

Phase I Environmental Site Assessment for:

Nineteen Houses in the White Mesa Reuse and Revitalization Housing Project and a building that will be utilized as the Youth Opportunity facility

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) for nineteen houses in the White Mesa Reuse and Revitalization Housing Project and for one building that will be utilized as the Youth Opportunity facility has been completed by Mary Ahlstrom, a contractor who wrote the report for the Environmental Program of the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe. The purpose of this document is to recommend if further testing should be conducted prior to removal of asbestos building materials.

The houses and Youth Opportunity facility are located on Tribally allotted lands in the community of White Mesa, San Juan County, Utah on the Ute Mountain Ute Indian Reservation.

A site reconnaissance and historical review were conducted, in coordination with the Tribal Environmental Director, to review the site for indications and/or the presence of recognized environmental conditions. Observations and records show that asbestos building materials are contained in the siding, roofing, floor tiles, tile mastic, and insulation around plumbing and heating pipes and fixtures of the structures. Some of the houses have newer siding covering older asbestos siding. Over the years, these building materials have been damaged and raise concerns that asbestos may have been released to the environment and potentially could affect the health of people. Most of the structures are located near other homes, businesses, and public recreational areas. Approximately ten years ago, asbestos building materials were removed from a few houses of similar vintage on the Reservation but deposited in illicit open dumps. Recent assessment and cleanup of those dumps verified the presence of asbestos containing materials.

Because of the previous asbestos removals, construction documentation, observations, and recent assessments and cleanups of asbestos debris piles, it is recommended that Phase II sampling assessments are probably not necessary and that a cleanup contractor and/or trained Tribal hazardous staff

can proceed with cleaning up the sites. If prior to or during the cleanup activities, additional information indicates potential contamination or safety issues, cleanup strategies will need to be reevaluated.

II. INTRODUCTION

A. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to recommend if further testing should be conducted for nineteen houses in the White Mesa Reuse and Revitalization Housing Project and one building that will be utilized as the Youth Opportunity facility prior to removal of asbestos building materials.

B. Scope of Work

- 1) Review available public records/documents that will help identify recognized environmental conditions in connection with the property.
- 2) Conduct a site reconnaissance to collect data and observe environmental conditions related to the property and any structures located on the premises to the extent not obstructed by adjacent buildings, bodies of water, asphalt, other paved areas, or by limiting conditions such as snow or rain.
- 3) Interview site-owner, occupants, or designated persons to review property boundaries and obtain information that may be relevant to the site or adjoining land. Briefly interview knowledgeable persons (i.e. neighbors, former owners, regulatory agencies) to establish previous property uses and conditions.
- 4) Prepare a report containing observations relating to the apparent environmental condition of the site, describing areas of impact, summary of records/documents reviewed, analysis of collected data, and the consultant's conclusions.

The scope of this report is limited to the matters expressly covered. This report is prepared for the benefit of the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe.

Radon, lead in drinking water, wetlands, regulatory compliance, industrial hygiene, ecological resources, endangered species, indoor air quality, and high voltage powerlines were not included in the scope of this assessment.

C. Methodology

The methodology followed was the American Society for Testing Materials (ASTM) Practice E 1527-00: Standard Practice for Environmental Site Assessments: Phase I Environmental Site Assessment Process. ASTM is a national standards-writing organization based in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. This practice outlines a methodology to complete an ESA for commercial real estate in the United States. Its purpose is to identify "recognized environmental conditions" of contamination by hazardous materials and petroleum products, and as such, defines what constitutes appropriate inquiry to qualify for the innocent landowner defense of the Comprehensive Environmental Response Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA).

D. Limitations and Exceptions

The preparation of this report relied on information derived from secondary sources. Except as set forth in this report, there was no independent investigation as to the accuracy or completeness of the information derived from secondary sources or personal interviews and has assumed that such information is accurate and complete.

The conclusions and recommendations in this report represent opinions, which are based upon facts and circumstances as they existed at the time that this report was prepared. These opinions were arrived at in accordance with currently accepted engineering, hydrologic, and geologic practices and are subject to the inherent limitations of environmental site assessments. A change in any fact or circumstance upon which this report is based may adversely affect the recommendations, findings, and conclusions expressed in this report.

No environmental site assessment can completely eliminate uncertainty regarding the potential for "recognized environmental conditions" in connection with these sites. Within reasonable limits of time and cost, an assessment conducted according to ASTM standards is intended to reduce uncertainty regarding the potential for contamination on the site.

