Energy Fuels, Navajo Nation Department of Justice, and Navajo Nation Environmental Protection Agency Sign Landmark Agreement on Uranium Ore Transport and Abandoned Mine Cleanup

written by Raj Shah | January 29, 2025

U.S.-based critical minerals producer to resume safe ore transport shortly, subject to precautions beyond strict USDOT requirements and aiding the Navajo Nation in the cleanup of abandoned uranium mines resulting from old U.S. government programs.

January 29, 2025 (Source) – Energy Fuels Inc. (NYSE American: UUUU) (TSX: EFR), a leading U.S. producer of uranium, rare earth elements (REE), and critical minerals, and the Navajo Nation, the largest indigenous tribe in the U.S., today announced the signing of a landmark agreement governing the transport of uranium ore along federal and state highways crossing the Navajo Nation. Ore transport from Energy Fuels' Pinyon Plain Mine in northern Arizona to the company's White Mesa Mill in southern Utah is now expected to resume in February 2025.

"The Navajo Nation has suffered longstanding impacts from uranium mining conducted during the cold war era, resulting in numerous abandoned mine and mill sites on their lands. This has understandably caused mistrust toward the U.S. government and

energy companies," said Energy Fuels' President and CEO Mark Chalmers. "I am personally honored that the Navajo Nation was willing to work with us in good faith to address their concerns and ensure that uranium ore transportation through the Navajo Nation will be done safely and respectfully."

"We appreciate the sincere approach the Energy Fuels' negotiation team took with the Navajo Nation. They demonstrated a genuine understanding for the Navajo Nation's and the Navajo People's trauma regarding uranium and engaged as a partner in good faith to build a trusting relationship," stated Acting Attorney General Heather Clah. "We look forward to Energy Fuels fulfilling their commitments to the Nation."

Under the agreement, Energy Fuels has agreed to add additional protections and accommodations over and above the existing, strict U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) requirements, including:

- limiting transportation to specified routes and hours of the day;
- not transporting ore on days involving celebrations or public events in respect of the Navajo Nation's culture and traditions;
- clearly spelled out emergency response procedures, notice and reporting requirements;
- additional insurance requirements;
- additional driver qualification and training requirements;
- obtaining Navajo Nation transport licenses;
- use of state-of-the-art cover systems to prevent fugitive dust from transport trucks;
- provisions for escorts and blessings at the discretion of the Nation; and
- additional inspection procedures that will enable the Navajo Nation to ensure that all applicable rules and

agreements are being satisfied.

Additionally, the company has committed to accepting and transporting, at no cost to the Nation, up to 10,000 tons of uranium-bearing cleanup materials from abandoned uranium mines within the Navajo Nation, which are primarily an unfortunate relic of old U.S. government uranium programs that began in the 1940s, in which Energy Fuels had no involvement. The company has also committed to make further contributions to support the Nation's transportation safety programs, education, the environment, public health and welfare, and local economic development on the Navajo Nation relating to uranium matters. Negotiation of the agreement began in August 2024, after the company voluntarily halted shipments of uranium ore, and has involved numerous in-person and virtual meetings between the company and the Nation's senior leadership.

Stephen B. Etsitty, the Executive Director of the Navajo Nation Environmental Protection Agency, remarked: "We have a settlement agreement that will allow the Navajo Nation to monitor and inspect the haul trucks and that provides financial compensation for the expenses to improve safety and protect the environment. The Navajo Nation appreciates the support from Arizona Governor Katie Hobbs who facilitated the pause in transport activities which helped the Navajo Nation and Energy Fuels conduct the negotiations."

Arizona Governor Katie Hobbs stated: "Today marks an important step forward for our communities and shows what is possible through collaboration, partnership, and a shared commitment to public safety. I'm proud to have brought Energy Fuels and Navajo Nation to the table so they could come to an agreement that addresses the Nation's long-standing concerns and includes enhanced emergency response plans.

“I want to thank President Nygren, Navajo Nation leadership, and Energy Fuels for their commitment to finding common ground. This sets an example of collaboration and progress that we can all learn from.

