

# International Uranium Film Festival Southwest US Tour 2018 Report



**„What an event! Such a deep, meaningful, fulfilling experience at the International Uranium Film Festival!“ Libbe HaLevy**

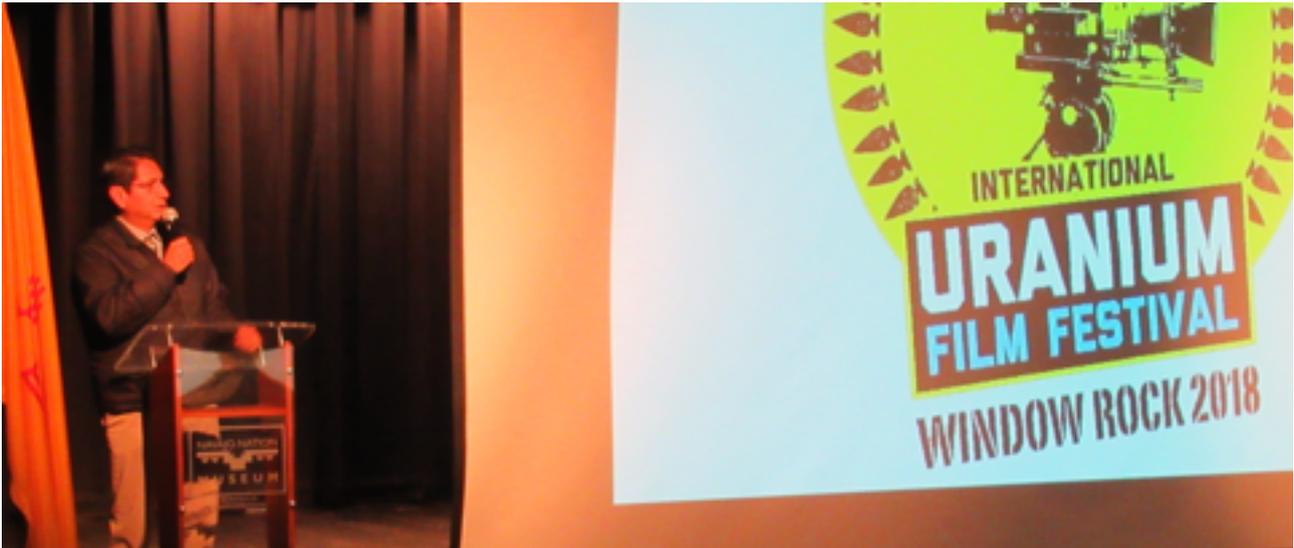
**From November 29th to December 12th the International Uranium Film Festival travelled 1,400 miles through the Southwest US, through Arizona and New Mexico, from Window Rock to Albuquerque, Flagstaff, Grants, Santa Fe and Tucson with a special stop at the Smith Lake Chapter.**

„International Uranium Film Festival - Window Rock: I can't even begin to describe how wonderful this experience is. The people, the information coming from the films, the heart, the tears, the ferocious will and kindness of the Navajo Nation's people, the conversations: And all this environment created by the astonishing films, each one a labor of love, conviction, heart, and caring.

Power, heart, dignity, soul, and profound information“, says Nuclear Hotseat producer Libbe HaLevy from Los Angeles about the Uranium Film Festival in the Navajo Nation Museum in Window Rock. „Thanks Libbe, I could not describe it better,“ comments the director of the Uranium Film Festival, Norbert G. Suchanek. „As I said it already at the first International Uranium Film Festival held May 2011 in Rio de Janeiro: our in the world unique film fest is not just about showing nuclear movies, it's also about networking and making friends.“



## Navajo Nation President at the Uranium Film Festival in Window Rock



From November 29th to December 1st the International Uranium Film Festival screened more than 20 films in the Navajo Nation Museum with the presence of filmmakers from Denmark, India and USA and several special guests like President-elect Jonathan Nez and Vice President-elect Myron Lize, Petuuche Gilbert, Indigenous Worlds Association president and member of the Laguna-Acoma Coalition for a Safe Environment (LACSE), Targol Mesbah, PhD, Assistant Professor, Anthropology & Social Change, California Institute of Integral Studies, Fukushima expert **Hervé** Courtois from France and Navajo singer Radmilla Cody, multiple Native American Music Awards winner and 46th Miss Navajo Nation.

