

## Testimony of Ray Manygoats

My name is Ray Manygoats. I am 53 years old. I live near Tuba City, Arizona, on land that my family has lived on for many generations. A uranium mill was built near our home and the homes of other family and community members when I was a young child. My father and other family members were recruited to work in the mill. They had no training or background in the processing of uranium. The Rare Metals Corporation of America promised to train my father and other family members and to keep them safe, but these promises were lies. The company failed to protect my father and the other workers. I am told that the Department of Energy, the United States Environmental Protection Agency, and the Bureau of Indian Affairs all have promised to guard our health and make sure that we would not suffer from the consequences of uranium mining and processing. But our land today is poisoned. Today, I am a man who has lost his health, his family and his ancestral way of life because of uranium. I am here today to ask you act today to stop the suffering and needless deaths of my people.

On our homeland near what is now called Tuba City, Arizona, we cared for our grandparents, herded sheep, planted vegetables and raised our children. As a young boy, I remember seeing the Rare Metals Mill, which had been built across the highway from our home. My father was recruited to work at the mill. The company provided him with a uniform that he was asked to wash at home. When he would come home each day, he was covered with a thick yellow dust. Each day we would wash his uniform. To wash

the uniform, we would gather water near the uranium mill. We scrubbed but the uniform was always yellow with the dust.

The Rare Metals Mill had no fence around it. Our horses, sheep and livestock would graze on the grass growing in and around the mill. We planted and ate food grown in the area. As we had done for generations, we made use of what we found around us. We cooked on grills my father brought back from the Mill. These grills had been used to sift the yellowcake uranium. My father also brought home large metal drums from the mill. We played in the drums and used them to store our food and belongings.

My brother Tommy and I would often bring lunch to my father at the Mill. Yellow stuff was always everywhere. We saw liquids bubbling and tried to stay away from it. But one day, my sister Daisy walked through one of the open ponds near the mill and burned her feet.

We would play in the yellowcake sand at the mill, jumping and rolling around in it. We also found many small metal balls at the mill. The balls were used to crush and process the uranium. We played marbles with them and had contests to see how far we could throw them.

My father began to have trouble breathing. His breathing troubles never went away, even after the mill was closed. I have always had problems with my ears and eyes. I have had surgery three times to remove growths from my eyes and often have sores on

my ears. Many of my sisters and brothers also have had problems with their eyes. I lost my mother to a cancer that grew in her lungs and throughout her body. Another family member, Lucille, was never able to grow hair and has worn a wig all her life.

Today I still live in the same area, the land of my family. The Mill is no longer operating, but the waste from the Mill is everywhere. Today I walk the land and see streaks of yellowcake uranium in our washes and our topsoil. It is always windy and the wind blows the earth into the air. I see the uranium marbles of my youth in areas where trucks dumped materials and waste from the mill back across the highway into our land. I see in the ground old rusting chemical drums and cables that once were used to operate the mill.

We know now that we are sick because of the uranium. Now people come with machines called Geiger counters and they click and make noises. The noises tell me what I already know: that my family's land is poisoned. But no one helps us to remove the poison. I am here on behalf of my community to ask for your help. To ask that we move past promises to actions. Actions that may save our children from the sickness and the poison that we are now living with.