

BEFORE CHIP CAMERON, FACILITATOR

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IN RE: U.S. Department of Energy Draft Uranium :  
Leasing Program Programmatic Environmental Impact :  
Statement Public Hearing. :  
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Telluride, Colorado  
Wednesday, April 24, 2013

PURSUANT TO NOTICE to all parties in interest,  
the above-entitled matter came on for public hearing  
on Wednesday, April 24, 2013, commencing at 7:04 p.m.  
at 725 West Colorado Avenue, Telluride, Colorado  
before Candice F. Flowers, Certified Shorthand  
Reporter.

1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 MR. CAMERON: Good evening,  
3 everyone. I'm Chip Cameron and I would like to  
4 welcome you to the Department of Energy's public  
5 hearing on the Draft Uranium Leasing Program,  
6 Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement. And  
7 we are going to try to limit the use of acronyms  
8 tonight, but for obvious reasons, one that we will  
9 be using is PEIS, and you are probably going to  
10 hear that a number of times and probably want to  
11 use it yourself tonight.

12 It's my pleasure to serve as your  
13 facilitator for tonight's meeting; and in that  
14 role, I will try to help all of you have a  
15 productive meeting tonight. I'm a private  
16 contractor working for Argonne National Lab, which  
17 is located in Chicago. And they are supporting the  
18 Department of Energy in the preparation of this  
19 draft PEIS.

20 I just want to go over a few logistics of  
21 tonight's meeting so that you know what to expect.  
22 I want to tell you about the objectives for the  
23 meeting, the agenda for the meeting, and then just  
24 go over some simple ground rules that will help us  
25 to have a productive meeting tonight.

1           In terms of the objectives, there are two  
2 objectives. The first one is to give you  
3 information on what's in the draft PEIS, and in a  
4 few moments, Ray Plienness, who is right here, from  
5 the Department of Energy will be giving you an  
6 overview presentation on the PEIS.

7           The second and most important objective  
8 is to hear from you, to listen to you, your  
9 recommendations, your concerns, your advice on the  
10 alternatives and potential impacts that are  
11 discussed in the PEIS. The Department has also  
12 requested written comments on the draft PEIS. The  
13 comment period has been extended from May 16th to  
14 May 31st.

15           Hopefully, tonight's presentation by the  
16 Department and the discussion that you might have  
17 had with the Department representatives and their  
18 experts by the posters before the meeting started  
19 and after the meeting, hopefully that will help  
20 you, that will enlighten your written comments.  
21 But I just want to emphasize that anything that you  
22 say tonight will carry as much weight as written  
23 comments, and you are free to do both: Speak  
24 tonight and submit a written comment. There's a  
25 sign-up sheet out front for anybody who wants to

1 talk tonight.

2           We are taking a transcript of the  
3 meeting. Candice is our court reporter tonight,  
4 and that transcript will be available to the  
5 public.

6           The agenda tonight is pretty  
7 straightforward. After Ray gives you an overview,  
8 we are going to go straight to public comment, to  
9 the people who signed in tonight. And what I'm  
10 going to do is I'm going to be operating up here, I  
11 will use this microphone, I will call your name,  
12 and if you could come down to the mic and introduce  
13 yourself, give us your affiliation, if appropriate.

14           And we have you facing away. Usually we  
15 have you facing to the audience, but we need to  
16 make sure that Candice -- she needs to see you  
17 talking to make sure that we get a true transcript  
18 of the meeting, so that's the way we are going to  
19 do that.

20           The Department and its experts are going  
21 to be available by the posters after the meeting to  
22 answer any questions you have either about the PEIS  
23 process or any of the information that's in the  
24 PEIS. And we are doing that by the posters because  
25 there's a lot of information there and the

1 Department may want to refer to some of that  
2 information when they are answering your question.

3           When you go out there after the meeting,  
4 if you see the people who have the name tags on, if  
5 you have a question or if you want to talk about  
6 something, just ask one of them. And if they can't  
7 answer the question for you, they will get the  
8 right person to answer the question.

9           Some simple ground rules for the meeting  
10 is we want to make sure we hear from everyone  
11 tonight, so I'm going to ask you to follow a  
12 four-minute guideline in your presentation. And I  
13 will let you know when you are getting close to  
14 four minutes so that you can sum up for us. If you  
15 have more to say, you can amplify through a written  
16 comment tonight.

17           Secondly, I wanted to tell you that the  
18 Department is here to listen carefully to your  
19 comments tonight. They are not going to be  
20 responding to your comments after you give them  
21 tonight, but they will listen carefully and they  
22 will be evaluating all of your comments as they  
23 prepare the final PEIS.

24           We are scheduled to end at 9:00 tonight,  
25 but we will stay until we hear everybody who has

1 signed up to speak tonight, even if that's after  
2 9:00.

3 Just in terms of some administrative  
4 details, you probably know this already, but the  
5 restroom, if you go out that door, they are down  
6 the hallway to your right. And the standard  
7 announcement that we always make in terms of  
8 emergency exits, there is one right there and there  
9 is one right over there.

10 And with that, let me introduce Ray  
11 Plieness, who is the document manager for the  
12 Uranium Leasing Program PEIS, but he's also the  
13 hearing officer for tonight's hearing.

14 And, Ray, I will put this in here for you  
15 and you can take it away.

16 MR. PLIENESS: Thank you, Chip.  
17 First, I would like to welcome you all here. I  
18 know a lot of you are spending your personal time  
19 and we have spent a lot of time on this PEIS. It's  
20 about a 1200-page document with a lot of  
21 information. It's missing one major component, and  
22 that's public input. And the reason we are here  
23 tonight is to continue that process, because it  
24 requires a thorough and in-depth review by the  
25 public to help us make it better and to make the

1 best informed decision we can.

2           We were in Grand Junction, Colorado on  
3 Monday night, Montrose last night, we are here, of  
4 course, tonight, and then we will be going to  
5 Telluride tomorrow.

6           AUDIENCE MEMBER: You're in  
7 Telluride.

8           MR. PLIENESS: Naturita. Excuse me.  
9 We're going to leave from here and go down to  
10 Naturita.

11           This is an overview of our presentation  
12 tonight. We're going to talk about the purpose and  
13 need for the agency to evaluate this, the proposed  
14 action, the uranium leasing background, some of the  
15 history of this program, talk about the cooperating  
16 agencies that are assisting us and have assisted us  
17 and will continue to assist us, consultation with  
18 the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the five  
19 alternatives that we have evaluated, and I'll try  
20 to differentiate for you what differences there are  
21 between those alternatives, and then we'll talk  
22 about the preferred alternative and, most  
23 importantly, the next steps.

24           The purpose and need of this particular  
25 program -- the purpose and need for agency action

1 is to implement basically two laws: The Atomic  
2 Energy Act as well as the 2005 Energy Policy Act.  
3 Within that we need to evaluate the existing  
4 program and determine the future course of the  
5 uranium lease program.

6           The proposed action is just that. It's  
7 two things: First and foremost, does this program  
8 continue and, if it does continue, under what  
9 management structure and approach do we take to  
10 continue the program.

11           The lease program started back in the  
12 1940s. The first program was in 1948 and it went  
13 on to 1962, and then we had another 20-year program  
14 from '74 to '94, another extension of that program  
15 in '96 to 2008. These are the historical  
16 activities. Those leasing programs provided about  
17 8 million pounds of uranium, 41 million pounds  
18 basically of vanadium, with a royalty payment of  
19 \$65 million. The royalties for this particular  
20 program, we have both an annual royalty, which is  
21 paid whether there's any mining or not, and we also  
22 have a production royalty if there is mining  
23 activity that actually happens on the lease tracts.

24           The current program, which started in --  
25 actually, under an environmental assessment in



1 2007, has 31 lease tracts. 29 of those lease  
2 tracts are actually leased at this point. Eight of  
3 those tracts have mines on them; actually nine  
4 mines on eight tracts. And two additional lease  
5 tracts are currently inactive and will remain so  
6 indefinitely.

7           The lease tracts basically follow along  
8 Highway 141, south of Gateway, north of Egnar.  
9 Most of you live here so you are more familiar with  
10 that than I. I lived in Grand Junction for 22  
11 years, but you probably know this area much better  
12 than I.

13           One of the things I wanted to say: If  
14 anybody is not sure where these are at, we have Ed  
15 Cotter here that works for us with our contractor,  
16 and while they are easy enough to see on a map,  
17 they're not that easy to find in the field. So he  
18 may be able to give you some pointers if you are  
19 interested in them.

20           The current program is in a stay status.  
21 After we published the notice of intent to proceed  
22 with the PEIS, the U.S. District Court of Colorado  
23 came up with two orders in a lawsuit, which the  
24 plaintiffs had alleged DOE's 2007 PEA -- which was  
25 the Programmatic Environmental Assessment at that

1 time -- and the FONSI violated NEPA and the  
2 Endangered Species Act.

3           The Court ordered on October 18, 2011 a  
4 stay of all lease activities. In February, after a  
5 request from DOE, they allowed activities to happen  
6 that assured protection of public health, if there  
7 was anything on the lease tracts on the nine mines,  
8 as well as any requirements that the state has for  
9 vegetation control and other activities that are  
10 not related to moving forward with any mining or  
11 other activity, other than protection of human  
12 health and the vegetation.

13           One of the things that we have worked  
14 very hard on is coordination and communication with  
15 the federal, state, county as well as our American  
16 Indian tribal governments in developing this draft  
17 PEIS. As cooperating agencies, they give us input  
18 and expertise in their area of the field that they  
19 manage, as well as can see the draft ahead of time  
20 and provide comments.

21           On the federal side, we have spent a lot  
22 of time with the Bureau of Land Management as well  
23 as the EPA organization out of Denver, the regional  
24 office.

25           In the state of Colorado, three primary

1 entities have been involved: The Department of  
2 Transportation; Reclamation, Mining and Safety as  
3 well as the Colorado Parks and Wildlife. The  
4 transportation people have been critical, as this  
5 program evaluation would include a fair amount of  
6 transportation. The Reclamation, Mining and Safety  
7 group manages all mining within the state,  
8 including mines that are on these lease tracts, if  
9 and when that happens. And then, of course, the  
10 Parks and Wildlife and protection of wildlife  
11 interests throughout the area.

12 Mesa County, Montrose County as well as  
13 San Miguel and San Juan Counties have actively  
14 participated in the draft PEIS, and five Indian  
15 tribal entities have also participated.

16 As a requirement of Section 7 under the  
17 Endangered Species Act, any federal agency is  
18 required to evaluate its impact on endangered  
19 species for any action they undertake. We have  
20 been in informal consultation with the Fish and  
21 Wildlife Service for about a year. We looked at  
22 all of the issues identified within the lease  
23 tracts. We assumed we would have 19 mines going at  
24 the worst case at any given time. All of our  
25 evaluations are based on that worst case.

1           And in this particular case, we developed  
2 a biological opinion that evaluated our impact on  
3 the wildlife. We find that the determination is  
4 not likely to adversely affect most species or  
5 their critical habitat. In our BA draft and in the  
6 final, we -- it's also stated in the final BA, but  
7 in our draft PEIS, you will see a statement on the  
8 fish for the Colorado River that says we also did  
9 determine that we were not going to affect them in  
10 an adverse way.

11           We have changed that determination and  
12 our BA is being resubmitted to the Fish and  
13 Wildlife Service, because the Fish and Wildlife  
14 Service has determined that anything above .1  
15 acre-feet of water depletion from the upper  
16 Colorado River is indeed an adverse impact to the  
17 endangered fish species. In our particular lease  
18 tracts, the worst year for our estimate is 19.1  
19 acre-feet, which is well above that, so we will be  
20 going to formal consultation with the Fish and  
21 Wildlife Service starting next week.

