how we address each other, how we respect each other.

There is a certain methodology that's always respected and represented in those communicative efforts the way a mother and son talk, the way a father and son talk, the way we talk with our paternal grandparents as well as our maternal grandparents.

There's a respectful manner that exists there. There is that methodology that's in place for us to listen as the grandchildren, as the son, as the daughter.

And so, it's through this mechanism that we redefine and really reinforce that understanding of that respectful relationship.

And so, it's through our own traditional laws that tell us that we should live in this manner.

And if we don't, we're going to continue to perpetuate any disbalance in our lives.

The whole idea between -- behind the idea

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

of including our own cultural way of life is to establish and maintain a true sense of balance in all that we do.

That balance we often refer to as hózhó. There's not a singular word that I can give you for the translation of hózhó, but in the context of what we're talking about here it is balance.

And I use that because when we throw each other off with disrespectful conversation, disrespectful relationships, then that balance is gone. We can't build off of it. We can't do that.

So, there's -- that's where it begins. It begins with that respectful relationship between us as Diné people. It further goes out to who we interact with.

We call ourselves the five-fingered people, Bíla'ashla'ii. That's what we refer to ourselves as Diné people.

And so, there is a respectful relationship that needs to be identified and respected, and that's between all races of -- races of every color. Whoever we're working with, that respectful relationship should exist there as well.

And then, of course, the environment itself. Mother Earth and all of its inhabitants that

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

we share the environment with, including the air, including the skies, including the sun, the moon.

All of this is defined in our tribal laws that are identified, by name, the Declaration of the Foundation of Diné Law.

So, the laws exist for us and oftentimes it's not something that we can sit in a classroom for the next year and explain to non-Navajos what it means.

In most cases, it's an everyday event that we just grew up with. We were told certain things from the very earliest days of our lives to be respectful of Mother Nature, to be respectful of the animals that we share Mother Nature with.

And so, it's with that sentiment that when we're talking with our communities, with our own Diné people, it's that mentality that we're sharing this information.

So, again, I thank you all and please know that my staff and myself are here to listen in on behalf of the Navajo communities, on behalf of our Navajo Nation Government.

And we're also here as a mouthpiece for our community members who may not know or have a clear understanding of what some of the content or even the

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

context of the material being shared with us today will be.

So, know that we're here to help. Thank you.

MR. CAMERON: Thank you very much, Dariel. And thank you for having your staff there. Thank you, Dariel and staff, for being on the phone.

And respectful relationship is something to really understand and emphasize. And I think that what you've said, Dariel, is going to be very helpful for the NRC staff to understand as they go through their work. And I look at this as a cooperative effort between the NRC staff and the Navajo EPA.

And we're going to go now to the key part of the meeting, which is to hear a summary of the draft Environmental Impact Statement from Ashley Waldron, who is the environmental project manager.

And after that, we'll go out and see whether there's anything that Dariel or his staff thinks needs to be emphasized, in Diné, for the Navajo community.

And, Ashley, I'll turn it over to you now.

MS. WALDRON: Alright. Thank you, Chip. And thank you, Dariel.

Kellee, if you could move to slide 4,

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

please. So, hello and good afternoon. My name is Ashley Waldron and I'm the project manager for the environmental review of the UNC license amendment application.

I'm going to give you a brief presentation today and I'm going to talk about the NRC's review process, give an overview of the licensing action before us, recap the NRC's scoping process, discuss the draft EIS findings and provide ways that you can comment on the draft EIS.

And then finally the majority of the time spent today will be to take public comments on that draft EIS.

Next slide. So, the main purpose of our meeting today will be to collect public comments on the draft EIS for the UNC mill site license amendment application.

Next slide. So, this chart provides an overview of the NRC's process. The blue box in the top left-hand corner is where NRC's process begins.

United Nuclear Corporation, or UNC, submitted a license amendment request to the NRC in September of 2018.

NRC accepted the application for a formal review in December of 2018. We then began our safety

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

and environmental review.

The environmental review documents the NRC findings in an Environmental Impact Statement, which I will refer to many times during this presentation as an EIS.

This is the draft report we will be discussing today and I'll discuss the environmental review process in more detail on the next slide. The safety review is represented in orange on the right side of the figure. This review will show technical and safety aspects of the license amendment request. The results of that review are documented in the Safety Evaluation Report. That report was issued in September of 2020. A copy of that report can be found on the NRC project webpage, which will be listed at the end of this slideshow.

The results of the environmental and safety reviews will factor into the NRC's final decision on whether or not to grant the license amendment request to UNC.

Next slide. This diagram outlines the environmental review process in more detail. The opportunities for public involvement are highlighted in blue.

The NRC started its environmental review

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

by publishing a notice of intent to inform the public of our plan to prepare an EIS. That was in February of 2019.

We also held scoping meetings in Gallup, New Mexico, in March of 2019. During that time, the NRC collected public scoping comments. NRC staff also published a scoping summary report.

NRC analyzed that information gathered and developed a draft EIS that discusses the environmental impact (telephonic interference).

Are the lines muted?

Alright. Now we are inviting the public comments on the draft EIS, which will be the purpose of our meeting tonight. We will document your comments today in the meeting transcript. The public can also provide written comments through the end of the comment period. I'll explain later on how to do that.

The NRC will then evaluate those comments and consider modifying the draft EIS before issuing a final. As mentioned previously, the final EIS and the results of the safety evaluation report contribute to the NRC's final decision on the license amendment.

Next slide. United Nuclear Corporation, or UNC, is seeking to amend its NRC license. If

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

approved, it would allow UNC to transfer 1 million cubic yards of mine waste from the Northeast Church Rock Mine and place it on the existing mill tailings impoundment for permanent disposal.

Next slide. This is the proposed project and it's located near Gallup, New Mexico, in McKinley County.

The area in the top right portion of the map is the Northeast Church Rock Mine. This is where the waste will be removed from and it will then be transferred and placed in the proposed disposal site, which is in this shaded area on the map.

(Pause.)

MS. WALDRON: Sorry. I'm going to remove my mask so that you can hear me a little bit better. Okay. I'm going to start over on this slide here.

So, this is the proposed project area. It's located near Gallup, New Mexico, in McKinley County, and the area in the top right portion of the map is the Northeast Church Rock Mine.

This is where the waste will be removed from and it will then be transferred and moved over to the mill site, the proposed disposal site, which is in this shaded area.

I also want to note the borrow and jetty

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

areas as I'll discuss those in more detail later on in the presentation.

Okay. Next slide. Can you all hear me okay?

MR. CAMERON: Yes.

MS. WALDRON: Just doing a sound check here. Okay. Great.

Okay. So, I'm on slide 10, Scoping Process. As I mentioned earlier, the NRC has conducted a scoping process for the EIS prior to developing the draft.

We conducted multiple scoping meetings to accept public comments. Some of the topics raised during the scoping period were related to, but not limited to, transportation, surface water and environmental justice. A copy of that report can be found at this link here on the slide.

Next slide. The EIS evaluated impacts for three phases of the project. The first is the construction phase. This includes surface disturbance, including haul roads and excavation of the waste.

Transfer, which is simply the transfer of the material from the mine to the mill. This also would include loading of the waste material.

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

And then, finally, the closure phase looks at impacts from the reclamation and re-vegetation of any disturbed areas and placement of a final cover on the mill site.

Next slide. The EIS evaluates impacts of the proposed action. The proposed action is to amend the UNC's license to allow UNC to transfer and dispose of 1 million cubic yards of mine waste and place it on top of the existing mill tailings impoundment at the mill site.

Under the no-action alternative, NRC would not approve the license amendment. And, therefore, would not allow UNC to dispose of the waste at the mill site.

The secondary alternatives were also considered. These are essentially the same as the proposed action but include modifications to specific activities.

The first one includes the modification of how the waste would be transferred, which would be by a conveyor -- a covered conveyor system instead of by truck.

The second one includes a modification of where cover material will be sourced from, which would be the jetty area instead of the borrow areas that I

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

mentioned on the map.

Next slide. So, this slide captures the impact assessment for each of the resource areas. The environmental impacts range from small to large.

For some of the resource areas you will see that there is a range, for example, small to moderate. This means that for particular phases, for example, construction, transfer and closure, there could be a small impact during construction activities, but moderate during transfer or vice-versa. You could also have certain aspects of that resource area have different impact levels. For example, ecology and air quality as shown here in this table.

It's important to note that these slides are showing impacts of the proposed license amendment itself.

The EIS also addresses the impacts of historic events that's cumulative. Those can be found in Chapter 5 of this EIS.

Next slide. Here is the remainder of the resource areas and impact findings. For most of the resource areas the impacts from the proposed action would be small to moderate. Most of these impacts would only occur during the approximate four-year

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

construction period.

When the repository is being built, waste would be transferred and the repository is finally capped and re-vegetated.

Many of the small impacts are considered minimal because of the environmental practice and safeguards would reduce any negative effects on the environmental resource.