New elected President of the Navajo Nation Jonathan Nez marked the opening of the Uranium Film Festival in Window Rock with a strong and sincere speech against uranium mining. Jonathan Nez said also the festival provides the opportunity to show films that feature the Native American perspective and demonstrate a universal concern about uranium mining on health and the environment. "It's not a Navajo issue. It's clear across the country, all around the world," Nez said. The new elected President commended the work of the film festival founders, Norbert Suchanek and Márcia Gomes de Oliveira, for providing an outlet for people to understand the circumstances of uranium on communities. With more than 500 abandoned uranium mines on the Navajo Nation, the need continues to address clean-up activities and to hold the federal government and companies accountable for mining, Jonathan Nez said: „How do we come together and express our discontent? That's what we are here to do through this film festival.“





Festival co-organizer Anna Rondon, the executive director for New Mexico Social Justice and the Equity Institute said at the opening: „The Uranium Film Festival is a festival of films. Films of education. We are not celebrating uranium. Let me make that clear, it's a festival of how we can fight and survive beyond the nuclear deprivation of our homelands.“

At the opening the festival showed five documentaries including "Half Life: The Story of America's Last Uranium Mill". A film by Justin Clifton that focuses on the White Mesa uranium mill, located 2 miles north of the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe's White Mesa community in Utah. Thelma Whiskers was one of three tribal members who spoke about the mill site after the screening. Whiskers said she has expressed her opposition to the site for several years because of its risk to public health and the land. She added the documentaries she watched on Thursday opened her eyes to uranium's effect on tribes. "No matter what tribe we are, we are all brothers and sisters," Whiskers said.

**On the second day, it was the turn of Navajo singer Radmilla Cody to shine and deliver her strong message.**

In July 1979, more than 1,000 tons of solid radioactive mill waste and 93 million gallons of acidic, radioactive tailings solution flowed into the Puerco River from the United Nuclear Corporation in Church Rock, New Mexico. Radmilla Cody cited this tragic point in Navajo history. Radmilla Cody, Miss Navajo Nation 1997-98, had just performed a song for the crowd at the Navajo Nation Museum, who were attending the International Uranium Film Festival, when she began talking about the perils and legacy of uranium mines and radioactive waste on the



Navajo Nation. "The toxic sludge poured into the Rio Puerco system," said Radmilla. "News reports at the time stated 'was sparsely populated and the spill posed no threats to public health.' Public health in that area seemed to only involve settlers living in urban cities. Not the Native people who relied on the river system for their crops, livestock, and drinking water."



Radmilla's presentation was followed by the film Yellow Fever presented by Navajo artist and veteran Tina Garnanez. Her film investigates the history of the Navajo uranium boom and its consequences.

A further highlight was the Q & A with Danish filmmaker & artist Lise Autogena. She is also professor of the Cultural, Communication and Computing Research Institute at Sheffield Hallam University and presented her film KUANNERSUIT / KVANEFJELD about the uranium mining question in Greenland. Lise discussed with the audience the conflicting issues of uranium mining currently facing the Inuit population in Greenland.



### The Deadly Legacy of the Manhattan Program

Saturday was marked by films and discussions about the atomic bomb program and its legacy in the US and the Marshall Islands. Young filmmaker Brittany Prater presented her first documentary „Uranium Derby“. A young woman’s investigation into her hometown’s secret involvement in the Manhattan Project. And the film directors Taylor Dunne (photo) and Eric Stewart, presented an excerpt of their film-in-progress „Off Country“, a multimedia oral history project examining landscapes of nuclear weapons testing and anti-nuclear activism in the American Southwest.



Special guest was Marshall Islands Atomic Cleanup veteran Paul Griego. The Enewetak Atoll in Marshall Islands was used by the US government to explode dozens of atomic bombs equivalent to 2,000 Hiroshima blasts. Thousands of people would later work to clean up these Pacific Islands and many of them died until today because of radioactive contamination, said Paul Griego who is one of the cleanup survivors. “We were given an impossible task - cleaning up the radioactive fallout from 43 nuclear bombs.”

„The festival is proving to be a fabulous experience. Talking intensely on all things nukes with Hervé Courtois from France, Shri Prakash from India, Marcia Gomes de Oliveira from Rio, Leona Morgan from the Diné nation, and several indigenous audience members - such serious issues, such great people“, commented journalist Libbe HaLevy.

