

Nuclear Waste: DOE's Plans to Complete Cleanup and Transfer of Moab Mill Site

GAO-26-108654

Q&A Report to Congressional Committees

July 15, 2026

Accessible Version

Why This Matters

The Moab Mill Site in Utah processed uranium ore primarily for the U.S. government's nuclear weapons program during the Cold War era. During this time, the site generated massive amounts of tailings, which are leftover waste after uranium has been removed from rock. Tailings were stored in an unlined pond, and as a result, the surrounding groundwater has become contaminated with uranium and ammonia—threatening the nearby Colorado River. The Department of Energy's (DOE) Office of Environmental Management (EM) is responsible for cleaning up the contamination through the Moab Cleanup Project and coordinates with DOE's Office of Legacy Management (LM) to plan the future long-term federal management activities for the site.

Senate Report 118-188 includes a provision for GAO to examine EM's efforts as the Moab Cleanup Project nears completion. We are providing information on the laws and regulations relevant to cleanup efforts; the remaining scope, schedule, and cost of the cleanup; EM's engagement with stakeholders regarding the future use of the site; and EM's coordination with LM regarding long-term federal management of the site.

Key Takeaways

- EM has removed and disposed of over 16 million tons of tailings and other debris from the Moab Mill Site and is planning to complete its cleanup activities at the site by 2029.
- The Moab Cleanup Project has cost approximately \$970 million through fiscal year 2025, and the total cleanup cost is expected to be approximately \$1.16 billion.
- DOE expects to transfer ownership of most of the Moab Mill Site to Grand County, Utah when cleanup is complete but has not made a final decision. DOE intends to retain ownership of a limited portion of the mill site and all of the disposal site.
- If ownership of the mill site is largely transferred to Grand County, DOE prefers that the community decide the site's future use, and community stakeholders have proposed a plan that would include various recreational uses.
- EM and LM are coordinating on the future transfer of the sites for long-term federal management through formal agreements and an integrated project team. However, they have not yet developed a plan for the transition.

Background

The Moab Mill Site is in southeastern Utah and neighbors the city of Moab, the Colorado River, and Arches National Park (see fig. 1).

Figure 1: Moab Mill Site and Surrounding Area



Sources: Department of Energy Office of Environmental Management and GAO (labels). | GAO-26-108654

The Moab Mill Site began operating in 1956 as a private mill for processing uranium ore. Uranium concentrate, the milling product, was sold to the U.S. Atomic Energy Commission—a precursor agency to DOE—through 1970 for use in national defense programs. After 1970, production was primarily for commercial sales to nuclear power plants. The private owner of the mill ceased operations in 1984. After the private owner went bankrupt, in 2000, Congress directed DOE to remediate the site in accordance with Title I of the Uranium Mill Tailings Radiation Control Act of 1978, as amended (UMTRCA).¹ The federal government pays 100 percent of the cleanup costs.²

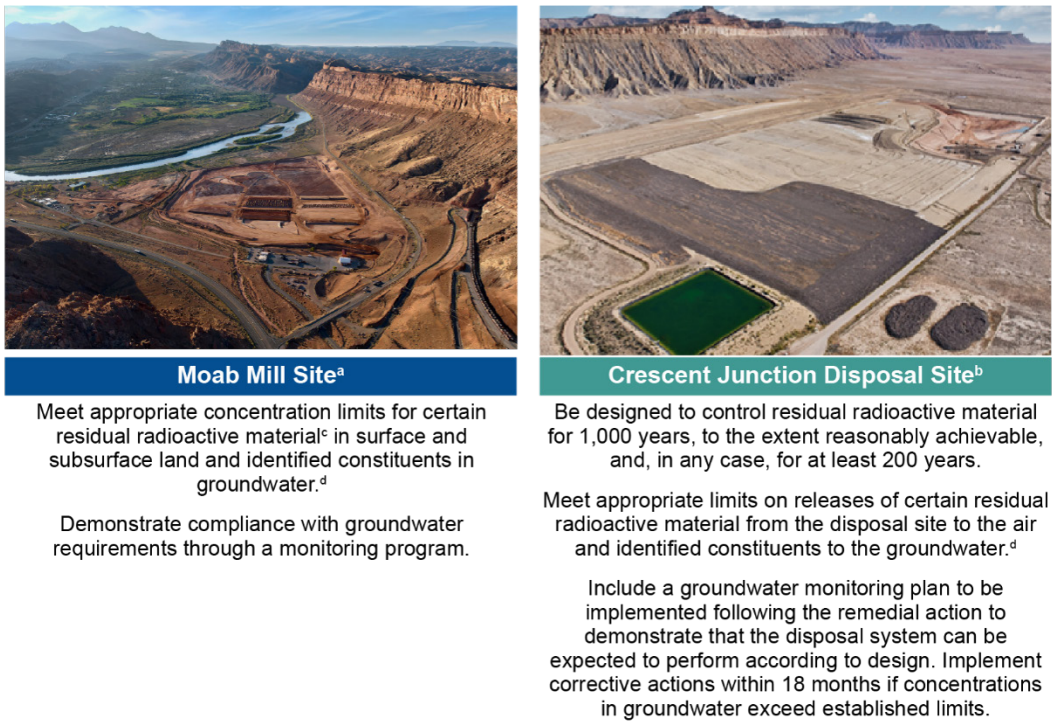
DOE's Moab Cleanup Project includes relocating the estimated 16-million-ton pile of uranium mill tailings and other contaminated material to an engineered disposal site near Crescent Junction, Utah, which is about 30 miles away.³ The cleanup also includes remediation of contaminated groundwater at the Moab Mill Site. Once the mill site is remediated and the disposal site is closed, LM will take over responsibility for long-term federal management of the sites.⁴

