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For Immediate Release:

Navajo Nation Receives \$1.2 Million from Tronox Bankruptcy Settlement for Uranium Clean Up Efforts

February 24, 2011, Window Rock, AZ – On February 16, 2011 the Navajo Nation Department of Justice (NNDNJ) received a check in the amount of \$1,231,978 from Tronox, Inc., a chemical company based in Oklahoma. NNDNJ filed a claim in the Tronox federal bankruptcy proceedings in 2009, and continued to negotiate with the U.S. Department of Justice on behalf of the Navajo Nation for this current settlement.

In 2008, the Navajo Nation and USEPA initiated a search of potentially responsible parties that were involved in past uranium mining activities. The intent is to bring back responsible companies back to the Navajo Nation to help fund assessments and clean up of their past contamination.

“The aftermath of Uranium Mining has been an open wound on the Navajo Nation for decades, stated Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly. “The funds will start the first stages of cleaning up abandon mine sites and begin the healing of the land and many families affected by the contamination.”

The bankruptcy settlement funds will be deposited into the Navajo Nation Environmental Protection Agency’s Hazardous Substance Fund, and will be used to address environmental compliance issues at the former Shiprock Uranium Mill site. The Hazardous Substance Fund is part of the Navajo Nation’s Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act of 2008; and is also authorized by an approved fund management plan.

In November 2010, a \$270 million nationwide settlement resulted from the Tronox Inc. bankruptcy proceeding. USEPA received \$14.5 million and the Navajo Nation received \$1.2 million. USEPA will use the \$14.5 Million to address uranium contamination at former Kerr McGee Corp. mine sites - which are the Quivera Mine near Church Rock, NM, and 49 scattered abandoned uranium mine sites in the northern and eastern parts of the Navajo Nation.

USEPA has started consulting with the NNEPA to begin addressing the Kerr McGee mine sites on the Navajo Nation. Assessments and radiological screenings will be accomplished among the higher priority mine sites to determine the extent of contamination. Both USEPA and NNEPA expect the costs to cleanup these sites will be more than \$14.5 Million.

Additional cleanup monies may result from a lawsuit that Tronox, Inc. filed against Kerr McGee Corp. and Anadarko Petroleum Corp. Tronox alleges that its parent companies fraudulently transferred its assets, and left it undercapitalized, without sufficient funds to cover billions of dollars of environmental liabilities. Kerr McGee Corp. is a former parent company of Tronox Inc., and Anadarko Petroleum Corp. is a former parent company of Kerr McGee Corp.

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