



## About the Homestake/Barrick Gold Uranium Tailings Pile

- **22 million tons of radioactive waste** in a pile that is 90 feet high and 200 acres in size
- Unlined Waste pile **leaking contaminants directly** into groundwater
- Owned by Barrick Gold, a **multi-billion company** able to afford removal and proper remediation
- Undergoing a tailings flushing remediation program for the past 30 years, **with minimal results**
- **Uncovered tailings release radon at levels 2 to 3 times higher** than acceptable cancer risk standards.

BVDA members have charted how groundwater contamination from the Homestake tailings has spread throughout the area since first discovered in 1961.

They have also documented how a succession of clean-up plans approved by federal and state agencies have failed to halt the migration.

Promises made by the company to restore the groundwater have not been kept, and state and federal agencies have not aggressively enforced Homestake's clean-up requirements.

## Bluewater Valley Downstream Alliance

(BVDA) was founded in 2006 by residents of the Milan, N.M., area who live next to and downstream of the Homestake/Barrick Gold uranium mill tailings facility. BVDA advocates for comprehensive cleanup of groundwater contaminated by uranium mining and milling facilities in the Ambrosia Lake-Milan area. BVDA also advocates for compensation of residents downstream of the Homestake tailings facility.

### Impacts to the Community

- Residents living around the site experience greater health problems than those living in other areas. Health problems include various cancers, asthma, severe migraines, gallbladder diseases, and thyroid diseases.
- Property values of the area have fallen, leaving family's investments in land and housing worthless.
- Communities have lost rights to their own wells and water supply and must now pay for water.
- Families experience intense stress with knowing they are raising their children in a hazardous area harmful to their health.

# DEMANDS OF THE BLUEWATER VALLEY DOWNSTREAM ALLIANCE

**1. Relocate the tailings to a safe permanent regional repository.** This contamination must not be allowed to leak from this unlined pond forever. A full cleanup is not possible if the pile is left on site. Removing the pile also protects residents from radon levels which the EPA says are higher than its acceptable cancer risk standards by 2-3 times at the property's boundary. A regional repository could be double-lined with state-of-the-art protections in an area that does not threaten groundwater, a precious commodity for New Mexico's future. This regional repository could also help solve similar problems for the Red Water Pond Road Community and Mariano Lake Community, among others.

**2. Demand a full Environmental Impact Study (EIS).** An EIS has never been required for our site. With the many changes noted in the most recent Corrective Action Plan submitted to the NRC by Homestake/Barrick, we insist on a full EIS which is warranted by these changes and which must be conducted to determine the full impact of this failed remediation.

**3. Set appropriate background.** Our community has evidence of the clean water we had before the milling began. We want that clean water back. It is unacceptable for the NMED, the EPA, and the NRC to accept only partial clean up from this billion dollar company. New Mexico will need this water in the future. **We need it now.**



Milton Head BVDA member demonstrating pollution flows.  
Photo: M. Varela

## BVDA CONTACT INFORMATION

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