Mitigation that have been identified could be -- can be found in Chapter 6 of this EIS. I'll discuss more of the resource areas in the next couple of slides.

Next slide. Environmental justice impacts are those that affect disproportionately low-income and minority populations.

Nearby communities, which primarily consist of Navajo, would be disproportionately affected by factors such as project-related transportation, air quality changes primarily from dust, increased noise level and visual disturbances.

Chapter 5 of the EIS describes the impacts to the Navajo people in the context of past uranium mining and milling activities.

NRC staff has attempted to accurately capture and describe the perspectives of the Navajo

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

Nation. However, we recognize that they may hold different views that differ from the conclusions presented in the EIS.

Next slide. The primary surface water feature at the proposed project is the Pipeline Arroyo, a tributary to the Puerco River.

Impacts on surface water may result from erosion runoff, spills and leaks of fuels and lubricants as well as stormwater runoff. However, those would be mitigated through the development and implementation of a stormwater and spill prevention plan.

Part of the proposed action also involves stabilization work in Pipeline Arroyo to address concerns about the potential for undercutting near the existing impoundment as well as improvements to stormwater drainage at the impoundment.

Next slide. For historic and cultural resources, there have been five sites that have been identified within the areas of disturbance that are recommended as eligible for the National Register of Historic Places; four located on the mine site and one on the mill site.

Impacts to historic and cultural resources would be small to large depending on the

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

implementation of mitigation measures to reduce land-disturbing effects on these resources.

The NRC, in coordination with the Environmental Protection Agency, the Navajo Nation Tribal Historic Preservation Office, the New Mexico Historic Preservation Office and United Nuclear Corporation, are developing a programmatic agreement to mitigate adverse effects on these sites. Large impacts would only happen if no mitigation occurred.

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

Next slide, please. This slide contains a number of web links for additional information. The first one will take you directly to the EIS.

The second link, to our reader's guide. That provides a summary of the draft EIS and some frequently asked questions.

Last is the NRC's project webpage. This is where you can find a copy of the Safety Evaluation Report that was mentioned earlier, the NRC's schedule. And each of the meetings are also listed there and you can find each of the meeting transcripts and presentations as well.

There are a number of ways to submit

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

comments on the draft EIS -- I'm sorry, next slide. So, there are a number of ways to comment on the draft EIS. Those are listed here on this slide.

In writing, by email or letter, by voicemail, by calling this number listed here, or providing them today at this meeting.

We have received many requests for extending the comment period. Because these slides were prepared before the requests were received, it still reflects the comment period ending on December 28th, 2020.

NRC plans to grant a 60-day extension request and, therefore, the comment period will end on February 26, 2021.

And to ensure everyone can attend at least one of the meetings, NRC will also hold an additional meeting in the evening hours sometime after January 1st.

This information will be noticed in the Federal Register and everyone on the distribution list will also be notified.

So, with that, that concludes my presentation and I'll turn it back over to Chip so that we can take public comments on the draft report.

MR. CAMERON: Okay. Thank you, Ashley.

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

Very concise. Very crisp.

And I just wanted to say before we go on to public comment, which is why we're here tonight, if Dariel or any of his staff thinks that -- as Dariel put it, to increase understanding or comprehension, is there anything that you would like to say to the community, in Diné, that might help their understanding or comprehension?

I just wanted to check in with you and your staff on that.

MR. YAZZIE: Chip, can you hear me?

MR. CAMERON: Yes.

MR. YAZZIE: Hello?

MS. WALDRON: Yes, we can hear you.

MR. YAZZIE: Okay. I wasn't sure if I had to do the star-1 or the star-0 or star-something. But actually at this time, I don't think I have anything. I would like to wait for some of the questions.

And if there's an opportunity for us to assist there, we will definitely provide assistance. Thank you.

MR. CAMERON: Okay. Thank you. Thank you, Dariel.

And with that, we're going to go to Lorraine. Are you ready to tell people how they get

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

on the line to speak, Lorraine?

THE OPERATOR: Thank you. We will now begin the comment session. If you would like to make a public comment, please press star-1, unmute your phone and record your name clearly. If you need to withdraw your comment, please press star-2.

(Pause.)

THE OPERATOR: Our first comment comes from Janet Greenwald. Your line is open.

MS. GREENWALD: Yes. I'm kind of new to this issue, but my understanding is the Red Pond Community, who are mostly affected, do not approve of this solution. And I urge you to respect their comments and their point of view since they are the ones that have suffered for so long because of this situation.

And then my second comment is that, you know, New Mexico, through time, but mostly recently, has become a dumping ground for all kinds of waste -- or sometimes it's proposed to be a dumping ground for all kinds of waste, most of it nuclear.

And I wish that when public officials look for a place to dump whatever it is, whatever dangerous product that it is, that they would consider some other place other than New Mexico.

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

We're one of the few minority-majority states in the United States. And I think that if environmental justice mandates were taken more seriously, I think that officials would be looking at other places. Thank you for this opportunity to speak.

MR. CAMERON: Thank you very much, Janet.

And I think we'll probably hear from the community, some members of that community that you were concerned about. Thank you.

MS. GREENWALD: You're welcome.

MR. CAMERON: Can we have the next commenter, Lorraine?

THE OPERATOR: There are no comments in queue at this time. Again, if you would like to make a public comment, please press star-1 on your phone and record your name clearly.

(Pause.)

THE OPERATOR: Our next comment comes from Marlene. Your line is open.

MARLENE: Hi. I was wanting to make the comment that putting the waste on top of more waste doesn't seem to be a rational solution.

New Mexico is filled with nuclear waste, radioactive waste, and that radioactive waste is very,

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

very close to the neighborhood of -- the affected neighborhood.

I would suggest that we look at another alternative, and that is remove all the waste from that community, which is so close to the Puerco River, that we should not be able to have that so close, which already sees a breakthrough.

So, I would hope that you would move the waste away from that community and restore the land. Thank you.

THE OPERATOR: Our next comment comes from Larry King.

MR. KING: Hello.

MR. CAMERON: Hi, Larry. We can hear you. This is Chip.

MR. KING: Hello.

MR. CAMERON: I just wanted to make sure if you knew the identity of the last person who spoke.

MR. KING: Am I on now?

MR. CAMERON: Okay. Go ahead, Larry. Go ahead.

MR. KING: Okay. My name is Larry King. The Red Water Pond Community are my maternal relatives and I offer some -- I helped them out with a lot of these issues. And I'm also a former uranium worker at

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

UNC for eight years.

And I currently live about six miles southwest along 566 -- State Route 566, about six miles southwest and adjacent to another abandoned uranium mine, which was also part of the UNC at the time; but it's been purchased and resold to a Canadian company.

That small area six miles southwest of this location, the mill site -- but I stepped away from the presentation at 2:35 thinking that the introduction was going to take a long time.

I had to do my chores outside, so I missed the whole presentation, but I will listen in on the next meeting next week.

But just to tell you a few words at this time that, again, I like to voice my concerns about just moving the mine waste over the hilltop on down to the mill site and transportation of this mine waste is very, very, very close to all these residents, the Red Water Pond Community.

And as one of the commenters said, that -- and I've always said it before that this mine waste should be moved out of the community someplace else, but, as always, it's always the main issue that's always brought up -- the main problem is always the

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

cost of removal, but my concern has always been, and always will be, that this mine waste is going to be located and placed on top of a mine waste site that's been buried a few years -- several years ago.

The compaction is never done. There's going to be ground movement. The liners for -- to hold all this waste in the pit -- it just is unstable ground in the first place.

That's the reason why the dam broke back in July 16 of 1979 because this is not suitable geologically to build a structure and to think that it's going to not have any ground movement at all.

But I just wanted to say I don't know who else is on the call waiting from the community, but I just wanted to make sure that I am listening on behalf of the community and, for the time being, that's my comment. Thank you.

MR. CAMERON: Okay. Thank you. Thank you, Larry, for highlighting the unstable land issue for the NRC.

And, Joanna, are you on? Joanna?

Joanna is our translator. Joanna Manygoats. I think we need her to say something to the Diné community to unmute their lines if they want to speak. That may be why we don't have more people

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

getting through.

(Pause.)

MR. CAMERON: If you want to get on to talk to the NRC, this is Chip, please hit star-1 and Lorraine, the operator, will put you on. So, with that, let's see if we have someone else waiting to get on.

Lorraine, do we have someone?

THE OPERATOR: Leona, your line is open.

MS. MORGAN: Hi. Can you all hear me?

MR. CAMERON: Yes, we can, Leona.

MS. MORGAN: Hi, Chip, and hello to the NRC (Diné language spoken). My family is from eastern Navajo and I have been working on issues related to nuclear colonialism since 2007.

Right now, my mom's side is from Nageezi, which is just north of the Red Water Pond Road Community, and I just wanted to, first of all, state my opposition to this proposal and urge you all, NRC people, to deny this license application.

With the need for cleanup of the 523 abandoned mine sites on Navajo, this is obviously one of the most contaminated and one of the worst areas to -- that needs cleanup and it's been long overdue.

