

Office of Environmental Management – Grand Junction



Moab UMTRA Project
Public Participation Plan

Revision 12

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Moab UMTRA Project Public Participation Plan

Revision 12

Review and Approval

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Revision History

Revision	Date	Reason for Revision
0	January 2008	Initial issue.
1	January 2009	Annual update.
2	January 2010	Annual update.
3	January 2011	Annual update.
4	January 2012	Annual update.
5	October 2013	Periodic update.
6	August 2015	Periodic update.
7	November 2016	Periodic update.
8	January 2018	Periodic update.
9	January 2019	Periodic update.
10	June 2019	Updated website url.
11	January 2020	Periodic update.
12	January 2021	Periodic update.

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1.0 Introduction

The purpose of this *Moab UMTRA Project Public Participation Plan* is to identify communication methods to facilitate stakeholder involvement in the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Moab Uranium Mill Tailings Remedial Action (UMTRA) Project. This Plan is reviewed periodically and updated as needed.

DOE is committed to enhancing public trust through transparency, public participation, and collaboration. DOE actively solicits public opinions, perspectives, and values to enable better, more informed decisions. DOE must comply with guidance on public participation provided in the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), codified at Title 42 United States Code Section 4321 (42 USC 4321), the Uranium Mill Tailings Radiation Control Act (UMTRCA) (42 USC 7901), and other federal requirements.

2.0 Project Scope and Site Descriptions

The scope of the Moab Project is to relocate mill tailings and other contaminated materials from a former uranium ore-processing facility (Atlas millsite) and from off-site properties known as vicinity properties in Moab, Utah, to an engineered disposal cell constructed near Crescent Junction, Utah.

The Moab site is located about three miles northwest of the city of Moab in Grand County. Figure 1 shows the general location of the Moab site and the Crescent Junction disposal site relative to the city of Moab and other geographical locations. Figures 2 and 3 show some of the features of the Moab and Crescent Junction sites, respectively.

The 480-acre Moab site is bordered on the north and west by sandstone cliffs. The Colorado River forms the eastern boundary of the site. U.S. Highway 191 (US-191) parallels the northern site boundary, and State Route 279 transects the western portion of the property. The entrance to Arches National Park is located less than one mile north of the site across US-191. The Union Pacific Railroad traverses a small section of the site west and uphill of State Route 279. The Moab Wash, an intermittent stream, runs northwest to southeast through the site and joins the Colorado River. Before remediation began, the uranium mill tailings pile occupied 130 acres in the western portion of the site.

The Crescent Junction site is located northeast of the junction of Interstate 70 and US-191, approximately 30 miles north of the Moab site; it is the disposal location for the tailings and other contaminated materials from the Moab site. The U.S. Department of Interior permanently transferred 500 acres at the Crescent Junction site to DOE for the disposal cell. An additional 936 acres is in temporary withdrawal to support construction and tailings-placement activities.

