



KEEP THE BAN ON URANIUM!

Protect our heritage, our health and our future

Virginia has a nearly 30-year ban on uranium mining. Foreign-backed interests are trying to lift the ban so they can mine and process uranium, starting in Southside Virginia. Drinking water, human health, farmland, property values, wildlife and tourism across Virginia are at risk.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Toxic waste will be left behind. Toxic waste and radioactive contamination created by the extraction and processing of uranium has been linked to increases in leukemia, kidney disease, and other severe health problems. The first proposed site would generate up to 29 million tons of waste.

Uranium has been found statewide. The uranium industry held leases throughout the state in the 1980s. If the ban is lifted, it would be lifted statewide.

Virginia's wet weather makes uranium production a risky experiment. Uranium mining in the United States has primarily occurred in dry, sparsely populated regions of the arid Southwest. Severe weather events – like Tropical Storm Gaston, which dumped 14 inches of rain on Richmond – could overwhelm uranium operations.

Drinking water for Virginia and North Carolina would be at risk. A report by Virginia Beach, downstream of the Coles Hill site, warns that hurricanes “have generated extreme flooding east of the Blue Ridge Mountains along a corridor that cuts a path through the uranium ore deposits.” The Virginia Beach City Council has voted in support of keeping the ban.

A February 2011 Virginia Beach study finds that in the event of a catastrophic failure of a uranium tailings containment structure, radioactivity concentrations in the Roanoke River and Kerr Lake systems will exceed the Safe Water Drinking Act levels for an extended period of time.

Our agricultural economy would be damaged. The legacy of radioactive uranium mill tailings waste in the Dan River and Roanoke River basins, affecting Virginia and North Carolina, would taint our agricultural heritage for generations.

Four studies are ongoing. It is essential that Virginia wait until all of these studies have been completed and the public has the opportunity to review them.

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