22           Within the PEIS, we basically took 14  
23 environmental resources and areas to evaluate from  
24 human health to air quality to acoustic  
25 environment, analyzed each one of those with the

1 data we had from our specific sites as well as  
2 other data that we can garner from other mining  
3 operations, both internal to the U.S. as well as  
4 some stuff from international areas. We tried to  
5 get the most conservative information we could in  
6 our evaluation to come up with what are the impacts  
7 or potential impacts that could occur from those  
8 actions that we have identified in the PEIS.

9           Additionally, we evaluated cumulative  
10 impacts. I use the term -- you evaluate your  
11 additional impact to the entire environment. It  
12 might be the straw that broke the camel's back.  
13 Even if you had very little impact, it might just  
14 be too much on a resource area. It takes into  
15 account the existing, current as well as past, and  
16 reasonably foreseeable actions within an area.

17           We used a 50-mile radius around the lease  
18 tracts, so all actions that we could reasonably see  
19 that will happen there or are currently happening,  
20 we added our impacts on top of that to evaluate the  
21 cumulative impacts as well as evaluation of  
22 measures that could minimize those impacts.

23           Those are resource areas such as  
24 compliance actions, requirements by federal, state,  
25 or local laws, and then we call them mitigation

1 measures. Those are things that we put into  
2 existing leases or they could be added to the  
3 leases to ensure additional actions in regulation  
4 of our leases. And then best management practices,  
5 those things that the industry does as a general  
6 practice and should be assumed that they would  
7 happen in this case as well.

8 I think Table 5.1, if you are not  
9 familiar with that, identifies those mitigation --  
10 those measures that would mitigate these impacts,  
11 and it's a pretty important table to be comfortable  
12 with because I think it helps understand some our  
13 evaluation.

14 The five alternatives: Alternative 1, I  
15 stated I think in Montrose, is basically the no  
16 mining option. We would reclaim the existing mines  
17 and we would hold the leases in abeyance basically  
18 within DOE.

19 Alternative 2 is very similar to  
20 Alternative 1, except once we reclaim the mines and  
21 any disturbances from the lease tracts that were  
22 associated with our leases, we would petition to  
23 return those to BLM, to the public domain. If BLM  
24 and DOE accepted that, they would go back to the  
25 public domain and they would operate the 25,000

1 acres in accordance with their multipurpose  
2 resource management plans. So I can't say that  
3 wouldn't include mining; I can just say it wouldn't  
4 be our decision.

5           Alternative 3 would return to July 2007  
6 when we had 13 existing leases and allow those to  
7 proceed for ten years or for a reasonable period  
8 past that.

9           Alternative 4, our preferred alternative,  
10 would continue the lease program for 31 leases for  
11 a period of ten years or a reasonable period after  
12 that. The difference between Alternative 4 and 5  
13 is a timing issue. The 31 leases that we proceeded  
14 with, 29 of which are existing leases, started in  
15 2008. This particular alternative would indicate  
16 that they would have the original ten-year period,  
17 but the program would end after that. So by 2018,  
18 we would have to either evaluate another document  
19 or we would have to stop the program. So  
20 Alternative 4, you start ten years now.  
21 Alternative 5, you started your ten years back in  
22 2008.

23           Does that make sense? Do you understand  
24 the difference? Okay, thanks.

25           DOE's preferred alternative is

1 Alternative 4, as I mentioned. The assumed  
2 evaluation assumes 19 mines would be operating in  
3 the peak year for that particular alternative. The  
4 number of mines that were operating in 1980 at the  
5 peak of the uranium production in this area was 20  
6 mines on the lease tract, so we assume 19. The  
7 maximum that we have ever seen is 20.

8           So what are the impacts as we evaluated  
9 them? The impacts are generally negligible to  
10 moderate. Alternative 1 and Alternative 2 would be  
11 reclamation. While those alternatives would be  
12 less impactful, they would have impacts as well.  
13 Alternatives 3, 4, and 5, which would include  
14 mining or could include mining, those alternatives  
15 would be more, and 3 would be less than 4 just by  
16 the number of mines that could be operated. And 5,  
17 actually, in our evaluation is the highest impact  
18 alternative, because if it's productive to mine,  
19 the period is very short and they would go very  
20 fast to try to get the ore out of the ground.

21           Cumulative impacts, again, were in a  
22 range of negligible to moderate with the overall  
23 contribution of the uranium lease program to be  
24 minor compared to the cumulative for all activities  
25 within the region. With the implementation of



1 compliance measures, we would find that between  
2 best management practice, mitigation measures, and  
3 those compliance measures, the ULP activities would  
4 be minimized and would be in compliance with all  
5 federal, state, and local laws.

6           So as I mentioned earlier and Chip  
7 mentioned earlier, we are here to listen to your  
8 comments, because we can do all the evaluations and  
9 have technical differences as well, but what we  
10 need to do is hear from the public on what they  
11 think.

12           We started this process back on June 21,  
13 2011, and we are now at the point where public  
14 comments are available or ready to be accepted up  
15 to May 31st. After that, we would issue a final  
16 PEIS. We anticipate that happening sometime at the  
17 end of this fiscal year -- actually, calendar year,  
18 sometime in the December time frame, and a final  
19 record of decision. So if you are familiar with  
20 the NEPA process, that's really when the final  
21 decision is made, that record of decision. And  
22 that we anticipate happening sometime before March  
23 of 2014.

24           So at this point, I will hand it back to  
25 Chip to start the public process.

1 Chip, anything else I should bring to  
2 attention?

3 MR. CAMERON: No. I think we are  
4 ready to go to public comment.

5 We have two representatives from the  
6 Telluride Town Council with us tonight, and I'm  
7 going to start with them, with Chris Myers and Bob  
8 Saunders, and then we are going to go to Shauna  
9 Palmer, Randy Parker, and Jennifer Parker.

10 And, Chris, if wouldn't mind coming up  
11 here.

12 CHRIS MYERS: Can we start with Bob?

13 MR. CAMERON: Are we starting with  
14 Bob? Okay. All right.

15 BOB SAUNDERS: First of all, I would  
16 like to say I'm for Alternative 1. And also I have  
17 a couple of photographs here. Is there a way to  
18 enter those into the record or...

19 MR. PLIENESS: Yes.

20 BOB SAUNDERS: I'll get to those in  
21 a second.

22 There's so much wrong with the nuclear  
23 industry and uranium, in general, it's hard to know  
24 where to start. Uranium, when processed, is one of  
25 the most toxic substances on the planet. We have

1 so many substances on the planet that are polluting  
2 our environment already, and yet we continue to  
3 mine and process uranium which has the potential of  
4 polluting our planet for a much longer time than  
5 most other substances.

6           A couple of examples: Since 1946, the  
7 U.S. Navy dumped 55-gallon drums of nuclear waste  
8 near the Farallon Islands, some 30 miles off the  
9 California coast near San Francisco. They simply  
10 threw the 55-gallon steel drums over the side of  
11 the ships. When the drums failed to sink, which  
12 was most of the time, they used the drums for  
13 target practice and shot them full of holes,  
14 letting water in and nuclear waste out.

15           This went on until the 1990s. It was  
16 estimated that almost 50,000 drums were dumped near  
17 the Farallons alone and many hundreds of thousands  
18 of drums in about 50 sites in the oceans. The U.S.  
19 was not alone in this. Russia, China, Japan, New  
20 Zealand, and most of the European countries are  
21 also culprits.

22           In Fallujah, there has been a huge  
23 increase in birth defects, infant mortality,  
24 childhood cancers, and all cancers. It has been  
25 reported there has been a fourfold increase in all

1 cancers since Fallujah was attacked in 2004.  
2 There's been a twelvefold increase in childhood  
3 cancers. Infant mortality is four times higher  
4 than in Jordan and eight times higher than in  
5 Kuwait. There has been a thirty-eight-fold  
6 increase in leukemia, ten times the normal rate for  
7 breast cancer, significant increase in lymphoma and  
8 brain tumors as well.

9           There has also been a noticeable drop in  
10 the male birthrate since 2004, suggesting that  
11 genetic damage from radiation exposure is more  
12 prevalent in male than female fetuses. There was a  
13 similar drop in the male birthrate after the  
14 bombing of Hiroshima.

15           In Fallujah, this has been attributed to  
16 the use of depleted uranium and ammunition used by  
17 the U.S. military. There have been many people  
18 exposed to radiation, both from the attacks and the  
19 aftermath when scavengers went into the battle  
20 fields to retrieve any metal that might be of  
21 value.

22           Here in this country, there are many  
23 examples of cancer and other illnesses related to  
24 exposure to uranium and other radioactive  
25 substances. There was a huge toxic spill on the

1 Navajo reservation near Church Rock which dumped  
2 huge amounts of radioactive waste into the Rio  
3 Puerco. The Navajo nation is still feeling the  
4 effects of that exposure and higher cancer rates  
5 and other associated diseases.

6           The one photograph there is a billboard  
7 seen outside of Tomb City alerting uranium workers  
8 that home nursing was available at no cost. The  
9 other photo is a glass top table on my deck. It is  
10 a clear glass top table. It is covered with dust  
11 from a storm the likes of which we get here in the  
12 San Juans. The dust is picked up west of here and  
13 deposited in the mountains. There are already  
14 uranium mines in the west end of our county that  
15 could be contributing to the dust you see in this  
16 photo. We are right downwind from the source.

17           Is it possible to tell if the dust comes  
18 from the mines? Maybe not. Is it worth the risk  
19 to open up more mines in the west end? Absolutely  
20 not.

21           The uranium industry, by and large, has  
22 been a terrible polluter in the past and the  
23 present. The Cotter Mill in Cañon City is a  
24 perfect example of the industry's lack of  
25 conscience when it comes to the pollution they

1 create. The Schwartzwaldler mine in Jefferson  
2 County, Colorado is an example of a mine that is  
3 polluting the groundwater which runs into Ralston  
4 Creek and then Ralston Reservoir, a source of  
5 drinking water for Denver and Arvada. The CDPHE  
6 and the EPA seem either unwilling or unable to hold  
7 the owners of the mine and the mill accountable for  
8 the ongoing health hazard they are creating.

9           Why am I bringing these statistics to  
10 you? Because it starts here. It starts with the  
11 DOE. It starts with you. Any further development  
12 of the uranium industry starts with you. The  
13 permits you issue allow the pollution of our  
14 environment to continue. The permits you issue  
15 allow more of the kind of disease that I have  
16 described to continue.

17           There are many new and developing sources  
18 of green and renewable energy that are coming  
19 online that will allow us to continue to live the  
20 lifestyle we are accustomed to without the cost to  
21 life and environment that the nuclear industry  
22 brings along with it. It's time to stop mining and  
23 milling uranium now while we still have a chance to  
24 save the environment that supports us and all the  
25 people who will follow us. It starts here. It

1 starts with the DOE. It starts with you.

2 Sorry. I forgot to introduce myself.

3 I'm Bob Saunders, Mayor Pro Tem of Telluride,  
4 although I'm speaking for myself. Thank you for  
5 your time.

6 MR. CAMERON: Thank you. Now we  
7 will go to Chris. This is Chris Myers.

8 CHRIS MYERS: My name is Chris  
9 Myers. I serve on the Telluride Town Council and I  
10 have for three years, but I'm here tonight speaking  
11 as a citizen. Given that the comment period for  
12 written comments has until May 31st, it's likely  
13 that the Telluride Town Council will issue formal  
14 written comments and send those along shortly.

15 First, I would like to address some  
16 broader issues, which I think Bob touched on.  
17 First and foremost is that in 60 years of nuclear  
18 industry in this country, we have failed as a  
19 country politically and as citizens to ever come up  
20 with a place for disposal of radioactive waste.  
21 I'm absolutely flabbergasted that we are  
22 considering increasing the supply of uranium in the  
23 marketplace when we have failed miserably. Nobody  
24 wants it in any of their communities, in their  
25 backyard, so why are we even considering the

1 possibility of expanding supply in this country.

