DOE–EM/GJ1542

*Office of Environmental Management – Grand Junction*

UMTRA Project

# Moab UMTRA Project
# Public Participation Plan

Revision 6

August 2015

U.S. Department of Energy

Office of Environmental Management

*Prepared by the Technical Assistance Contractor under contract number DE-EM0002067*
*for the U.S. Department of Energy Office of Environmental Management, Grand Junction, Colorado.*

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**Revision 6**

## Review and Approval

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Date

# Revision History

| Revision Number | 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. |

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# 1.0 Introduction

The purpose of the *Moab UMTRA Project Public Participation Plan* is to provide information on the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) public participation policy and to identify communication methods to facilitate stakeholder participation in the Moab Uranium Mill Tailings Remedial Action (UMTRA) Project decision-making process. This plan is reviewed periodically and updated as needed.

DOE regulations and policy mandate public involvement in decision making. DOE actively solicits public participation in its decisions that could affect the quality of human health and the environment. Public participation provides DOE with the opportunity to gather opinions, perspectives, and values from the public and enables it to make better, more informed decisions. DOE must also comply with additional guidance on public participation provided in the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (Title 42 United States Code Section 4321 [42 USC 4321]), the Uranium Mill Tailings Radiation Control Act (UMTRCA) (42 USC 7901), "Council on Environmental Quality's Regulations for Implementing NEPA" (Title 40 Code of Federal Regulations Parts 1500-1508), and other federal and state agency requirements as they pertain to such items as permits and notifications.

Certain core values are associated with the DOE public participation policy. These include:

- Accessibility – DOE employees who are available, approachable, and open to the public.
- Fairness – objectivity and freedom from bias toward any side.
- Innovation – introducing new ideas, methods, and approaches associated with communication methods or remediation technologies.
- Peer review – examination of key issues and decisions by internal and external peers.
- Credibility – commitment to pursue sound and dependable science and technology.
- Timeliness – allowing sufficient time for stakeholders to participate in DOE decision-making processes, timely responses to stakeholder comments and requests, and timely DOE decision-making processes supported by public participation.

# 2.0 Site Descriptions

The Moab site (formerly known as the Atlas millsite) is a former uranium ore-processing facility located about 3 miles northwest of the city of Moab in Grand County, Utah. Figure 1 shows the general location of the Moab site and the Crescent Junction disposal site (also in Utah) 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 site is bordered on the north and southwest by sandstone cliffs. A 130-acre uranium mill-tailings pile occupies much of the western portion. 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 1 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, then enters a tunnel; the track terminates several miles to the southwest. The Moab Wash, an intermittent stream, runs northwest to southeast through the site and joins with the Colorado River. The Scott M. Matheson Wetlands Preserve lies directly across the Colorado River from the site.