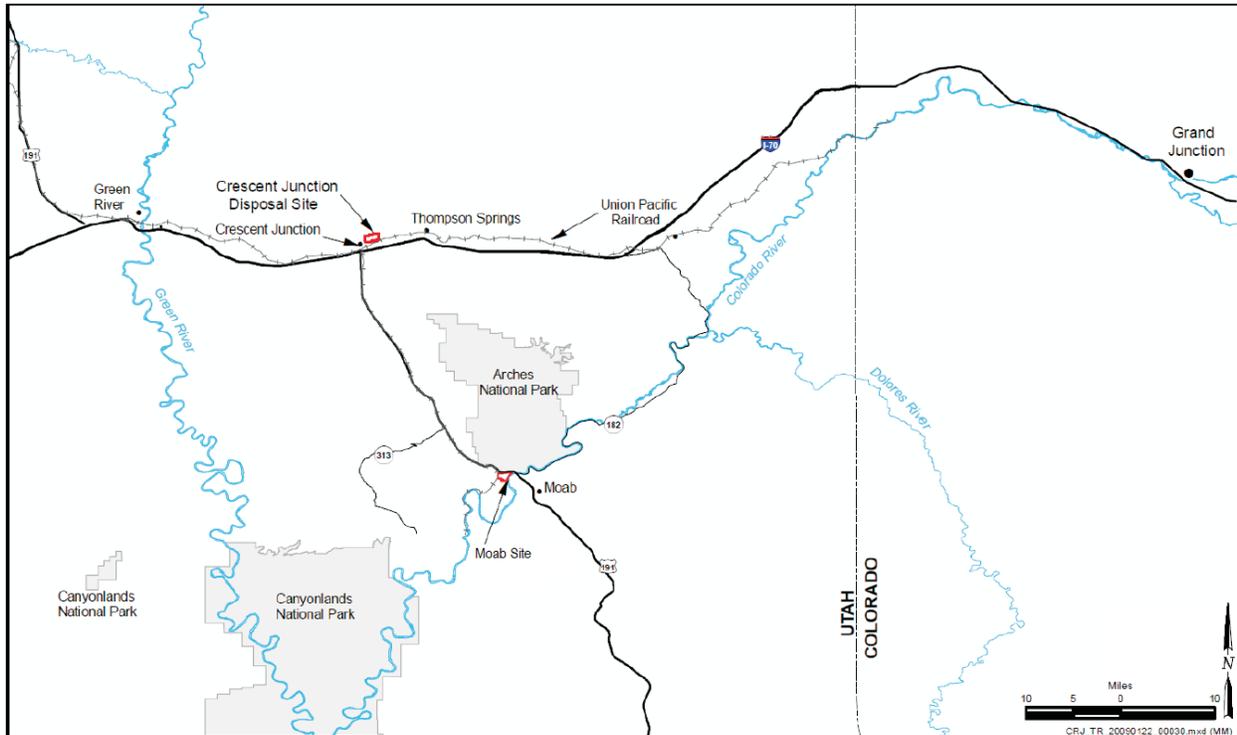


Figure 1. Location of Moab Site and Crescent Junction Disposal Site

3.0 Background

The Moab site was subject to Title II of UMTRCA because it was an active uranium-processing site when the legislation was passed, and it was regulated under a U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) license. With the enactment of the Floyd D. Spence National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2001 (Public Law 106-398), Congress changed the designation to an UMTRCA Title I site and mandated that it be remediated by DOE. On October 25, 2001, DOE assumed ownership of the Moab site. The DOE Environmental Management office in Grand Junction, Colorado, has primary responsibility for managing the Project.

In July 2005, DOE published the *Moab UMTRA Project Remediation of the Moab Uranium Mill Tailings, Grand and San Juan Counties, Utah, Final Environmental Impact Statement* (DOE/EIS-0355) (EIS) to fulfill the NEPA requirements for evaluating significant federal actions. The Final EIS presented the preferred alternatives of active groundwater remediation at the Moab site and off-site disposal of the tailings pile and other contaminated materials at the proposed Crescent Junction disposal site predominantly by rail.

In September 2005, DOE issued the *Record of Decision for the Remediation of the Moab Uranium Mill Tailings, Grand and San Juan Counties, Utah* (ROD) (6450-01-P), which detailed the selection of the preferred alternatives and the basis for that decision. DOE has issued subsequent NEPA documents, as appropriate, to amend the ROD, perform adequacy reviews of the Final EIS, and address substantive changes to the EIS bounding analysis.