2           Two, in 2008, there was a general  
3 accounting office report that basically looked at  
4 the revenues generated by the oil and gas industry  
5 by leases and royalties and also looked at those  
6 royalties and leases, lease income, generated by  
7 the hardrock mining industry and found them  
8 woefully inadequate based on the 1872 mining law.

9           There was a Congressional initiative that  
10 has still failed to try and change that situation,  
11 but there's potentially hundreds of millions of  
12 dollars of royalties that are not secured by the  
13 mining of uranium and other hardrock minerals,  
14 which is basically taking away the legacy and  
15 royalties from future generations in this country.  
16 So I don't think that we should be even exploring  
17 more extraction of hardrock minerals until we  
18 figure out how we can better sustain income for the  
19 public.

20           Three, on national security, there's no  
21 guarantee that this uranium that is mined is going  
22 to serve the United States. Quite likely, it could  
23 be mined by foreign countries and exported to other  
24 nations. How does that benefit the national  
25 security? The Atomic Energy Act and the DOE



1 policies before to manage the Uranium Leasing  
2 Program was for national security. These lands  
3 were isolated and maintained after World War II for  
4 the benefit of the U.S. people and the government.  
5 That seems to be missing from this discussion.

6           Four, recently the Town of Telluride was  
7 trying to appeal to the Colorado Department of  
8 Public Health and Environment to protect the  
9 Telluride environment and San Miguel County. They  
10 were looking at permitting -- which is still in the  
11 permitting process -- the first uranium mill to be  
12 approved in 25 years 55 miles upwind from  
13 Telluride.

14           In order for Telluride to protect its  
15 environment and the health of our community, we are  
16 having to spend our own dollars to conduct a  
17 baseline study to establish a baseline for  
18 radionuclide presence in fugitive dust or in our  
19 water supplies here in this part of our county.  
20 Why are we doing that, and the CDPHE, our state  
21 government, is not doing that? Is the federal  
22 government prepared to help us protect our  
23 environment, should this program go forward with  
24 the leasing of these public lands? I don't believe  
25 so, and I don't have the confidence in what's been

1 demonstrated to me by our state government.

2           Addressing the PEIS specifically: A,  
3 water. Water is the new gold in the wild west.  
4 Civilizations rise and fall based on water  
5 supplies. When I was reading outside -- and I need  
6 to read more deeply into the PEIS -- I saw a figure  
7 of 8 million gallons per year used for Alternative  
8 5. There was no such figure for Alternative 4, but  
9 it was said to be similar. I would love to know  
10 where that number is coming from; where that water  
11 is coming from. It's a critical issue. That is  
12 the mineral we should be preserving for the  
13 economies and the people of this region. I will  
14 come back to some other issues with water as it  
15 relates to climate change.

16           It doesn't appear that the PEIS addresses  
17 the changing climate issues. Though there are some  
18 parcels which I completely object to that are  
19 immediately adjacent to the shores of the Dolores  
20 River, meaning that there's virtually an  
21 impossibility of protecting our watershed from  
22 contamination, but when you have lease parcels that  
23 appear in an arid environment and we're getting  
24 more and more violent events that create  
25 flash-flooding -- the 100-year events seem to be

1 more like 25-year events now. I think we are  
2 basing data on the effect in terms of weather  
3 impacts and rainfall patterns -- it's old. We need  
4 to be revising that and looking at what is  
5 currently affecting our weather patterns.

6 Third, in terms of the reclamation of  
7 Alternatives 1 or 2, it seems to sound pretty awful  
8 that there is going to be dust disturbance and  
9 invasive weeds, and I'd like to see that if we are  
10 going to be looking at reclaiming in Alternatives 1  
11 and 2, which are the two that I would favor at this  
12 point, is that I would like to see a thorough study  
13 done because maybe some sites don't need to be  
14 touched, if there aren't issues there.

15 MR. CAMERON: Chris, I'm going to  
16 have to ask you to sum up for us now.

17 CHRIS MYERS: Terrific. I have two  
18 last points.

19 On endangered species, just in brief, in  
20 hearing -- I heard in informal consultation with  
21 the Fish and Wildlife that there's not likely to be  
22 adverse effects, I support that you are revising  
23 your BA, and I hope we get new data on the  
24 endangered species.

25 E, I was frustrated to read about the

1 socioeconomic impacts. They seem to have been  
2 written in a vacuum. It says refer to the land use  
3 impacts. They don't reflect a geographic study and  
4 examination of our region. I think that's  
5 sufficient to say, but given the billion-dollar  
6 impact of our economy in this region that's based  
7 on recreation and a state that has one of the  
8 strongest renewable energy economies in the  
9 country, I think we need to be looking at this  
10 very, very differently.

11 Thank you.

12 MR. CAMERON: Thank you very much  
13 for your specific comments, and we are going to  
14 hear from Shauna. This is Shauna Palmer coming up.

15 SHAUNA PALMER: Shauna Palmer, area  
16 resident, property owner, and taxpayer. Thank you  
17 for this opportunity to comment.

18 Some quick questions that I jotted down.  
19 I'm not asking for answers right now, but when I  
20 heard your presentation, I'm just curious to hear  
21 why the County prefers Alternative 1 to Alternative  
22 2. Not that I'm questioning it; I just -- it would  
23 be great to hear.

24 The two lease tracts that will remain  
25 inactive indefinitely, I'm curious on what basis

1 you say that. How do we know we can count on that.

2 Another question, 1 acre-foot versus 19  
3 acre-foot, if I heard that right. You decided that  
4 it actually would impact. That's quite a  
5 significant oversight. And I have a feeling that  
6 that's an example of one of the reasons that the  
7 Department earns some scepticism from the public  
8 that you serve, those of us that you work for.  
9 Just to make a point about that.

10 The cumulative impacts are considered --  
11 they are considered in this and I'm wondering,  
12 really, because even if the State Health Department  
13 doesn't -- and I realize there's jurisdictional  
14 issues there, but that's another issue I'm  
15 skeptical about.

16 Negligible cumulative impacts, that some  
17 of them were considered negligible? Uranium mining  
18 impacts are negligible compared to other impacts  
19 like recreation? To me, that's a Twilight Zone  
20 kind of thing. I'm showing my age here with that  
21 older TV show. But just some of the things you  
22 guys say, I just do not understand how it could  
23 possibly be true.

24 But mostly I wanted to just say that I  
25 would echo that the uranium/nuclear industry is

1 like a dinosaur, and the United States is behind  
2 even the major economies and countries, even of  
3 Europe, in switching. We say we want to switch,  
4 but we have not paid attention; we are not living  
5 our words. The federal government could be leading  
6 that, including the Department of Energy. You guys  
7 could be heros in leading us; instead, we are being  
8 dinosaurs.

9           The huge risks -- I think this sums it  
10 up. I mean, there are numerous things. It  
11 undermines the alleged goal of switching to  
12 sustainable energy. It hurts national security  
13 because, like Chris said, it can go to foreign  
14 countries. It could be used against us, including  
15 the barium mill permit that was given. His  
16 contacts are mostly, from what I've read, with  
17 other countries.

18           It also could be used against us, even if  
19 it goes into just nuclear power, because our  
20 nuclear power plants are not even adequately  
21 protected for security reasons, either from  
22 terrorism or even from natural events. They tend  
23 to be, it seems like, built on earthquake faults.

24           We also used to hear that nuclear power  
25 was cheap. That's only true if you do not include

1 adequate, cost-effective analysis of true security  
2 and cleanup, which the industry knows it has not  
3 done. Nuclear power is clean. That's even a bogus  
4 argument.

5           But when you really look at the bottom  
6 line, the huge risks, dangers, and costs of the  
7 uranium/nuclear industries are well known by the  
8 informed. They are so well known that the industry  
9 would have collapsed -- this is what I have read  
10 extensively -- would have collapsed if not for its  
11 success at lobbying for taxpayer moneys, low-cost  
12 government loans, if not outright investments, and  
13 programs like the Superfund site and the programs  
14 that take care of uranium miners after they have  
15 lost their health.

16           MR. CAMERON: And, Shauna, could you  
17 wrap it up.

18           SHAUNA PALMER: Okay. So in other  
19 words, taxpayer subsidies are necessary to prop up  
20 this industry because the private sector does not  
21 adequately invest or even insure the nuclear  
22 industry and the toxic sites that are left behind,  
23 and you don't have a plan to do that yet. I think  
24 it's insanity, frankly, to continue.

25           MR. CAMERON: Thank you, Shauna, for

1 those comments. We are going to go next to Randy  
2 Parker and Jennifer Parker.

3                   RANDY PARKER: As a year-round  
4 resident of Ridgway, Colorado, I'm very concerned  
5 about the Department of Energy's proposed leasing  
6 of public lands for uranium exploration and mining.  
7 There are better choices that will not adversely  
8 affect the citizens of Western Colorado, their  
9 health, their water, their air, their economy, than  
10 increased uranium development.

11                   The inherent boom/bust cycle of the  
12 uranium industry has failed to provide any  
13 long-term economic gain to our region. In fact,  
14 the history of uranium mining in this region has  
15 been a legacy of waste and radioactive  
16 contamination that continues to burden the  
17 taxpayers of this region and the state of Colorado.

18                   I noted the 65-million-dollar figure that  
19 was generated as revenue from these leases. That  
20 pales in comparison to the \$1 billion the taxpayers  
21 of the state of Colorado have paid to clean up the  
22 nuclear industry.

23                   The future of Western Colorado and the  
24 Telluride and Ridgway region, in particular, is  
25 based on agriculture, conservation, recreation, and



1 tourism, all of which will be threatened by  
2 increased uranium exploration and development.

3           The PEIS, by limiting its scope to a  
4 50-mile buffer region surrounding the lease tracts,  
5 fails to adequately analyze the cumulative effect  
6 of increased uranium mining on this region. The  
7 potential impacts of radioactive releases in  
8 environmental contamination were not thoroughly  
9 studied and were not considered in conjunction with  
10 the impacts from mining on non-leased public land  
11 in the region.

12           The PEIS also failed to adequately  
13 consider the cumulative effects of increased  
14 uranium mining on the region's roads, bridges, and  
15 rivers. Given the history of incomplete and  
16 inconsistent uranium mining cleanup in this region  
17 and in the industry as a whole, I urge the  
18 Department of Energy to adopt a transparent process  
19 that leads to a uniform, modern standard of  
20 reclamation that returns all uranium mining areas  
21 to their original condition.

22           Before any more public land is offered to  
23 be leased for uranium mining, the Department of  
24 Energy should put people to work reclaiming old  
25 sites and cleaning up the past uranium legacy that

1 continues to haunt the region. It is totally  
2 irresponsible to propose additional leasing of  
3 public land for uranium development and mining  
4 before the previously leased parcels are reclaimed.

5           Cleaning up old uranium mine sites will  
6 create permanent jobs in the region which will  
7 strengthen our economy and create jobs in our rural  
8 communities. Once these disturbed areas are clean,  
9 the Department of Energy can take advantage of the  
10 recognized potential for solar energy in the leased  
11 areas by developing renewable energy projects on  
12 these sites.

13           Thank you for considering my comments.

14           MR. CAMERON: Thank you. Now we  
15 will have Jennifer Parker.

16           JENNIFER PARKER: So many of the  
17 people that have spoken before me have hit upon a  
18 lot of my points, so I won't belabor them. But I  
19 do have to say that my impression, and it is an  
20 impression, of the uranium industry is that it's  
21 dirty, dangerous, and deadly. We have so many  
22 people in this area who are receiving help with  
23 diseases that they have, with conditions that they  
24 have and, like some of the people before me have  
25 said, it seems insane to be even considering this.

