



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION IX

75 Hawthorne Street
San Francisco, CA 94105-3901

JUN 16 2015

OFFICE OF THE
REGIONAL ADMINISTRATOR

The Honorable Russell Begaye
President, Navajo Nation
P.O. Box 7440
Window Rock, Arizona 86515

Dear President Begaye:

I am writing to extend an invitation to conduct government-to-government consultation on the *2014 Federal Agencies Actions to Address Impacts of Uranium Contamination in the Navajo Nation* working draft. This draft plan was developed by the United States Environmental Protection Agency, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, the Department of Energy, the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, and the Indian Health Service.

During the initial 2008-2012 Five-Year Plan, the Agencies invested over \$100 million to reduce the most urgent risks to Navajo residents by remediating 34 contaminated homes, providing safe drinking water to 1825 families, and performing stabilization or cleanup work at 9 abandoned mines. We also conducted field assessments of 240 water supplies and 520 mines to gain a more complete understanding of the widespread scope of potential exposures to uranium contamination on the Navajo Nation. In addition, the recent Tronox settlement provides almost \$1 billion for EPA cleanup of approximately 50 abandoned uranium mines on and very near the Navajo Nation.

The work done to date would not have been possible without the partnership of your office, the Navajo Nation Environmental Protection Agency, and the Navajo Nation Department of Justice. Coordination and consultation with the Navajo Nation is vital to ensuring that uranium mine cleanup work is completed in a manner that protects the health and welfare of Navajo residents and supports the interests of the Navajo Nation government.

This consultation process will be conducted in accordance with the *EPA Policy on Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribes* (<http://www.epa.gov/tribal/consultation/consult-policy.htm>). Information about this consultation will be posted on EPA's Tribal Consultation Opportunities Tracking System (<http://tcots.epa.gov/oita/TConsultation.nsf/TC?OpenView>). At the end of the consultation period, EPA will provide written feedback on how input was considered in the final action.

Subject to your approval, the EPA can invite partner agencies to join in this consultation as outlined in the portion of the EPA consultation policy related to joint undertakings. Consultation can occur with each agency involved in the plan individually or we could arrange for this joint consultation.

I am designating Clancy Tenley, Assistant Director of the Region 9 Superfund program, as our point of contact for working with your staff to arrange this consultation; he can be reached at (415) 972-3785. Please also feel free to contact me at (415) 947-8702, or Superfund Director Enrique Manzanilla at (415) 972-3843. We are committed to continuing our partnership with the Navajo Nation to remedy the legacy of uranium contamination.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jared Blumenfeld". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and a long, sweeping underline.

Jared Blumenfeld

cc: Donald Benn, PhD, Executive Director, Navajo Nation Environmental Protection Agency
David Taylor, Navajo Nation Department of Justice