What legal framework governs EM's Moab Cleanup Project?

UMTRCA and its associated cleanup standards issued by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) provide the overarching legal framework governing EM's cleanup at the Moab Mill Site.⁵ Under UMTRCA, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) is the primary regulator for cleanup.

The EPA standards cover cleanup and disposal actions for the residual radioactive material at UMTRCA sites to minimize long-term risks to human health and the environment (see fig. 2).⁶

Figure 2: Overview of Federal Cleanup and Control Standards for the Department of Energy’s Moab Mill Site and Crescent Junction Disposal Site



Sources: GAO analysis of laws, regulations, and Department of Energy documentation; Department of Energy Office of Environmental Management (photos). | GAO-26-108654

^aThese standards apply to cleanup of both the Moab Mill Site and vicinity properties that have been determined to be contaminated with residual radioactive material from the mill site. 40 C.F.R. §§ 192.10; 192.12.

^bThese standards apply to disposal of residual radioactive material at mill sites and disposal sites. Because DOE is disposing of contaminated material from the Moab Mill Site at the Crescent Junction Disposal Site, these standards are primarily relevant to the Crescent Junction Disposal Site. 40 C.F.R. §§ 192.00. 192.02.

^cResidual radioactive material means “(A) waste (which [DOE] determines to be radioactive) in the form of tailings resulting from the processing of ores for the extraction of uranium and other valuable constituents of the ores; and (B) other wastes (which [DOE] determines to be radioactive) at a processing site which relate to such processing, including any residual stock of unprocessed ores or low-grade materials.” 42 U.S.C. § 7911(7).

^d40 C.F.R. Part 192, Appendix I and Subpart A, Table 1 identify the relevant constituents that DOE is to address in groundwater when those constituents are present in or derived from residual radioactive material.

Accessible text for Figure 2: Overview of Federal Cleanup and Control Standards for the Department of Energy’s Moab Mill Site and Crescent Junction Disposal Site

Moab Mill Site ^a	Crescent Junction Disposal Site ^b
Meet appropriate concentration limits for certain residual radioactive material ^c in surface and subsurface land and identified constituents in groundwater. ^d	Be designed to control residual radioactive material for 1,000 years, to the extent reasonably achievable, and, in any case, for at least 200 years.
Demonstrate compliance with groundwater requirements through a monitoring program.	Meet appropriate limits on releases of certain residual radioactive material from the disposal site to the air and identified constituents to the groundwater. ^d
	Include a groundwater monitoring plan to be implemented following the remedial action to demonstrate that the disposal system can be expected to perform according to design. Implement corrective actions within 18 months if concentrations in groundwater exceed established limits.