1                   We have a stockpile of uranium that I  
2 understand -- and I could be misinformed -- that  
3 will last us 100 years. We also know that the  
4 uranium in the ground is the safest possible place  
5 for it to be. I would agree with my husband, which  
6 doesn't happen very often, and that is that we  
7 should reclaim the mining sites that we have,  
8 putting people to work to do so, and then using  
9 those areas, since they are already set aside, for  
10 renewable energy. There is no question we have  
11 plenty of sun in Colorado and plenty of wind.  
12 Thank you.

13                   MR. CAMERON: Thank you, Jennifer.  
14 We are going to go to Catherine Peterson next and  
15 then to Paul Szilagyi.

16                   CATHERINE PETERSON: I'm actually  
17 thinking of moving closer, over to Norwood, to this  
18 area, so I guess I should go to the other hearing  
19 also in Naturita.

20                   But it seems like in talking to you, it  
21 feels like you are being held hostage, that when  
22 you talk about your options, that you're like, oh,  
23 well, we have to settle on something in the middle.  
24 And when we talk about Option 2, it's like, okay,  
25 well, if we don't do Option 1, Option 2 is going to

1 give us back to the BLM and who knows what they  
2 will do. And that has an implicit threat to it,  
3 like we can't choose that one.

4           So when we have 3 or 4, which, you know,  
5 I don't know why we have to bargain when there are  
6 like all these -- everything that everybody already  
7 said. It's like we -- I mean, I don't know. Do we  
8 have to bargain and do we have to support this  
9 industry?

10           When we did the -- the environmental  
11 impact statement talks about endangered species  
12 animals, but it really doesn't talk about our  
13 microclimate. And we -- when we talk about  
14 biodiversity, we are not really going to know about  
15 a bee or a butterfly or, you know, something that's  
16 really being affected. So I don't think an  
17 Endangered Species Act is really enough to say  
18 that, you know, we looked at the impacts to the  
19 animals.

20           So we can't have those trucks. In those  
21 two alternatives, whether it's 80 trucks or 90  
22 trucks or 60 trucks, you know, obviously our roads  
23 can't do that. We can't have an accident on any  
24 Colorado roads. I mean, that would be tragic. I  
25 mean, we are dealing with environmental accidents

1 everywhere. And we have, you know, Colorado to  
2 think about and these -- it's an archaic industry.  
3 So we don't want 3 or 4 because it doesn't really  
4 deal with all the impacts of uranium mining, and it  
5 seems like we shouldn't have to deal that way.

6           No. 5, fast and dirty. That's also a  
7 real threat, you know, that we don't -- you know,  
8 boy, they are going to come in there and just do  
9 whatever, so...

10           The social impacts, I agree. That's the  
11 first thing I turn to. Okay. What do they talk  
12 about the social impacts of mining. We know that  
13 it's not art and culture and teachers and doctors.  
14 It's a boom/bust economy. It's not going to bring  
15 what we've -- it's not going to enhance our economy  
16 here. So the social impacts really aren't covered  
17 in that statement. I mean, it's like vague and  
18 nonspecific and doesn't really talk about anything.

19           I agree mining uranium could affect our  
20 national security. We really need to be thinking  
21 about climate change and moving into the future. I  
22 agree with everybody else that said that. I find  
23 it hard that any -- you know, if Indian tribes have  
24 any input, I hope for sure that they were saying,  
25 listen, we've suffered enough and we're

1 recommending that you don't go any further with  
2 uranium mines.

3 MR. CAMERON: And, Catherine, could  
4 you sum up for us.

5 CATHERINE PETERSON: And that was my  
6 last thing, the Indian tribes.

7 MR. CAMERON: Perfect.

8 CATHERINE PETERSON: Anyway, thank  
9 you very, very much for coming here, and obviously  
10 we need -- for our health and economic and  
11 everything, we need Option 1. We need to like  
12 squelch this whole thing.

13 MR. CAMERON: Thank you, Catherine.  
14 Now to Paul Szilagyi, and I hope that I'm  
15 pronouncing that sort of correctly, and then we  
16 have Mike Rozycki.

17 PAUL SZILAGYI: It's Szilagyi. It's  
18 Hungarian. And I don't expect any claps when I'm  
19 done, but I do thank you for welcome miners to your  
20 territory. It's very nice that you put that up.

21 I'm here for three hats today. I'm here  
22 for myself, and most of my comments will be about  
23 myself. I will also talk as an investor in a  
24 mining company, a mining company that has no  
25 interest in any of the leases that are under

1 discussion here today under the ULP, so I have no  
2 dog in the hunt. And, thirdly, I come to you as a  
3 board member of the Western Small Miners  
4 Association.

5           And all of my hats wish to recommend the  
6 DOE go forward with their preferred Alternative No.  
7 4. The Western Small Miners will likely issue a  
8 formal comment in support of this. For those of  
9 you who don't know the organization, it was formed  
10 a few years ago. It's to foster, you know, to  
11 enhance and to promote mining and agriculture in  
12 this area. It's to foster economic development,  
13 which is probably number one and should be listed  
14 that way. And it's also to ensure and promote  
15 public health and safety.

16           The majority of people that you are  
17 talking about that are economically impacted, bread  
18 and butter wise, providing for their family, live  
19 here. They want it done safe. There's many  
20 comments about the history and the legacy of  
21 uranium mining. That would be like me saying I'm  
22 going to go out and prepare a business plan with  
23 multiple years of financial statements. I'm not  
24 going to use a calculator, I'm not going to use a  
25 computer, I'm going to use pens and pencils and

1 adding machines.

2           It's not the same world. Trust me. And  
3 you need to look at the standards that we have to  
4 meet at a uranium mine to even get a permit. I  
5 would love to take any of you, if you really wanted  
6 to know. That said, I'm not known for uranium  
7 mining.

8           I'm known for hybrid electric vehicle  
9 technology development, part of a group we financed  
10 with our own money, and built the vehicles that run  
11 on 16th Street Mall in Denver. It was the world's  
12 largest, and still is, series hybrid vehicles.  
13 They carry 116 people. They have an engine smaller  
14 than a Toyota Prius. They pollute less. In those  
15 are batteries. In those are generators. You are  
16 going to need those for any kind of energy that's  
17 advanced.

18           And no one's talked about vanadium here.  
19 Vanadium is really an important mineral. It's part  
20 of these lease tracts. And this is one of the few  
21 areas in the world where uranium and vanadium has  
22 been deposited together. Vanadium is -- has great  
23 promise for standby and facility level, grid level  
24 energy storage.

25           Why do we need uranium? They're charged



1 with it. They're charged with it because we get 20  
2 percent of our power, electrical power, from  
3 nuclear. We need uranium. We import over 90  
4 percent of what we use. That's not something  
5 that's a good position for our country. If we want  
6 to move away from it, that's fine. But remember  
7 that you are going to increase your carbon  
8 footprint, so think about it and decide what you  
9 really want to do.

10 MR. CAMERON: If you could finish up  
11 for us, Paul.

12 PAUL SZILAGYI: I will. I could go  
13 on for a long time. But I'm an environmentalist.  
14 I took my first environmental class in 1977. If  
15 this group -- I would ask you to go home and  
16 challenge. If you're truly an environmentalist and  
17 if this is truly going to be part of the world --  
18 and by the way, nuclear power is on the upswing.  
19 If you are truly an environmentalist, there is no  
20 better place on the planet where there's better  
21 worker protections and there's better environmental  
22 protections than right here.

23 MR. CAMERON: Okay. Thank you.  
24 Thank you very much. Mike Rozycki.

25 MIKE ROZYCKI: Good evening. My

1 name is Mike Rozycki. I'm the County planner for  
2 San Miguel County. The County has provided a  
3 couple letters already on the PEIS in 2007 and then  
4 scoping comments in 2011. And I think, generally,  
5 I wanted to come tonight and listen and hear, as  
6 the staff makes recommendations to the County  
7 Commissioners for the comments prior to the May  
8 31st deadline.

9           But I think it's very clear that the  
10 County has expressed we have grave concerns with  
11 the environmental impacts associated with potential  
12 leasing of the uranium leases on the west end of  
13 the county. I think 11 or 12 of the mines or lease  
14 parcels are in San Miguel County.

15           I think the other thing that we pointed  
16 out, and I would want to reiterate, is at this  
17 time, there's a lack of a clear and comprehensive  
18 cradle-to-grave strategy necessary for safe use of  
19 nuclear energy. And I think until there is a  
20 better system or strategy for dealing with waste  
21 and other impacts, there's a real concern with the  
22 nuclear energy industry in proceeding.

23           I think as far as the alternatives, you  
24 know, we stated in earlier letters -- and I think  
25 it comes closest to what you have as Alternative

1 1 -- that would continue to treat uranium lease  
2 tracts as reserves held by the Department of Energy  
3 for future energy needs and for our country's  
4 security, if and when there is safer, nuclear  
5 technology for generation and waste disposal that's  
6 evolved. Until such time, I think it's appropriate  
7 to keep these tracts as reserves rather than  
8 offering for lease at this time and selling the  
9 material in the open market. I don't see that that  
10 relates to this country's security.

11           The other comment that I wanted to make  
12 was a personal comment, and as a planner in trying  
13 to understand the Programmatic EIS, it seems that  
14 there isn't a specific plan. There are a lot of  
15 big variety in parcels. I think they range from 25  
16 acres to 4,000 acres, some are close to the Dolores  
17 River. And it seems that the PEIS sort of just  
18 makes some general assumptions and treats them all  
19 the same without ranking them in priority, trying  
20 to evaluate their impacts. And there really isn't  
21 a site-specific plan there and site-specific  
22 proposals, so I think there's a lot of really kind  
23 of gross assumptions that are made as to impacts,  
24 and I'm having a hard time understanding the  
25 importance or the validity of the PEIS.

1                   Those are my comments. Thank you.

2                   MR. CAMERON: Thank you, Mike.

3 Angela Dye.

4                   ANGELA DYE: Angela Dye, local  
5 resident of Telluride.

6                   I do not support Alternative 4 as your  
7 preferred alternative, neither do I support the  
8 leasing or mining of uranium for all the previous  
9 reasons that folks have said. It's an onerous  
10 resource and we don't know how to handle it. So I  
11 think it needs to be left in the ground until we  
12 know how to handle the waste. We obviously have  
13 not figured that out yet.

14                  I would like to add to some of the  
15 comments as well as endorse some of the things that  
16 have been said. Basically to clean up the spills,  
17 the remaining tailings of the uranium that has been  
18 excavated so far, especially along our rivers and  
19 streams.

20                  I would like to also point out that we  
21 have 12 pages of mitigation measures that are in  
22 ten point type in landscape format. That is an  
23 incredible number of mitigation measures to try to,  
24 in fact, deal with. They are way too extensive.  
25 They are vague and without measurable outcomes or a

1 time frame.

2           And specifically under three areas --  
3 under visual resources, for instance, that's the  
4 longest list under Alternative 4 of effects to  
5 landmarks and significant landscapes in our region.  
6 And that is related part and parcel to our  
7 livelihood here.

8           Under transportation, the increase in the  
9 amount of truck traffic is on a scenic byway;  
10 again, part of our livelihood, and it also affects  
11 bicycle tourism. And, in general, I do not see  
12 where recreation has been adequately evaluated.

13           Under socioeconomics, I don't believe  
14 that they account at all for our current  
15 activities, which include agriculture, grazing and  
16 organic farming, as well as recreation.

17           So in summary, I do not support your  
18 alternative. I appreciate the opportunity to  
19 comment. I think we should focus on renewables and  
20 conservation and add provisions for climate change  
21 and our weather events. Thank you.