No sampling of any materials was performed for this assessment.

III. SITE DESCRIPTION

A. Location

The houses and Youth Opportunity facility are located on Tribal allotted lands in the community of White Mesa, San Juan County, Utah on the Ute Mountain Ute Indian Reservation. White Mesa is separated from the main portion of the Reservation and consists of 8,456 acres of trust land and 4,359 acres of fee lands. It is located approximately nine miles south of Blanding, Utah near Indian Highway 35. The Latitude is 37°28'6" North and the Longitude is 109°28'3" West.

B. Past and Present Uses

The nineteen houses and the future Youth Opportunity facility are located on Tribal allotments. Observations and records show that asbestos building materials are contained in the siding, roofing, floor tiles, tile mastic, and insulation around plumbing and heating pipes and fixtures of the structures. Some of the houses have newer siding covering older asbestos siding. Over the years, these building materials have been damaged and raise concerns that asbestos may have been released to the environment and potentially could affect the health of people. Most of the structures are located near other homes, businesses, and public recreational areas. A gas station/convenience store is across from one of the houses. The Tribal ball fields and Bear Dance ceremonial grounds are across the street from another house. Annually, the traditional feast celebrates the bear coming out of hibernation with dancing and hand games that are open to attendance by all cultures. A dump and sewage lagoons are near the Bear Dance ceremonial grounds. The lagoons are fenced. A bulk propane storage area is west of the dump and northwest of the sewage lagoons.

The Indian Health Service (IHS) has provided some assistance in addressing asbestos issues in the past consisting of site visits and visual confirmation of asbestos containing materials. Some houses in the Tribal community of White Mesa were renovated approximately ten years ago via Federally funded housing projects, which removed the asbestos problems but created new issues when the demolition materials were deposited in illicit open dumps. Recent assessments and cleanup of those dumps verified the presence of asbestos containing materials.

In April of 2004, the Tribe contracted with Envirotech to assist with cleanup and proper disposal of debris piles near the ball fields and Bear Dance grounds.

About 3 cubic yards of friable asbestos were taken to a certified landfill. Approximately 70 cubic yards of non-friable asbestos siding, roofing, and tiles along with household trash were taken to a RCRA Subtile D landfill. Envirotech oversaw the cleanup and site management, which was conducted by the Tribal Weeminuche Construction Company, whose workers had received appropriate training and were fitted with protective respirators and cleanup suits.

C. Site Vicinity and Characteristics

The Ute Mountain Ute Reservation was established in 1897 as is homeland to the Weeminuche Band of Utes. The present day Reservation encompasses 597,288 acres of trust land and 27,354 acres of fee land. It is located in Montezuma and La Plata Counties in southwestern Colorado, and San Juan County in northwestern New Mexico. It also includes and a small section of San Juan County in southeastern Utah where individually and tribal owned lands or allotments are located in White Mesa and Allen Canyon. Elevations range from 4,600 feet along the San Juan River to 9,977 feet on Sleeping Ute Mountain. The eastern half of the Reservation is characterized by a high mesa cut by the canyon of the Mancos River and numerous side canyons. The western half, with the exception of Sleeping Ute Mountain, is semi-desert and grassland.

The area is known as the Four Corners (where four states come together) and is rich in culture and history. There is the prehistory of "The Anasazi" the ancient ones, who lived here nearly 1000 years ago. They left the area long before the Ute Bands and the Plains Indians roamed the mountains and vast plains. Early Spanish priests and travelers introduced horses to the Ute people. There are historical chronicles of early settlers who came here to the lush and fertile Montezuma Valley instead of going further west. Historically, the Ute Nation roamed throughout Colorado, Utah and northern New Mexico in a hunter-gather society, moving with the seasons for the best hunting and harvesting. The Ute Bands were forced onto Reservations in the 1800's.

Tribal enrolment of the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe is at 2029 members and the 2000 Census list 1,676 people living on the Reservation. The Tribe employs over 900 people in its enterprises and departmental programs. Others are employed in ranching operations throughout the Reservation. The unemployment rate is approximately 20- 40%. Most of the people live in two communities on the Reservation, the Tribal Headquarter City of Towaoc with a population of about 1,097 and the smaller community of White Mesa with a population of approximately 277. Towaoc is at the base of Sleeping Ute Mountain, which resembles a sleeping Indian with his headdress to the north. Towaoc is eleven miles southwest of Cortez, Colorado and just over an hour north and west of Farmington, New Mexico. Within the Reservation, is the 125,000 acre Ute

Mountain Tribal Park along a 25-mile stretch of the Mancos River, which was set aside by the Tribe to preserve remnants of the Hisatsinom Culture and is kept as a primitive area.