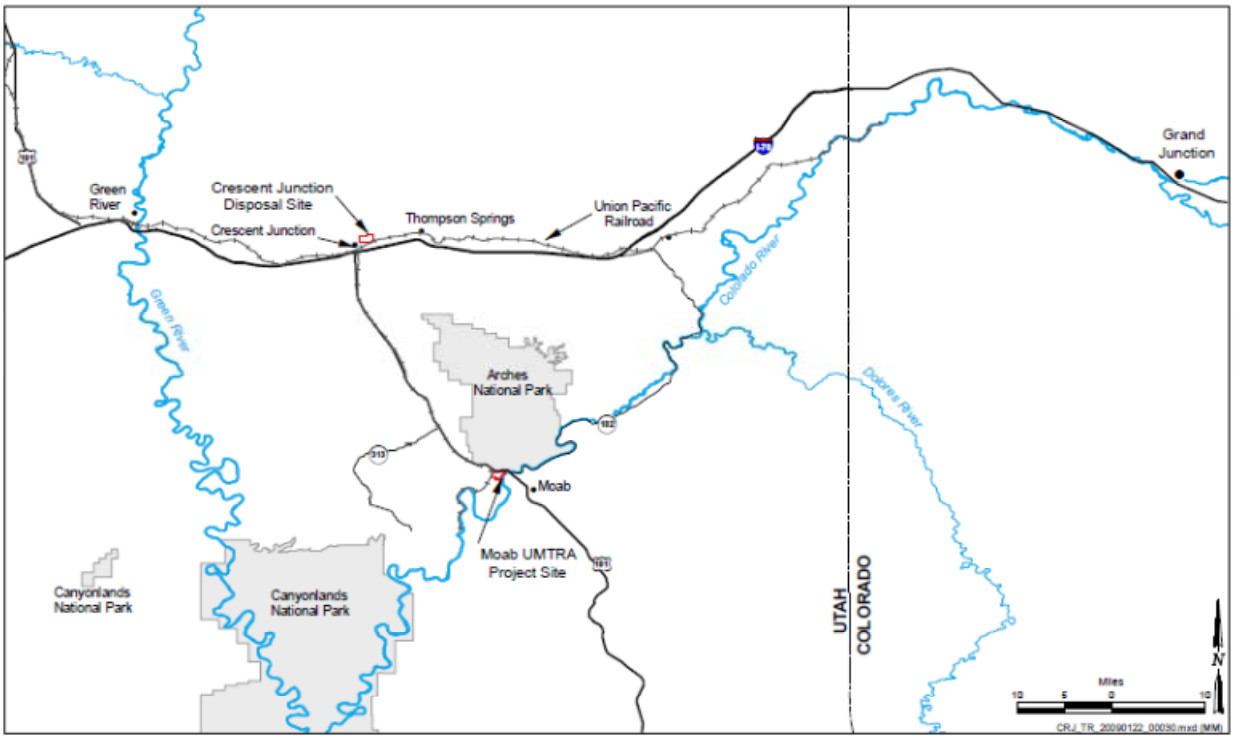


*Figure 1. Location of Moab Site and Crescent Junction Disposal Site*

The Crescent Junction site is located northeast of the junction of Interstate 70 and US-191, approximately 30 miles north of the Moab site, and is the location for disposal of 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.

## 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, is responsible for reclamation and stewardship of the site.

DOE developed an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Moab Project to fulfill the NEPA requirements for significant federal actions. Twelve federal, state, local, and tribal agencies assisted DOE as cooperating agencies in the EIS process of identifying all reasonable alternatives and associated environmental, social, and economic impacts associated with the proposed cleanup actions.

