

Appendix A

Year End Report 2001 Community outreach and major events made possible by Diné CARE's leadership

* Western States RECA Reform Coalition (WSRRC) -- consists of representatives of grassroots radiation victim's organizations from the states of NM, CO, AZ & UT working together in a force uniting people of different ethnic, geographic, religious and political backgrounds. Organizations includes: Colorado Plateau Uranium Workers, Colorado Uranium Workers Council, Navajo RECA Reform Working Group, Utah Navajo Downwinders, Northern Arizona Navajo Downwinders, Eastern Navajo Uranium Workers, Lukachukai Uranium Workers, Churchrock Uranium Workers and Diné CARE. Formed in January 1999, Diné CARE was nominated to serve as WSRRC's Communication Headquarters and Lori Goodman was appointed the communications coordinator.

January 25, 2001

Carol Dewey, 52 years old died of a rare and extremely aggressive form of thyroid cancer. As the President of Colorado Plateau Uranium Workers and member organization of the Western States RECA Reform Coalition, from rural Dove Creek, CO. Carol had donated all her time volunteering for the amendment of RECA. In seeking justice for the elders made ill by U.S. Government, Carol overlooked her own health in the process. Because of the success of our organizing strategies we have enlisted people whose humanitarian contributions have been immeasurable. Carol was the third organizational leader we lost to cancer in a two year period.

January 27, 2001

Salt Lake City, Utah. Nine Navajos from AZ, UT & NM attended this historic event. The Governor and Mayor of SLC both signed proclamations that designated a "Day of Remembrance" to recognize the legacy of the Cold War, to express our hopes for peace, justice, healing, and reconciliation, and to convey our fervent desires and our commitment to assure that such a legacy will never happen again. January 27, 2001 marked the 50th Anniversary of the beginning of nuclear weapons testing at the Nevada Test Site on January 27, 1951.

March 12 to 17, 2001

RECA campaign launched across the Four Corners states. Approximately 4,000 Navajo uranium workers, their family members and supporters were reached and informed through the meetings in their respected areas. Organizers were on their local Radio and TV programs throughout the four corners. Chicago Tribune, NY Times, Denver Post, Albuquerque Journal, SLC Tribune wrote up on RECA related issue during this time. The government was renegeing on its own rules and intended to switch programs without input from the victims. The message was "Obey the Law": 1.) the consensus of victims was to keep the RECA program in DOJ and not moved to DOL; 2.) By law, the regulations were supposed to be out in 180 days from July 10, 2000 – and they were not; 3.) The RECA Trust Fund was out of funds. Those who qualify for payment under RECA were receiving IOU's instead. RECA 2000 was supposed to make RECA much more of a people-friendly program. It lessened the stringent eligibility criteria of the 1990 RECA bill. It expands on the list of diseases caused by radiation and is more sensitive to the cultural practice of Native Americans who worked in the mines. But, despite the fact that it looks good on paper, no one has yet benefited from RECA 2000.

May 10, 2001

Lawsuit against U.S. Attorney General John Ashcroft was filed by Diné CARE as lead plaintiff because: The DOJ failed to comply with its statutory obligation to promulgate implementing regulations within 180 days of the amendments enactment (January 6, 2001). The DOJ's failure to

comply or provide an explanation with its statutory duty to promulgate implementing regulations within the timeframe set out by Congress defeats the humanitarian intent of the statute, and causes injury to the plaintiffs.

June 13, 2001

Mike Kasey of US General Accounting Office in Washington, DC, was calling our coalition members to do a telephone surveys (questionnaire) on the effectiveness of the outreach program done by DOJ's RECA program. Eight western Senators, after being pressured by their constituents, had asked for a GAO report to determine how well or how bad DOJ was doing in administering the RECA program. So our coalition and membership were being asked about our experience and satisfaction/dissatisfaction with DOJ's program.