In the intro, it was mentioned 80 years,

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

but this site specifically has gone, you know, unaddressed for decades and it's a slap in the face to be pushed and have this proposal shoved down our throats.

And I understand, even, the different agencies don't agree with this plan. It's going to disrupt the existing mill cell where the tailings are sitting now. And I understand this has already -- apparently has been approved by USEPA and I really urge our Navajo Nation EPA to push for something better.

We have been contaminated and we have been used by the United States Federal Government to exploit not just the uranium and our natural resources, which are resulting in multiple health issues that have not been addressed. And the communities, they want a new home and this needs to be paid for as part of the cleanup plan.

So, looking at this at a comprehensive level, you know, going back to the Code Talkers, our people have been used by the U.S. Government for their purposes of war.

And right now we're still dealing with these issues and many people have not been compensated. And right now we're looking at RECA, the

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

Radiation Exposure Compensation Act, sunseting in 2022, which is ridiculous because people still need compensation.

All of these issues are relative to your license amendment question at hand because this is not acceptable. What you all are doing is unacceptable. To put mine waste on top of mill waste in a floodplain, you heard all these comments last March.

You heard the communities saying this could result in a second Church Rock spill and I'm appalled at your slides. It just states dam failure. This was one of the largest releases of radioactivity in the world and you describe it in two words as a dam failure.

You have no idea what our people are living with. I am not just insulted. I am incredibly -- it's just beyond words what this proposal is doing.

I don't think you all understand the gravity of the decision that you all don't have to live with.

So, please deny this license amendment because we need a better cleanup plan. We want the waste that you allow to be created taken out of our communities. We don't want you to move it across the street, you know, whether it's by trucks or a conveyor

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

belt. This is ridiculous. Put it somewhere else.

And then when you're talking about PTW, it's again environmental racism that you want to dump this waste on another indigenous community at White Mesa Mill. This is another form of genocide that you are perpetuating. This is on your hands, NRC. This is your responsibility to deal with this mess, not create a future problem that people are going to be dealing with if the waste from the mill continues to - - if the mine waste on top of the mill waste becomes an issue in the future and then gets into the Puerco River.

You're going to have a bigger mess to clean up and it's imperative that you listen to everyone today, and on the 9th, and all the public comments, to really understand that this is not acceptable and you cannot approve this plan.

In addition to that, this is a slow -- a very, very slow process. We don't want this plan. We don't want this so-called cleanup.

We need a better plan, but you need to move faster because our people have been waiting for decades for you to clean up your mess.

And in addition to this horrible proposal and what you all are doing to us, I mean, besides

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

environmental racism and all of the comments that you've heard already in the transcripts from the last two meetings, this is unacceptable.

You cannot approve this license amendment and you cannot allow White Mesa Mill to be continuing to take waste from all over the world.

This is -- these are forms of environmental racism, but also genocide. And so, I want to make some comments just specifically about these meetings.

We've said this before in the whole tech process for the high-level radioactive waste dumps being proposed, that you all need to stop pushing these meetings during an international health crisis.

This is ridiculous that you are putting out this -- nobody is going to call in. People are not going to call in at two o'clock in the afternoon and try to understand all this, you know, the thousands of pages of technical jargon that you put out there.

Those are not translated into our language. Our people can't read all those documents, you know, before December 28th or before February 26th. You need to create a different process.

This checkbox of NEPA is unacceptable

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

because this is a larger problem than just allowing a little bit of time for such a huge impact to our future.

This is a permanent waste site. If you allow this, this sets the precedent for creating 523 permanent waste sites on the Navajo Nation, not to mention the 15,000 abandoned mines across the country.

And if you continue to do this and allow this type of cleanup, which creates bigger problems for the future, it's unending.

Please do the right thing. Make sure the mine waste is taken out -- off the Navajo Nation. And I'm not talking about a place down the road in a different jurisdiction.

We want a comprehensive plan that includes the wellness of our communities, which is also part of our healing for our Mother Earth.

And I know you don't understand any of that. This presentation that we've heard, it shows that -- I mean, you made your own arguments for why you shouldn't even allow this.

Five places that are eligible for listings on the National Historic Register -- on the National Register of Historic Places, I mean, that alone should stop you from trying to create a bigger problem. And

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

if one of those sites is on the mill site, then you definitely should not approve this plan.

But knowing there's four of those sites on the Northeast Church Rock Mine site, that deserves a lot of attention and scrutiny in how the cleanup is done so those cultural properties and resources are not harmed and impacted.

I'm going to end my comments there and I just, you know, I want to say thank you for having the Navajo Nation involved, but this is a horrible plan and you all know that.

So, do the right thing. Deny the license application. Demand that GE, who can afford to do a better cleanup, do a 100 percent cleanup as well as funding the needed healthcare and new homes for the people of Red Water Pond Road Community.

THE INTERPRETER: Can you hear me? Chip, can you hear me?

MR. CAMERON: Yes, I can.

THE INTERPRETER: This is the Navajo interpreter, Joanna.

MR. CAMERON: Oh, good, Joanna.

THE INTERPRETER: Yes. I was here. I was trying to talk to you, but I don't think you heard me.

What did you want me to say to the people?

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

That they need to unmute their telephones or --

MR. CAMERON: Yes. If you could just -- if we could just make sure that the people aren't being prevented from getting on to talk to us because they haven't unmuted their phone, if you could just say that to them in Diné that would be helpful.

THE INTERPRETER: Sure. I can say it right now.

(Diné language spoken.)

MR. CAMERON: Okay. Thank you. Thank you very much, Joanna. And I just wanted to thank Leona for her very clear comments and especially the part at the end about new homes and healthcare. That's very important for the NRC to hear.

And with that, again, star-1 to get on the line. And, Lorraine, do you have someone else who wants to talk to us?

THE OPERATOR: There are currently no questions in queue at this moment. If you would like to make a public comment, please press star-1. If you would like to remove your public comment, please press star-2.

(Pause.)

THE OPERATOR: Our next comment comes from John Gromar (phonetic). Your line is open.

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

MR. GROMAR: Thank you. Yes, I think I heard -- was that Leona Morgan that spoke just previously?

MR. CAMERON: Yes, it was, John.

MR. GROMAR: Yeah. Yeah. Thank you. Yeah, I caught most of that.

I'm recovering from the Coronavirus. I live over here in the Homestake Superfund Site, but I'm familiar with the area over there at Church Rock.

And I liked what Leona said. I had the same sentiments, and so I just want to add my voice to her voice and to the rest of the Navajo people, as well as the local people here that are being bought out and moved. Sounds like they might be giving up on our project over here.

So, I hope they don't give up over there.

I hope they can clean it up 100 percent. I know it sounds impossible from all that we've gone through so far, but I do want to add my voice 100 percent sentiment with what Leona said.

I was listening very carefully and she's very articulate. So, I won't have to say all of what she said, but I just want to put, you know, my sentiment here with -- I'm part of MASE. So, I'm the head of the BVDA group over here in Milan.

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

So, I guess that's all I have to say.
Thank you for letting me participate and listen.

MR. CAMERON: Thank you, John, and we all
hope and pray that you have a very safe recovery.

MR. GROMAR: Yes. I'm feeling much
better. I'm at the tail end of it and so thank you
for your thoughts.

MR. CAMERON: Thank you for mentioning
MASE, M---A-S-E. Thank you.

Lorraine, who is next?

THE OPERATOR: There are no comments in
the queue right now. Again, if you would like to make
a public comment, please press star-1. If you would
like to remove your public comment, please press star-
2.

(Pause.)

MR. GROMAR: How do I get back to mute?

MR. CAMERON: How do you get back to mute?

MR. GROMAR: Yeah. I've made my comments.
Do I just push star-1 again?

MR. CAMERON: I think you press star-2,
right?

MS. WALDRON: Lorraine, can you verify
that?

THE OPERATOR: Yeah. I have to clear him

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

out of the queue. I'm doing that now.

MS. WALDRON: So, okay. The operator will take care of it. Thank you.

(Pause.)

MR. CAMERON: Okay, Lorraine, we're here waiting to see if we have someone else.

THE OPERATOR: Our next comment comes from Jonathan Perry. Your line is open.

MR. PERRY: (Diné language spoken). My name is Jonathan Perry and I'm from eastern Navajo. I've been active with a lot of the discussion taking place at the Red Water Pond for several years and I'm a former council delegate with the Navajo Nation Council.

And as an individual who has been pretty much in conversation with the community, and even in talks with the federal government and different agencies through various subjects, I would request, and even make note, that with the current situation that the Navajo Nation is having to go through, we are seeing a lack of participation from our people in these type of discussions because, as you acknowledged earlier, we are going through this pandemic and it's really hard to get folks to get into areas where they may be able to make comments.

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

And, as you may know, on Navajo Nation we don't have adequate infrastructure for telecommunication.

And so, some of our community members have to go to different locations to make phone calls and participate in these type of events.

And right now, there is an executive order -- or a stay-home order, which would prevent many people from being able to access and participate in these public hearings. And I would ask that NRC and everyone involved take note of that and also consider the fact that, you know, the community is tired as well.

They've been having to work on this issue for generations, for years. It's not a single-generation issue. You're seeing the younger people having to get involved and we -- my people here are opposing the amendment to the NRC license and I also oppose. And hearing them in the pain and trials that they've been through because of these actions, and even the current actions taking place, I would urge NRC to deny this amendment.

And, in addition to that, a comment on Diné fundamental law, Diné Bi beenahaz'áanii, the violation of not only the relation

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

between people, but the abuse that Mother Earth has endured because of these different actions and the lack of a plan to resolve these issues, you know.

We don't have something in place comprehensively and even one thing that can be brought forward in long-term.

I know earlier there was always that term that you use as "permanent." And this type of issue, whatever decision we make today and this year, is going to be a long-term -- is going to serve long-term in terms of influencing further generations.

And we've already seen how the Navajo Nation, Navajo people have been negatively impacted by decisions that have cost us many years. And so I'm asking NRC to listen to the locals, listen to the Navajo people and deny this amendment.

But in addition to that, what I would urge our tribal agencies to go back to do is reevaluate the process of what we talked about in terms of Diné fundamental law (Diné language spoken) -- for holy surface people.

We were installed with certain knowledge in terms of our place in this universe and on this world. We were given certain knowledges and ceremonies, certain privileges, and we continue to use

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

that. And there is a way to sit down with parties to talk this over. It might not be in a public comment period or comment setting. There are other avenues.

But our tribal agencies, we really need to sit down with our local people more and participate and really look at how we incorporate not only natural law, but traditional law in addressing the discussions and bringing forth plans.

I know with the discussion on uranium, we always cite natural law, but we always don't go into traditional or customary because these areas not only are they being impacted by our cultural properties, but we're impacting the livelihood of our people.

We've seen in the past our families in that area were impacted economically. They lost their sole provider for the families, many generations. And so, the impact of poverty and even to healthcare, that's not been addressed.

We talk about the issues with compensation. We talk about corporations and the government and different agencies talking about the cost, but what about the cost of these families long-term? What have they endured all these years?

And it's really hard to understand their point of view unless you really sit with them and you

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

know them and you understand the pain that they're going through.

And these type of discussions, especially during the pandemic when many of them are at high risk because of their ailment or other influences, it's hard for them to participate.

And I would also urge NRC to look at that setting as well as just a reminder that we are having a hard time here on Navajo, but I know there are some people that are on this call and they would like to speak, but it's also the fact that we've been repeating ourselves for years.

We've been repeating ourselves saying that we deny these actions, but they continue to move forward.

So, I would urge you to please listen to the people, listen to the community, and understand that we all don't want this amendment to go forward and we ask you to please deny that. Thank you.

MR. CAMERON: Okay. Thank you very much, Jonathan. The point about increasing community involvement and dialog and looking at other avenues for sitting down with the local people, I think that is good not only for the NRC to hear, but also good for the Navajo officials who may be on the phone with

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

us. So, thank you for raising that.

And, Lorraine, someone else?

THE OPERATOR: Our next question comes from Susan Gordon. Your line is open.

MS. GORDON: I'm Susan Gordon. I'm the coordinator for the Multicultural Alliance for Safe Environment and we are a network of five groups that work on uranium mining issues in the Grants Mineral District.

The Red Water Pond Road Community Association is one of them, the Eastern Navajo Diné Against Uranium Mining, the Bluewater Valley Downstream Alliance, The Post-71 Uranium Workers Committee and the Laguna-Acoma Coalition for a Safe Environment. And we're chosen to work collaboratively through the lens of environmental justice on the issues that we address.

So, concerning this proposal, as was mentioned before, there is concern that piling the mine tailings on top of the mill tailings is not a very safe way to approach this and, in addition, there is concern about potential flooding.

Where it's situated is in a floodplain and there is concern that any flash floods that we get here in New Mexico, that without better barriers and

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

preventative measures, that the tailings could easily be washed down into the Puerco again and create additional contamination.

There is concern that the mill tailings are not lined. They're not sitting on a lined base. And so, it will allow continued leaching into the groundwater. And a main concern is that this proposal does not address the contaminated groundwater in the area.

And how, you know, you can have a superfund cleanup plan that doesn't at all look at groundwater contamination is just completely not acceptable.

We also remain very concerned now in reading these documents that the hot waste is going to go to the White Mesa Mill.

That was not included in the EPA's prep application. It said it would go to -- that waste would go to licensed facility. And so, suddenly to see it would be going to another indigenous community is really unacceptable and we urge you to try to find a different -- not try, but to find a different solution than sending it to White Mesa Mill.

Currently, the mill is not even operating. It's just stockpiling materials there and this is

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

really not a solution to take waste from one community and ship it to another community, especially indigenous communities. It is really unacceptable.

And I, too, urge you to listen to the community. They have suffered a very long time and they are anxious to see the project move forward as safely as possible.

And there has been a lot of speakers that are potentially representing the community, but no one from the community has actually spoken this evening -- or this afternoon. And so I think that it will be important that you hear from community members about what they want.

And then I want to further emphasize, and I thank you for extending the comment period, but in the opening statements about respect and wanting to cooperate, you know, it just -- I found those statements to be very ironic given the fact that this was released in the midst of a pandemic with a deadline that covered two holidays, the shutdown is going on. That's not respectful. That's not respectful to community. It's not a sign of cooperation.

The people of Red Water Pond Road don't even have access to long-distance telephone. They

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

can't call into this unless they risk leaving their homes and going somewhere to be on the phone -- a phone call.

So, again, I appreciate you extending the time, but I just really have to point out that this sort of approach is an environmental injustice.

And we spoke to you in detail about our concerns when you came out to that first meeting, which was in March a year ago or whatever, two years ago, I guess, and you have not been to the community which asked you to come and sit down and share a meal with them and get to understand their perspective.

And that is still an offer. I understand (telephonic interference) have changed, but not doing justice does not (telephonic interference) to this community in the way that you're approaching this. Thank you.

MR. CAMERON: Okay. Thank you. Thank you very much, Susan, for those comments.

Lorraine, do we have another person on who wants to comment?

THE OPERATOR: We currently have no questions in queue at this time. If you would like to make a public comment, please press star-1.

If you would like to remove your comment,

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

please press star-2. One moment, please.

(Pause.)

THE OPERATOR: Our next question comes from Chrissy Largo. I'll draw you in. Chrissy, your line is open.

MS. LARGO: Hi. My name is Chrissy Largo and I am the community outreach network coordinator out in Window Rock, Arizona.

And I've been in my role for about a year and a half. And for those of you that don't know, the Community Outreach Network Office was part of -- or is part of the ten-year plan which is, in return, a congressional directive that tribal and federal agencies meet on a pretty regular basis to talk about issues on Navajo Nation.

And I just wanted to ask that NRC please hire a tribal member for representing NRC in these monthly calls that take place in our meetings.

Currently, we do have two representatives from the NRC that join the calls and I am thankful for their presence. However, recently, about three months ago, I encountered two concerned community members and they had questions regarding the Church Rock site.

So, I relay that information back to the network call and I was thankful that Sandra Talley,

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

who does represent as the tribal liaison, was able to get this meeting information to me to send out to the network. I really appreciate that.

However, I also would like to ask NRC, based off that information, if they could also update the network on information regarding the Church Rock site. This site has been a concern for the Gallup community as well as just overall the Church Rock site community.

So, those are my two requests on NRC's part and that's all I have to say. Thank you.

MR. CAMERON: Okay. Thank you very much, Chrissy. To the staff and my colleagues, is that -- are Chrissy's requests clear?

Okay. They're clear and understandable here, Chrissy. Thank you. And, Lorraine, do we have another speaker?

THE OPERATOR: There are no questions in queue at this time. If you would like to make a comment, please press star-1.

MR. CAMERON: And let me just point out to people that, as I mentioned in my opening, these formal comment meetings on draft Environmental Impact Statements, that the NRC staff doesn't respond to any of the comments that are made now. They consider them

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

in preparing the final EIS.

They also don't respond to questions they're asked unless it's something that immediately needs to be taken care of.

But if you want to come in with questions for the NRC to consider in preparing the final EIS, you can also do that as well as make comments and it may be that our colleagues in the Navajo EPA might want to listen to some questions, consider some questions in terms of further communications with you.

So, star-1, right, Lorraine?

THE OPERATOR: Yes.

MR. CAMERON: Okay.

THE OPERATOR: It is star-1 to ask a question. We do have a question in queue. Dariel Yazzie, your line is open.

MR. YAZZIE: Good afternoon, again, everyone. This is Dariel Yazzie, manager with Navajo Superfund.

I guess I want to take this opportunity to really identify to NRC what I had shared in my comments when we started this meeting in understanding and really identifying and respecting the nature of how we communicate.

And I think as you've heard several

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

community members who are involved at various levels with the community that is directly impacted, we heard from one community member who shared his thoughts. Again, really conveying with deep feelings for his community and the impacts that have happened over the years and understanding that the respectful nature really needs to be identified in the sense of where we are and what we're doing.