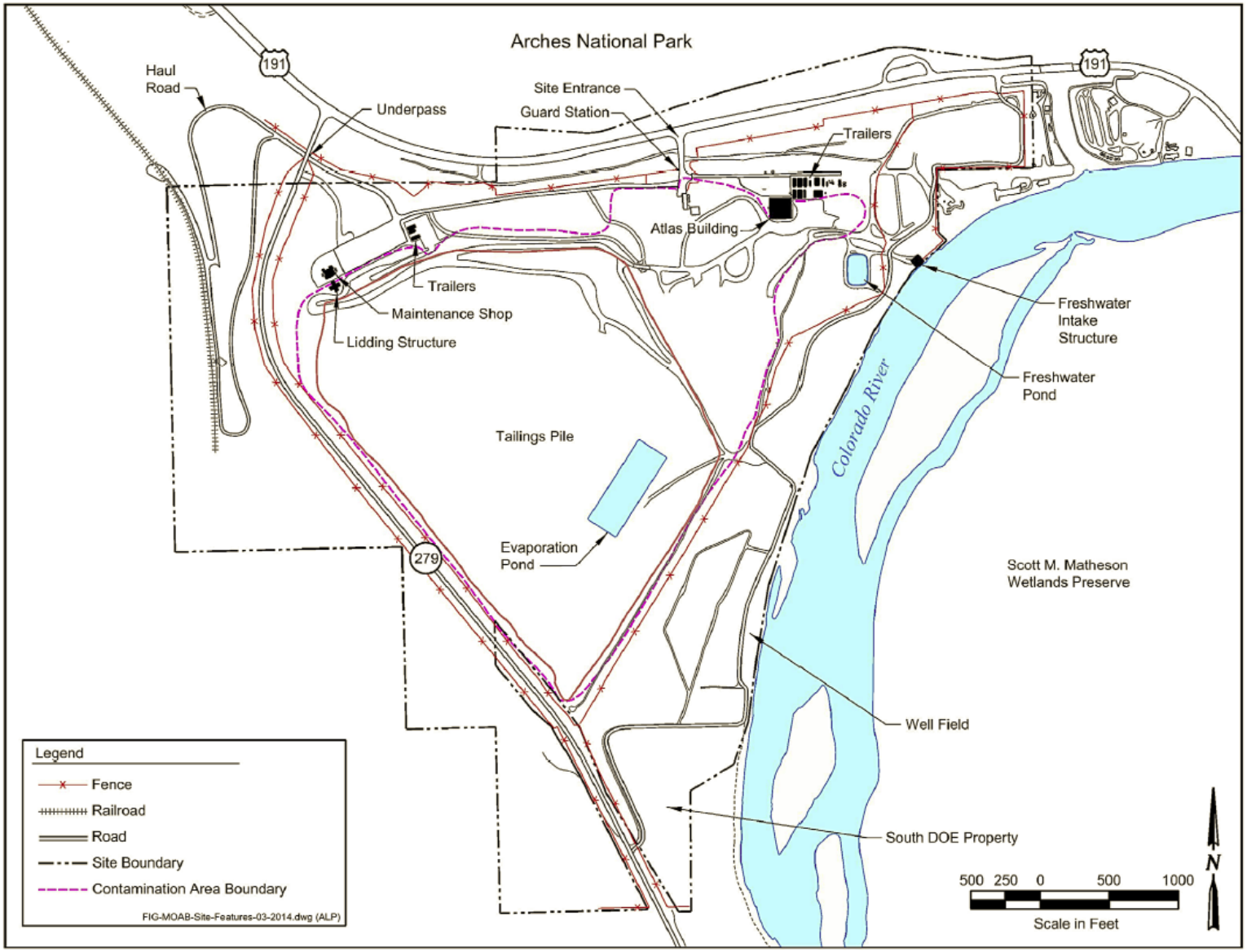


*Figure 2. Moab Site Features*

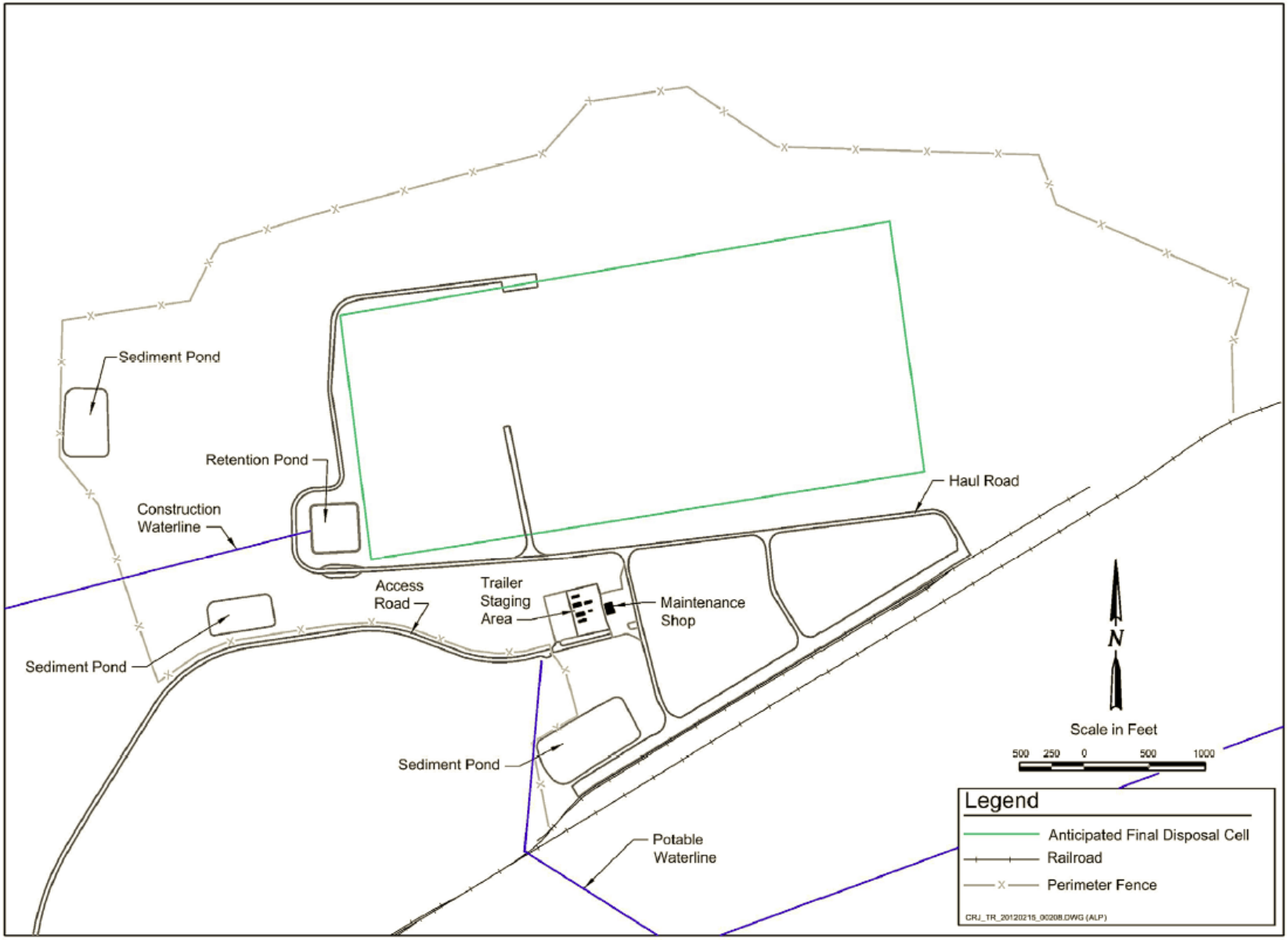


*Figure 3. Crescent Junction Site Features*

In July 2005, DOE published *Moab UMTRA Project Remediation of the Moab Uranium Mill Tailings, Grand and San Juan Counties, Utah, Final Environmental Impact Statement* (DOE/EIS-0355). The Final EIS presented the preferred alternatives of active ground water remediation at the Moab site and off-site disposal of the tailings pile and other contaminated materials at the proposed Crescent Junction disposal site using predominantly rail transportation. The preferred alternatives included cleanup and reclamation of the millsite property and certain off-site properties known as vicinity properties.

In September 2005, DOE issued the *Record of Decision for the Remediation of the Moab Uranium Mill Tailings, Grand and San Juan Counties, Utah*, which detailed the selection of the preferred alternatives and the basis for that decision. The Record of Decision was amended in 2008 to allow transport of the tailings by either truck or rail.

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 ground water interim remedial action system, and conducts 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 July 2014, the Project reached the milestone of 7 million tons of tailings shipped 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 Utah Department of Workforce Services website.

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. Within a 100-mile radius of Moab are four national parks, four state parks, and numerous national monuments and national historic sites. The population of Moab is about 5,130. In addition to Moab, the communities of Crescent Junction and Thompson Springs, which are also in Grand County, are affected by the relocation of the mill tailings to the Crescent Junction site for permanent disposal.

The population of Grand County is about 9,360. 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 million people visit Grand County for recreation. Leisure and hospitality industries account for about 40 percent of Grand County's employment, government accounts for 18 percent, and trade, transportation, and utilities account for another 18 percent. The school district, local government, regional hospital, grocery store chain, and National Park Service are among the major employers.

