Developing the Moab UMTRA Site: Conditions and Constraints

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From Mines to Mill and More

- 1952 - Legendary local Charlie Steen discovered major uranium ore deposit, spurring mining boom in Lisbon Valley
- 1984 - Atlas Mill closed, ~16 million tons tailings accumulated
- 2001 – Congress authorized USDOE to remediate mill site (UMTRCA Title I)
- Today - 57% of tailings removed since 2009, remainder by about 2034 then site reclamation for a few more years.

Photo courtesy of USDOE
• Privately-owned properties.

• *Initial Community Vision* for UMTRA site established in 2013-2014 (5-yr review in progress).

*Millsite Riverside Trail* proposed by UMTRA for future recreational use and well field maintenance by DOE after remediation ends.
Community Involvement

- Local Stakeholders Committee
- County UMTRA Liaison
- Elected Officials
- Site Futures Committee

Monitor Impacts of UMTRA
Consider future uses of UMTRA sites
Facilitate understanding
Envision potential site uses
**Conditions**

~1.6 million visitors enter Arches NP each year of ~2.8 million visiting Moab area.

**USDOE** managing remediation project, oversight by **Nuclear Regulatory Commission**, subject to **NEPA reviews**.

Much windblown surface contamination removed but **deep contamination TBD**.

**Tailings removal until ~2034 at current funding level**, followed by site reclamation.

**Extraction/injection wells** still needed after tailings removed, duration TBD.

Photo courtesy of USDOE
Constraints

- USDOE does not currently allow public use of any portion of UMTRA site.
- Potable water and waste treatment must be provided by Arches SSD facility across wash.
- No construction in major NG pipeline easement, limited construction in remediated areas.
- DOE requires periodic access to river water intake and well systems, maybe for decades.
  - UDOT restricts access to US-191.
  - Floodplain sites must be raised before development.
- Army Corps of Engineers permit needed in floodplain, State Lands permit in riparian zone.

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Rights of First Refusal

1. DOE must determine that site is “surplus” to DOE needs
2. Other federal agencies, starting with DOI (NPS and BLM)
3. State of Utah (State Parks for example)
4. Grand County (if site not annexed first by City of Moab)
5. Private buyer? willing to reimburse $100-150 million remediation costs for 50 acres?
References

• Moab UMTRA website (official DOE information)
  • gjem.energy.gov/Moab/index.htm

• Tailings Project websites (local perspectives and records)
  • Ut-grandcounty.civicplus.com/257/Moab-UMTRA-Project
  • Ut-grandcounty.civicplus.com/205/Moab-Tailings-Project-Steering-Committee
  • Ut-grandcounty.civicplus.com/206/Moab-Tailings-Project-Site-Futures-Commit