NAVAJO NATION DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

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July 16, 2012

Ms. Nancy Rose, Forest Supervisor
U.S. Forest Service
Cibola National Forest
2113 Osuna Rd. N.E.
Albuquerque, NM 87113

Re: USDA Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the La Jara Mesa Mine Project

Dear Ms. Rose:

These comments are submitted on behalf of the Navajo Nation through the Navajo Nation Department of Justice and with the concurrence of the Navajo Nation Environmental Protection Agency.

The Navajo Nation unequivocally opposes the planned La Jara Mesa Uranium Mining Project. This opposition is based on two Navajo Nation laws, copies of which are attached to these comments and marked as Exhibits A and B. Exhibit A is a copy of the Dine′ Natural Resources Protection Act of 2005 (DNRPA of 2005) and Exhibit B is a copy of the Navajo Radioactive Materials and Transportation Act of 2012 (RMTA of 2012).
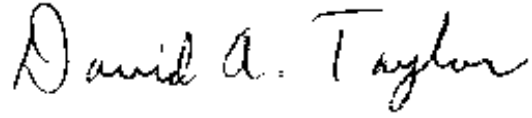
The DNRPA of 2005 places a moratorium on all uranium mining or processing on Navajo lands until impacts from past uranium mining and processing have been fully remediated to the satisfaction of the Navajo Nation Council. The RMTA of 2012 establishes conditions for crossing Navajo lands in connection with uranium mining or processing that occurs on lands adjacent to or in the vicinity of Navajo lands.

While the Draft EIS mentions a number of tribal concerns with the proposed uranium mining it makes no mention of these specific Navajo Nation laws and the findings contained within. We believe that the existing EIS is deficient to the extent that it fails to recognize the findings of the Navajo Nation Council concerning the cultural importance of the Mt. Taylor region in relation to the devastation to Navajo lands and people resulting from past uranium mining and processing.

We specifically request a reference to these Navajo Nation laws in the final EIS together with a verbatim listing of all their findings.

Very truly yours,

NAVAJO NATION DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
HARRISON TSOSIE, ATTORNEY GENERAL

David A. Taylor, Attorney
NATURAL RESOURCES UNIT