22           MR. CAMERON: Thank you. This is  
23 Linda Miller, then we'll go to Ashley Boling.

24           LINDA MILLER: Linda Miller of  
25 Telluride. Thank you for this opportunity.

1           I consider myself a citizen of this area,  
2 and part of my responsibility is to be a steward of  
3 this land and our resources. I don't think we've  
4 been doing a very good job taking care of the  
5 messes that we have created. San Miguel and  
6 Telluride have a really good history of knowing  
7 what it means not to reclamate what we have done.

8           And I base it on a history of an area  
9 that you probably drove through coming here, and  
10 that was the Newmir vanadium -- where's the  
11 vanadium man? -- mill site on Highway 145, six  
12 miles west of Telluride. The mill was originally  
13 developed in 1908, encompassing approximately 15  
14 acres consisting of the former mill area, tailing  
15 disposal area, and other facilities used to support  
16 the milling operation. It operated from 1920 until  
17 the 1950s when the ore was depleted.

18           Not until 1998 when it was sold to Cyprus  
19 Amax was there an agreement mandating remedial  
20 activities. At that time, the EPA and the Colorado  
21 Department of Public Health and Environment  
22 conducted a site assessment and determined that  
23 subsurface residual radioactivity existed on both  
24 sides of Highway 145. Historical photos confirm  
25 that the highway that was built went right through

1 the mill site. More important, the lower side was  
2 in the San Miguel river floodplain. The cleanup  
3 was 60 years in the making. So we know about how  
4 long it takes.

5 Today the public is told operations are  
6 vastly improved. The state of the art, best  
7 operating procedures are in place, all kinds of  
8 technology. The industry is well prepared.  
9 However, the BP's Deepwater Horizon blowout gave  
10 lie to the state of the advances and our reliance  
11 upon them. There will be accidents.

12 On October 1, 2012, a rollover involving  
13 a tanker illustrated the vulnerability in the  
14 systems now in place. The accident occurred at  
15 Mile 24, Highway 141. The truck was carrying  
16 liquid asphalt. The trucking company was  
17 responsible and contacted a company called Storage  
18 Tank Technologies. Cleanup operations require a  
19 permit from the Colorado transportation department,  
20 as it was in their right-of-way. The Colorado  
21 State Patrol responded to the scene, but it  
22 oversees the cleanup; it's not responsible for the  
23 cleanup. CDOT issued a permit October 9th but was  
24 not aware it was an emergency. Perhaps they were  
25 not told it was liquid asphalt.

1           To complicate matters further, the spill  
2 site was archeologically rich and teams from the  
3 Bureau of Land Management had to do an assessment  
4 before they could bring in a bulldozer to clean it  
5 up so no artifacts would be destroyed.

6           The spill only came to the attention of  
7 authorities when the San Miguel County sheriff was  
8 out riding on his motorcycle on his day off. Over  
9 two weeks has passed before the cleanup began.  
10 Granted, the casualties were birds caught in the  
11 sticky stuff and not humans.

12           I describe this sequence of errors just  
13 to illustrate that the emergency procedures are not  
14 there and there are all kinds of bureaucratic  
15 blocks to getting things done quickly. So you can  
16 only imagine what kind of conditions we'll have  
17 when there are uranium trucks going up and down  
18 those roads.

19           These leases that are especially on the  
20 river, on the Dolores and on our waterways, it's  
21 our lifeblood, and they have to be protected.  
22 Before more mining takes place -- and I'm for  
23 Alternative 1, no mining taking place -- please  
24 clean up the old sites, examine the potential for  
25 highway accidents, and assess the availability of



1 emergency response for those events.

2 Remediation must be timely and complete.

3 Citizens cannot settle for less and the private

4 endeavors must post adequate bonds so the taxpayer

5 is not left with the bill. It's interesting to

6 note at the headwaters of the San Miguel, we have a

7 Superfund site. Right up there, and so far, it's

8 not complying with the consent decree. At the end

9 of the San Miguel, we have another Superfund site.

10 MR. CAMERON: Okay. Linda, can --

11 LINDA MILLER: I'm done. I don't

12 want the San Miguel to be a sacrifice area. Thank

13 you.

14 MR. CAMERON: Thank you very much,

15 Linda. Ashley Boling and then Linda Thurston.

16 ASHLEY BOLING: Hi. My name is

17 Ashley Boling. I live in San Miguel County. I'm a

18 father. I'm a resident for the last 23 years here.

19 Just to be clear with everyone in this

20 room, I'm against any further uranium mining, any

21 current or proposed in the future uranium mining

22 and/or milling.

23 I recognize a lot of people in the crowd

24 here. Could you raise your hand if anyone is here

25 from Energy Fuels Corporation. Anyone here?

1 Anyone here from Cotter Corporation? You are.

2 Anyone here from Denison Mining Corporation? Okay.

3 I'm just curious. Could you raise your hand if you  
4 don't live in San Miguel County.

5 MR. CAMERON: And I just want to  
6 point out to the audience that it's great that  
7 Ashley is asking these questions, but you don't  
8 have to respond if you don't want to.

9 Go ahead, Ashley.

10 ASHLEY BOLING: Thanks for making  
11 that clear.

12 I think I have four minutes and I would  
13 like to respond or at least speak my mind. I have  
14 been to a few meetings in Montrose County and San  
15 Miguel County. I haven't been to meetings in other  
16 states because it's not really an issue about  
17 mining uranium or building a proposed uranium mill.  
18 My understanding is in the rest of the 49 states  
19 and jurisdictions of the United States, nobody  
20 wants one in their backyard, so it's not really an  
21 issue.

22 But it happens to be an issue here. I  
23 live about four and a half miles west of here in  
24 San Miguel County, and that's 50-some miles  
25 downwind from the proposed increased mining and

1 increased milling and that concerns me. I have a  
2 ten-year-old son. That concerns me too.

3 I have been to other meetings and I have  
4 asked the question of elected officials and of  
5 people who are getting paid to represent us and  
6 protect us, like CDPHE. I have asked this question  
7 and I'll ask it again: Show me an example of  
8 uranium extraction and/or processing and milling on  
9 our planet that has a 100 percent safety record,  
10 where there has never been any spills -- and I'm  
11 sorry. I can't call the Deepwater Horizon event a  
12 spill, the worst environmental catastrophe in the  
13 United States, and no one from either BP or  
14 Haliburton or Transocean has been indicted or gone  
15 to jail because of that, and people were killed  
16 initially in that explosion. I'm going off on a  
17 tangent there.

18 But show me an example of this industry  
19 where it's been safe. And if it's so safe and DOE  
20 and others involved are so confident that this  
21 mining of uranium and the milling and processing  
22 and enriching of it -- and then selling it to other  
23 countries like China, who then can sell it to North  
24 Korea to further their uranium industries and do  
25 who knows what with it after that.

1                   Show me an example where it's safe and  
2 I'm willing to listen. I've done some research. I  
3 haven't been able to find one on our planet. We  
4 can't contain or dispose of or effectively use this  
5 very dangerous, highly toxic substance. It's a  
6 gamble to me, and I'm not willing to take the  
7 gamble. I'm very conservative.

8                   So that's my charge, my question, to the  
9 Department of Energy and others. Show me an  
10 example where it's safe and we can control it, and  
11 there's never a truck that turns over and no one's  
12 water ever gets polluted and I will believe you.

13                   I will conclude with this before you tell  
14 me my time's up. Albert Einstein said of uranium  
15 and its use in producing electricity: What an  
16 absurdly ridiculous way to boil water.

17                   MR. CAMERON: Okay. Thank you.

18 Linda Thurston.

19                   JENNIFER THURSTON: Did you call me  
20 Linda?

21                   MR. CAMERON: I did. Is that wrong?

22                   JENNIFER THURSTON: For the record,  
23 my name is Jennifer Thurston. I live in Norwood,  
24 Colorado and I'm from San Miguel County, the heart  
25 of the Uranium Leasing Program, the most wonderful

1 county in the most wonderful state.

2           And I grew up down the road in sort of  
3 the place that I refer to as the cusp between gold  
4 country and uranium country, so I understand the  
5 landscape. I'm also the director of INFORM, the  
6 Information Network for Responsible Mining, and I'm  
7 preparing some very detailed comments to submit to  
8 you before the end of the deadline. So I'm just  
9 going to be as brief as four minutes will allow me  
10 to be.

11           INFORM, in 2008, sued the Department of  
12 Energy, along with the Colorado Environmental  
13 Coalition and Center for Biological Diversity and,  
14 a couple years later, the wonderful conservation  
15 group Sheep Mountain Alliance. And the reason why  
16 we have this PEIS is because of that lawsuit. And  
17 I can tell you, I have been rather frustrated. We  
18 had these hearings in late summer 2011, and the  
19 last time I tried to give comments to the  
20 Department of Energy, Laura Kilpatrick, who is the  
21 realty officer, spent most of my three-minute  
22 hearing rolling her eyes at me.

23           I know it doesn't go into the official  
24 transcript about how DOE representatives typically  
25 sit in the back of the room with their hands

1 crossed when environmentalists get up and talk.  
2 However, last week on the front page of the  
3 Telluride Daily Planet, I read a quote from Mr.  
4 Plieness about how sincere he is in listening, and  
5 I want to be sincere back because I want you to  
6 know what I know about this program and about  
7 what's happening on our landscape. So I'm going to  
8 be very detailed about that in written comments.

9 I want to focus a little bit on San  
10 Miguel county. And, actually, just to sort of run  
11 through my general feelings about the whole Uranium  
12 Leasing Program. You've divided these areas into  
13 four tracts: Gateway and Outlaw, Mesa, and the  
14 Gateway tracts. There's a higher purpose to those  
15 tracts than uranium mining, and it's about  
16 recreation and how actively they are used by people  
17 who love to ride around on those roads on the ATVs  
18 or ride around on their horses. That's a real  
19 conflict with uranium mining. And Gateway has such  
20 a tremendous potential for recreation and tourism  
21 development. It would be a shame not to see those  
22 tracts pulled from the program.

23 One of the big concerns that I have has  
24 to do with cumulative impacts. I think that the  
25 flaws in the studies -- most have to do with you

1 have a very incomplete picture of cumulative  
2 impacts.

3           Let's talk about the Paradox tracts for a  
4 minute; perhaps the most disturbed, unsettled,  
5 scarred area in the entire program. I don't think  
6 you understand the concept of cumulative impacts  
7 when it comes to uranium mining, that once it's a  
8 uranium mine, it's really not good for anything  
9 else. And there's a lot of space in between all of  
10 those lease tract boundaries where there's also  
11 uranium mines going on.

12           We talked a little bit before this  
13 meeting started, Mr. Plieness and I, about the  
14 congressionally ordered study of the DOE that's  
15 basically going to be multiple years in  
16 development. It's going to take a long time to  
17 truly paint the picture and have an accurate  
18 inventory of what's already existing. Somehow when  
19 we lack a cumulative notion and a defined idea of  
20 what's actually in existence, it does seem a little  
21 bit absurd to talk about new mining.

22           The Uravan tracts, also heavily impacted,  
23 even though there's been some reclamation work up  
24 there. You know, it's really difficult to think  
25 about how the tailings graveyards from the various

1 mill sites that have been cleaned up over the years  
2 are really out there and that's permanent.

3 I know that the Department of Energy is  
4 very proud of the \$65 million in royalties that  
5 it's collected in this program, but that's just a  
6 drop in the bucket. That's about how much it cost  
7 to clean up one mill in Slickrock. And Slickrock  
8 is the most important place in the Uranium Leasing  
9 Program. It's just a marvelous, marvelous area,  
10 and it's San Miguel County and, therefore, I care  
11 the most about Slickrock. Those tracts are not  
12 suitable for mining. They are directly endangering  
13 the health of the Dolores River.