And the overall approach that is this meeting, I think, I believe that, you know, the intentions are good, but at times when you are looking at the big picture, we forget to include all of the other aspects of what we all really struggle with every day, which is life itself.

And we are currently in a position that we have not ever been before on this scale of dealing with a pandemic of this nature and, you know, I know the efforts to continue to move and make progress on activities that were started some time ago and really try to show that there is efforts being made to move forward.

And, again, my role was to share with you that there is an importance for identifying what that communication effort looks like and it needs to be respectful.

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

And it wasn't from me that you heard that from. It was from people on this call who were able to identify that we're still missing that aspect of what we're doing.

And so, I just want to flag that because we absolutely need to recognize it and it needs to be included in the discussions that we're having.

One of our former delegates, Mr. Perry, was able to enlighten us as well with what we need to do on our end to ensure that we provide that venue on our end to have these discussions and to have them be meaningful.

So, those are my comments, but I also wanted to just reiterate to the community that, in Navajo, (Diné language spoken). Thank you.

MR. CAMERON: Thanks, Dariel. And if you're still there, one question for you. You did mention what Mr. Perry talked about in terms of new venues for discussion to involve the community. And you recognize that is something that the Navajo government needs to think about.

And we heard Larry and Chrissy talk about the monthly phone calls and having a Tribal liaison to represent the NRC. You also mentioned the daily lives, the impact of COVID-19 on all of us but

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

especially on the Navajo community.

Is there some type of venue that you're suggesting that the NRC should initiate apart from these public comment meetings?

MR. YAZZIE: Thank you, Chip. Excellent question. Let me go back a little bit. We had the NRC come out two years ago, and we met with them individually as Navajo EPA and NRC.

They brought a group of people down before the last public comment period, that last public meeting. And we provided insight on what we felt would help them in moving forward.

And a large part of it was to maintain regular contact with the communities, holding regular meetings outside of the more formal comment periods or collection of comments but to maintain regular update meetings. That's where you would get the most amount of information that pertains to what we may miss in just the science and research of the project areas.

And, you know, we absolutely have to do this. On my end, in my role as manager with Navajo EPA Superfund, I have to say, you know, listening to the comments that are shared here, they definitely reflect what my team has been talking about within the ranks of our office.

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

And the identification of indicating that this site itself it exists in an area that just doesn't bode well for the environment nor for the community.

And I think when we look at it in that sense, we should be taking real steps towards addressing that impact. And it should go beyond the dollar value that often gets thrown at us. It's going to be too much. It's going to cost too much.

Why then would a similar site in Moab, Utah, in the flood plain that that site existed in, that site is being relocated entirely. How does that work in the sense of we have similar scenarios that exist and the impacts to human health definitely exists?

There was a word that was utilized a couple of times, and it's social injustice. That's where we've simply disregarded the respectful communication, respectful efforts that need to be had and that need to be included in what NRC is proposing at this time.

And so that's where I want to leave that.

Again, I thank you for that question. Thank you.

MR. CAMERON: Okay. Thank you, Dariel.
And I think what you're suggesting is that the NRC is

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

following its regulations and be constrained by regulations that at some point they have to pay attention to that.

But it sounds like you're saying that maybe there could be some more imaginative dialogue about whether there's realistic alternatives that could be explored, could be discussed informally. But thank you for elucidating on that very much.

MR. YAZZIE: Chip?

MR. CAMERON: Yes?

MR. YAZZIE: Okay. I was just checking to see if I was still on. I think what you said is accurate. The only thing I would change in that is we would have to have realistic discussions to talk about realistic approaches.

I can't put in there imaginative. To me to say something is imaginative is putting a boundary on it existing only in my imagination. And I can't do that. It has to be a realistic discussion with realistic approaches based on realistic situations that currently exist. And that's what we need to do.

And I think I may not have answered your question. But it was something I shared with Navajo, with my community members, is, you know, with our leadership identifying that we need to have some real

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

discussions about this.

And it may not be on this type of platform that we're having right now. It may be a separate conversation that we need to have with just the community members, with just leadership, with our Tribal leaders, our Tribal practitioners, to really capture realistically for us what are realistic solutions. Thank you.

MR. CAMERON: And thank you, Dariel. I should have used the word creative rather than imaginative. I think that you can still be realistic and be creative. But thank you very much.

And I would ask Lorraine if there is -- do we have another speaker, Lorraine?

OPERATOR: We do. Next we will hear from Lee Anna Martinez. You may go ahead.

MS. MARTINEZ: Good afternoon. Just to note, Chip, it sounds like you're getting further away from the phone. You're getting faint, more faint.

I'm Lee Anna Martinez. I recently began work with Navajo Nation Superfund. I'm new to the program, less than a month. And I would like to have to agree with Ms. Morgan on the option of these comment periods being held during a high pandemic.

It's not only ridiculous but

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

disrespectful. Many of the people in indigenous Navajo don't have internet yet alone within the area that we're speaking of, Red Water Pond north of Church Rock, the phone service is terrible if any of you have ever been out there. There's no cell phone coverage.

If this was at a public setting, such as a chapter house, which it typically is at, the audience wouldn't be silent. I'm computer savvy myself to a certain extent. But I tried to get on with the Webex to view the presentation that was given, and I was not able to get on.

I think that this waste should be moved off of the Navajo Nation completely. The Navajo Nation people have suffered enough. They've been impacted by these mine wastes for decades. There's generations, children and many Dinés' health and well-being have suffered.

And another thing that I'd like to say is how are these comments going to be addressed? Chip kind of answered that and said the NRC will be responding.

In that nature, is this just another formality that the U.S. government is utilizing to follow as part of the formality, oh, we went about the public notice process. These are the comments that

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

were created. But yet the solution or the authority consensus, that's not even agreed upon with the Navajo Nation, the Navajo people or the community. Thank you.

MR. CAMERON: Okay. Thank you, Lee Anna.

And excuse me, I was sitting away from the microphone. I won't do that again. But I think Dariel mentioned you at the beginning.

And it's not really my role as a facilitator, but seeing how the staff responds to comments they come in from working substantively at the NRC is that they seriously consider the comments.

They just don't dish them off so to speak. So I would just like to reassure you about that. But thank you for your comments.

OPERATOR: Thank you. And once again if you would like to make a comment at this time, you can press star 1 and record your name when prompted. Our next comment will come from Lester Tsosie. You may go ahead.

MR. TSOSIE: Good afternoon. Can you hear me?

MR. CAMERON: Yes.

MR. TSOSIE: Thank you. My name is Lester Tsosie. I'm the superintendent for BIA Eastern Navajo

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

Agencies. And I wanted to share a couple of comments.

(Diné language spoken.) First I want to thank the NRC for working on a very complicated issue as well as thanking a lot of our Tribal experts working on this issue, certainly in Eastern Navajo and across the Navajo Nation.

From the Eastern Navajo Nation BIA, we do engage with many Tribal members inquiring about the different status or abandoning uranium mine work or remediation work that's happening across the Eastern Navajo Agency. I know there's also other activities happening across Big Navajo.

And so my first comment is related to that. I think it's important the NRC provide maybe a more clear approach to how this effort fits into the big picture of this AUM work that's happening.

If you can imagine Tribal members at the community level getting numerous different types of information about Church Rock, about Mariano Lake, Smith Lake, Casamero Lake, Crownpoint, you know, they probably wonder, like, all this information is just overwhelming, I think, for some of our Tribal members.

And many of them want to respond in Navajo in providing their experience and their recommendations.

I attended several Commission meetings.

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

And those meetings go, like, from 8:00 a.m. to, like, 10:00 p.m. at night, hearing different family members providing testimonial and how uranium has still impacted different multi-generations for their families.

So there is a lot of anxiety out there. There is a lot of hurt and healing that still has to happen. And we from the federal government, we represent -- being experts as well as Tribal subject matter experts to try to figure out and provide a very clear path for our people to understand how these different moving parts are and that the different initiatives that are going on at least within the Navajo Agency and across Big Navajo.

Part of that is, I think, also understanding the land status we're issuing out of the Agency. As I think most people understand, it's a checkerboarded type of land status.

Here at BIA we have to be very clear and aware of how to approach different landowners. Navajo Nation gained the Tribal Trust landowner and there are several allotments within the Nation Navajo Agency, public domain, BLM, other types of land status are issued by Navajo Agency.

So we have always tried to customize our

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

communication to different segments for the different landowners. So that would be my first general comment.

The other comment is related to questions about is there other forms that could be used to reach out to Tribal members? Just as some of the work that we're doing right now with BLM on another project, we've been holding a lot of public outreach meetings for the EIS work that we're working on.

But one of the, I think, very respective form that was suggested by, actually the Navajo Nation's Office of the President was a radio remote.

What we did for that one project was we did a radio remote for, I believe, two hours where we had our subject matter experts on the line at the radio station via telephone connections and things like that and really just opened it up to the general public, Navajo speaking or not.