**Three filmmakers received the International Uranium Film Festival Award „Yellow Einstein“ in Window Rock, Navajo Nation Museum.**

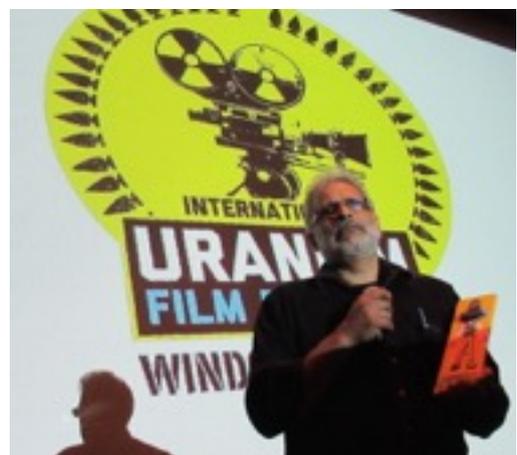
Finally the Uranium Film Festival in Window Rock awarded three filmmakers with its trophy, the Yellow Einstein: Filmmaker Brittany Prater received the The Young Director Award of the Uranium Film Festival for here exceptional feature documentary „URANIUM DERBY“.



The Young Indigenous Filmmaker Award was given to Deidra Peaches for her short documentary „Doodá Leetso - The Legacy of Navajo Nation Uranium Mining“.

And filmmaker Shri Prakash from Ranchi in India received the International Uranium Film Festival Lifetime Achievement Award „for fighting the uranium industry for more than 20 years with his camera and for giving the voiceless uranium victims, the indigenous Adivasi people from Jadugoda a powerful voice“.

„With our award we also intend to stimulate new productions about uranium and the consequences of the nuclear industry and that Brittany Prater, Deidra Peaches as well as Shri Prakash continue with their important work and to inspire others to follow their steps“, said festival director Norbert G. Suchanek.



## From Window Rock to Tucson

Window Rock was just the beginning. The Uranium Film Festival continued in the Southwest US and was held in the following days in Flagstaff, Albuquerque, Grants (The Uranium Capital of the World), Santa Fe and in Tucson.

First destination after Window Rock was Flagstaff. December 2nd the Uranium Film Festival was held at the Native American Cultural Center of the University of Arizona organized by Diné activist & artist Klee Benally. The festival presented four short films and a panel discussion with filmmaker Justin Clifton from Flagstaff and Danish filmmaker & artist Lise Autogena. Klee Benally, told the audience that 10 million people live in close proximity to abandoned uranium mines that have yet to be cleaned up; 3,272 of those mines are located in five western states.



## Smith Lake Chapter visit

On the way back from Flagstaff to Albuquerque the Uranium Film Festival directors accepted the invitation by Navajo politician Percy Byron Anderson - who attended the festival in Window Rock - to participate in the „Community Meeting: Living with Uranium in OUR Communities“ in the Navajo reservation Smith Lake Chapter, December fifth.



At the event Smith Lake Chapter President Anselm Morgan spoke about the contaminated water in his community caused by the legacy of uranium mining. For about a 13-year period there was uranium mining within the chapter lands. Several mining companies operated in the area and region along the "Grants uranium belt". Western Nuclear was the last to close operations in 1979. Anselm Morgan also expressed the need for a documentary about the water problem in his community.

## Uranium Film Festival for the second time at the Guild Cinema

In Albuquerque, New Mexico's most populous city, the Uranium Film Festival took place on December 6th at the Guild Cinema with a wonderful interactive audience including longtime American Indian Movement (AIM) member Bobby Valdez from Laguna Pueblo, the co-founder of The Red Nation Sam Gardipe of the Pawnee Nation and Teracita Keyanna of the Red Water Pond Road Community Association. Chris Shuey of the Southwest Research and Information Center (SRIC) and Dr. Johnnye Lewis presented the film „DII'GO TO BAAHAANE: Three Stories about Water“.



After the screening of „Tale of a Toxic Nation“ Teracita Keyanna took the microphone and impressed the audience with her statement. Red Water Pond community member Teracita Keyanna grew up in the area and is all too aware of the dangers of uranium mining. „Tale of a Toxic Nation“ documents three of her family members. The mother of three, Keyanna, said that she currently lives in Gallup because she knows that Red Water Pond Community, where she grew up

is to dangerous. “My kids could play in an arroyo or ditch and not know that uranium is there in the dirt,” Keyanna said. “I want my kids to grow up in a safe environment and cleaning up these abandoned mines and doing more studies should be a priority.”

