

Mt. Taylor Mine Fact Sheet

Mt. Taylor Mine was operated by Gulf Mineral Resource Company from 1980-1985 and by Chevron Resources Company from 1985-1990, before the mine ceased production altogether.

The mine is now owned by Rio Grande Resources Corporation (RGR), a subsidiary of General Atomics Corporation.

Mine owners have requested 3 stand-by periods since the New Mexico Mining Act was enacted in 1993.

RGR applied for its third standby permit revision in 2010.

MASE appealed the 2010 stand-by permit revision that was granted by the Mining & Minerals Division (MMD), based on MMD's failure to allow meaningful public participation. A New Mexico district court agreed and ordered MMD to conduct further public hearings. A new public hearing has now been scheduled for May 1, 2015.

An environmental baseline study of the Mt. Taylor Project Area was performed in 1974 by the NM Environmental Institute.

Under New Mexico mining law, mine reclamation is not mandated until a mine closes. A mining company can delay the start of expensive reclamation activities by requesting multiple stand-by periods.

MASE is concerned about the spread of contamination during prolonged stand-by periods from radioactive and toxic waste rock stockpiled at the mine site and from ground water mixing in the open mine shaft.

Mining companies generally claim that the uranium market will not support the costs of mining operation when they request to go on stand-by. This means that some mining companies may take short-cuts to lower their reclamation expenses if a downturn in the uranium market forces them to close.

In the meantime, wind and water can carry exposed uranium in dissolved or particulate forms great distances from a mine site, putting our public health and water supplies at risk during mining operations and prolonged stand-by periods.

MMD could require interim reclamation and monitoring until active reclamation begins.

MMD can also revise the mining company's financial bond to assure that all required reclamation activities will be completed.

Many other mines in the Grants Mining District remain un-reclaimed to this day. Other mines, such as the Jackpile Mine, have yet to address continuing soil, surface water and groundwater contamination.