

From: [Penny Heuscher](#)
To: [mail_ulpeis](#)
Subject: Clean Up and Clean Energy!
Date: Sunday, June 30, 2013 9:41:17 AM

Dear

Dear Mr. Plienness:

Although this comment is intended for action regarding Western Colorado, I would like to remind you that there is a high incidence of CANCER in the Navajo Nation in Northeastern Arizona close to Colorado. The Cornfields Chapter, four years ago began a Cornfields Chapter Cancer fund to assist twelve members including children with the effort to travel for medical care. It has been documented that the incidence of cancer is contributed to the tailings left on nearby lands and due to water contamination.

This and previous documentation of tailings effects in our Colorado uranium miners and their children who breathed the dust the miners brought home on their clothes provides the basis and the reasoning for the Department of Energy to include cleanup projects in the PEIS.

The ULP covers roughly 25,000 acres of public lands across western Colorado, and future uranium development should only be done in a manner that protects public health, safety and welfare. The current PEIS is inadequate and it needs to expand its alternatives, bolster impact analyses, support renewable energy, and protect long-term public interest. For DOE to usher a process that results in the best choice, any analysis should also address bonding, royalty rates, uniform and holistic standards for mine reclamation, and uranium market conditions.

Under DOE's preferred alternative, scores of existing leases could operate alongside 19 new mines during peak operations. Instead, DOE should substantively consider a "Clean Alternative", one that prioritizes mine reclamation and safer energy alternatives. Western Colorado has thousands of un-reclaimed uranium mines and at the same time is renowned for its solar energy potential. DOE should put people back to work cleaning-up old mines and developing sustainable, renewable energy economies.

In order for future DOE uranium development to be done safely, impact analyses must include a thorough programmatic review alongside in-depth, localized information. Western Colorado has already carried the disproportionate burdens of an industry that left behind a legacy of waste and radioactive contamination. The PEIS lacks a detailed cumulative impacts study, excluding investigation of long-term economic development, transportation corridors, and public health; in general failing to consider the combined impacts of all past and present uranium activities in this region.

The ULP runs across Mesa, Montrose and San Miguel Counties; it will inherently have regional implications on our economy, environment and public health. The PEIS states only "minor" environmental justice concerns are associated with increased uranium mining in this area. The CORNFIELDS CHAPTER does FUNDING RAISING BY SELLING THEIR WOVEN RUGS TO RAISE MONEY FOR THEIR URANIUM AFFECTED CANCER PATIENTS.

Our lands take many years to recover from mining and therefore bonding must be adequate to provide long term results showing the land has been reclaimed. The DOE after certifying total recovery would then release the company from obligation. When public lands as well as private lands are mined proof of reclamation must be provided.

I believe DOE can offer a program that supports promising sustainable jobs without increased uranium mining. The DOE should contribute to our local economies by putting people back to work reclaiming old mines and developing renewable energy. Every Coloradan has the right to a clean environment, a strong economy and a healthy community.

Sincerely,

Penny Heuscher