They were able to ask us questions, and we provided as much detailed information on that EIS that we're working on with BLM.

So I think that type of forum would be very useful for this project that NRC is working on, especially during the pandemic. As I think everybody has expressed, there's a lot of anxiety around the

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

pandemic and then health orders, restrictions and things like that.

So that would be my second comment, more related to the process and how to improve outreach to the Tribal members and then perhaps solicit more recommendations from Tribal members. So thank you very much for the time.

MR. CAMERON: Thank you for sharing that.

It's great to hear from another federal agency that's involved using some of the same processes.

And I think that my colleagues here at the NRC might want to learn more about this radio remote.

And we will -- I'm not sure if it's in the slides about how you can get in touch with Ashley or Christine.

But I think it would be ashley.waldron@nrc.gov. It would be great if you could just contact Ashley and maybe you could have a conversation about the radio remote. I think the NRC would appreciate that. Thank you.

And I just want to alert people that outside of calling in to this meeting, there's a toll free number, 888-672-3425. You can call that number, and you can press a button to speak in English and leave a comment for the NRC but use another button so

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

to speak that you can press, and you can leave a comment for the NRC in Diné. So that's 888-672-3425.

So, Sheila, I guess you're sitting in for Lorraine right now?

OPERATOR: Yes, I am. Thank you.

MR. CAMERON: Okay. Well, we're ready if anybody wants to speak to us.

OPERATOR: Thank you. We currently have no comments in the queue. But once again, if you would like to make a comment at this time, you can press star 1 and record your name when prompted. One moment, please, for any additional comments.

And once again, to make a comment at this time, please press star 1. One moment, please. Our next comment will come from Kathy Helms. Your line is open.

MS. HELMS: Hey, Chip Cameron. This is Kathy Helms on her day off spending time with you. Glad you're not dead. Me, too.

Anyway, we've spent a whole lot of time together over the years, and I can't tell you how many of these handouts that you guys produce, these slide shows that I've basically seen before, you know, it's a template.

Anyway, is there a possibility that you

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

guys could, like, use these handouts at your meetings to explain the process but not cover that every time, instead talk more on the issues.

I mean, you and I are growing old together here. And we don't have that much time left, you know. So maybe do like Annie Harris said, lose the Crayolas and focus more on the issues. And that would be my comment.

MR. CAMERON: Hey, thank you, Kathy. Nice to hear from you, and I guess I have to agree with you about glad I'm not dead yet. I'm glad you're not dead.

And I think that that's food for thought for the NRC about maybe being more creative about doing this and not just having the same standard line. But at any rate, you take care.

OPERATOR: Thank you. And next we will hear from Valinda Shirley. Your line is open.

MS. SHIRLEY: Good afternoon, everybody. My name is Valinda Shirley. (Diné language spoken.)

So my comment would be we've had a chance to participate in other NRC comments. And at that time, they were able to answer some of our questions that we were asking them.

So this is a little different for me. And

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

it's kind of like talking to a wall. So is this the usual process? I am a little new to this as well, too.

So is there a way for, you know, this question and answer kind of format could be used in the future or is this the way it usually goes? Thank you.

MR. CAMERON: I think that the NRC is considering having a different type of format. These meetings, and I think I said this when we were out there for the scoping meetings is that the requirement under the NRC regulations to take public comments on a draft EIS can lead to a formal legal process that the NRC has to follow.

But they certainly can, and I think they have considered this, they certainly can consider just having a dialogue with community members and answer questions -- from facilitating different types of meetings, seeing that sometimes if you do a more informal meeting that it can lead to more understanding from the government staff perspective but also from the community perspective of what the government agency staff is faced with as they try to do their job. But I think that that was a good comment for the NRC to think about. So thank you.

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

OPERATOR: Thank you. And once again, if you would like to make a comment at this time, you can press star 1 and record your name at the prompt. One moment, please, for any additional comments.

And we're currently showing no comments in the queue. But, again, to make a comment, please press star 1. Thank you.

And once again, if you would like to make a comment at this time, please press star 1 and record your name when prompted. We do have a follow-up comment at this time from Kathy Helms. You may proceed.

MS. HELMS: Hey, Chip, one more thing. Like Grant and Cibola County has a monthly coffee with the managers, times being what they are now, normally you would go to Red Water Pond Road community and, like, Edith Hood and Thompson Bell suggested after the 2019 public meeting, you know, normally you would go over there, and they would do a sheep roast, you know, so NRC could provide some sheep.

But since you can't do that now because of the virus, maybe NRC could do a virtual monthly coffee with the NRC and just, you know, seriously sit down at the table, have your cup of coffee, air your differences, get to the bottom of this. Everybody's

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

dying. Time's a-wasting. All right. That's it. Remember, I'm off. This is my personal opinion. Thank you, Bye.

MR. CAMERON: Thank you for that. Another good suggestion about how to increase communication and increasing communication often builds understanding. So that even though it's virtual, virtual coffee could increase that communication and understanding. So another great suggestion. Thank you.

OPERATOR: Thank you. We're currently showing no comments in the queue at this time. If you could like to make a comment at this time, please press star 1 and record your name when prompted. Thank you.

MR. CAMERON: And, Sheila, I just want to queue up, Joanna, our translator. Joanna Manygoats --

INTERPRETER: Yes. Yes, I'm here.

MR. CAMERON: Could you repeat what you said in Diné about unmuting your phone just to make sure that people aren't confused about that? Can you repeat that comment you made? It seemed to have done some good.

INTERPRETER: Okay. (Diné language spoken.) Alrighty, Chip. You're back on.

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

MR. CAMERON: Thank you. Thank you.
Thank you, Joanna.

INTERPRETER: You're welcome.

MR. CAMERON: Alrighty. That's good.
Sheila, all right.

OPERATOR: Thank you.

MR. CAMERON: Sheila, do we have anything?

OPERATOR: Nobody in the queue at this
time, but once again if you would like to make a
comment, you can press star 1. Thank you. We do have
an additional comment from Valinda Shirley. Your line
is open.

MS. SHIRLEY: Good afternoon, again. I
just wanted to ask, I presume the collection is
correct, is there, like, technical things that the NRC
(telephonic interference) community members in regards
to reviewing the Environmental Impact Statement? Is
that correct?

MS. WALDRON: Valinda.

MR. CAMERON: She was muted, I guess, for
a second.

MS. SHIRLEY: I'm sorry. Were you able to
hear me?

OPERATOR: Yes, yes.

MS. WALDRON: Valinda, this is Ashley.

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

Can you repeat your comment, please?

MS. SHIRLEY: Hey, Ashley. So I remember that we were talking about technical assistance. So like I understand that some of the residents received, even, like the Reader's Guide, right, to take a look at that Environmental Impact Statement. Is that something that we could share right now for individuals that may not be familiar with even these what could be insights in the Environmental Impact Statement?

MS. WALDRON: Yes. That's available. It was in one of the slides. Kellee, if you could go back -- it can be found here at this link. Can you see the slides, Valinda?

MS. SHIRLEY: No. Unfortunately, like many of our -- I'm not able to with our scan. Sorry. My internet here at home is not very reliable so right now I'm calling in.

MS. WALDRON: Okay. I'll get that information over to you.

(Simultaneous speaking.)

MS. WALDRON: Okay. I'll send that information to you.

OPERATOR: Thank you. And once again, if you would like to make a comment, you can press star 1

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

and record your name when prompted.

One moment, please, for any additional comments. Next we will hear from Leona Morgan. Your line is open.

MS. MORGAN: Hello, again. I just wanted to see if we can get -- if I could get a copy of the recording from today's meeting.

As has been said several times, people are unavailable and especially with the poor internet and phone accessibility, it would be good for us to have a recording. And I like the idea of a public forum that was mentioned, I think, by Mr. Tsosie to air on KTNN.

This might be a better way to do the meeting. Perhaps December 9 is coming up, but maybe the meeting next year, maybe you can host it over KTNN or if there are other ways to do that, I encourage you to think outside the box because this format not only is it inappropriate, it's culturally inappropriate. But it's also inaccessible and silencing the voices of many of our people who can't access it.

But at least if we could hear a recording, would you please send a recording of the -- the file of the recording to me. I can email Mr. McIntyre or whoever, please -- how do I -- let me know how do I get access to this recording. Thank you.

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

MR. CAMERON: Okay. Thank you. We're going to work on that because I think we do have a recording, and we also have the transcript. But I think you want a recording so that can be played for people to listen to. Is that correct?

MS. MORGAN: Yes, yes. More immediately than the transcript, which usually takes some time. And it's easier to listen to the meeting than to have folks read several pages of the transcripts.

MR. CAMERON: Okay. That's a good idea. And, Ashley, do you know how to get in touch with the person who has just made this comment?

MS. WALDRON: I believe so, yes. But if you wouldn't mind, please, emailing me at ashley.waldon@nrc.gov. And I'll make sure that you get that information.

MR. CAMERON: Thank you.

