



**Moab Mill Tailings Removal Project Plans  
to Resume Train Shipments in March  
All of the Laid Off Workers Will Return**

(Grand Junction, CO) — All 27 employees of the Remedial Action Contractor (RAC) to the U.S. Department of Energy will return to work on the Uranium Mill Tailings Remedial Action Project on March 4, following a 3-month planned furlough. Project shipping and disposal operations have been shut down, as planned, since late November 2012, but are scheduled to resume March 7, after the contractor ensures employees have received refresher training, reviewed procedures, and measures are in place for a safe startup.

“We are pleased to have 100 percent of the furloughed workers returning to the project,” said RAC Project Manager Jeff Biagini. “We look forward to having a full workforce again at the Moab site and Crescent Junction disposal site after the 3-month curtailment.” Federal Project Director Donald Metzler attributes the high return rate to the RAC’s upfront communication with its employees and the emphasis the project puts on a safe work environment. To limit the number of employees affected, the RAC proposed to DOE to keep 34 workers employed through the curtailment to install permanent liners in the containers used to transport the tailings. This capitalized on the availability of empty containers during the curtailment and will result in a cost savings to the project over the long term. Made of ½-inch durable plastic, the liners will prevent the tailings material, which tends to be sticky, from holding up in the containers. Installation of the permanent liners eliminates potential safety concerns associated with the previous practice of manually placing single-use disposable liners in the containers.

“The sustained below-freezing temperatures this winter made the container lining project an even more difficult task than already anticipated,” said Metzler. “But as usual, the workforce didn’t let the cold weather keep them from getting the job done. We are confident the lining installation will be completed by the end of February, which will allow us to resume shipments as planned.”

As originally planned, 40 RAC employees were retained during the curtailment to continue required activities, including project management, environmental monitoring, quality assurance, health and safety, security, and radiation protection, and to perform medium-level maintenance of heavy equipment.

The mill tailings are shipped by train 30 miles north of the Moab site to a disposal cell constructed near Crescent Junction, Utah. Almost 36 percent of the total 16 million tons of tailings has already been placed in the disposal cell.

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