14 I wanted to briefly talk to you -- I  
15 don't know how much time I have left.

16 MR. CAMERON: Just a little bit,  
17 Jennifer.

18 JENNIFER THURSTON: Not enough.

19 MR. CAMERON: If you could just wrap  
20 it up, please. Thank you.

21 JENNIFER THURSTON: I would like to  
22 say that the 14-day extension for the comment  
23 period is really not sufficient to prove that you  
24 are listening. Give us more time.

25 I understand last night at the meeting in



1 Montrose a discussion came up, a mention of the  
2 story that ran in the New York Times last week and  
3 this photograph. And I would just like to put it  
4 into the record because this is not an old file  
5 photograph, as was stated. I escorted the  
6 photographer to the site, and the photo was taken  
7 on March 22, 2013. There you go.

8 MR. PLIENESS: Okay. Thank you.

9 JENNIFER THURSTON: No, I'm not  
10 done. I have another document where we kind of  
11 outlined the specific violations that are in effect  
12 on Tract 13. I also want to point out -- I've got  
13 another document. It's dated October 24, 2012.  
14 It's from the Department of Energy. This is from  
15 you guys to the lessee warning them that he must  
16 come into compliance with the law. Since then  
17 you've had no response from him, and here's an  
18 inspection report. I would just like to read it,  
19 just an excerpt. It's short. I promise.

20 MR. CAMERON: Well, Jennifer, we  
21 have to give other people time.

22 JENNIFER THURSTON: All right. You  
23 will find it's a violation of the law and you are  
24 not enforcing it.

25 MR. CAMERON: Thank you very much.

1 Michael Saftler, and then we're going to go to  
2 David Glynn and Glen Williams.

3                   MICHAEL SAFTLER: Hi. My name is  
4 Michael Saftler. I've been a resident of this  
5 region for 39 years, and this is the first time I  
6 have considered leaving because of what is being  
7 proposed.

8                   Despite irrational claims to the  
9 contrary, uranium has proven itself to be  
10 uncontainable. There is no way to mine it in a  
11 vacuum. Once it's dug up, it emits harmful  
12 radiation. When a person is exposed to radiation,  
13 it accumulates in the body. Once it accumulates in  
14 your body, it can and often does kill. When it is  
15 concentrated by mining, milling, and processing,  
16 the lethal toxicity rises exponentially. That  
17 should be enough to stop this procedure in its  
18 tracks, but for some mystifying reason, it  
19 continues. Therefore, please accept my comments as  
20 heartfelt.

21                   My concern is for the health and welfare  
22 of millions of people, and no amount of jobs or  
23 energy generation or, heaven forbid, nuclear  
24 weapons will offset the harm that will befall our  
25 great nation if these mines are allowed to continue

1 to be developed. No new report will persuade me  
2 that prolonging this industry is a good idea or  
3 that it is viable or safe.

4 I would first like to address your  
5 acronyms. FONSI, finding of no significant impact.  
6 According to your scientific studies, you have  
7 concluded that mining of uranium and its  
8 aftereffects will result in no impact of  
9 significance. Tell that to all the people who have  
10 died because of exposure -- I'm sorry, I get  
11 emotional about this -- because of exposure to  
12 uranium and radiation. Tell that to the people who  
13 are sick and in the process of dying today because  
14 of their exposure to uranium.

15 We are told that there are new procedures  
16 and new regulations and, therefore, finding of no  
17 significant impact. No only are the procedures  
18 unproven, but the regulations currently in place  
19 are not enforced and are currently resulting in  
20 significant impacts. What you call FONSI is  
21 nothing more than a FONSI scheme, like a Ponzi  
22 scheme that sells people a false bill of goods and  
23 ultimately results in individuals losing  
24 everything. This FONSI scheme that you are  
25 proposing to foist upon us is a false bill of

1 goods. There is no safe way to mine, mill, process  
2 and transport uranium, none. Ultimately, people  
3 will lose everything, including their lives, in  
4 your proposed FONSI scheme.

5           Then we have your PEIS, Programmatic  
6 Environmental Impact Statement. Environmental  
7 impacts are not conjecture. They are supposed to  
8 be based on science and historic facts. The  
9 science and historic facts show that uranium and  
10 its attendant radiation pollutes the environment  
11 and kills living kind. There is no way of covering  
12 that up. That is the history of this industry.  
13 Look at the Navajo Nation, look at Uranium, look at  
14 Naturita, look at Nucla, look at Grand Junction.

15           That is our immediate neighborhood and  
16 those are our neighbors and many of those people  
17 are dead from exposure to radiation from uranium.  
18 How can anyone conclude that, therefore, there's a  
19 finding of no significant impact. If that is not  
20 significant, what is? How many deaths do you need  
21 before you cross your significant threshold?

22           I have another acronym for you to  
23 consider: CAWS, C-A-W-S, clean air, water, and  
24 soil. Those are the building blocks of life.  
25 Without clean air to breathe, a human being will

1 die in a matter of minutes. Without clean water, a  
2 human being will die in a matter of days. Without  
3 clean soil to grow our food and feed our livestock,  
4 a human being will die in a matter of a few  
5 seasons. These are the basis of human and all life  
6 on this planet.

7 MR. CAMERON: And --

8 MICHAEL SAFTLER: I will wrap it up.

9 MR. CAMERON: Thank you.

10 MICHAEL SAFTLER: Downriver from  
11 here, there are tens of millions of people who are  
12 drinking and irrigating out of the Colorado River,  
13 which is fed by the Dolores. These mines will be  
14 interacting with the Dolores River. Any  
15 environmental assessment needs to include an  
16 analysis of those impacts to those millions of  
17 downriver life forms.

18 Energy, jobs. We have many other options  
19 besides mining, milling, processing, transporting,  
20 and further processing uranium in order to set in  
21 motion a chain reaction that attempts to contain  
22 massive amounts of concentrated energy that, when  
23 uncontained, can annihilate millions of people just  
24 to boil water or to turn a turbine. Fukushima and  
25 Chernobyl and Three Mile Island and Uravan and

1 Cañon City and endless other locations where leaks  
2 and explosions have occurred scientifically prove  
3 this industry is significantly uncontainable and  
4 unsustainable.

5 MR. CAMERON: Thank you. We are  
6 going to hear from David Glynn, then Glen Williams.

7 DAVID GLYNN: My name is David  
8 Glynn. I'm a resident of Ophir, Colorado. I'm for  
9 Alternative 1.

10 I would like to speak to the end game of  
11 uranium. We are really looking at the beginning,  
12 and the beginning is not connected so far with the  
13 end game. There's no need for the beginning of  
14 this process, if we are not for the end. Now, the  
15 end game of uranium is nuclear weapons and nuclear  
16 power plants. Nuclear weapons are an abomination.  
17 I can't say it any clearer. The nuclear industry  
18 produces all kinds of waste that we have no  
19 solution for in its storage and to make it and keep  
20 it safe.

21 Then there's always the chance of nuclear  
22 disaster. Chernobyl, Three Mile Island, Fukushima,  
23 and then a disaster waiting to happen like the one  
24 that this country avoided two months after  
25 Fukushima. Now, this was a near disaster that went

1 pretty much virtually unreported. It happened  
2 along the Missouri River. The Missouri River flows  
3 into the Mississippi, which flows into the Gulf of  
4 Mexico. Thousands of miles of the best farmland in  
5 the world were threatened, and yet the media paid  
6 very little attention to this.

7           What they did cover was the stage that  
8 I'm going to give you here, the setup. The  
9 disaster that was nearly -- or that was avoided on  
10 the Missouri, Fort Calhoun, Omaha, Nebraska,  
11 nuclear power plant totally surrounded by the  
12 floodwaters of the Missouri River.

13           Now, to be fair, this particular plant  
14 was offline at the moment, but a spent fuel rod was  
15 not offline. This facility was surrounded by the  
16 Missouri River floodwaters. The primary levy  
17 protecting the facility failed, so they put up an  
18 emergency, water-inflatable, rubber berm, 8 foot  
19 high. They punctured it in the process of putting  
20 it up. Not too safe. Floodwaters have, what,  
21 debris in them that can easily puncture a rubber  
22 membrane. 8 feet tall.

23           The water rose over halfway up that berm.  
24 The reactor room floor was 3 feet below the level  
25 of the floodwaters, 3 feet below. Downriver --

1 another power plant 70 miles downriver, the Cooper  
2 power-generating station, nuclear facility.

3 Reactor room floor 2 feet above the floodwaters, 2  
4 feet above.

5           During this flood -- which lasted, by the  
6 way, not days and hours, but months -- was an  
7 electrical fire in the control panel for the  
8 pumping station cooling system for the spent rod.  
9 Power was out for only two hours. The water did  
10 not reach the boiling point, but we did have that  
11 fire. It did happen.

12           Now, one thing else I want to get at here  
13 is the connection, the dot that was not connected.  
14 Okay. Remember these levels: 3 feet below the  
15 floodwaters; protected by an 8-foot berm that was  
16 already halfway submerged; the other reactor, 2  
17 feet above the flood stage.

18           Now, across the state of Iowa, the  
19 neighboring state, one watershed away, a super cell  
20 released its moisture over the Dubuque area along  
21 the Mississippi River. The Mississippi River,  
22 which is a bigger river, much bigger than the  
23 Missouri, during that event, up to 20 inches of  
24 rain fell in a six-hour period. The Mississippi  
25 River rose 5 feet in 24 hours. Add that 5 feet --



1 if that storm cell would have released its energy  
2 just a little west, the Calhoun nuclear power plant  
3 would have been inundated. The waters would have  
4 gone over the top of that inflatable berm.

5           The Cooper station may have been 3 feet  
6 below the floodwaters if that had happened. So  
7 what do we do with the nuclear industry, with  
8 something that is so toxic? We've got nuclear  
9 weapons and we have got nuclear disaster lurking.

10           MR. CAMERON: I'm going to have to  
11 ask you to wrap up.

12           DAVID GLYNN: I will wrap it up.

13           So my point is this: You've got all of  
14 this beautiful farmland. What would have happened  
15 if we would have had that super cell release its  
16 energy just a little west and we would have  
17 possibly, potentially contaminated thousands of  
18 miles of the best farmland in the world. We are  
19 playing Russian roulette with the nuclear industry.

20           MR. CAMERON: Thank you, David.  
21 Glen Williams, please, and then we'll go to Hilary  
22 Cooper.

23           GLEN WILLIAMS: My name is Glen  
24 Williams. I'm a resident of San Miguel County for  
25 the last 30-plus years in the Norwood area. I have

1 got a lot of history in mining, and I know for a  
2 fact that the way the permitting goes these days  
3 with the State of Colorado to obtain a mine permit,  
4 there is extensive bonding requirements that the  
5 State has to go through and they make you put up  
6 the money to cover any reclamation that might be  
7 associated with the mining operation.

8           If there are any wet mines -- which most  
9 of these DOE leases, I believe, are dry -- the  
10 state, in your permitting process, will make you do  
11 monitor wells to check the groundwater and the area  
12 around the mining operation to see if there's going  
13 to be any contamination, unlike way in the past  
14 which they never did before. And the standards for  
15 reclamation are enforced by the DRMS, the Division  
16 of Reclamation, Mining and Safety. An operator has  
17 to submit a mine plan to DOE if you are operating  
18 on a DOE lease, but that mine plan also has to be  
19 consistent in your permitting process with the  
20 state.

21           Another thing is the -- I heard earlier  
22 something about these BLM lands shouldn't be leased  
23 if we are not getting any royalties off them. I  
24 can tell you for a fact that there are significant  
25 royalties paid on these leases for the minerals

1 produced on them, both the uranium and vanadium.

