IN THIS ISSUE

The Longest Walk 2  2
What Waste Comes to WIPP?  4
What is the (Changing) Bush Global Nukes Program?  5
Protecting Mount Taylor  6
Communities and Uranium: The Work Continues  8
BOOK REVIEWS:
• Agrarianism and the Good Society; Land, Culture, Conflict, and Hope  10
• Power of the People: America’s New Electricity Choices  5
• Energy: Use less, Save More – 100 Energy-Saving Tips for the Home  4
• Water: Use less, Save More – 100 Energy-Saving Tips for the Home  6
• Vaccine: The Controversial Greatest Lifesaver  12

S \n
People Helping People

Since 1971, Southwest Research and Information Center (SRIC) has been working with communities, from assisting them with reclamation of their lands, to helping them prevent unwanted industries coming into their communities. But an important part of those efforts is helping these communities learn to help themselves. From these efforts come new organizations. But to have even stronger results, these communities are now mobilizing into coalitions or collaboratives, working together to keep their people, and their environment, safe.

This issue of Voices from the Earth focuses on some of those efforts and communities. Five Native Tribes — the Pueblos of Acoma, Laguna, and Zuni, the Navajo Nation, and Hopi Tribe — are working to protect Mount Taylor, which they use in their sacred ceremonies. For some of these tribes, these ceremonies always have been shielded from outsiders’ view. But in light of the recent efforts by companies to renew uranium mining near this sacred site, and the history of this industry’s negative impacts on their lands and their health, these tribes are now unifying their efforts in order to protect Mount Taylor from further harm (see pages 6–7).

There are also other efforts across the region by groups and individuals to educate the public about the many problems caused by uranium mining (pages 8–9).

One part of this effort involves the Grand Canyon with minimal impact to the Park mine at the boundaries of the Grand Canyon with minimal impact to the Park. But in light of the recent efforts by mining companies to renew uranium mining near these boundaries, these communities are now unifying their efforts in order to protect the public from further harm (see pages 6–7).

After 14 years, Eastern Navajo Diné Against Uranium Mining (ENDAUM) efforts to halt the NRC licensing of Hydro Resources, Inc. culminated with the hearing in Denver, CO on May 12, 2008. Attendees included Crownpoint Middle School students Lemanuel Loley, Theron Henderson, Kaydon Tracey, Kelsey Henry, and Savannah Cowboy. (PHOTO COURTESY OF JUANA COLÓN, NEW MEXICO ENVIRONMENTAL LAW CENTER.)

“People Helping People” summarizes the 30th Anniversary of the Longest Walk (page 2). The Longest Walk marked an effort by Native People across the country to protect their rights as sovereign nations, as well as protect their freedom of religion, a right long denied them in this country. The Longest Walk is currently traveling across the country to not only celebrate the Anniversary, but also to promote the theme, “All Life is Sacred.”

In terms of the nuclear fuel cycle, there continue to be controversies over the front end (uranium mining and milling), power generation, and waste disposal. Many communities and organizations nationally are working to oppose President Bush’s Global Nuclear Energy Partnership (GNEP) (page 5). Many in Congress, and people throughout this country, feel this program is controversial, generally unwanted by the public, and ultimately too expensive for the American taxpayers. And SRIC’s work continues in our efforts to keep the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) safe, regardless of the U.S. Department of Energy’s efforts to bring “hotter” waste to WIPP, in violation of the WIPP Land Withdrawal Act (page 4).

It is because of these stories of communities working together that we continue to work on issues affecting the environment and human health. Helping one another, and protecting our environment for future generations — where’s the wrong in that?

—Martin Luther King, Jr.