The community of White Mesa in San Juan County, Utah is separated from the main portion of the Reservation. It is located nine miles south of Blanding, Utah near Indian Highway 35. Nearby are the individual and Tribal allotments in Allen Canyon, which are located twelve miles west of Blanding and adjacent to the Manti-La Sal National Forest.

The White Mesa uranium mill is located approximately three miles north of White Mesa. It is owned by International Uranium (USA) Corporation and overseen by the Utah Department of Environmental Quality, Division of Radiation and the US Nuclear Regulatory Commission. At issue and with opposition from the Tribe, is a proposal from the Department of Energy (DOE) to bring uranium tailing from a mill in Moab, Utah to the site north of White Mesa. Additionally, there are holding cells for the uranium mill that are located on private land, which is near the Ute Mountain Ute Reservation. The cells are being monitored but potentially could leak and contaminate an aquifer that is a source of drinking water for the Tribe.

D. Structures, Roads, and Utilities

Highways on the Reservation are U.S. Highways 160 and 491; and Colorado State Highways 41 and 789. Two maintained gravel roads cross the Reservation; one follows the Mancos River Canyon to the eastern part of the Reservation then southward toward Farmington; the other goes westward from Towaoc to the Cache oil field then on to Aneth, Utah. White Mesa can be reached from Utah cities and communities of Aneth, Montezuma Creek, Red Lake Village, White Rock Curve Village, Red Mesa, Bluff, and Blanding. U.S. Highway 191 runs approximately fifteen miles west of White Mesa, U.S. Highway 163 runs about five miles north, and U.S. 106 runs about twelve miles south. Utah Highways 163 and 262 run about ten miles north of White Mesa.

After over 100 years of almost no water, the Colorado Ute Water Settlement Act of 1988, which mandated construction of the Delores River Project and McPhee Dam, brought the first piped drinking water to the reservation and also water that is used for irrigation.

E. Environmental Liens

The abstract for the properties were not available for review. No indications were made that there are environmental liens on the site.

IV. RECORDS REVIEW

A. Environmental Record Sources

An environmental review was conducted of U.S. EPA, other Federal, and State agency databases.

San Juan County, Utah - The following sites in San Juan County, Utah in the White Mesa area are included in the EPA databases.

LIST OF EPA-REGULATED FACILITIES IN ENVIROFACTS

Go to the Envirofacts website to see a report on a facility and click on the underlined Facility Name. Click on the underlined "View Facility Information" link to view EPA Facility information for the facility.



<u>FACILITY NAME/ADDRESS</u>	<u>FACILITY INFORMATION</u>	<u>Permitted Discharges to Water?</u>	<u>Toxic Releases Reported?</u>	<u>Hazardous Waste Handler?</u>	<u>Active or Archived Superfund Report?</u>	<u>Air Releases Reported?</u>
<u>BALLARD PETROLEUM LLC</u> 11 MILES SE OF BLANDING BLANDING, UT 84511	<u>View Facility Information</u>	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES
<u>BRAISER ASPHALT</u> 1.5 MILES N.E. OF BLANDING BLANDING, UT 84511	<u>View Facility Information</u>	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES
<u>CITY OF BLANDING WATER TREATMENT PLANT</u> 50 WEST 100 SOUTH	<u>View Facility Information</u>	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO

BLANDING, UT 84511						
CURTISS E. PERKINS TRUCKING 1277 NORTH 750 WEST 38-5 BLANDING, UT 84511	View Facility Information	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO
F.G. LAWS TRUCKING BROWN CANYON RD. 104 - S BLANDING, UT 84511	View Facility Information	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO
FOUR CORNERS PLANT 18 MILES EAST OF ALKALI CANYON BLANDING, UT 84511	View Facility Information	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES
H.F. COSBY TRUCKING PINION RIDGE RD BLANDING, UT 84511	View Facility Information	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO
HOLLIDAY CONSTRUCTION INTERSECTION OF RT. 163 & 191 BLANDING, UT 845110000	View Facility Information	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES
INTERNATIONAL URANIUM (USA) CORPORATION HIGHWAY 163 WHITE MESA MILL BLANDING, UT 84511						