



File Code: 2360
Date: July 2, 2025

Mike Thompson
Acting Division Director
NMEMNRD Mining and Minerals Division
1220 S. St. Francis Drive
Santa Fe, NM 87505

Dear Mr. Thompson:

I am writing to inform you of my decision to conduct additional investigations to identify historic properties in the areas of potential effect (APEs) for the proposed La Jara Mesa Uranium Mine, in accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. The proposed La Jara Mesa Uranium Mine is located in Cibola County, New Mexico, northeast of the Village of Milan on the Mount Taylor Ranger District of the Cibola National Forest and National Grasslands (Cibola). I am writing to consult with you regarding the Cibola's plan to conduct additional investigations, and to invite you to a consulting parties meeting to further discuss our proposal.

Over the past nine months, the Cibola has conducted one-on-one consultations with several of the Section 106 parties, including Tribes, the New Mexico State Historic Preservation Officer, and the project proponent, Laramide Resources (USA), Inc. Based on those consultations, as well as internal deliberations, I have decided to supplement the archeological investigations conducted for this undertaking in 2009 to 2012. These are the details of the additional investigations:

- **Conduct new pedestrian inventory of physical APE.** The project proponent will hire a consulting firm to conduct a new pedestrian inventory of the project's physical APE.
- **Include Tribal experts in conducting inventory.** The consulting firm will hire Tribal experts recommended by the Tribes to assist with the inventory, and the recording and evaluation of identified cultural resources.
- **Inventory setting APE.** The consulting firm will identify and evaluate historic properties with the potential to be affected by the undertaking in the setting APE (visual, auditory, groundwater) based on a review of literature and other existing data, along with input from Tribal experts.
- **Include Tribal experts in making recommendations.** The consulting firm will include Tribal experts in preparing the inventory report, developing recommendations for National Register of Historic Places eligibility determinations for historic properties, and developing the recommended finding of effect to historic properties.



- **Inventory includes other tribal resources and uses.** The inventory report will also include information on identified Tribal resources and uses in the APEs that may not be evaluated as historic properties to help describe the cultural landscape and inform the environmental analysis (environmental impact statement, EIS).

I have chosen this approach to additional inventory to satisfy our responsibility to make a reasonable and good faith effort in the identification of historic properties. This approach will ensure that the necessary expertise is employed to identify all historic properties that have the potential to be affected by the undertaking, while also ensuring that the inventory is conducted in a timely and cost-effective manner.

If you have any comments on this approach to additional investigations, please provide them to me by August 29, 2025. You may submit your input in writing by mail to me at the address at the top of this letter, or by e-mail to Jeremy Kulisheck, Assistant Regional Archeologist, at jeremy.kulisheck@usda.gov. If you wish to provide your comments in person, please contact Jeremy Kulisheck at the email address above, or via telephone at (505) 537-7721, and we will schedule a meeting with you.

We will also hold a meeting for the consulting parties to discuss our approach to additional investigations. The meeting will be held on the morning of Thursday, August 21, 2025, in Grants, New Mexico, at the Cibola County Courthouse. The meeting will also be available by videoconference. We will send you an invitation to this meeting with more details on the meeting time and location.

Thank you for your continuing participation in the Section 106 (National Historic Preservation Act) process for the proposed La Jara Mesa Uranium Mine.

Sincerely,

HEIDI MCROBERTS
Forest Supervisor

cc: David Ennis, NMEMNRD, Mining and Minerals Division, Samantha Rynas, NMEMNRD, Mining and Minerals Division, Clint Chisler, NMEMNRD, Mining and Minerals Division, Sarah Browne, Jeremy Kulisheck, Richard Adkins