Media in the area consist of two private and one public radio station 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, including:

- Citizens of Grand County and the city of Green River, Utah.
- Native American tribes.
- Local media.
- Local elementary and secondary schools.
- Local city and county governments.
- State and regional governmental agencies.
- Elected state of Utah officials.
- Federal agencies.
- Congressional delegations.
- Environmental organizations.
- Business owners.
- Service organizations.
- General public using US-191 traveling into and through the city of Moab.
- Other interested individuals.

## 6.0 Issues and Concerns

Since DOE assumed ownership of the Moab site, local citizens, environmental groups and agencies, and downstream users of water from the Colorado River have expressed various issues and concerns associated with the Moab Project. Some issues and concerns are associated with potential health effects of the site contaminants, such as air and water quality, dust control, and future land use. Other expressed concerns include general aesthetics associated with the site activities that can be seen from US-191, transportation issues, and positive and negative economic impacts to the Moab and Crescent Junction areas.

## 7.0 Public Participation Activities

The following public participation activities are conducted in support of the DOE goal of actively informing the public about the Project to provide opportunities for communication between DOE and its stakeholders.

### 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 that interested stakeholders can plan to attend.

## 7.2 Public Availability Sessions

Public availability sessions are opportunities for interested stakeholders to meet with Project personnel in an informal setting. These sessions are held to identify and answer stakeholder concerns and may be held in lieu of public meetings to allow more informal discussions about the Project.