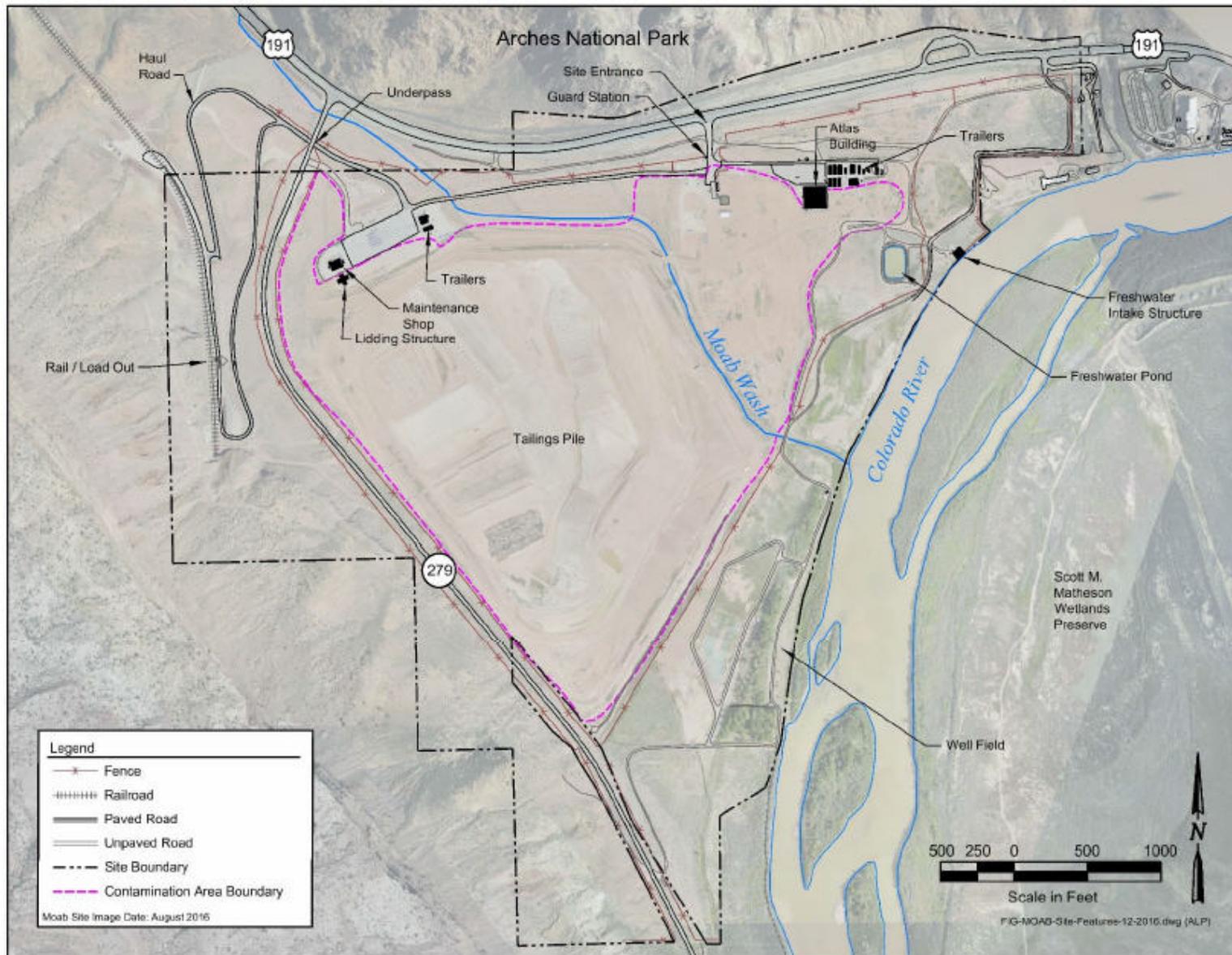


Figure 2. Moab Site Features

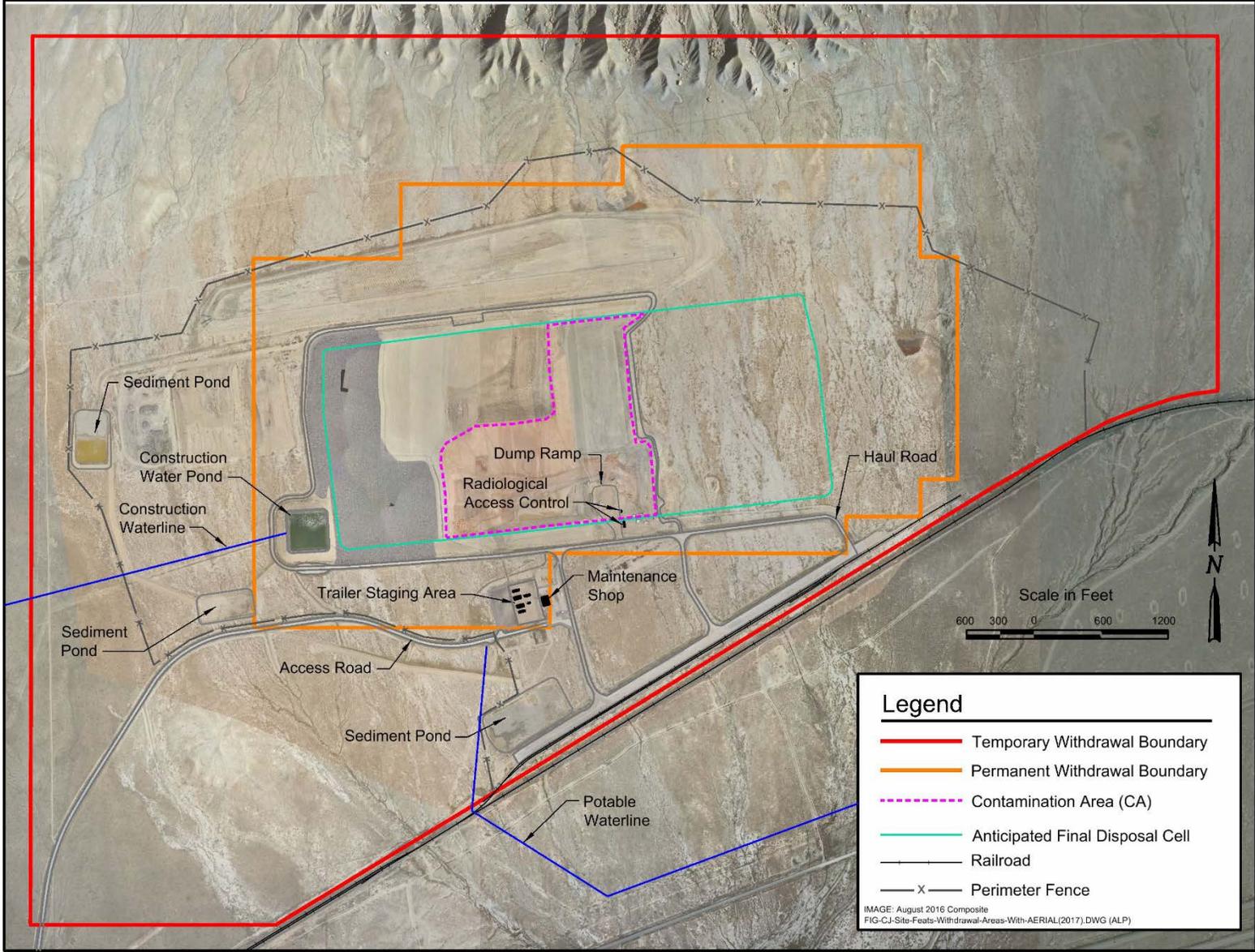


Figure 3. Crescent Junction Site Features

DOE has two contractors to perform the Project scope of work: the Remedial Action Contractor is responsible for transportation of the tailings to Crescent Junction, construction of the disposal cell, placement of the tailings in the cell, and handling day-to-day maintenance and operations at the Moab and Crescent Junction sites. The Technical Assistance Contractor provides technical and administrative support services to DOE, operates the groundwater interim remedial action system, conducts environmental compliance and air monitoring activities, and performs radiological surveys of vicinity properties.

On April 20, 2009, the first rail shipment of mill tailings left the Moab site and was placed in the Crescent Junction disposal cell. In October 2020, the Project surpassed shipping 11 million tons of tailings to the Crescent Junction site for disposal.

4.0 Area Profile

The following information about the Moab community and Grand County is the most current information available from the United States Census Bureau and Utah Department of Workforce Services websites.

