



## Frequently Asked Questions

About the Preferred Alternatives for Remediation of the Moab, Utah, Uranium Mill Tailings Remedial Action (UMTRA) Project Site:

***Off-Site Disposal at Crescent Junction, Utah  
Primarily Rail Transportation  
Active Ground Water Remediation***

May 2005

*Answers to these frequently asked questions are based on the best information available to the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) as of May 2005. Research, study, and planning continue in all aspects of DOE's preferred alternatives for remediating the Moab Project Site. Please note that no decisions regarding these issues will be final until issuance of the Record of Decision, which is anticipated to occur in fall 2005.*



*View of the Crescent Junction Site from the I-70 Highway Scenic Overlook*

### Transportation

- Q: *Will construction be necessary to transport the tailings and vicinity property materials from the Moab Project Site to the disposal cell at Crescent Junction?*
- A: *If rail transport is selected, it would require construction of a loading facility at the Moab site and some additional track and unloading facilities at the Crescent Junction site.*

*Q: What kind of railcars would be used to transport the tailings?*

A: DOE is investigating use of specially designed, sealed, lined, 110-ton containers. These containers are leak proof and would be covered to prevent dust from the tailings from becoming airborne during transport. Whatever containers are used for transport, DOE will ensure that the tailings are transported in a safe and protective manner.

*Q: If the tailings are transported primarily by rail to the disposal site as indicated in DOE's preferred alternative, how much impact will there be from truck traffic?*

A: Truck traffic would increase in the Moab area during the hauling of contaminated materials from vicinity properties to the Moab millsite. There potentially could be increases in truck traffic to haul borrow materials from off-site locations to both the Moab Site and the Crescent Junction disposal site.

## **Water Use**

*Q: Where is water currently derived for residents of Crescent Junction?*

A: The current known source of drinking water used by residents in the Crescent Junction area is from Thompson Spring, near the town of Thompson Springs.

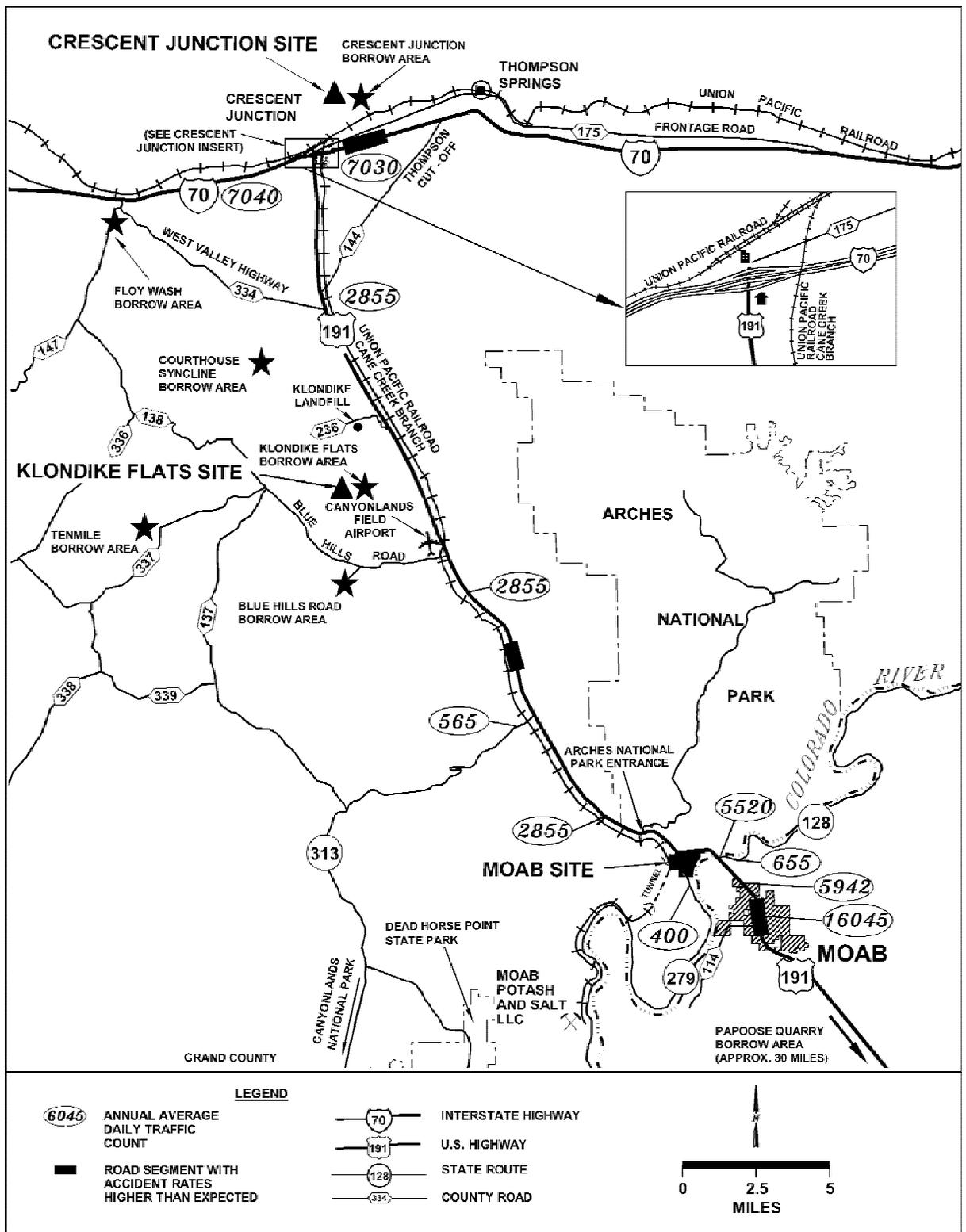
*Q: Where will DOE acquire the water necessary for the project and disposal site operations?*

A: The Moab Project Site has its own pump station that can pump nonpotable water from the Colorado River. DOE currently has a water right for consumptive use of Colorado River water at the Moab site. Potable water is available in the city of Moab. DOE is currently evaluating the best option to provide water for operations needs at the Crescent Junction disposal site. This may include withdrawals from Thompson Spring, the Colorado River, the Green River, or some combination of these. Disposal site water needs would not compete with local residents' water supply.