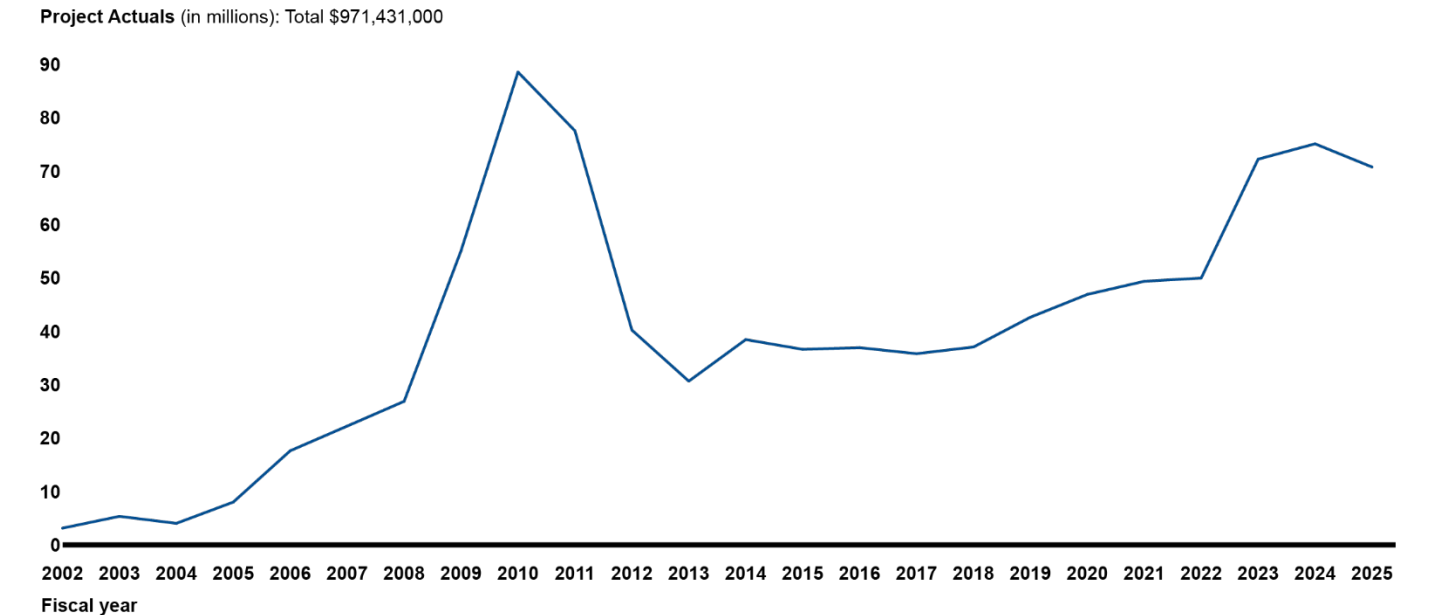
Under EPA’s regulations, EM can use alternative cleanup and control standards to those above in specific circumstances.⁷ These are referred to as supplemental standards and can be applied when, for example, the application of the default standards would be unreasonably costly, technically impracticable, or cause health or environmental harm that is excessive compared to the benefits achieved.⁸ For example, one criteria for applying supplemental standards includes specific instances in which groundwater is not a current or potential

source of drinking water.⁹ If supplemental standards are applied, EM must select and perform remedial action that comes as close to meeting the otherwise applicable standard as reasonably achievable.¹⁰

How much has DOE spent, and what work has been completed?

Through fiscal year 2025, DOE has spent a total of approximately \$970 million on the Moab Cleanup Project, of which about \$880 million has been spent since fiscal year 2009, when DOE began removing the tailings.

Figure 3: Department of Energy Spending on Moab Cleanup Project Through Fiscal Year 2025



Source: GAO analysis of Department of Energy documentation. | GAO-26-108654

Accessible data for Figure 3: Department of Energy Spending on Moab Cleanup Project Through Fiscal Year 2025

Year	Project Actuals (in millions)
FY02	3.138
FY03	5.356
FY04	4.038
FY05	8.025
FY06	17.635
FY07	22.255
FY08	26.891
FY09	55.095
FY10	88.561
FY11	77.565
FY12	40.248
FY13	30.668
FY14	38.456
FY15	36.627
FY16	36.943
FY17	35.819
FY18	37.061
FY19	42.646
FY20	46.913
FY21	49.373
FY22	49.976

FY23	72.246
FY24	75.118
FY25	70.778

Since the beginning of the project in fiscal year 2002, DOE has completed the following key cleanup activities, as of May 2026:

- Selection of a remedy (2005)
- Design and substantial construction of the Crescent Junction Disposal Site (excavation and construction began in 2008)
- Construction of railway and other infrastructure to transport the tailings from the Moab Mill Site to the Crescent Junction Disposal Site
- Dismantlement and removal of a former mill building
- Transfer of over 16 million tons of uranium mill tailings and other debris—including former mill buildings and equipment previously dismantled and buried in the tailings pile—to the disposal site (beginning in 2009)
- Remediation or application of supplemental standards at 13 properties in the vicinity of the Moab Mill Site with contamination from the mill
- Removal of about 1 million pounds of ammonia and over 5,000 pounds of uranium from the groundwater through an interim extraction system (beginning in 2003)¹¹

What are the remaining costs and work?