Moab is the Grand County government seat and the principal city of southeastern Utah. Southeastern Utah has the nation's largest concentration of national and state parks, monuments, and recreation areas. The population of Moab is about 5,336. In addition to Moab, the communities of Crescent Junction and Thompson Springs, which are also in Grand County, are affected by the permanent disposal of the mill tailings at the Crescent Junction site.

The population of Grand County is about 9,754. Grand County's major economic base is tourism. The region is noted for mountain biking, rock climbing, jeeping, four-wheeling, and whitewater rafting on the Colorado River. Annually, more than 1.5 million people visit Grand County for recreation. Leisure and hospitality industries account for about 38 percent of Grand County's employment; trade, transportation, and utilities account for 17 percent; government and administration account for 18 percent; and a variety of other services and industries account for the remaining 27 percent. The local grocery store chain, regional hospital, and National Park Service are among the major employers.

Media in the area consists of several private and public radio stations and two weekly newspapers. Regional, national, and international newspapers, and network television are readily available.

5.0 Stakeholders

DOE recognizes that stakeholders may be any affected or interested party. For the Moab Project, stakeholders generally include:

- Citizens of Grand County.
- Native American tribes.
- Local media.
- Local city and county governments.
- State, regional, and federal agencies.
- State of Utah elected officials.