## **Economic and Housing Impacts**

*Q: Will the disposal of tailings near Crescent Junction adversely affect the property values in the area?*

A: In communities where DOE has completed similar projects, project development and concomitant factors (e.g., influx of workers to the area) have actually caused property values to rise and boosted local economies.



*Transportation Routes and Selected Roads in the Moab to Crescent Junction Area*

*Q: Where will workers at the millsite and disposal site be housed? Will their housing needs compete with or adversely impact lodging available for tourists?*

A: Workers would likely seek a variety of types of housing, including motels, RV parks, trailer parks, and rental properties in the Moab, Green River, Thompson Springs, and Grand Junction areas. Vacancy rates for temporary housing in Moab tend to follow the pattern of the seasonal tourist economy. The availability of apartment rental units, as well as mobile homes and trailers, is greatest between November and mid-February. By early spring, seasonal employees who staff motels, restaurants, shops, and other tourist service businesses occupy most rental units.

## **Employment and Training**

*Q: How many workers will be needed at the millsite, at the disposal site, and for transportation during removal and disposal of the tailings pile?*

A: DOE anticipates needing a total of as many as 150 employees among Grand Junction (where the site is managed), the Crescent Junction disposal site, and the Moab millsite. Of the 150, approximately 60 to 70 would be professional positions and approximately 70 to 80 would be laborers.

*Q: What percentage of the total project workforce will be brought in by DOE and what percentage will be hired locally?*

A: To be determined; this is dependent on the individual subcontracts awarded for infrastructure construction, tailings hauling, and repository construction. Local workers would be hired to the extent practicable.

*Q: Will hazardous materials training be provided to the Thompson Springs emergency response personnel?*

A: DOE offers a Radiological Worker training course and a 40-hour Occupational Safety and Health Administration HAZWOPPER course as needed. These courses would be available to Grand County emergency response personnel to attend. DOE does not currently provide hazardous materials training courses per se.

*Q: What training will be provided to National Park Service (NPS) employees and others who interact with tourists to answer questions and allay concerns?*

A: A general orientation course or fact sheet on the fundamentals of radiation and radiation controls could be offered to NPS employees.

## **Vicinity Properties**

*Q: What is the plan to address vicinity properties surveyed in 1971 by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and identified as potentially having residual radioactive material (RRM)?*

A: A letter and consent agreement for property access to conduct a radiological screening of approximately 25 of the properties from the EPA survey will be sent to current property owners. DOE plans to conduct a screening survey this summer to determine if RRM is present and, if so, whether the presence of RRM is in excess of EPA regulations. RRM does not include unprocessed ore material; therefore, DOE will not be remediating unprocessed ore material.

## **Dust and Radon Control**

*Q: What will DOE do to control dust during remediation of the pile? How will emissions be monitored?*

A: Windblown tailings and other contaminated material could create fugitive dust emissions. A dust control system would be implemented following provisions in the *Fugitive Dust Control Plan for the Moab, Utah, UMTRA Project Site*. Water for compaction and dust control would be drawn from the Colorado River. Dust suppressants such as calcium chloride, which would be stored in tanks, could also be used. Water would be stored in tanks or in the existing water storage ponds and applied only as needed using the most economical and efficient delivery method.

## **Contents of Mill Tailings Pile**

*Q: What does DOE expect to find in the mill tailings pile during remediation? Is there evidence of “mystery” barrels?*

A: DOE anticipates finding typical mill-related contamination and processing materials in the pile from milling operations at the site. It is unlikely that organics or “mystery” barrels would be uncovered because DOE has not found evidence in the millsite soils or ground water to indicate such materials are present in the pile. DOE would notify stakeholders of any anomalous materials discovered during remediation.

## **Project Schedule and Costs**

*Q: What is the project schedule and what are the estimated costs for remediating the contaminated materials?*

A: Remediation of contaminated materials and vicinity properties is estimated to take 10+ years to complete using the Crescent Junction site as the preferred alternative. Remediation costs are approximately \$472 million, which includes the design and construction of the ground water remediation system. Ground water remediation is estimated to require up to 75 years if off-site disposal is selected.

*Q: What are the basic steps in the project that are required from now through completion?*

A: The basic steps are as follows (some steps are concurrent with others):

- Issue Final Environmental Impact Statement
- Issue Record of Decision
- Characterize Moab and Crescent Junction sites
- Prepare conceptual designs, including a Remedial Action Plan and designs for infrastructure and materials handling and transportation
- Finalize engineering designs for Moab and Crescent Junction
- Construct infrastructure at both sites
- Construct cell at Crescent Junction
- Procure tailings haul contractor
- Haul tailings to disposal site
- Cap disposal cell
- Prepare completion report and conduct site reclamation

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For more information about the Moab, Utah, UMTRA Project, please visit our website at <http://gj.em.doe.gov/moab/>.

Questions, comments, or requests for further information may be directed by mail to

Donald R. Metzler  
Moab Federal Project Director  
U.S. Department of Energy  
2597 B  $\frac{3}{4}$  Road  
Grand Junction, CO 81503

By email to [moabcomments@gjo.doe.gov](mailto:moabcomments@gjo.doe.gov), by telephone toll free at (800) 637-4575, or by fax at (970) 248-7636.