The estimated remaining cost for the Moab Cleanup Project is about \$190 million, which makes the estimated total life cycle cost of the project about \$1.16 billion. Key aspects of the remaining work include removing the remaining tailings, developing and implementing a final groundwater remedy, and transferring responsibility for long-term federal management of the sites to LM (see table 1).

Table 1: Remaining Work and Schedule for the Department of Energy's (DOE) Moab Cleanup Project, as of May 2026

Remaining work		Remaining schedule
Tailings	DOE needs to complete removal of the tailings from the Moab Mill Site (mill site). About 1 million additional tons of contaminated material beneath and around the main tailings pile need to be transferred to the Crescent Junction Disposal Site (disposal site), including contaminated soil excavated up to 3 feet below the pile surface.	DOE's Office of Environmental Management (EM) expects to remove the remaining tailings by mid-2027. ^a
Groundwater	DOE needs to complete the plan for cleaning up contaminated groundwater at the mill site. The groundwater remedy design is about 60 percent complete, and the final design will need the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's (NRC) concurrence. It is presently unknown what final groundwater remedy DOE and NRC will select for the mill site. ^b The strategy may include water use restrictions.	EM expects to complete the final groundwater remedy design and submit it to NRC for their concurrence in 2027. Groundwater remediation and monitoring at the site may continue for decades. EM officials told us that the schedule for completing the final remedy design will be captured in the project lifecycle baseline, which EM is planning to update in June 2026.
Site restoration	DOE needs to complete certain site restoration activities at the mill site, including realignment of the Moab Wash—a stream that runs through the site and joins the Colorado River—and regrading and revegetation.	EM expects to complete site restoration, including realignment of the Moab Wash, by 2029.
Vicinity properties	DOE needs to determine if one remaining vicinity property with contamination from the mill site requires remediation. In addition, there are five properties adjacent to the mill site that are planned for the application of supplemental standards.	EM expects to make the determination about the one remaining vicinity property in fiscal year 2026. EM expects to complete supplemental standards applications for the five properties adjacent to the mill site by 2028.
Disposal site	DOE needs to place a final cover on the disposal site after it transfers the remaining tailings from the mill site. NRC recently approved the disposal site cover design, which EM updated from its original design.	EM expects to complete the disposal site in 2029.

Site transfer	DOE needs to transfer the mill site and disposal site from EM to DOE's Office of Legacy Management (LM) for long-term federal management of the sites and any ongoing groundwater cleanup operations. According to officials, EM and LM have discussed transferring the mill site and disposal site separately due to their unique nature, planned final disposition, and regulatory requirements.	EM expects to transfer the mill site and the disposal site to LM by the end of 2029 (though LM's most recent Site Management Guide notes that the site will transition in 2032). LM will likely oversee active groundwater remediation at the mill site for decades and manage the disposal site in perpetuity.
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Source: GAO analysis of DOE and Nuclear Regulatory Commission information and interviews with EM. | GAO-26-108654

^aAgency officials told us that the biggest risk that could impact this schedule for completion is if there is more subsurface contamination than expected that would need to be removed.

^bNRC has agreed that DOE may temporarily defer groundwater restoration activities until a final remedy is selected, as long as human health and the environment will not be substantially affected, as verified by groundwater monitoring.

Figure 4: Department of Energy Cleanup Activities at the Moab Mill Site and Crescent Junction Disposal Site



Truck at the Moab Mill Site moving tailings from the pile to the train.



A train hauling the containers away from the Moab Mill Site to the Crescent Junction Disposal Site.



The surface water diversion system at the Moab Mill Site, which helps protect endangered fish species in the Colorado River.



Two trucks unloading containers of tailings at the Crescent Junction Disposal Site.

Source: GAO. | GAO-26-108654

What does EM plan to do with the Moab Mill Site once cleanup is complete?

DOE intends to retain ownership of a limited portion of the Moab Mill Site and all of the Crescent Junction Disposal Site. DOE documents indicate that DOE plans to transfer the remainder of the Moab Mill Site to Grand County, Utah, upon completion of cleanup and remediation. However, DOE officials said that they have not yet made a final determination regarding land transfer. Regardless of ownership, LM will exercise long-term federal management of both the Moab Mill Site and the Crescent Junction Disposal Site to ensure the environmental remedies function as intended.

