



## ***Moab Began Multiple Train Shipments of Mill Tailings on August 17 Under the Recovery Act***



Mill tailings train heading to the disposal site

The Moab Uranium Mill Tailings Remedial Action (UMTRA) Project increased the number of trains shipping uranium mill tailings to the Crescent Junction disposal site from **one to two trains each weekday beginning on August 17**. Since its start date on April 20, 2009, the project has shipped 200,000 tons of mill tailings to the disposal site, including **22,000 tons under the Recovery Act**. Each train consists of 15 rail cars with 60 containers carrying an average of 32.5 tons of mill tailings. Additional containers are being purchased that will be able to carry up to 39.5 tons of mill tailings. The number of rail cars in each train will gradually increase as the operations ramp up, with the goal of 22 rail cars by mid-September.

### **Benefits of the Recovery Act**

Prior to the Recovery Act, the Moab UMTRA Project was shipping mill tailings using one train per day, four days a week. The increase in shipments due to the Recovery Act began when a **fifth weekly shipment was added on Fridays** in mid-June (see Office of Environmental Management Recovery Act News Flash, dated July 30, 2009). With 160 jobs expected to be created or saved by the fall of 2009 through Recovery Act funding, **92 new employees have already been hired and 22 jobs have already been saved**. "The funding from the Recovery Act (\$108 million) allowed us to accelerate our cleanup efforts and add new jobs, so the community is seeing two major benefits from this legislation," said Donald Metzler, Moab Federal Project Director.

#### **Recovery Act Benefits**

- Recovery Act work at Moab has created or saved **114 jobs**
- Train shipments have increased with the **addition of a fifth weekday train shipment and a second daily train shipment**
- **22,000 additional tons** of mill tailings have been shipped to the disposal site



Crescent Junction disposal cell

### **Where the Trains are Headed: The Crescent Junction Disposal Cell**

DOE's Environmental Impact Statement (issued in July 2005) and subsequent Record of Decision (issued in September 2005) selected the disposition alternative of relocating the mill tailings pile away from the Colorado River to a DOE-constructed, NRC-accepted disposal facility near Crescent Junction, Utah. The cell is excavated about 25 feet below the existing grade, with an above-ground height of 20 feet. Roughly rectangular in shape, the cell will be approximately 5,200 feet long by 2,400 feet wide. The top of the contaminated materials will be capped with an 8- to 10-foot-thick, multi-layered cover composed of native soils and rock. More information regarding cleanup under the Moab UMTRA Project is available at [www.gjem.energy.gov/moab](http://www.gjem.energy.gov/moab).

### **Where Do Mill Tailings Come From?**

Uranium ore was mined in significant quantities in the United States for more than 40 years. Initially, the ore was mined and milled by private companies for use in national defense programs. After the 1950s, uranium was also needed as fuel for nuclear power plants to produce electricity. These milling operations entailed crushing the ore and leaching with acid, creating process-related wastes and tailings, a radioactive sand-like material. The tailings were slurried to unlined impoundments that accumulated over time, forming piles. When the processing operations at Moab ceased in 1984, an estimated 12 million cubic yards (16 million tons) of mill tailings and tailings-contaminated soil were present in a pile located in the western portion of the property.

