



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **MILAN, NM RESIDENTS PUTS HOME UP FOR SALE DUE TO HOMESTAKE/ BARRICK GOLD RADON CONTAMINATION**

**\*Video available at: <http://bit.ly/NMUranium>**

*Milan, N.M.* — Just a half mile north of the nearest homes in Milan, NM sits the Homestake/Barrick Gold Uranium Tailings Pile Superfund Site. This site holds the 22 million tons of radioactive waste (uranium mill tailings) generated during the last uranium boom in this area. The Tailings Pile sits unlined and sparsely covered, releasing contaminants into the air and water. State and federal agencies struggle to find a remediation strategy that can maintain the contamination leaking from the site.

The Bluewater Valley Downstream Alliance is a grassroots community group formed to address the ongoing contamination from the Homestake/Barrick Gold Uranium Tailings Pile. For over 50 years, the site has leaked radioactive contaminants including radon into the air and into their water systems, making water wells unusable by the local community.

Community members living around the Tailings Site experience greater health problems than those living in surrounding areas. Health problems include various cancers, asthma, severe migraines, gallbladder diseases, and thyroid diseases - to name a few. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, exposure to radon causes lung cancer in non-smoker and smokers alike.

Annual air monitoring reports conducted by the US EPA in 2006 – 2010 indicate releases of radon outside the area covered by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission license, in concentrations exceeding US EPA standards. The 2006 - 2010 annual air monitoring report indicates that releases of radon exceeded the annual average concentrations allowed under 40 CFR 192.02(b)(2).

Radon air monitors along the Homestake fenceline have continuously recorded outdoor ambient air radon concentrations associated with cancer risk levels that are greater than EPA's acceptable cancer risk range of  $1 \times 10^{-4}$  to  $1 \times 10^{-6}$  [i.e., lifetime cancer risks of 1 in 10,000 to 1 in 1 million], as published in the National Contingency Plan.

Community members and Bluewater Valley Downstream Alliance President, Candace Dylla and her husband, are putting the home they built up for sale, because of the high radon levels and the radioactive contaminants in their water wells. Candace Dylla says, “We’re putting our home up for sale, because it is no longer safe for us to live here. It’s unacceptable and dangerous for our families.” Over the past few decades, property values of the area have fallen due to past lawsuits with Homestake/Barrick Gold and local knowledge of the contamination. The fallen property values have left working families’ investments in land and housing worthless.

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*The Multicultural Alliance for a Safe Environment (MASE) is rooted in the experiences of uranium-impacted communities of the southwestern U.S. We are communities working to restore and protect the natural and cultural environment through respectfully promoting intercultural engagement among communities and institutions for the benefit of all life and future generations.*

**MASE Core Group of Alliances**

*Bluewater Valley Downstream Alliance, Eastern Navajo Diné Against Uranium Mining, Laguna-Acoma Coalition for a Safe Environment, Post-71 Uranium Workers Committee, Red Water Pond Road Community Association*

**MASE Affiliated Groups and Allies**

*Amigos Bravos, Moquino Mutual Domestic Water Consumers Association, New Mexico Environmental Justice Working Group, McKinley Community Health Alliance, New Mexico Environmental Law Center, Office of Peace, Justice and Creation Stewardship, Partnership for Earth Spirituality, Ramah Navajo Community, Dineh Bidziil, Sierra Club Environmental Justice Office, Southwest Research and Information Center, Stewards of Creation, NukeWatch, Think Outside the Bomb, Western Mining Action Network, Wise Uranium*

[www.masecoalition.org](http://www.masecoalition.org)