OPERATOR: Thank you. And once again, if you would like to make a comment at this time, please press star 1. One moment, please.

So far we have no further comments in the queue. But once again, it is star 1 if you would like to make a comment. Thank you.

And once again, if you would like to make a comment, you can press star 1 and record your name

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

at the prompt. Thank you.

And once again for comments, please press star 1. Thank you. Our next comment will come from Teracita Keyanna. Your line is open.

MS. KEYANNA: Good afternoon. Good evening. My name is Teracita Keyanna. And I have lived in the Red Water Pond Road community almost all my life. I did take the option that was presented by the EPA to move my family out.

And the comment I have is really just something that the community has always expressed and that was to move all that waste out of that whole area. And GE and the EPA just kind of went with the technicality that GE owns that land right across the road from them. And so it feels really unfair, and it feels like the whole community was not listened to.

But we're just like on the fence of -- it's kind of how this whole situation is going forward. And we understand that a lot of people have been saying that we wanted off the Reservation. And technically it is. And our community was saying outside the community. And if you want to be technical about it, that is not outside the community.

And, yes, I understand that there's these boundaries that say that this land is private land,

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

checkerboard land, but really nobody really owns the land. Once you die, you're just part of the land.

So that's how traditionally we see ourselves as part of the land. And so if we ask you to give up a piece of yourself, that's basically what you're asking the entire community. And I just want everybody to reflect and understand that's how the community feels. It feels like we're just being taken advantage of.

And we're not expendable. And our community has been there for decades. And we have so many generations of family there, and we still have family there even though a few of us have taken the option to move.

I made the decision to move my family out because I have little ones, and I also lost little ones. And I've had too many miscarriages to want to remember. But I feel like that kind of hazard that our whole community has been under is not fair.

And if this happened in a predominantly white area, it would have been cleaned up fast. And in this location and in this circumstance, it was swept under the rug. And the community really feels like the government really let us down.

And it just kind of seems like it's just

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

the same old song. And it's really unfortunate that we have to come to these public meetings and kind of not be able to praise you guys as people who are trying to help. And I understand you're trying to help.

But for us it just seems like it's taking so long, and it feels really unfair for my kids because they miss home, and they know where home is. And they constantly want to go back. And it's not possible.

And it really hurts as a parent to see that. And I just, you know, want everybody to understand and look through our eyes. You know, we've seen our whole landscape change. We've seen health issues get worse.

We've seen our family members pass away, and a lot of the times, you know, it's from respiratory illnesses and internal organs just giving up. And I believe that's all the side effects that are happening to our bodies that we don't know medical terminology of what exactly is going on with our bodies when it's exposed to these heavy metals and these different chemicals in which the waste has been diluted or changed in different ways.

And so just because we don't have the

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

expertise like that, we have different expertise. And so really talking to the community and really getting that cultural intake from everybody is something that needs to really be considered because every one of our community members have a voice, and they should all be listened to. Not just the adults and the elders, but the children, too, because these children are the ones who are going to be living in this area again once we're able to move back.

And that is my husband and myself, our goal is to move back because we enjoyed the quiet. We enjoyed just being out there at home.

So thank you for giving me this opportunity to make this comment. And I'll be here if you need to contact me. And I think my contact information has been sent around so everybody can probably find a way to contact me. Thank you.

MR. CAMERON: Very, very serious, very profound comment. Thank you very much for sharing that with us. Sheila, do we have someone else?

OPERATOR: We're showing no further comments in the queue at this time. But once again, if you would like to make a comment, you can press star 1. One moment, please.

MR. CAMERON: I would just make one

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

comment for all of you out there is our meeting was scheduled to go to 8 o'clock, and we're just going to patiently wait to see if anybody else gets on. It may be that there comes a time -- it's 4:00 to 7:00? Oh, okay. Well, I guess we're going to wait patiently from 4:00 to 7:00.

OPERATOR: We do have one question in queue, one comment in queue. The name was not recorded, but your line is open. Your name was not recorded, but your line is open.

MR. LEE: Good afternoon. Can you hear me?

MS. WALDRON: Yes.

MR. LEE: Okay. My name is Danny Lee with the Navajo Nation Superfund program. I was listening to a presentation earlier regarding the Love Canal over in New York, I guess, how the whole process more or less kind of expedited and cleaned up to everybody's liking that was involved, especially the community.

Now with that in mind, since this was a presentation by one of the U.S. EPA groups or whoever it was, now how is that site, Love Canal over in New York City, different from this site?

MR. CAMERON: I'm not sure what to say

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

about how it is different except that the regulatory agencies were different and there may have been different causes for the pollution.

So I don't know what to tell you about that, Danny. But I guess it would be interesting to look at Love Canal or look at other places and see if there are some things that are the same that --

MR. LEE: I'm not saying it's anything you can do today. I guess what I'm asking is why is it really that the cleanup with this that is over there, and people are listening to you. And now you're going to kind of like sweep everything under the rug here. That's what it's kind of like sounding to me, listening to the comments made earlier also.

And then also reviewing your draft, too, and that's like -- to me it sounds like it was just a regurgitation of what somebody else had written. So nothing really specific and nothing really with a whole lot of meat on it, I was feeling, anyway.

That's just a comment just based on what I was reading.

MR. CAMERON: Thank you. Thank you, Danny.

OPERATOR: If you would like to make a public comment, please, press star 1, unmute your line

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

and record your name clearly. If you would like to remove your comment, please press 2. We do have a public comment from Vivian Craig. Your line is open.

MS. CRAIG: Good afternoon, everyone. My name is Vivian Craig. And I'm the senior environmental specialist with Navajo EPA Superfund.

I just want to let the NRC know that back during when the dam broke in 1979 of July, my dad was in the Rio Puerco Wash herding sheep for his brother.

And all of a sudden, he heard a huge rumble and then the next thing you know, all those radioactive waters washed him away along with the sheep and the goats.

My immediate family has all been impacted by cancer. My dad having it four times, my mom and my older brother and myself. I have since then lost my dad, my mom and my older brother.

I don't know if it's from the fact that we lived and grew up in Church Rock, but I just wanted to make that statement.

And then also my main role working with the Superfund program is working with the families of the Red Water Pond area.

They are not only impacted by the UNC Mill site, but they're also impacted by ways of having to move away from their homeland, especially in the

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

voluntary alternative housing that they're signing up for, having to move away from their homeland.

This process is just taking so long that by the time that they decided eligibility, I think it was in 2011, and now the kids have grown up. And then according to the EPA guidelines, now grown-ups, families with their kids, are all -- they have no options but are being offered by EPA to move into one house.

For example, we have three grown children with a child each. But according to the guidelines of the voluntary alternative housing, those three families would either be required to move into one five bedroom home or one three bedroom home and then one two bedroom home. Those families should all be allowed to have their own private dwelling if they choose to go with the voluntary alternative housing.

And having all these families having to follow the guidelines, it's not right, especially during this pandemic. We are a family of generational families living in a home. But almost due to the pandemic, this has all changed.

So like I said, there's more impact to the families there. They are having to move from where they grew up. Right now they are restricted by a

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

fence around their area that they have volunteered to move to. And they're also leaving families behind who do not want to move. They have no place to bring their animals. They have lost family to cancer and then are also being impacted by cancer themselves.

I remember meeting with a grandmother on Red Water Pond during the winter. And she invited me in because it was cold outside. And she had little sheep and goats around her stove. And she started talking to me and she said to me, she said, (Diné language spoken), meaning my child, she said, before I leave this earth, I would really like to see the other side of the valley, but I can't.

The reason why she was saying that was the Quivira Mine tailings was in her way of seeing the other side of the valley. And she would say that most of the time when I would pay her a visit.

So those are my comments. I just really feel for the community because the impacts are great.

It's not only due to the mine tailings. It's other impacts that the families are going through, like breaking up the families, having to move from where they grew up, missing the hills. You know, I've heard other statements of children wanting to go home but that's not possible for them.

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

I know their parents are probably concerned about what kind of impacts they'll get back if they go back home as they're growing up. Thank you very much.

MR. CAMERON: Okay. Thank you. Thank you, Vivian. Very, very painful to hear. Thank you for sharing that. And we're going to be here to see how many other people would like to talk to us now that I've been corrected about when the meeting is going to end.

I won't force us all to stay here until 8 o'clock, but my colleagues at the NRC want to make sure that they give everybody a chance who wants to talk an opportunity. So if we're still going after 7:00, we're going to be here to listen to your comments. Thank you.

OPERATOR: Our next comment comes from Tammi Moe. Your line is open.

MS. MOE: Hello. My name is Tammi Moe. I am the director of the public library in Gallup, New Mexico, and I sit on the Board for the New Mexico Social Justice and Equity Institute.

I had read the Environmental Impact Report from front to back. And I'm really actually shocked that the language that is used in this report is very

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

benign and innocuous. It kind of indicates that this isn't as serious of an issue as it is calling something that is a disaster an incident in the report.