---- Congress established the General Accounting Office and the Inspector Generals to provide an independent oversight of the federal agencies. The reports they developed were based on impartial and thorough investigations of the ----

June 23, 2001

A special meeting in Window Rock, AZ, was called by former Secretary of Interior Stewart Udall, NM Congressman Tom Udall, Navajo Nation VP McKenzie and the Navajo Nation Office of Navajo Uranium Workers Director Larry Martinez. The objective was to enlist our networks; because our effective organizing provided us a clear agenda from the impacted people. Our constituents and networks were asked to be part of an initiative to apply for some of the government funds earmarked for RECA outreach efforts. As part of the 2000 RECA amendment, Health and Human Services will make available \$20 million for studies and educational outreach on uranium radiation, and these funds are for community and tribal groups, NGOs, universities, etc.

June 29 – 30, 2001

Western States RECA Reform Coalition meeting was held in Farmington, NM. The coalition building training was held for nine organizations from the Four Corners states. The training was a success with strategic plan to carry out the work that needed to be done to successfully implement the new RECA 2000 law at the grassroots level. Also discussed were new developments with RECA 2000, in that U.S. government sent IOU's to claimants; U.S. congress plans to move RECA from DOJ to DOL; and RECA 2000 regulations not been developed. In January 1999, we held a coalition meeting that then formed the Western States RECA Reform Coalition (WSRRC) that continues to today. At the January 1999 meeting, Diné CARE as the most experienced community organization was selected to serve as the Communications Director of WSRRC.

July 19 – 20, 2001

Six community organizers attended workshop in Grand Junction, CO. Five Decades of Uranium Mining & Milling: Impact on Healthcare Practice in the Four Corners and In-service for Healthcare Providers and Community Volunteers. On July 20 – Department of Labor (DOL) officials met with community organizers at the Mesa State College Public Meeting to disseminate information on new Department of Energy (DOE) Worker Bill that is administered by DOL that now affected the uranium miners claim process.

July 30, 2001

The Navajo Forest Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement were the issue of discussion at the special meeting between Navajo Nation Council Resources Committee and Dine' CARE members. We presented our side of the story on the recently developed Navajo FMP and EIS. We do not support the plan because of the many loop holes it had and publicly stated that we support Preferred Alternative 2, "No Cut". At the end of the meeting the Navajo Resources Committee approved a resolution to resume the Navajo lumber business by approving plans to cut 15.9 million board feet. With that Dine' CARE representatives requested that their opposition to the Navajo Resources Committee's action be known and put on record.

August 11-19, 2001

Two of our coalition members traveled to Wollaston Lake, Canada to be part of the Denesuline Annual Gathering 2001, at Hatchet Lake Denesuline First Nation. This cultural exchange between Diné and Dene was initiated and funded by Indigenous Environmental Network. It was a historic connections made by distance relatives who are both affected by the devastation left by uranium mining on their lands. The Dene' people are not aware of the dangers of how radon gas will affect not only health, but their environment and genes, as well. Many workers were offended by our uranium presentation and not ready to hear the facts of health effects of radiation.

October 27, 2001

A rally bringing the people of the Four Corners states intended to send a united voice to the U.S. Congress. "Take care of old messes before creating new ones" was the message of the region-wide campaign. **NO NEW MINING!** A bill introduced by Rep Wilson (R-NM), House Energy Bill (HR4) that would give \$30 million dollars to companies to start uranium mining, in the same area, where ill miners denied compensation live.

November 1- 4, 2001

Western Mining Activist Network conference held in Albuquerque, NM. Four coalition members from AZ, NM, UT and CO were able to attend this conference. New contacts and renewed connections were made while sharing information and attending workshops with fellow activists from the Western United States and Canada.

November 8, 2001 *small victory*

A direct result of a successful Oct 27th RECA Rally that brought in over 300 people, removes uranium provision. U.S. Senator Pete Domenici (R-N.M.) Thursday struck down his own plan to provide mining companies with \$30 million. Domenici said he decided to remove the ISL provisions from his comprehensive nuclear energy plan in order to calm fears stoked by "substantial misinformation about the legislation."

December 13, 2001 *small victory* Congress passed S.1438, authorizes RECA to be a permanent appropriation. No more IOUs! It now goes to the President for signature.

December 28, 2001 *Big victory* President Bush signs S.1438 (defense authorization bill). This bill will make mandatory appropriations for the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act trust fund through 2011 with the \$655 million set aside. The bill provides assurance that uranium workers and downwinders will never again be issued another IOU from the U.S. Department of Justice which administers RECA.