DOE does not have authority under UMTRCA to transfer ownership of the Moab Mill Site.¹² However, DOE officials said that there are two options for transferring ownership of the land to Grand County:

- DOE could use their authority under the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended, which includes broad authority for DOE to grant or sell land.¹³ DOE officials said they have used this authority recently but could not say whether DOE would consider selling versus granting the land.

- Congress could choose to direct DOE to convey the Moab Mill Site to Grand County, in line with the proposed Moab UMTRA Project Transition Act of 2025.¹⁴ As of May 2026, this bill—which has been introduced in both houses but has not passed either—proposes to require DOE to transfer the Moab Mill Site to Grand County, Utah at no cost once cleanup is substantially complete.

How may the Moab Mill Site be used in the future, and what are the views of stakeholders on these uses?

If ownership of the Moab Mill Site is largely transferred to Grand County, DOE prefers that the community decide the future use of the site's land, according to EM officials. EM officials said the primary stakeholders that have expressed continued interest regarding the future of the site are Grand County, the City of Moab, and the Grand County community. Overall, these stakeholders have proposed different recreational land uses, such as an events center, trails, non-motorized boat ramp, and view areas.

DOE has consistently coordinated with the local community over the years through the Moab Tailings Project Steering Committee (Steering Committee). The Steering Committee meets quarterly, and membership includes local government officials from Grand County and the City of Moab, state and federal agencies, and other stakeholders.

The Steering Committee created the Moab Tailings Project Site Futures Committee (Site Futures Committee) to gather local stakeholder perspectives on future uses of the Moab Mill Site. According to the Site Futures Committee representative we spoke with, the goal of the committee is to research the community's interest in and leverage the existing expertise of committee members to create a unified plan for the Moab Mill Site. The Site Futures Committee is required by Grand County to update the vision for the future use of the Moab Mill Site every 5 years. As part of the 2023 community vision update, the Site Futures Committee hosted an open house and administered a survey on the future of the Moab Mill Site, which was completed by 179 community members.¹⁵

Limitations on future use of the Moab Mill Site

EM officials and project documents noted the following limitations on the future use of the Moab Mill Site:

- According to the 2023 community vision update, approximately 74 percent of the property's 480 acres is currently on steep hillsides, on land with a conservation easement, encumbered by highway, railroad and utility rights-of-way, or in flood hazard areas.
- There will not be any on-site groundwater use due to contamination and naturally high salinity.
- There will likely be institutional controls associated with supplemental cleanup standards expected to be applied to certain soil areas.

Further, according to DOE documentation, final decisions on allowable future land use at the Moab Mill Site can be made only after the success of surface and groundwater remediation is determined. Officials noted that land use decisions will not affect cleanup activities as EM is cleaning up the site based on EPA's standards.

Has EM followed leading practices while engaging with selected stakeholders about the future use of the Moab Mill Site?

We found that DOE followed or partially followed the eight leading practices for engaging with stakeholders in environmental cleanup regarding the future use of the Moab Mill Site, according to selected key stakeholders (see table 2). These leading practices were identified in GAO-24-106014 and based on key concepts from a literature review on stakeholder and government engagement, and consultation with subject-matter experts in the field.¹⁶ Representatives of the five key stakeholder groups we interviewed were largely positive on EM's engagement with them on the future use of the Moab Mill Site from 2023 through 2026.

Table 2: Extent to Which the Department of Energy’s (DOE) Office of Environmental Management (EM) Has Followed Selected Aspects of GAO’s Leading Practices for Engaging with Stakeholders in Environmental Cleanup Regarding the Future Use of the Moab Mill Site Since 2023, According to Interviews with Selected Key Stakeholders