It's really clear from the way that this has been brushed over and not acted upon in several decades. This is racially motivated when you have these comments that you've heard already from other people listening in at different sites that have actually been cleaned up. And this site has just been left. And it's just really shocking that the NRC expects the community to trust them in what they're saying when they have let this radiation seep and poison the people of the Navajo Nation for so long.

It should be removed from their land. It is ridiculous that that isn't even mentioned in this environmental report. It is extortion to say to the people who have been suffering all of these decades that they can either accept these solutions or they can wait another 10 years or more for something to happen.

And I just really feel for the people in the Navajo Nation, and especially the Red Water Pond Road community, who are living in compromised health because of what has happened and still nothing has

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

been done about it. And I just really think that it needs to be emphasized how much of a disaster this was, not an incident that happened. That's my comment.

MR. CAMERON: Thank you. Thank you, Tammi. Thank you, Tammi, good comment.

OPERATOR: There are no questions in queue at this time. If you would like to ask a question -- I'm sorry, a comment, make a comment, please press star 1. If you would like to remove your comment, please press star 2.

Again, if you would like to make a public comment, please press star 1. If you would like to remove that comment, please press star 2.

Our comment comes from Dariel Yazzie. Your line is open.

MR. YAZZIE: Can you hear me?

OPERATOR: Yes.

MR. YAZZIE: Perfect. I guess as we start to wrap up here, I want to circle back and for the NRC members hosting this call, hosting this event, you know, there's a clear reason why when I opened up with my comments, my emphasis was on the respectful relationships.

And I think it needs to be identified

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

through this process. A lot of what you've heard from comments, from questions, from perceptions, and it's not just Navajos, it's those individuals that are non-Navajo that have called in, but they've been involved in one way or another over the years with the dialect that has been going back and forth all of these years in addressing these sites.

And it's clear to them and it's definitely clear to us that there's something missing. But it's through my recognition of wanting to perpetuate the idea of maintaining a respectful relationship.

I reach out to all of you and ask that you give hard thought to everything shared. Some of the key words that were shared, like social injustice. Our engineer, Mr. Danny Lee asked why was the Love Canal cleanup expedited? And I know and I understand that was led by a different agency.

But in the grand scheme of cleanup efforts throughout the country, we as Navajo people, Diné people, indigenous people, we can't help but see that perhaps because we're not of the Anglo race we don't have the high dollar political position or influence to bring about cleanup to happen immediately that we suffer, and that's another key word, suffer, 80 years.

My senior environmental specialist, Vivian

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

Craig, shared a personal story. At the beginning of this call, I said that's what my staff have. They all have a personal connection to all of this.

Ms. Leona Morgan shared different scenarios with other people throughout the Navajo Nation. Not just in the Church Rock area, but across Navajo where we continue to deal with these issues that are longstanding and go beyond just the mine waste, the mill waste.

It's been there for so long. It's seriously a disaster area that we're embarking to address. And comments made indicating that this EIS, this draft EIS would appear to be nothing more than a regurgitated formality.

Is that the perception that NRC wants to put forward in addressing this? I ask that simple question because that's where we need to change the dialect that we're having.

Clearly, you have concerned people on this call, concerned Navajo people, concerned non-Navajo people, who simply listen and have been able to understand what all of this is.

Can we move forward with a respectful manner of addressing this? And not just go through another formality where we've not had the turnout that

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

we truly need to capture the impacts, the comments, what we don't see through the science data that's gathered, the traditional impacts.

What ceremonies existed in this area? How was the area utilized prior to the mining activities? What was lost?

Now some of these things can't be replaced. I understand that. But this is where we open that door for a truly different manner of communicating. And I strongly close with my comments to give it hard, serious thought on what it's going to mean to have respectful relationships with Navajo community members that are impacted in this area.

And, again, it goes beyond just this one area, where we're talking the whole entire Navajo Nation.

I say it in this manner because I believe it can be done. Those were the words that were provided to me as a young person that we can always make forward progress through the respectful relationships that we built. I believe that.

But it's going to take more than just us saying that we believe it on our end. We need to have the other side of the relationship see and understand what we're talking about and truly engage with us at a

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

higher level.

We are more than willing to put in the work to help you understand or get a better understanding of why we say what we say to give you an understanding of why we bring out the different examples that we share, why we say it needs to go completely off of Navajo.

This past year, I think I've been in several conversations where waste was identified to be Navajo waste. It's not Navajo waste. We didn't ask for it. We definitely didn't approve it.

So those are my comments. To the community members, (Diné language spoken). Thank you for being with us the past several hours and listening. Let us continue to help you where we can.

My staff have been reaching out to me during this entire call and offering to provide assistance in capturing comments, collecting comments, reading and understanding the documents.

And I want to convey that at this level, that we're here for our Navajo communities to help and assist in that manner. Thank you. Ahéhee'.

MR. CAMERON: Thank you, Dariel. I couldn't think of a more articulate or stronger way to close the meeting and capture the thrust of the

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

meeting.

And I'm glad to hear that your staff is going to be helping to collect comments and inform people of that. So thank you. We are going to go to Kevin Coyne, our senior official for a closeout. I just want to make sure that there's no other people that we missed that want to --

OPERATOR: We have one caller in queue.

MR. CAMERON: Okay.

OPERATOR: Darlene Jenkins, your line is open.

MS. JENKINS: Okay. I just want to say (Diné language spoken) and hello to everyone this evening and also (Diné language spoken).

And I've been working with Superfund for several years now. And one thing I wanted to -- well, actually maybe I wanted to do both a comment and a question. Everyone is aware of the spill or the dam break in the area by that river, Puerco River.

So my fear is back. I was involved with trying to identify some sentinel well locations because surface-wise, all the runoff runs towards Gallup, right, southwest. But subsurface, meaning under the ground, the runoff is going towards northward, which is into Navajo land.

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

And the border is right there by that pipeline road. And that's the area that the sentinel wells were going to be located. And I don't know, I've been kicking off the projects. So I don't know where or if those wells have been placed because there's contaminants subsurface-wise going towards Navajo, the Navajo Trust land area.

So I was just wondering if we're going to be putting more weight on that proposed location, is there not going to be a cleanup subsurface-wise? Is that contamination going to continue to move onto Navajo or is that going to be addressed?

So we already know the dam break and all that runoff and waste that went down, that was never addressed. So I think a lot of our Navajo people are suspicious of this tall work, you know, just seeing how the company has -- with that runoff. But now we have another situation going back subsurface-wise, the contaminants going onto Navajo.

So will that be addressed before the waste is moved on to the proposed site or how is that all going to be dealt with? That's my question, comment.

Thank you.

MR. CAMERON: Thank you. Thank you, Darlene. The NRC staff has noted that issue for

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

consideration, and we'll consider it in drafting the final. I don't think we have an answer right now.

Lorraine, do we have anybody else?

OPERATOR: No one in the queue at this time.

MR. CAMERON: Well, we are going to meet again next week and now that I know it's going to be 4:00 to 7:00. And there will be a meeting in January, not scheduled yet so. Lots of good ideas tonight about other ways to increase dialogue and communication.

I would just thank you all for your comments. And I want to go to Kevin Coyne for a closing for us. Kevin?

MR. COYNE: Thanks, Chip. I want to thank everyone for taking time out of your day to participate in this meeting and provide your comments.

Obtaining your feedback is an essential part of our process. And we'll give these comments thorough consideration as we finalize the Environmental Impact Statement.

I also want to remind folks that there will be a second meeting on December 9. In addition, as we mentioned, we are processing a 60-day extension to the public comment period, which will now end on

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

February 26. We'll issue a formal notice of this extension in the near future.

I also want to remind everyone that there are multiple ways to provide your comments. In addition to capturing the comments from the meeting today, you can use a dedicated voice mail line that has been established for the project.

You can submit comments at the regulations.gov website. We accept comments via U.S. mail and/or you can email -- send an email to the dedicated project comment email address. And the specifics of each of those were provided in the slide presentation.

If you have any questions about the project or need assistance with submitting comments, you can always reach out to Ashley Waldron. Her contact information is included in the meeting announcement for this meeting.

Thank you again for your participation in the meeting. We very much appreciate your feedback and comments. And I hope everyone has a good evening.

MR. CAMERON: Okay. Thank you, Kevin. And the next meeting is this next week. It is going to be from 2:00 to 5:00 p.m. Mountain Time, that's 4:00 to 7:00 Eastern Time. I think that everybody

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

we've heard from today was speaking from the Mountain Time area.

So 2:00 to 5:00 p.m. Mountain Time next week, December 9, we'll be here. And are we using the same phone number?

MS. WALDRON: Yes.

MR. CAMERON: We are using the same number.

MS. WALDRON: The Webex will be different. I will send that information.

MR. CAMERON: Okay. Thank you, Ashley. Thank you all. Thank you, Joanna Manygoats.

MS. MANYGOATS: You're welcome.

MR. CAMERON: And thank you, Lorraine, Sheila, Sam, thank you all, and we'll be here next week. We're adjourned.

(Whereupon, the above-entitled matter went off the record at 7:18 p.m.)

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701