“This agreement isn’t just about resolving a conflict; it’s a commitment to protecting future generations, respecting Tribal sovereignty and ensuring that all voices are heard and valued. I’m committed to continue working on real solutions that prioritize the safety of all Arizonans.”

Chalmers continued: “We are proud to be a part of a historic agreement with the Navajo Nation, and we are committed to fulfilling our promises to them. We hope this agreement marks the beginning of a constructive relationship that restores trust with our neighbors, while also paving the way for future collaborations on cleanups and other areas of shared interest.”

Energy Fuels’ operating mines and processing facilities mentioned here are fully permitted and subject to continuous oversight from state and federal regulators. The company has a strong track record of safeguarding human health, protecting the environment, and ensuring regulatory compliance, often exceeding stringent U.S. standards in mining, transport, and mineral processing. Energy Fuels (and its predecessor) safely hauled several hundred thousand tons of uranium ore and other materials on state and federal highways and interstates that cross the Navajo Nation between 2007 and 2024 with no incidents resulting in the spillage or release of ore. Measures outlined in the agreement provide additional layers of protection for the Navajo and others, beyond the rigorous standards set by the USDOT.

The ore from Energy Fuels’ Pinyon Plain Mine will be processed at the White Mesa Mill into natural uranium concentrates (U_3O_8),

which are used in the production of clean, baseload nuclear energy. The mining and milling of “natural uranium” represent the first steps in the nuclear fuel cycle for producing zero-emission energy to the national electric grid. Nuclear energy, which is seeing a global resurgence due to it being a clean, reliable and affordable source of energy, currently provides roughly 18% of all electricity generated in the U.S., including 46% of all carbon-free electricity, according to data from the Nuclear Energy Institute (NEI).

Based in Denver, Colorado, Energy Fuels remains one of the largest uranium producers in the country and plays a crucial role in advancing U.S. energy independence, restoring the domestic nuclear fuel cycle, and supporting recently enacted bans on Russian uranium imports. These initiatives, along with Energy Fuels’ growing rare earth and critical mineral capabilities, align with priorities set forth by President Trump’s Executive Orders signed on his first day in office, including Unleashing American Energy (Executive Order #14154, January 20, 2025) and Declaring a National Energy Emergency (Executive Order #14159, January 20, 2025).

Cautionary Note Regarding Forward-Looking Statements: *This news release contains certain “Forward Looking Information” and “Forward Looking Statements” within the meaning of applicable United States and Canadian securities legislation applicable to Energy Fuels. Generally, these forward-looking statements can be identified by the use of forward-looking terminology such as “plans,” “expects,” “does not expect,” “is expected,” “is likely,” “budgets,” “scheduled,” “estimates,” “forecasts,” “intends,” “anticipates,” “does not anticipate,” or “believes,” or variations of such words and phrases, or state that certain actions, events or results “may,” “could,” “would,” “might” or “will be taken,” “occur,” “be achieved” or “have the potential to.” All statements, other than*

statements of historical fact, herein are considered to be forward-looking statements. Forward-looking statements involve known and unknown risks, uncertainties and other factors which may cause the actual results, performance or achievements of Energy Fuels to be materially different from any future results, performance or achievements express or implied by the forward-looking statements. Forward-looking statements contained herein are made as of the date of this news release, and Energy Fuels disclaims, other than as required by law, any obligation to update any forward-looking statements whether as a result of new information, results, future events, circumstances, or if management's estimates or opinions should change, or otherwise. There can be no assurance that forward-looking statements will prove to be accurate, as actual results and future events could differ materially from those anticipated in such statements. Accordingly, the reader is cautioned not to place undue reliance on forward-looking statements. Energy Fuels assumes no obligation to update the information in this communication, except as otherwise required by law.

SOURCE Energy Fuels Inc.

Inquiries: Energy Fuels Inc., Curtis Moore, SVP – Marketing and Corporate Development, (303) 974-2140 or Toll free: (888) 864-2125, cmoore@energyfuels.com, www.energyfuels.com ; Navajo Nation Environmental Protection Agency, Stephen Etsitty, Executive Director, (928)871-7692, s.etsitty@navajo-nsn.gov