2 Another item that I just remember hearing  
3 was how DOE should reclaim the legacy mining sites,  
4 and I believe that almost all of the legacy mining  
5 sites on the DOE lease tracts have been reclaimed.  
6 There may be a lot of sites that are on BLM lands  
7 which are not covered by this leasing program, but  
8 that's under the auspice of the State of Colorado  
9 to reclaim those at this point, because those are  
10 historic mining operations that were done before  
11 they had the reclamation permits that they have  
12 now.

13 The last thing I would like to cover is  
14 that from my perspective, being associated with  
15 mining for an extensive period of time, miners  
16 don't have any problem with people hunting,  
17 fishing, hiking, riding bikes in the area, you  
18 know, on these public lands that are multiple  
19 purpose. And I'm constantly amazed that people who  
20 base their livelihood on recreation, like people in  
21 this area do, they insist or seem to want to insist  
22 that there be nothing else other than recreation  
23 where they want to play.

24 To me, it's just an unreasonable  
25 requirement because those lands are multiple

1 purpose. They were intended for use by the public.  
2 That use being natural resource development and  
3 production. Back in the day, recreation really  
4 wasn't that much of a consideration, but they are  
5 there for recreation, for hiking, hunting, fishing,  
6 et cetera. And I know the miners, they don't have  
7 a problem with the hunting and fishing and bike  
8 riding.

9           So it just amazes me that the  
10 recreationists, who want to come in every once in a  
11 while, insist that there be no other disturbance so  
12 they can enjoy their pristine playgrounds, which  
13 these grounds aren't pristine. They're just BLM  
14 grounds that are intended for multiple purpose.  
15 Thank you.

16           MR. CAMERON: Thank you very much.  
17 And next we're going to hear from Hilary Cooper.

18           HILARY COOPER: My name is Hilary  
19 Cooper. I'm the director of Sheep Mountain  
20 Alliance and we are submitting extensive comments  
21 as well, so I will keep my comments short.

22           I want to say thank you very much to all  
23 the very well-articulated comments that have been  
24 stated tonight. Wow. You guys are all very well  
25 informed and passionate about this area. And I

1 also want to thank Paul and Glen for coming. This  
2 is a tough audience. I have been in the inverse  
3 before, and it's very difficult to speak and I  
4 appreciate your opinions. We all have different  
5 opinions but we are all allowed our opinion.

6 I will say that the documents -- I have  
7 been plowing my way through them -- will serve as  
8 very informative data for future information.  
9 They're very thorough in their presentation of  
10 potential impacts and some of the activities that  
11 are going on out there.

12 I will say that the follow-through,  
13 taking that data and translating it into potential  
14 impacts was woefully inadequate, and that's why we  
15 ask that you guys go back to the drawing table and  
16 take another look at your data, including the Fish  
17 and Wildlife information that has come recently to  
18 you, which could have been gathered from what was  
19 in your document in the first place, and go back  
20 and do another analysis with a more thorough set of  
21 alternatives.

22 I'm going to try to keep my comments  
23 specific to the PEIS and its shortcomings. First,  
24 remediation. Clean it up when you mess it up.  
25 We're all taught that lesson in kindergarten.

1                   Who's responsible for the cleanup?

2   Ultimately, as I understand, in places like New  
3   Mexico and Arizona, because these have been federal  
4   programs, the mining companies, the mining  
5   industry, is allowed to walk away, because they are  
6   federal programs. So they are being challenged in  
7   court, but ultimately they will probably be allowed  
8   to walk away, and the federal taxpayers will be  
9   responsible for cleanup.

10                  The remediation, you really need to look  
11   at your best management practices and work on some  
12   very specific measurable outcomes that actually  
13   clean up contamination. It's not too difficult to  
14   go out to those sites right now and see with our  
15   eyes that they are not cleaned up. If we can see  
16   the contamination that's happening on those sites,  
17   it would even be more obvious that those sites have  
18   not been cleaned up.

19                  If a site is in violation of the Clean  
20   Water Act, is that remediated? I'm having a hard  
21   time making that connection there. But you claim  
22   remediation for those sites. They are not  
23   remediated. Cleaning it up will also bring jobs to  
24   the region, which would be good for everyone.

25                  Permanent withdraw, you don't have any

1 options for permanent withdraw in -- specifically,  
2 on Sheep Mountain Alliance's behalf, for the river  
3 parcels on the Dolores River and other ecologically  
4 sensitive lands. I think Jennifer Thurston did an  
5 excellent job commenting on the overall impacts to  
6 the -- from the other parcels. We are most  
7 concerned with the Dolores River parcels, and we  
8 ask that you consider an alternative that would  
9 permanently withdraw, not just withdraw and  
10 transfer to the BLM or hold for future use.  
11 Permanently withdraw from resource extraction and  
12 clean up.

13           Consider renewables as a cleaner, safer  
14 energy option. These are ultimately going to be  
15 brown fields. Really no ecological system,  
16 services are going to be able to be restored on  
17 these sites. We should be considering  
18 alternatives. You guys are the Department of  
19 Energy, not just the department of uranium, so  
20 let's consider other energy sources for these sites  
21 that will also bring immediate jobs to the region.

22           Reserves. This is not going to be a very  
23 popular opinion with everybody around here, but we  
24 are just trying to address specifically your  
25 purpose and need, because I understand, as a

1 government agency, that's what you're tasked with.

2 We need to -- we encourage you to reserve the

3 uranium ore in the ground where it can be safely

4 stored and possibly considered for future, real

5 domestic need. I have noted in all your documents

6 that your purpose and need is for domestic supply.

7 We know dang well -- I think Glen even admits --

8 that this uranium will be taken out of the ground

9 and shipped to Canada and make its way wherever.

10 MR. CAMERON: And, Hilary, could you  
11 wrap up for us, please.

12 HILARY COOPER: Really?

13 MR. CAMERON: Yeah, it's been...

14 HILARY COOPER: So keep it here,  
15 keep it in the ground for future need if there is a  
16 future need. Taxpayers right now are paying for  
17 the DOE to store and manage already existing ore  
18 supplies and a recycling program.

19 Royalties, you mentioned the royalties.  
20 I believe what you meant was the payment in lieu of  
21 program. You're not actually receiving those  
22 royalties right now. You're getting -- you're  
23 allowing for people not to pay their annual  
24 royalties in lieu of a remediation program.

25 Climate change, I mean, I could go on



1 forever. That wasn't really adequately addressed  
2 at all.

3           The Dolores River, it's iconic, it's  
4 scenic, it's the most important river ecosystem in  
5 an arid, drought-impacted region. It supplies  
6 water to the Colorado River. The Colorado River is  
7 currently the most endangered river in the U.S.  
8 This is a huge impact to the Dolores River, and you  
9 have got to do a better job considering all of your  
10 information.

11           MR. CAMERON: Could you finish up.

12           HILARY COOPER: We ask that you go  
13 back, conduct a more thorough evaluation of all the  
14 information you have put together, do some  
15 fieldwork on the ground, fieldwork on the sites  
16 that exist, and come back to us with a more  
17 thorough analysis with better alternatives. Thank  
18 you.

19           MR. CAMERON: Thank you, Hilary.  
20 Summer Colt?

21           AUDIENCE MEMBER: She left.

22           MR. CAMERON: How about Allison  
23 Wolff?

24           AUDIENCE MEMBER: I believe she had  
25 to leave too.

1 MR. CAMERON: Okay. Lawry de  
2 Bivort, and you can give us the correct  
3 pronunciation of that.

4 LAWRY DE BIVORT: I'm Lawry de  
5 Bivort and I'm a resident of Telluride, and I'm a  
6 veteran of over four decades of research and  
7 development in Washington D.C., including for DOE  
8 and NRC and EPA and all kinds of alphabet agencies.

9 I'm going to be making some comments that  
10 are critical of your process here, but I ask you  
11 not to take it personally, because I have been on  
12 your side of this barrier. I have composition  
13 books plenty, full of notes from hearings and  
14 comments and so forth, so I know what you are going  
15 through and I know how, in some ways, impossible  
16 the job is that you have been given.

17 I have not had a chance to look at  
18 the EIS. I'm a quick reader, but 1,200 pages will  
19 tax even me. So I have some comments and  
20 questions.

21 First is that your selection or declared  
22 preference for Alternative 4 is curious to me,  
23 because preferences, by definition, are just a  
24 matter of one's values. So what I'm really curious  
25 about is what values did you take into account in

1 deciding on this preference?

2           You are meeting a lot of very good and  
3 very interesting people here, despite your  
4 limitation on people to four minutes. I invite you  
5 to get to know the region, get to know the people,  
6 before you start selecting preferences.

7           I would question also your selection of a  
8 preference, given the fact that the PEIS is still  
9 in draft form. Certainly you would want to  
10 complete the EIS before making judgments about what  
11 you prefer, at least I would.

12           Second is we are all up here under this  
13 four-minute limitation, despite some very smart  
14 people who have already appeared before you, and  
15 you're not responding to the questions or comments  
16 that are being made. This is a huge mistake. It  
17 is in some ways an arrogance. We should be in  
18 dialogue, not this controlled thing where we appear  
19 as petitioners to you who control the draft. This  
20 is not right. We should be in dialogue.

21           Third thing is about the resources  
22 involved in this interaction. Your EIS, I'm told  
23 by a charming lady outside, is 1,200 pages long.  
24 Now, I know how much effort it takes to put  
25 together a 1,200-page government EIS, and I know

1 the kinds of fees that the federally funded  
2 research and development centers charge. So you  
3 guys have had access, as you properly should, to  
4 lots of money. Off the top of my head, I would say  
5 you've burned through 2.5 to 3 million dollars for  
6 this EIS, and you're not finished. You can tell me  
7 if I'm wrong, but I doubt it.

8           The EIS, if it's like other EISs that  
9 I've both written and studied, will be highly  
10 technical. You'll be using analytic tools, models,  
11 and so forth. Those require a lot of study to do.  
12 We need to figure out, we need to assess, how good  
13 your EIS is technically. We can't do that with a  
14 few minutes spent preparing four-minute  
15 commentaries.

16           So you all are being paid to draft this  
17 EIS; we're not. You have the resources to buy  
18 access to the analytical tools and models, travel,  
19 G&A, overhead, et cetera. I don't think Argonne  
20 charges profit, does it? But we don't have any of  
21 that. You have given us the CED for the EIS, which  
22 is great, but where are the resources to study it,  
23 to analyze it.

24           MR. CAMERON: I'm going to have to  
25 ask you to wrap it up for us, Lawry.

1                   LAWRY DE BIVORT: Okay. We  
2 certainly have the intellectual, analytic,  
3 scientific, institutional, and professional  
4 horsepower right here in this region to assist your  
5 PEIS on a fully technical level and the validity of  
6 DOE's preference for Alternative 4.

7                   So one of my questions to you is: How  
8 much money will the government make available in  
9 the form of grants to affected communities to study  
10 the draft PEIS, and what will be the process for  
11 activating such a grant or grants?

12                   Lastly, it's imperative that if you are  
13 sincere about hearing from the affected  
14 communities -- and I'd like to think that you are.  
15 At least one of you is taking extensive notes,  
16 which I know you will be shaking out your wrist  
17 tonight. If you are sincere in hearing from the  
18 affected communities, that the period for the  
19 assessment of the draft PEIS be increased  
20 adequately and appropriately.

21                   MR. CAMERON: Lawry, I'm going to  
22 have to ask you to finish.

23                   LAWRY DE BIVORT: I am finished.

24                   MR. CAMERON: Thank you very much.

25                   LAWRY DE BIVORT: You're welcome.

1 Welcome to Telluride, by the way.

2 MR. CAMERON: Thank you very much.

3 We are going to go to our final two speakers, and  
4 one is Joan May and Nick Kolachov. This is Joan.

5 JOAN MAY: Hi. I'm Joan May, and  
6 I'm a San Miguel County Commissioner, and San  
7 Miguel County is one of the cooperating agencies so  
8 we have been quite involved with this process. And  
9 you have received comments from us in the past and  
10 you will receive comments this time. Something  
11 happens when you speak. It seems like the clock  
12 goes faster, so I'm going to try and be respectful  
13 of the time frame and everybody has been here for a  
14 long time.