## 7.3 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 was established through Grand County and generally meets quarterly to discuss the Project. This committee is independent from DOE; DOE attends and participates in this committee's meetings by invitation. The Moab Federal Project Director also periodically meets with senior citizens at Grand County's Grand Center to hear their thoughts on the Project.

## 7.4 Briefings for Local Officials

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

## 7.5 Newsletter, Fact Sheets, and Information Updates

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

## 7.6 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 7.9).

## 7.7 Display Ads/Articles

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

## 7.8 Kiosks

Two kiosks are located near the Moab site, one at the Courthouse Wash parking lot off US-191 and one in a pull-off 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.

## 7.9 Internet Website

Selected Project documents, fact sheets, newsletters, meeting announcements, and news releases are posted to the DOE Moab Project website. The website includes a Current Status page that is updated monthly. The website address is www.gjem.energy.gov/moab.

## 7.10 Email Address

DOE established an email address to receive comments or to request Project documents. The address is moabcomments@gjem.doe.gov.

## 7.11 Toll-free Hotline

A toll-free Moab 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.

## 7.12 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 Library | Library hours: |
| 257 East Center Street | 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Monday through Friday |
| Moab, Utah | 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Saturday |
| (435) 259-1111 | Closed Sunday |

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

## 7.13 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.

## 7.14 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 Wendee Ryan, contractor Public Affairs Manager, at (970) 257-2145, or by email at wryan@gjemtac.doe.gov.

## 7.15 Site Tours

Each year, the Project provides dozens of tours of the Moab and/or Crescent Junction sites to school groups, elected officials, agencies, and the public, upon request. To request a site tour, contact Wendee Ryan, contractor Public Affairs Manager, at (970) 257-2145, or by email at wryan@gjemtac.doe.gov.

### 7.16 Local Offices

The Moab and Crescent Junction site administrative offices are open Monday through Thursday. The sites are secured during off-hours.

### 7.17 Emergency Notifications

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

### 7.18 Information Contacts

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

Donald R. Metzler
Moab Federal Project Director
U.S. Department of Energy
200 Grand Avenue, Suite 500
Grand Junction, Colorado 81501
(970) 257-2115
(970) 257-2175 (fax)

Email: moabcomments@gjem.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.
1989 Construction of an interim cover over the tailings pile begins.
1994 NRC decides to prepare an EIS to evaluate the Reclamation Plan.
1995 Placement of interim cover over the tailings pile is completed.
1996 Decommissioning of mill structures is completed.
1996 NRC releases the Draft EIS.
1998 Atlas Minerals Corporation files for bankruptcy. Reclamation activities as a Title II site are administered by PriceWaterhouseCoopers, a trustee appointed by NRC.
1999 NRC completes Final EIS with a preferred alternative to stabilize mill tailings in place.
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.

2002 DOE initiates NEPA process with publication of a notice of intent to prepare an EIS (December 20).
2003 DOE conducts six public scoping meetings to solicit public comment on the cleanup alternatives.
2004 DOE issues Draft EIS in November.
2005 DOE issues Final EIS in July.
2005 DOE issues Record of Decision on September 14.
2007 DOE awards a Remedial Action Contract and a Technical Assistance Contract.
2008 DOE issues Amended Record of Decision 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 submits Report to Congress in July that provides annual funding needed to complete the Project by 2019.
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.
2008 DOE excavates first phase of Crescent Junction disposal cell.
2009 First rail shipment of mill tailings from Moab site to Crescent Junction disposal site occurs on April 20.
2009 DOE holds event at Moab site on May 4 to celebrate commencement of tailings shipments.
2010 DOE begins excavation of second phase of disposal cell.
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.
2012 DOE awards a new Remedial Action Contract and issues a follow-on Technical Assistance Contract.
2013 DOE reaches 6 million tons of mill tailings shipped and disposed as of June 18.
2014 DOE and Project contractors reach 2 million hours without a work-related, lost-time injury or illness in late February.
2014 DOE reaches 7 million tons of mill tailings shipped and disposed as of July 30.

## 9.0 References


40 CFR 1500-1508 (Code of Federal Regulations), “Council on Environmental Quality’s Regulations for Implementing NEPA.”

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*.

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