In addition Bobby Valdez came forward to the stage. to tell the interested audience his impressive story and experience with uranium mining on the Laguna Pueblo, just 40 miles west of Albuquerque.



„The festival in ABQ was a great event. Nice cinema and great people. We received many messages of support and encouragement to continue with our work, bringing the Uranium Film Festival around the globe and to the American Southwest,” said the festival’s co-founder Márcia Gomes de Oliveira.

## Visit to the Uranium Capital of the World



The following day, December 7th, the Uranium Film Festival team, Márcia Gomes de Oliveira, Norbert G. Suchanek and Susan Gordan (MASE) travelled to Grants by invitation of Candace Head-Dylla of the Bluewater Valley Downstream Alliance (BVDA) and member of the Multicultural Alliance for a Safe Environment (MASE).

Grants is the so called uranium capital of the world where Candace's father worked as uranium miner. The film screenings happened first in the Grants Library with filmmaker Shri Prakash and young filmmakers of the St. Joseph Mission School who won the MASE uranium video contest 2018.

The festival team honored the young middle school filmmakers who produced their first films about uranium mining and its legacy with the official festival T-shirt designed by Navajo artist Klee Benally.



Later the Uranium Film Festival in Grants took place in the wonderful Martinez Hall of the University of New Mexico Campus with several special guests like Linda Evers, who worked in a uranium mill in the 1970s in Grants and Petuuche Gilbert from the Laguna-Acoma pueblo. As before in Window Rock and in Albuquerque Teracita Keyanna from Red Water Pond Road on Navajo Nation impressed the audience with her presence and speech. Her family uranium story is documented in the film „Tale of a Toxic Nation“.



**The fifth stop was Santa Fe, the famous city of artists and the capital of New Mexico.**

The Santa Fe Uranium Film Festival was held December 9th in the charming Jean Cocteau Cinema, owned by 'Game Of Thrones' Author George R.R. Martin. Santa

Fe Filmmaker Adam Jonas Horowitz presented his new film project "Atomic Gods: Creation Myths of the Bomb" and producer Jay Minton presented his uranium film "Yellow Fever: Uncovering the Navajo Uranium Legacy".

Beside of that the festival screened "Devil's Work", a short fiction film by Brazilian Miguel Silveira about use and consequences of depleted uranium weapons. Special guest was Atomic Cleanup Veteran and survivor Paul Griego who had also attended the Window Rock film screenings. Paul Griego was one of the approximately 6,000 workers and soldiers who participated in the cleanup of the Marshall Islands Enewetak Atoll from the radioactive nuclear waste of 43 atomic bombs.



**Final destination of the International Uranium Film Festival 2018 in the US was Tucson.** It was organized in partnership with the Physicians for Social Responsibility Association of Arizona, co-sponsored by Nuclear Resister, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, Sierra Club (Rincon Group). Further proud co-sponsor was the National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA). Festival venue was the YWCA Tucson, Frances McClelland Community Center.



We showed two short and one feature film on the adverse impacts of uranium mining on communities and environment, followed by Q & A with filmmaker Justin Clifton and a panel discussion with public health activists.

„In Tucson the Uranium Film Festival 2018 closed with a golden key. The festival was warmly received by co-organizer Kathy Altman and her wonderful team“, comments festival director Márcia Gomes de Oliveira. „We hope that we can return to Tucson and USA soon with more new films.“

**The International Uranium Film Festival Team thanks all filmmakers, participants, festival partners, volunteers, supporters and especially the co-organizers Anna Rondon (left) and Susan Gordan!**



The International Uranium Film Festival extends its most sincere gratitude to its partners in the Southwest US, Anna Marie Rondon (New Mexico Social Justice and Equity Institute), Susan Gordon (Multicultural Alliance for a Safe Environment), Mikki Anaya and Kathy Altman (Physicians for Social Responsibility, Arizona) and to its supporters: the Seventh Generation Fund for Indigenous Peoples, the Anna and Max Levinson Foundation, McCune Foundation and the Western Mining Action Network for their support making this Festival possible. Additional Festival partners and sponsors include: the New Mexico Social Justice and Equity Institute; Multicultural Alliance for a Safe Environment; Beyond Nuclear; Concerned Citizens for Nuclear Safety; Conservation Voters New Mexico Education Fund; Gallup Solar; Interfaith Worker Justice New Mexico; New Mexico Environmental Law Center; New Mexico Health Equity Partnership; New Mexico Interfaith Power & Light; Nuclear Watch New Mexico; Southwest Research & Information Center; and Tewa Women United.

