From: Jeanne Geselbracht
To: Laura Mayo
Subject: Arizona Strip uranium mining
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Laura, I spoke with Roddy Cox, the AZ Strip geologist in the St. George, Utah, BLM office about uranium mines in the AZ Strip, and here's what he told me:

In the 1980's and 90's there were 6 uranium mines operated by Energy Fuels Nuclear. They closed and reclaimed 3 of them and put 3 of them in temporary closure status (not reclaimed because they might want to open again when prices go back up). Denison owns these mines now. They were all about 15 to 20 acres and were underground conventional mines (not in-situ leaching), and all ore bodies were at least 1,000 feet above the regional aquifer. Of the 3 that have been in temp closure, their top priority to reopen is called Arizona 1 Mine. It was permitted by BLM many years ago and an EA was written at the time. BLM does not plan on re-writing a NEPA document for this project, as there is no change to their Plan of Operation (POO). but Denison is applying to the State for permits. It sounds as if the State is scheduled to issue an air permit today, and he thought there would be a 30-day appeal period. This is important for folks to know about right away. The ore would be transported to Denison's mill in Blanding, Utah, for processing, which is the same as before.

Pine Nut Mine is Denison's second priority for reopening. Kanab North Mine is their third priority on the AZ Strip. They are currently assessing it to see if it's even economical at this time. BLM hasn't received an proposals from Denison on Kanab North.

There is also a proposal by Denison for a brand new mine, called EZ1 Mine, which is within the segregated/withdrawn area. My guess is that, if they pursue this, BLM might have to conduct a validity exam to see if Denison has validity existing rights, but Roddy couldn't verify if that would be done. BLM has decided this project would be the subject of an EIS. Denison has submitted a draft POO to BLM, and BLM is working with them to get a complete POO.

The Canyon Mine is in Kaibab National Forest on the Tusayan Ranger District. He didn't give me any other info on this one since it's a USFS project.

Roddy is sending me a CD with the pdf files of the old EAs on the Arizona 1 and Pine Nut mines, so we can see what they look like. I asked if conditions have changed since those old EAs were written, and he said condors have been re-introduced into the AZ Strip, and AZ has some new permitting requirements.

If I find out more, I'll keep you apprised.

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