SAMPLE letter to Linda Meyer, EPA Project Manager for Midnite Mine

Dear Ms Meyer:

I am writing because of my concern about the cleanup of the Midnite Mine, on the Spokane Indian Reservation. I recently became aware of this cleanup, and I respectfully ask that the public be given additional opportunities to learn about the mine and the cleanup. For the benefit of the public, I request that a series of public meetings be held, both on the Reservation, and in Spokane.

I understand that Newmont Mining Company (Newmont) has proposed to modify the cleanup levels that were required by the EPA’s 2006 Record of Decision (ROD). I am very concerned that modifying the cleanup levels agreed upon in the ROD will result in increasing the cancer risk for Spokane tribal members. Therefore, before the EPA considers modifying the standards, I request that:

• The EPA not issue an Explanation of Significant Differences (ESD) until an independent expert has had the opportunity to re-evaluate the new data set. I understand that possible inconsistencies and/or problems may exist with both background data set and the manner the data was evaluated.

• EPA revisit the background sampling that was accomplished for the Remedial Investigation and Feasibility Study (RI/FS) and determine soundness. If the sampling methods and data for the RI/FS were high quality and defensible, I request that Newmont’s data not be considered, and an Explanation of Significant Differences not be considered.

• Commission additional independent studies using both previous and new data sets. It appears that EPA hired a statistical contractor to perform some of the data analysis. This contractor appeared to have some difficulties locating past data sets.

• For the benefit of the public, the EPA provide a white paper that clearly explains how the existing cleanup levels were calculated. This paper should also include an explanation of how cleanup levels at other uranium mine sites have been determined, as well as a section about health risks posed by contaminated water and sediment in Blue Creek, an important cultural site for the Spokane Indian community. Everyone will benefit if the public has a thorough understanding of this process.

• Please ensure that all components of the Community Involvement Plan (CIP) are being followed, and all updates are provided at public locations in Wellpinit, Ford, and Spokane. In addition to providing these resources at information depositories, please ensure that the EPA’s website for Midnite mine is regularly updated.

I appreciate all the work that you’ve done on this site, Mary. Thanks in advance for considering my comments.

Sincerely,

Your Name