- Congressional delegations.
- Environmental organizations.
- Business owners.
- Service organizations.
- General public using US-191 and State Route 279 traveling into, around, and through Moab.

6.0 Issues and Concerns

Since DOE assumed ownership of the Moab site, stakeholders have expressed various issues and concerns associated with the Project. These have included potential health and environmental effects from site contaminants, future land use, general aesthetics associated with site activities that can be seen from public roadways, transportation issues, Project funding, and positive and negative economic impacts to the area.

7.0 Public Participation Activities

The following public participation activities are conducted to inform the public about the Project and provide opportunities for open communication between DOE and its stakeholders. Some of the following activities may not be currently offered or may have been altered to comply with Coronavirus (COVID-19) safety precautions (e.g. meetings held virtually, public tours suspended.)

7.1 Public Meetings

Public meetings are held as circumstances dictate to address issues of importance to stakeholders. These meetings provide information about the Project and a forum for comments from attendees. DOE will provide sufficient advance notice through local media outlets of the date, time, and location of meetings so interested stakeholders can plan to attend.

7.2 Small Group Meetings

Stakeholders may request DOE to meet with small groups. These meetings provide opportunities to address specific concerns or issues. For example, the Moab Tailings Project Steering Committee consists of a small group of stakeholders established through Grand County. The committee meets quarterly to discuss the Project and meetings are open to the public.

7.3 Local Official Briefings

DOE will periodically meet with the Grand County Commission or Moab officials to provide a status of the Project or address issues as they arise; however, the Moab Tailings Project Steering Committee is DOE's main mechanism for communicating with local officials.

7.4 Newsletter, Fact Sheets, and Information Updates

Articles about the Project are periodically published in DOE newsletters. DOE also prepares fact sheets and other short, informational materials for public distribution to provide Project updates or describe technical or other aspects of the Project.

7.5 News Releases

DOE issues news releases to announce public meetings, provide information on Project activities, and publicize other newsworthy events. News releases are distributed to identified news media and other stakeholders and are posted on the DOE Moab Project website (see Section 7.8).

7.6 Display Ads/Articles

Display ads are prepared, as needed, and placed in local print media to announce public meetings, special events, or public notices. Periodically, a status update article may be submitted to the local print media.

7.7 Kiosks

Two kiosks are located near the Moab site, one at the Courthouse Wash parking lot off US-191 and one in a turnout along State Route 279 near the junction with US-191, to provide information about the Project to passersby. The kiosk panels contain background information about the site, current Project activities, and Project contacts.

7.8 Internet Website

Fact sheets, news releases, and many Project documents are posted to the DOE Moab Project public website. The website includes a current status page that is updated monthly. The website address is www.gjem.energy.gov.

7.9 Email Address

DOE established an email address for stakeholders to submit comments or request Project documents. The address is publicaffairs@gjemtac.doe.gov.

7.10 Toll-free Hotline

A toll-free Project hotline was established for the convenience of stakeholders. The number is (800) 637-4575. The hotline includes options to leave a message for the Project, listen to employment opportunities, or request a document.

7.11 Public Reading Room

DOE maintains a public reading room that contains documents and information related to the Project. The reading room is at the following location:

Grand County Public Library
257 East Center Street
Moab, Utah 84532
(435) 259-1111

Library hours are subject to change due to
COVID-19.

The official Project record is located at the DOE Environmental Management Grand Junction office, located at 200 Grand Avenue, Suite 500, Grand Junction, Colorado, 81501.

7.12 Educational Programs and Outreach Activities

DOE is committed to supporting educational initiatives designed to enhance curriculum in schools and coordinates educational partnerships with local schools as appropriate. In addition, the Moab Project team supports and participates in educational outreach activities, such as environmental fairs, science fairs, and career days.

7.13 Speakers Bureau

Speakers in various areas of expertise are employed on the Project. Speakers are available to participate in community and educational activities. Arrangements for speakers are made by contacting the contractor Public Affairs Manager at (970) 257-2145.

7.14 Site Tours

The Project provides tours of its sites to academic classes, elected officials, environmental groups and in some cases, the public, upon request. To request a site tour, contact the contractor Public Affairs Manager at (970) 257-2145. (Please note: tours are not currently offered due to COVID-19.)

7.15 Emergency Notifications

In the event of an emergency or an incident involving the Project that could affect the nearby community, public notifications are made consistent with the *Moab UMTRA Project Emergency/Incident Response Plan* (DOE-EM/GJ1520).