**The Uranium Film Festival US Tour 2018 in the News. Some links of the press coverage of the Uranium Film Festival Southwest US Tour.**



Film festival highlights uranium's impact on tribal lands, Farmington Daily Times. <https://www.grandcanyontrust.org/film-festival-highlights-uraniums-impact-tribal-lands>

Film festival carries urgent message of danger by Arlyssa Becenti, Dec 6, 2018, Arts <https://navajotimes.com/ae/arts/film-festival-carries-urgent-message-of-danger>

Uranium/Nuclear Devastation to Navajo Nation, Japan, India, Greenland? Ames, Iowa?!? International Uranium Film Festival SPECIAL. <https://dunrenard.wordpress.com/category/u-s/>



Uranium/Nuclear Devastation to Navajo Nation, Japan, India, Greenland? Ames, Iowa? International Uranium Film Festival SPECIAL - Nuclear Hotseat  
<http://nuclearhotseat.com/2018/12/12/explosive-films-on-nuclear-uranium-devastation-to-navajo-nation-india-japan-greenland-ames-iowa-international-uranium-film-festival-special-nuclear-hotseat-390/>



Uranium/Nuclear Devastation to Navajo Nation, Japan, India, Greenland? Ames, Iowa? <https://dunrenard.wordpress.com/category/u-s/>



Film festival highlights uranium's impact on tribal lands by Noel Lyn Smith, Farmington Daily Times  
<https://www.daily-times.com/story/news/local/navajo-nation/2018/11/30/film-festival-highlights-uranium-impact-tribal-lands/2166298002/>



Uranium Film Festival Coming To United States, Including New Mexico.  
<https://www.krwg.org/post/uranium-film-festival-coming-united-states-including-new-mexico>



International Uranium Film Festival Returns to Southwest, November 9th, 2018 in Action Alerts - Nuclear Active.  
<http://nuclearactive.org/international-uranium-film-festival-returns-to-southwest/>

International Uranium Film Festival returns to Diné Nation - Honor Earth  
<http://www.honorearth.org/>



the\_international\_uranium\_film\_festival\_returns

International Uranium Film Festival returns to Navajo Nation by Noel Lyn Smith, Farmington Daily. Three-day event planned for Navajo Nation Museum <https://www.daily-times.com/story/news/local/navajo-nation/2018/11/26/international-uranium-film-festival-returns-navajo-nation/2095578002/>



Professor Lise Autogena presenting at the International Uranium Film Festival in Arizona. [https://blogs.shu.ac.uk/c3riiimpact/autogena-international-uranium-film-festival/?doing\\_wp\\_cron=1550142918.0826010704040527343750](https://blogs.shu.ac.uk/c3riiimpact/autogena-international-uranium-film-festival/?doing_wp_cron=1550142918.0826010704040527343750)

International Uranium Film Festival Returns to the Southwest and Films Reveal the Horrid Truth! <https://jeancocteaucinema.com/event/uranium-film-festival/>



INTERNATIONAL URANIUM FILM FESTIVAL COMING TO NAVAJO NATION & OTHER SOUTHWESTERN LOCATIONS BY LEVI RICKERT - Native News. <https://nativenewsonline.net/currents/international-uranium-film-festival-coming-to-navajo-nation-other-southwestern-locations/>



Renowned Uranium Film Festival 2018 headed for the American SouthWest <https://nuclear-news.net/2018/09/21/renowned-uranium-film-festival-2018-headed-for-the-american-southwest/>

PSR-AZ PRESENTS INTERNATIONAL URANIUM FILM FESTIVAL - SW 2018 TOUR <https://www.iitc.org/international-uranium-festival-tucson-az-12-december-2018/>

