Mt. Taylor is situated in northwestern New Mexico, formerly known as the Grants Mineral Belt. This part of New Mexico was devastated by uranium mining from the 1940’s to 1980’s.

Part of the legacy of past uranium mining is that the air (breath), soil (plants), and water (springs, streams) are polluted and can never be returned to their original state before mining. In 2009, the National Historic Trust listed Mt. Taylor as one of 11 most endangered historic places in the US.

The area now harbors 97 abandoned uranium mines and 5 former uranium mills. Currently two new uranium mines are being proposed: the Roca Honda mine, owned by Roca Honda Resources (RHR), LLC, and the La Jara Mesa Mine, owned by Laramide Mine. Additionally, Rio Grande Resources has proposed the reopening of the Mt. Taylor mine.

Proposed mining in all three of these areas will adversely impact the Mt. Taylor Traditional Cultural Property. Under the leadership of the affected indigenous nations, in 1990 Mount Taylor was permanently listed in the State Register of Cultural Properties, due to its significance to Laguna and Acoma Pueblos and many other native nations in New Mexico.

These indigenous nations have a spiritual relationship to Mt. Taylor, with over 1,000 identified archeological sites that have been significant since prehistoric times. Its shrines, springs and other landscape features are important for religious pilgrimages and ceremonies today.
LAGUNA ACOMA COALITION FOR A SAFE ENVIRONMENT GOALS

- Community Education for Laguna and Acoma members and residents
- Community empowerment in addressing legacy issues affecting health and the environment

JACKPILE MINE LEGACY

Jackpile was once the world’s largest open pit uranium mine, located on the Pueblo of Laguna near the village of Paguate.

Anaconda Minerals Company operated the 7,868-acre site from 1953 to 1982, leaving open pits, waste dumps, and ore stockpiles. Contaminants found at the site include uranium, arsenic, barium, chromium, and lead.

An EPA assessment in 2007 determined additional remediation was necessary. Jackpile was declared a Superfund site in 2012.

The nearby Rio Paguate and Paguate Reservoir have shown elevated levels of isotopic uranium, which could affect cultural and ceremonial uses of these water bodies. (http://www.wise-uranium.org/udusanm.html#JACKPILE)