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www.savecrowbutte.org

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***Amicus Curiae* Briefs Filed in US Nuclear Regulatory Commission Licensing of Cameco Inc.'s ISL Uranium Mine Expansion in Crawford, Nebraska**

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Oglala Sioux Tribe, and two environmental organizations, the Center for Water Advocacy (www.wateradvocacy.org), and Rock the Earth (www.rocktheearth.org), filed *amicus curiae* briefs opposing a proposed license amendment requested by Crow Butte Resources, Inc., a subsidiary of Canadian multinational Cameco, Inc. [NYSE: CCJ] (www.cameco.com), which calls itself the largest uranium company in the World. The briefs explain the superior water rights of the Oglala Sioux Tribe and its members, including four of the Petitioners in the case, under the Winters Doctrine. The briefs also explain the Petitioners' and the Tribe's rights under the Ft. Laramie Treaties of 1851 and 1868, Federal Indian law and environmental justice policies, the UN Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous People, and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. During a January 16, 2008 hearing in Chadron, Nebraska, Chief Administrative Judge Ann M. Young requested briefing on the indigenous and water issues which are germane to the case because of proximity of the ISL mine to Pine Ridge Indian Reservation.

The Oglala Sioux Tribe pointed out substantial rights of Petitioners and the Tribe including the Winters right to a sufficient quantity and quality of water to make the Reservation "livable" and productive, the trust responsibility, as well as rights to meaningful and effective consultation concerning activities that may threaten the Tribe's water resources or the ability of the Lakota people to practice sacred ceremonies such as the "sweat lodge" using local, pristine water unadulterated by the ISL mining process. The Center for Water Advocacy and Rock the Earth also explained the adverse impacts of ISL mining on the quality of the water.

The In Situ Leach (ISL) mining process involves injecting a bicarbonate solution into the water aquifer which releases uranium from sand particles in the aquifer and also stirs up and releases radioactive and toxic chemicals like Radon, Thorium, Radium and Arsenic into the environment. The uranium is removed from the water and a form of "geo-chemically changed" water is re-injected into the aquifer. No ISL uranium mine has ever returned the water in the mined aquifer to baseline levels and ISL mining may be responsible for elevated kidney and cancer problems and the closure of 98 wells to due arsenic contamination at Pine Ridge.

"The Tribe is greatly concerned by the expansion of the mine because of the health hazards and environmental degradation that will result to the residents of the nearby Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. Of equal concern is the destruction of tribal cultural resources and historic properties in the Crow Butte area." the Oglala Sioux Tribe stated in its brief. "Indian Tribes and their members have probably had more experience with the human health and environmental consequences from uranium mining than any other ethnic group in this country. That is why they are so far out ahead of the rest of us in raising red flags all over the West regarding the most recent uranium boom and we should be listening." said Attorney Harold Shepard of the Center for Water Advocacy. Supporting affidavits explaining the significance of continued access to local, pristine water for medicines and ceremonies were filed including those from several of the International Council of Thirteen Indigenous Grandmothers (www.GrandmothersCouncil.org), and from Winona LaDuke of Honor the Earth (www.HonorEarth.org).

[Donations](#) for this effort may be made to Plenty International, fiscal sponsor of the project (www.thefarm.org), and earmarked for “**Save Crow Butte**”: POB 394, Summertown, TN 38483; www.savecrowbutte.org.

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Aligning for Responsible Mining (ARM) is an indigenous-led non-profit organization dedicated to the application of the International Precautionary Principle to mining and opposition to “Abusive Mining” which is mining that fails to satisfy the Precautionary Principle. More information on the Crow Butte case may be found at www.SaveCrowButte.org and information from ARM’s Uranium Advocacy Project may be found at www.UraniumIsNotMyFriend.com.

The Center for Water Advocacy is a non-profit public interest law firm specializing in the water and other natural resource rights of Indian Tribes and Native Communities and environmental justice matters. RtE is a nonprofit conservation organization, whose mission is to protect and defend America’s natural resources through partnerships with the music industry and the world-wide environmental community. The Center for Water Advocacy, POB 331, 90 West Center St., Moab, UT 84532, (435) 259-5640; www.wateradvocacy.org attn: Harold Shepherd waterlaw@uci.net

Rock the Earth is a Colorado-based, national public interest environmental organization dedicated to protecting and defending America's natural resources through partnerships with the music industry and the worldwide environmental community. The organization has most recently worked with coalitions to oppose increased drilling on the Roan Plateau and to limit motorized boating through the Grand Canyon. Rock the Earth has also received support from a variety of sources, including the Fund for Wild Nature, Yahoo! Employees’ Foundation, musicians Jack Johnson, Bonnie Raitt, Incubus and the Rex Foundation, allowing it to pursue the defense of important natural areas. Rock the Earth may be contacted at: Rock the Earth, 1536 Wynkoop St., Ste. B200, Denver, CO 80202, (p) (303) 454-3304, (f) (303) 454-3306, www.RockTheEarth.org; attn: Marc A. Ross, President & Executive Director, marcr@rocktheearth.org.