What Has Been Done?

- In 1991, United Nuclear Corporation removed mine waste from Old Church Rock mine settling ponds and took it to Northeast Church Rock Mine.
- In 2007, the Church Rock Chapter completed the Church Rock Uranium Monitoring Project (CRUMP) Report that assess environmental conditions in residential areas. The report is titled "Report of the Church Rock Uranium Monitoring Project."
- In 2007, a scoping survey was conducted by NNEPA, and recommendations were provided for assessing soils and sediments near Old Church Rock Mine.
- In 2009, a site characterization was conducted to follow up on the recommendations provided in the 2007 NNEPA scoping survey.
- In 2023 USEPA completed a removal assessment at the site.
- In 2026, USEPA and NuFuels, Inc. reached agreement to conduct an interim action at the site.

What Has Been Found?

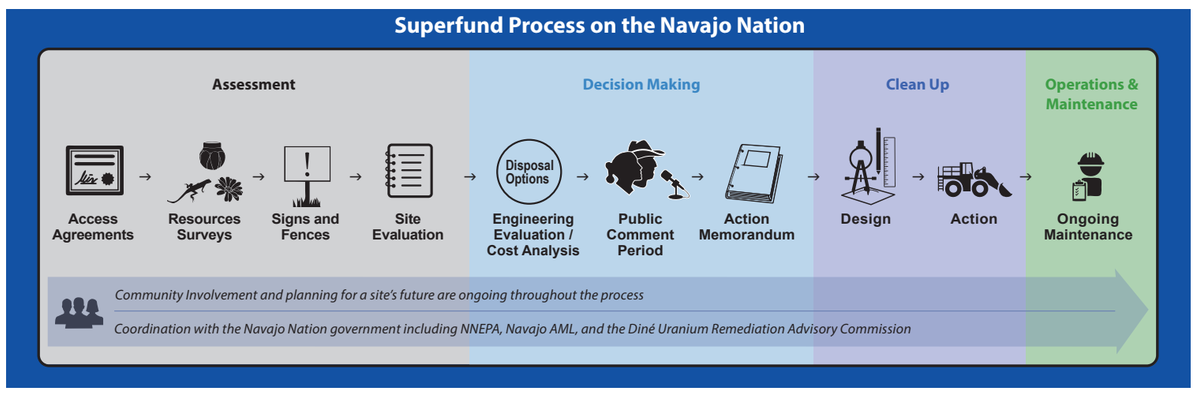
- All investigations have found elevated gamma rates inside the fenced facility boundary and in some areas outside the fence.
- Although some reclamation has occurred at the site, mine waste is still present within and outside of the fenced area, including east of State Highway 566.
- Mine waste has been transported downstream by the arroyo that runs along the western edge of the site, which empties into the Puerco River.

What is Happening Now?

- NuFuels, Inc., with oversight by USEPA and NNEPA will conduct an interim action or Time-Critical Removal Action to address areas of ongoing migration and community exposure.

What Happens Next?

- USEPA will start developing a human health and ecological risk assessment and an Engineering Evaluation and Cost Analysis (EE/CA) within the next 2-3 years.
- Following a public comment period, USEPA will select a final cleanup action for the site based on the risk assessment and EE/CA.



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USEPA Navajo Abandoned Uranium Mine webpage: **www.epa.gov/navajo-nation-uranium-cleanup**

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Old Church Rock Mine

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency • Region 9 • San Francisco, CA • April 2026

Old Church Rock Mine is in the Church Rock Chapter of the Navajo Nation, New Mexico

Background

Old Church Rock Mine is an inactive underground uranium mining facility located approximately 8 miles northeast of Gallup, New Mexico in the Church Rock Chapter of the Navajo Nation. The approximately 75-acre site includes a closed mine shaft, an empty ion-exchange building, five dry pond beds, former stockpile areas, and concrete pads.

Old Church Rock Mine was operated by Phillips Petroleum Company in the early 1960s, and the mine was reopened and operated by United Nuclear Corporation from 1976 to 1977 and again from 1979 to 1981.

A total of 316,250 tons of ore were produced using 800- to 900-foot shafts. Once mined, uranium ore was sent off site for processing. Groundwater was pumped from the underground mine workings to prevent flooding. Once at the surface, groundwater was stored in on-site ponds and treated using ion exchange before being discharged to the adjacent arroyo.

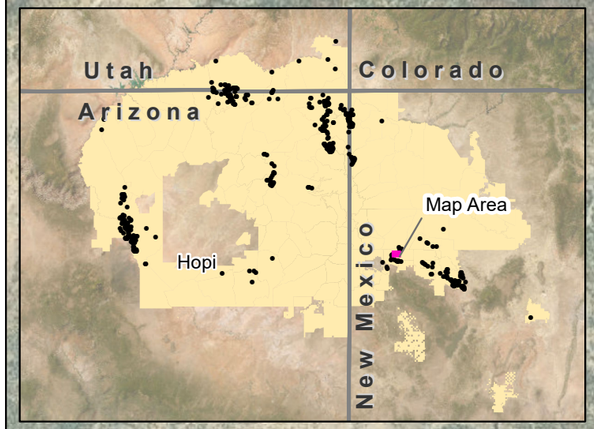
Removal Assessment and Interim Action

Together, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) and Navajo Nation Environmental Agency (NNEPA) initiated a removal assessment at the Old Church Rock Mine in November 2022. The removal assessment includes gamma scans, surface soil sampling, and background area studies. The removal assessment was completed in August 2023. The removal assessment identified areas of ongoing off-site migration and direct exposure to the surrounding community. In 2026, EPA reached agreement with a responsible party, to conduct a Time-Critical Removal Action (TCRA) to address the areas of ongoing release.

Old Church Rock Mine site

Source: The source of the image is ESRI, used by the EPA with ESRI's permission.

Date: December 21, 2022



566

Old Church
Rock Mine

N

0 0.15 0.3 0.6

Miles

Fence
Highway
Road
US State

Abandoned Uranium Mines

Old Church Rock Mine

Reduce Your Contact with Uranium and Radiation

Steps to keep yourself safe:

- Stay away from abandoned mines and mills
- Find out if your home is a contaminated structure
- Use regulated water for human needs
- Never use unregulated water for human needs—even if it looks ok
- Use good water hauling practices to keep your water clean
- Get regular cancer screenings, like pap tests, mammograms, colonoscopies, and other cancer screenings

UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY