

Gold mining company named Toxic Polluter of 2020

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N.M. Environmental Law Center hands out AWARD

SANTA FE — The N. M. Environmental Law Center announced Dec. 4 that Homestake Barrick Gold Mining Company, with a mine five miles north of Milan, N. M., is this year's selection for Toxic Polluter of 2020.

The Homestake Mill site, owned by Barrick Gold, an international mining company, processed uranium that was mined from nearby mines for decades. In 1983, it was named a Superfund site, meaning that it is one of the most contaminated places in the country and a clean up is required under federal law. Yet 40 years later, more of the groundwater aquifers near the site are contaminated with uranium and selenium than when the supposed clean up began.

The New Mexico Environmental Law Center is working with the Multicultural Alliance for a Safe Environment to push the Environmental Protection Agency and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission to ensure that the Homestake site is cleaned up, so surrounding communities can safely use the water in their wells.

“We recently learned that Homestake Barrick Gold wants to call the ‘clean up’ done and pack up and leave town. This is unacceptable. They have profited off of New Mexico for decades. Now

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they need to clean up the mess they made,” Gail Evans, attorney with NMELC said.

The Law Center bestows the Toxic Polluter of the Year Award each year to a person or group that has shown extraordinary disregard for New Mexico’s environment and the communities that live in it.