

Environmental Justice Talking Points

These talking points are provided as a guide to help you create your own message for the April 29 Hearing. Please feel free to modify them so they work for you.

- Environmental Justice is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people in the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. It will be achieved when everyone - regardless of race, color, national origin, or income - enjoys the same degree of protection from environmental and health hazards and equal access to the decision-making process that ensures a healthy environment in which to live and work.

*EPA Region 6 Environmental Justice Training Workshop, Albuquerque, NM, June 19-21, 2013;
Executive Order 12898 on Environmental Justice*

- The Member groups of the the Multicultural Alliance for a Safe Environment have suffered combined disproportionate burdens from uranium legacy contamination in the Grants Mining District for over five decades. (Bluewater Valley Downstream Alliance, Eastern Navajo Dine Against Uranium Mining, Laguna Acoma Coalition for a Safe Environment, Post '71 Uranium Workers Committee, Red Water Pond Road Community Association)
- As downstream communities, we have been subjected to hazardous, toxic releases first, from the UNC-Homestake Partners uranium mill and tailings site, and now, from ongoing contaminant releases into the air, water and soil at the Superfund site.
- Homestake's claims that contamination was confined to the shallow alluvial aquifer were wrong. Groundwater contamination has since spread to the Upper, Middle, and Lower Chinle aquifers. Residents were told to stop using their wells in 1976.
- Community residents now face off-site migration of groundwater contaminants from the Department of Energy-owned Bluewater uranium mill tailings pile site west of the Homestake site and possible contaminant migration from the Ambrosia Lake area north of the site. Both additional contaminant sources are located upstream of the affected communities, in the Rio San Jose and San Mateo Creek watersheds.
- The New Mexico Environment Department and other state and federal regulators must take into account the combined cumulative adverse impacts to our communities from all uranium legacy sources of pollution in order to achieve environmental justice for our communities.
- The Environmental Protection Agency's Five-Year Plans for addressing health and environmental impacts of uranium mining and milling in the Grants Mining District and the Navajo Nation can be used to achieve widespread regional clean-up of uranium legacy contamination and long-term environmental restoration.

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