

Intermountain West Summit on Uranium and Water

Final Declaration April 2016

1. WHEREAS some 30 people from at least six states and five native nations, who are committed to achieving environmental justice, participated in the 2016 Intermountain West Summit on Uranium and Water in Rapid City, SD, USA, Lakota Territory, on April 2;
2. WHEREAS, the tribes and states in our region are the ones most affected in North America by uranium issues;
3. WHEREAS we reached consensus that we could work together on federal issues to educate for action on the entire nuclear power chain's effects on water and health;
4. WHEREAS we approved a committee to draft a joint declaration and incorporate feedback into it for the purpose of having an outreach document to sway the opinion of the public, candidates for office, and decision makers;
5. WHEREAS we deemed that the declaration would demonstrate a broad-based agreement that could be quoted in a petition drive or public comment process, and be distributed to organizations' mailing lists, as well as serving as a basis for a joint action plan at a follow-up encounter;
6. WHEREAS we shared the notion that our effort should use proactive and positive language, avoiding the term "no" by favoring other constructions in our outreach, such as those expressed during our summit and included in the drafting;

We the undersigned, on behalf of the organizations cited below, do THEREFORE DECLARE:

We are united in common cause to raise awareness and educate for action to mitigate the negative impacts of the nuclear power chain on water, land, air, health, genetic integrity, and sacred landscapes.

We are dedicated to learning and understanding the most useful ways to educate for the cause, such as relevant teaching methods and grassroots campaign platforms that emphasize the mutual concerns for assured access to plentiful clean water as a human right and radiation literacy for politicians.

We defend international, treaty, traditional, tribal, state, local and case law that supports processes and decisions in the interest of subjugating the profit motive in uranium and nuclear development activities to the need to honor ancestral territorial claims and bolster cultural survival of all people.

We embrace citizen monitoring of environmental threats and the use of the results in long-range planning efforts to strengthen stakeholder clout for achieving legal reform and regulatory changes to modernize outmoded statutes and clauses.

We stand for the highest criteria attainable in public institutions' mandatory oversight, monitoring, regulation, enforcement and disclosure of uranium and related nuclear operations, for the purpose of attaining congruency in standards implementation, punishing lawbreakers, halting current illegal dealings, improving corporate accountability, securing transparency, and providing community access to information.

We are entitled to reimbursement payments in the form of fines, royalties and taxes levied on mining companies for the damage their uranium and related exploitation does on public and tribal property; we want the money applied to cleanup and protection.

We vow to share information; work to build alliances on local, state, tribal, federal, regional and international levels; and to strengthen governing bodies to help keep the public rights to water, land and air in the public domain so that these mainstays of life can be used for drinking and producing food.

We champion the precautionary principle in protecting the sanctity of mother earth from the spread of uranium mining, rare earth, thorium, radioactive coal, vanadium and other radioactive element exploitation, nuclear fuel, nuclear weapons, nuclear warfare and nuclear waste.

We promote alternative energy that can be democratically distributed and fortify self-reliance while eliminating the need for fragile and expensive high-tech systems at nuclear plants.

We advocate increased employment income sources through clean renewables, appropriate technology and remediation of abandoned uranium mines, mills, and waste dumps, and nuclear radioactive contamination.

We strive, through a multicultural effort, for the goal of fairness, involving more people in ensuring a safe and peaceful environment, with gender equity and respect for diversity, for ours and upcoming generations.

We pledge to pray, speak, lobby, network, inform and take direct actions, not only on behalf of those who want to make their voices heard, but also to benefit those among us who do not have the use of words.

We will act in solidarity with all people who endeavor to break free of their nuclear fuel chains and dependency on highly polluting non-renewable sources of energy, moving instead towards greater conservation of energy and more-sustainable renewable energy.

SIGNED: Sarah Fields, Sierra Club Nuclear Free Campaign; Gena Parkhurst, Dakota Rural Action Black Hills Chapter; Don Kelley, Dakota Rural Action; Susan Gordon, Multicultural Alliance for a Safe Environment; Liliias Jarding, Clean Water Alliance; Debra White Plume, Owe Aku (Bring Back the Way); Petuuche Gilbert, Laguna Acoma Coalition for a Safe Environment; Larry King, Eastern Navajo Diné Against Uranium Mining; Leona Morgan, Diné No Nukes