Window Rock uranium film festival: On Nov. 29, the International Uranium Film Festival



starts in Window Rock at the Navajo Nation Museum with films about the legacy of uranium mining, nuclear power and nuclear waste. <https://www.nhnews.com/news/2018/nov/20/around-rez-week-nov-21/>



New Mexico, Farmington: Documentaries that share stories about uranium mining and its legacy on Native American communities will be shown when the International Uranium Film Festival returns this week to Window Rock, Arizona, less than a mile across the border - USA Today <https://www.usatoday.com/list/50-States-112818/aa05effc-7345-46ea-b4fd-993d4bb9d7fa/>



International Uranium Film Festival Returns to the Southwest and Films Reveal the Horrid Truth! <https://jeancocteaucinema.com/event/uranium-film-festival/>



International Uranium Film Festival returns to Navajo Nation <https://swuraniumimpacts.org/international-uranium-film-festival-returns-to-navajo-nation/>

Nuke Films in Arizona & NM! Uranium Film Festival's Norbert Suchanek + Filmmakers Rebecca Cammisa, Taylor Dunne, Eric Stewart - Nuclear Hotseat <http://nuclearhotseat.com/2018/11/07/nuke-films-arizona-nm-uranium-film-festivals-suchanek-filmmakers-cammisa-dunne-stewart-nh-385/>



International Uranium Film Festival Returns to the Southwest - Films Reveal the Horrid Truth <http://www.buffalofire.com/international-uranium-film-festival-returns-to-the-southwest-films-reveal-the-horrid-truth/>

International Uranium Film Festival returns to Navajo Nation - ABQ Journal <https://www.abqjournal.com/1250844/international-uranium-film-festival-returns-to-navajo-nation.html>



Uranium Film Festival in the American Southwest 2018 Schedule, beginning at Window Rock. <https://actionnetwork.org/events/uranium-film-festival-in-the-american-southwest-2018-schedule?rel=nofollow&source=widget>

Nuke films? This man's got 'em! Norbert Suchanek is the Executive Director of the International Uranium Film Festival and talks about the upcoming screenings in Arizona and New Mexico. <https://www.iheart.com/podcast/966-nuclear-hotseat-30301377/episode/intl-uranium-festival-norbert-30304561/>



„Nuclear Cattle“ film screening in Window Rock: Japanese, Navajo share views when it comes to their livestock. By Marley Shebala. <https://swuraniumimpacts.org/japanese-navajo-share-views-when-it-comes-to-their-livestock/>









## **About the Uranium Film Festival**

The International Uranium Film Festival of Rio de Janeiro is dedicated to all films (movies, documentaries, animated films, image films, art, fiction and non-fiction) about any nuclear issue: uranium mining, nuclear power plants, nuclear accidents, atomic bombs, nuclear waste, radioactive risks: from Hiroshima to Fukushima. It is an annual and global film festival with traveling festivals in other countries and cities. The best and most important films of the year receive the festival award or a special recognition.

The Uranium Film Festival Award is called Yellow Einstein. It is a piece of art created by Brazilian waste-material-artist Getúlio Damado, who lives and works in the famous artist quarter Santa Teresa in Rio de Janeiro. Getúlio uses waste material that he finds in the streets of Santa Teresa and old, broken watches to remember the first atomic bomb dropped over Hiroshima. Watches in Hiroshima stopped exactly at 8:15 in the morning when the A-bomb exploded on August 6th, 1945.

The International Uranium Film Festival depends on donations and sponsors. Only with the help of concerned people, institutions and companies the Uranium Film Festivals are possible. Uranium Film Festivals planned in 2019: Rio de Janeiro, California, Scotland, Portugal and Spain.

## **Festival Contacts**

Norbert G. Suchanek  
General Director  
International Uranium Film Festival  
[info@uraniumfilmfestival.org](mailto:info@uraniumfilmfestival.org)  
[www.uraniumfilmfestival.org](http://www.uraniumfilmfestival.org)

## **US Southwest Partners**

Anna Marie Rondon  
Executive Director  
New Mexico Social Justice and Equity Institute  
505-906-2671 (c)  
[nmsjei@gmail.com](mailto:nmsjei@gmail.com)

Susan Gordon  
Multicultural Alliance for a Safe Environment  
[sgordon@swuraniumimpacts.org](mailto:sgordon@swuraniumimpacts.org)  
505-577-8438  
[www.swuraniumimpacts.org](http://www.swuraniumimpacts.org)