15 My comments that I will make outside of  
16 our written comments are: I think you know that  
17 this is Telluride's off season, and there are a lot  
18 of people who are very concerned about this issue  
19 who aren't here tonight. You came here I think it  
20 was about a year and a half ago in the summer. We  
21 had a meeting at the opera house and there were a  
22 lot of comments. Tonight we heard the same  
23 comments really. Very passionate, very  
24 knowledgeable people who understand the issue and  
25 understand the impacts to our region. I hope you

1 will listen to the comments and read the comments  
2 again from the previous meeting because they  
3 haven't changed. They were just more plentiful  
4 then, even though it's pretty plentiful now.

5           The only other comment I really have is  
6 that if you look at the map -- and thank you for  
7 providing that in the beginning -- San Miguel  
8 County really is where this lease program has a  
9 great effect. If you look across the Western  
10 Slope, we have more leased parcels than the  
11 counties around us, and we feel that we deserve a  
12 say in how our land is used here because it affects  
13 us directly.

14           It's been mentioned many times that the  
15 purpose and need for this program is stated. It's  
16 for energy, but we hope that you will consider that  
17 domestic use of the uranium that's mined should be  
18 the only use of it, and there really isn't demand  
19 for that at this point. Let's not squander what we  
20 have and our resources that we have in our ground  
21 here. Let's keep those for when we have a purpose  
22 and need for them that we know how to deal with  
23 effectively, if that time ever comes. Thank you.

24           MR. CAMERON: Thank you, Joan, and  
25 please come down, Nick.

1                   NICK KOLACHOV: I just want to thank  
2 everyone for everything they've said that has been  
3 contributed, and I just wanted to come from a  
4 different point. I live on the road that a lot of  
5 these trucks are going to be going on. I've lived  
6 on this road for eight years, and you can tell time  
7 by the sounds of the different trucks that are the  
8 different buses that go on this road. I don't  
9 know -- I think a lot of people that drive it will  
10 be driving it and will be seeing, well, there's a  
11 lot of traffic right now when I'm on the road.

12                   But in actuality, living next to this  
13 road, you really understand our whole community,  
14 and you see that, you know, wow, there goes the UPS  
15 truck. It must be that time. You can really see  
16 that there aren't many people that live here. We  
17 don't have many people driving on this road. And  
18 so when you start to look at the numbers of the  
19 trucks and the kind of traffic that's going to be  
20 generated, I mean, even six or eight trucks would  
21 be noticeable a day.

22                   The road between the hours of, say, 9:00  
23 and 10:00 in the morning goes silent. There is  
24 almost no traffic. I mean, it's -- most people who  
25 drive it wouldn't understand this. But I



1 understand this just by virtue of living right next  
2 to the road.

3           And so I took a moment today thinking  
4 about the hearing, and I thought, you know, it's  
5 really interesting to look at it and say, right now  
6 in this moment, it's as good as it's ever going to  
7 get. Now, isn't that a sad commentary? That we  
8 have to say that here it is. We are going into a  
9 time period when we should be thinking about less  
10 driving and, you know, less CO2, and it's only  
11 going to get more. And then it's going to be  
12 happening through industry in this environment  
13 where most of the people that have moved here and  
14 live here and inhabit this area now, who weren't  
15 born here, moved here for the quality of life. And  
16 yet, that's being directly impacted, especially by  
17 ambient noise of trucks and the dust that they give  
18 off, and here we are on a road that is quiet today  
19 in 2013.

20           So as a steward of the road that these  
21 trucks are going to be on, and not to mention there  
22 are families who live all around me who have  
23 children, and we all live right on this road, and  
24 it's a pretty quiet road and we're okay with it the  
25 way it is right now.

1                   And so I would say as a resident, that I  
2   entirely disagree with the options here, the  
3   alternatives. I'm more an Alternative 1 than 2.  
4   So I do not agree with the way things are going and  
5   I just wanted to make sure that that was heard  
6   here. Thank you.

7                   MR. CAMERON: Thank you. Thank you,  
8   Nick. And I just want to thank all of you for  
9   coming out tonight.

10                  Did you want to make a comment?

11                  SCOTT CLOW: Yes.

12                  MR. CAMERON: Come on down. And we  
13   have one other person, so we have two more  
14   commenters.

15                  Go ahead. Please introduce yourself,  
16   sir.

17                  SCOTT CLOW: Sure. I'll be brief  
18   because I know it's late. My name is Scott Clow.  
19   I live in Dolores, Colorado.

20                  I just wanted to -- I wasn't going to say  
21   anything tonight, but one of the gentlemen who  
22   spoke earlier made a comment about the other 49  
23   states. Currently the uranium that's mined in  
24   Southwest Colorado is transported over to Utah  
25   where there is a milling facility for uranium and

1 vanadium. And that facility has essentially been  
2 turned into a national sacrifice area. They ship  
3 waste materials, i.e. (2) byproduct material,  
4 regulated by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
5 there. They make money for taking that stuff and  
6 they make money for extracting some uranium and  
7 vanadium out of it.

8           The reason I mention that is this program  
9 follows a scheme that we see in a lot of EIS  
10 documents where we look at a very single, okay,  
11 we're looking at this Uranium Belt and leasing  
12 programs on it. We are not seeing the big picture.  
13 We need to consider the comprehensive impacts of a  
14 program like this. It's not just here in San  
15 Miguel County. It's not just San Juan County,  
16 Utah.

17           The people I work for in my day job are  
18 averse to hearings like this, although I suspect  
19 they will comment. They were displaced from their  
20 homeland by this industry in the first couple  
21 rounds of lease programs that were described in the  
22 presentation, and they don't live there anymore.  
23 There's an old mill site that's still very  
24 radioactive. If you run a Geiger counter over it,  
25 it goes wild. And that's -- they don't want to be

1 there anymore.

2           So I just wanted to say: You need to  
3 consider a cradle-to-grave -- no pun intended --  
4 cumulative impact beyond this small region. You  
5 need to consider the ramifications of the entire  
6 industry. Thank you.

7           MR. CAMERON: We have one more  
8 gentleman up there. Please introduce yourself,  
9 sir.

10           NICHOLAS YOHO-WIKSE: Hello. My  
11 name is Nicholas Yoho-Wikse. I grew up near the  
12 Nevada test site in Las Vegas and also in  
13 California. I've lived in this area quite a few  
14 years. I have worked at La Cocina restaurant here  
15 and with a green building firm, Steeprock Joinery,  
16 for several years and with the Galloping Goose and  
17 volunteering for the adaptive ski program for four  
18 or five years. I have some humble residences here  
19 as well as in other states and countries.

20           I'm here representing basically interests  
21 of a few of my own companies and other end-stage  
22 consumers of uranium products in the medical,  
23 energy, weaponry, and other areas of uranium  
24 consumers. We feel this -- the interests I  
25 represent feel this is an ideal spot for the mining

1 of uranium, perhaps even perfect. It takes about  
2 one pound of uranium -- it takes about 3 million  
3 pounds of coal to get the same power out of one  
4 pound of uranium.

5           People here want to base their economy on  
6 marijuana farms and their pleasure mountain, their  
7 pleasure ski mountain. But I think it's a wise  
8 idea, perhaps, to have a balance of conservative  
9 and liberal interests, and Colorado works that way  
10 quite a bit with ranchers and farmers and military  
11 industries balanced with the ski area population.

12           There's a high cost to, quote,  
13 sustainable energy. What do you think it takes to  
14 make solar panels? Do you think that's free? Do  
15 you think people don't break their backs on  
16 assembly lines? You don't think the materials to  
17 make those are going to run out?

18           One of the best reasons for mining  
19 uranium here -- because we will get it elsewhere.  
20 We'll get it somewhere else, for sure. But there  
21 will be pretty good controls here, not perfect by  
22 any means. But there will be a strong lobby in  
23 this area to keep the industry relatively, quote,  
24 safe, if anything can be safe.

25           The area is also close to several

1 end-stage consumers of uranium products: New  
2 Mexico, California, Nevada, and Washington have  
3 various medical weaponry facilities, energy  
4 facilities, that would use the materials. We  
5 basically support the gradual, continuous use of  
6 nuclear products. It would be unwise to completely  
7 disband the industry, as well as it would be to  
8 mine all the uranium immediately.

9           We need to let our technicians gradually  
10 increase their skills. The efficiency with both  
11 nuclear energy for power and also with weaponry  
12 will gradually increase. We don't have the staff  
13 right now to be able to give you perfect weapons or  
14 perfect power plants. We generally support renewed  
15 underground testing of nuclear weapons. Mines you  
16 might call them; they are not just weapons.

17           I disagree with this gentleman here who  
18 says that a nuclear weapon is so much more horrible  
19 than other weapons. I think it's no different than  
20 your pocketknife, good sir. But I do agree with  
21 you that all weapons are obscene.

22           I would say also that this is the least  
23 of your worries. We have labs we can put in here.  
24 You will not have a public commentary. You will  
25 not know about them. And if an accident happens,

1 you would have wished that you would have had a  
2 nuclear explosion in your vicinity.

3 MR. CAMERON: And I'm going to have  
4 to ask you to wrap up.

5 NICHOLAS YOHO-WIKSE: Okay. That's  
6 about it. My main point is that there's a lot of  
7 good people in this area. It's a dynamic,  
8 intelligent population. The mining is going to  
9 take place somewhere, and I think the people here  
10 will keep it in a better way than it would have  
11 been in other places.

12 MR. CAMERON: Thank you. And I  
13 think if you could stick around after we are done  
14 just so we can get the correct spelling of your  
15 name for the transcript.

16 And we're going to wrap up now. The  
17 Department and our experts, if you need to talk to  
18 them, ask them anything, Lawry, they're going to be  
19 out by the posters, and I'm going to ask Ray  
20 Plieness to come up and close the meeting out for  
21 us.

22 LAWRY DE BIVORT: This is a question  
23 that's relevant to everyone. What kind of  
24 follow-up to the comments and questions that have  
25 been put to you this evening will you be giving?

1                   MR. PLIENESS:   Okay.   Thank you.  
2   That is my closing.   What are we going to do with  
3   all these comments?   I think somebody mentioned I  
4   said I was a sincere person.   I'm a very sincere  
5   person.   This is important things for us to  
6   discuss, important in the fact that there are a lot  
7   of different opinions.

8                   What we do with your comments is we take  
9   all of the comments.   We will answer all of those  
10  comments in what we call a response document that's  
11  part of the final PEIS.   And as part of that PEIS,  
12  we will make a final recommendation, but it will  
13  include all of the comments that we receive in this  
14  hearing, in the hearing tomorrow, the two previous  
15  to this, as well as all written comments that we  
16  have received or will receive before the end of the  
17  comment period.   And any comments that we get even  
18  after the comment period that we can use, because  
19  we haven't moved past that location or that area of  
20  the PEIS, we will also use.   So there will be a  
21  response document that you can see how we respond  
22  to those comments and considered this input.

23                  Last but not least, I am very sincere  
24  with that, that there are things that people said,  
25  Don't take it personally.   I don't take this



1 personally. It is my job to analyze all actions  
2 we've considered here. We have a preferred  
3 alternative because we wanted you to know what is  
4 the preference based on the data we had to date to  
5 meet our mission and our goals. It also provides  
6 you a better opportunity to respond in my mind, but  
7 at the end of the day, we will analyze everything  
8 we have heard and the decision-makers will know  
9 what you have said. That's all I can tell you, and  
10 I do thank you sincerely for taking your personal  
11 time to come out and participate.

12 (Proceedings concluded at 9:11 p.m.)

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