



JAN 11 1999

## Finding of No Significant Impact

# Ground Water Compliance at the Tuba City, Arizona, Uranium Mill Tailings Site

December 1998

U.S. Department of Energy  
Grand Junction Office  
Grand Junction, Colorado

**RECORD COPY**

*GW TUB 11.6.3*

## Finding of No Significant Impact

### Environmental Assessment

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) proposes to conduct active ground water remediation at the Tuba City, Arizona, uranium mill tailings site. This proposed action and a no-action alternative are described in the *Environmental Assessment of Ground Water Compliance at the Tuba City Uranium Mill Tailings Site* (see attached DOE/EA 1268). The Environmental Assessment analyzes the relevant environmental issues at the Tuba City site, which include ground water, surface water, human health, air quality, wildlife, vegetation, soils, cultural resources, visual resources, socioeconomics, transportation, and environmental justice considerations.

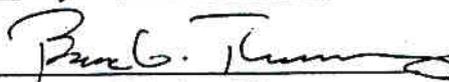
The purpose of the proposed compliance action is to meet U.S. Environmental Protection Agency ground water standards that are defined in Title 40, Part 192 of the *U.S. Code of Federal Regulations* (40 CFR 192). Ground water at the Tuba City site is contaminated with residual radioactive material from historical activities associated with the processing of uranium ore. DOE is proposing to clean up the ground water by extracting it from the aquifer, treating it with a water distillation system, and injecting it back into the aquifer.

The *Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement for the Uranium Mill Tailings Remedial Action Ground Water Project* (PEIS) (DOE/EIS 0198) presents a step-by-step approach for determining the appropriate compliance strategy. That approach was used to select the ground water compliance strategy for the Tuba City site. The Environmental Assessment was tiered to the PEIS in a manner consistent with the concept of tiering described in 40 CFR 1508.28.

### Finding

On the basis of the Environmental Assessment, which analyzes the relevant environmental issues and the concerns of stakeholders, DOE finds that no significant impact would result from implementing the proposed action to actively remediate ground water. This Finding of No Significant Impact is pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), 42 U.S. Code §4321 *et seq.*; the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations for Implementing the Procedural Provisions of NEPA, 40 CFR 1500; and the DOE National Environmental Policy Act Implementing Procedures, 10 CFR 1021. The proposed action does not constitute a major federal action that would significantly affect the environment within the mandate of NEPA. Therefore, implementation of the proposed action does not require an environmental impact statement.

Signed in Albuquerque, New Mexico, this 5 day of Jan, 1999.

  
Bruce G. Twining, Manager

For further information concerning this proposal, or to obtain copies of the Environmental Assessment, please contact:

Don Metzler, Project Manager  
U.S. Department of Energy, Grand Junction Office  
2597 B 3/4 Road  
Grand Junction, CO 81502-2567  
Telephone (970) 248-7612 or (800) 399-5618

Copies of the Environmental Assessment and the Finding of No Significant Impact will be available at the following locations:

Flagstaff Coconino County Public Library  
300 W. Aspen Avenue  
Flagstaff, AZ 86001

Navajo Nation Library System  
Attn: Irvin Nelson  
P.O. Box 9040  
Window Rock, AZ 86515

Tuba City Public Library  
P.O. Box 1901  
Tuba City, AZ 86045

Kykotsmovi Public Library  
c/o Hopi Tribe  
Box 123  
Kykotsmovi, AZ 86039

Phoenix Public Library  
Burton Barr Central Library  
1221 N. Central Ave.  
Phoenix, AZ 85004

U.S. Department of Energy  
Grand Junction Office  
Public Reading Room  
2597 B 3/4 Road  
Grand Junction, CO 81503

Mesa County Public Library  
Government Documents Section  
530 Grand Ave.  
Grand Junction, CO 81501

For further information about the NEPA process, please contact:

Jeff Robbins, NEPA Compliance Officer  
U.S. Department of Energy Albuquerque Operations Office  
Environmental Protection Division  
P.O. Box 5400  
Albuquerque, NM 87115  
Telephone: (505) 845-4426

**Management and Review Team  
Concurrence Sign-off  
For Environmental Assessment Approval**

**ACTION:** ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT OF GROUND WATER COMPLIANCE AT THE TUBA CITY, ARIZONA, URANIUM MILL TAILINGS SITE

**ISSUE:** Approval of the document as the final Environmental Assessment and the issuance of a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the ground water compliance action at the Tuba City Uranium Mill Tailings Site.

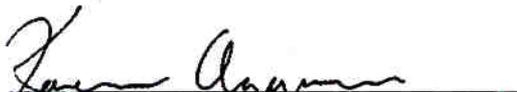
**RECOMMENDATION:** The Management and Review Team and the AL NEPA Compliance Officer concur in their recommendation that the DOE-AL Manager approve the attached document as the final EA, DOE/EA-1268, for this action and issue the attached FONSI.

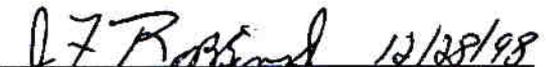
  
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Document Manager

  
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DOE-GJO Environmental Specialist

  
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Public Involvement Specialist

  
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DOE-AL Environmental Specialist

 12/28/98  
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DOE-AL NCO