7.16 Information Contacts

The DOE Moab Federal Cleanup Director is the primary information contact for public inquiries regarding Project activities. Contact information is provided below.

Moab Federal Cleanup Director
U.S. Department of Energy
200 Grand Avenue, Suite 500
Grand Junction, Colorado 81501
(970) 257-2115

Email: publicaffairs@gjemtac.doe.gov
Toll-free hotline: (800) 637-4575

8.0 Historical Highlights

- 1956 Uranium Reduction Company begins operating Moab mill.
- 1962 Atlas Minerals Corporation acquires the Moab site.
- 1978 UMTRCA mandates cleanup of potentially hazardous uranium mill tailings to provide stricter controls on disposal of process wastes.
- 1979 Atlas Minerals Corporation's license is renewed with NRC.
- 1984 Moab mill ceases operation under License SUA-917.
- 1988 Decommissioning begins.
- 1996 Decommissioning of mill structures is completed.
- 1998 Atlas Minerals Corporation files for bankruptcy. Reclamation activities as a Title II site are administered by PricewaterhouseCoopers, a trustee appointed by NRC.
- 2000 Moab site is designated as a Title I site under UMTRCA with the passage of the Floyd D. Spence National Defense Authorization Act.
- 2001 DOE assumes ownership of the Moab site on October 1; the NRC license is terminated.
- 2004 DOE issues Draft EIS in November.
- 2005 DOE issues Final EIS in July and ROD in September.
- 2008 DOE issues Amended ROD in February to allow tailings transport by truck or rail. DOE reaffirms its decision in August to transport the tailings primarily by rail.
- 2008 DOE receives NRC conditional concurrence of its *Moab UMTRA Project Final Remedial Action Plan and Site Design for Stabilization of Moab Title I Uranium Mill Tailings at the Crescent Junction, Utah, Disposal Site* (DOE-EM/GJ1547) in July.
- 2009 First rail shipment of mill tailings from Moab site to Crescent Junction disposal site occurs on April 20.
- 2010 DOE reaches 1 million tons of mill tailings shipped and disposed as of March 4.
- 2010 DOE reaches 2 million tons of mill tailings shipped and disposed as of August 11.
- 2011 DOE reaches 3 million tons of mill tailings shipped and disposed as of January 13.
- 2011 DOE reaches 4 million tons of mill tailings shipped and disposed as of June 3.
- 2012 DOE reaches 5 million tons of mill tailings shipped and disposed as of February 27.
- 2013 DOE reaches 6 million tons of mill tailings shipped and disposed as of June 18.
- 2014 DOE reaches 7 million tons of mill tailings shipped and disposed as of July 30.
- 2015 DOE and Project contractors reach 2.5 million hours without a work-related, lost-time injury or illness in December.
- 2016 DOE reaches the halfway mark, 8 million tons, of mill tailings shipped and disposed as of January 20.
- 2018 DOE reaches 9 million tons of mill tailings shipped and disposed as of February 20.
- 2019 DOE reaches 10 million tons of mill tailings shipped and disposed as of September 16.
- 2020 DOE reaches 11 million tons of mill tailings shipped and disposed as of October 19.

9.0 References

42 USC 4321 (United States Code), National Environmental Policy Act.

42 USC 7901 (United States Code), Uranium Mill Tailings Radiation Control Act.

DOE (U.S. Department of Energy), *Moab UMTRA Project Emergency/Incident Response Plan* (DOE-EM/GJ1520).

DOE (U.S. Department of Energy), *Moab UMTRA Project Final Remedial Action Plan and Site Design for Stabilization of Moab Title I Uranium Mill Tailings at the Crescent Junction, Utah, Disposal Site* (DOE-EM/GJ1547).

DOE (U.S. Department of Energy), *Moab UMTRA Project Remediation of the Moab Uranium Mill Tailings, Grand and San Juan Counties, Utah, Final Environmental Impact Statement* (DOE/EIS-0355).

DOE (U.S. Department of Energy), *Record of Decision for the Remediation of the Moab Uranium Mill Tailings, Grand and San Juan Counties, Utah* (6450-01-P).

Public Law 106-398, Floyd D. Spence National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2001.

United States Census Bureau website <https://www.census.gov>.

Utah Department of Workforce website <https://www.jobs.utah.gov>.