Leading practices	Selected key questions associated with the practices	Extent followed	Summary of responses
Demonstrate agency commitment	Has agency leadership communicated a commitment to engagement?	Followed	EM staff attend every Moab Tailings Project Steering Committee (Steering Committee) meeting and Moab Tailings Project Site Futures Committee meeting.
Ensure agency resources and capacity	Has the agency ensured that it has adequate workforce capacity to support engagement?	Followed	EM brings project leadership staff whose roles touch on different project areas to the Steering Committee meetings to present updates and field questions.
Clearly define and communicate goals and expectations	Has the agency defined the goals that it is trying to achieve by engaging stakeholders and governments?	Partially followed	Some stakeholders noted that EM plans to transfer the land for the benefit of the community and supports the community in the process to determine the future use. Other stakeholders noted confusion over the future land use and land transfer process.
Systematically and iteratively identify and include relevant stakeholders and governments	- Has the agency used a systematic and iterative approach to identify the full scope of potential stakeholders and governments? - Is the agency's inclusion of stakeholders and governments consistent with its goals for the engagement?	Followed	There are varying levels of public participation due to a lack of interest, but all relevant city and county departments are represented.
Minimize barriers to meaningful participation	- Has the agency designed the engagement process to ensure equitable access and participation? - Has the agency made information accessible and understandable?	Followed	Steering Committee meetings take place in person and virtually and are recorded for people who cannot attend. Additionally, EM tailors their presentations to focus on what a reasonable person would understand.
Design engagement to fit the goals and context	- Has the agency used engagement methods, tools, and formats that are appropriate given the goals and context? - Has the agency timed engagement appropriately given the goals and context? - Has the agency monitored and made needed adjustments to its engagement design?	Followed	The methods, timing, and frequency of EM's engagement have been appropriate, and EM has adjusted its approach when needed.
Provide valid scientific information that addresses stakeholders' and governments' concerns	- Has the agency produced scientific information that addresses stakeholders' and governments' values and concerns? - Has the agency integrated local knowledge into its analyses? - Has the agency provided accurate and credible scientific information?	Followed	Stakeholders had no concerns about the accuracy or credibility of EM's scientific information. Additionally, EM has hired locally, including former Moab Mill Site employees, as a way to integrate local knowledge in the cleanup.
Follow through on commitments to engagement	- Has the agency followed through to provide agreed-upon opportunities for engagement? - Has the agency communicated changes and unexpected events? - Has the agency demonstrated how it used engagement results?	Followed	EM provides stakeholders with engagement opportunities and has kept stakeholders informed of changes.

Legend:

- Followed—EM took actions that addressed all aspects of the selected key questions we examined for the practice.
- ◐ Partially followed—EM took actions that addressed some, but not all, aspects of the selected key questions we examined for the practice.

Source: GAO analysis of interviews with selected key stakeholder groups. | GAO-26-108654

Note: The leading practices and associated key questions are derived from GAO, *Nuclear Waste Cleanup: Adopting Leading Practices Could Strengthen DOE’s Engagement with Stakeholders and Governments*, GAO-24-106014 (Washington, D.C.: Sept. 9, 2024). We focused our assessment on the selected key questions that we determined were most relevant to the Moab Cleanup Project based on our review of project documents and interviews with DOE officials.

How has EM coordinated with LM regarding the completion of the Moab Cleanup Project?

EM coordinates with LM through interagency groups and agreements, such as the Moab Closure Integrated Project Team and Memorandum of Understanding between EM and LM concerning completion of the Moab Cleanup Project and transition of the sites. As noted above, LM will exercise long-term federal management of the Moab Mill Site and Crescent Junction Disposal Sites once cleanup is complete.

According to agency officials, EM and LM jointly developed memorandums to support the roles, responsibilities, objectives, and information sharing concerning the status of the Moab Cleanup Project and the transition of sites from EM to LM for long-term care and stewardship. The most recent memorandum, signed in 2024, spans a period of 10 years and addresses the development of the Moab Closure Integrated Project Team to support transfer of the Moab Mill Site and Crescent Junctions Disposal Site from EM to LM. The Integrated Project Team meets quarterly to discuss areas of cooperation including the disposal site design, final groundwater remedy development, and the site transition plan.

The site transition plan is expected to establish long-term responsibilities, including the groundwater responsibilities that would transfer to LM. EM officials said that they have initiated the development of the site transition plan but noted that it still needs more work before they can share it with LM. EM officials noted that the groundwater responsibilities could involve monitoring or active remediation, but it is too early to know. EM officials said they plan to gather more information and will work with LM to use their expertise and past experience on the length of transfer activities to ensure they are well captured in the site transition plan.

Agency Comments

We provided a draft of this report to DOE and NRC for review and comment. DOE provided technical comments, which we incorporated as appropriate.

How GAO Did This Study

We reviewed relevant laws, regulations, and agency documentation related to DOE's Moab Cleanup Project. For example, we reviewed UMTRCA, EPA regulations, the Moab Site Strategic Plan, and DOE memorandums. We also interviewed EM and LM officials that are involved in the Moab Cleanup Project and interviewed officials from NRC to help us understand the regulatory framework. We visited the Moab Mill Site and Crescent Junction Disposal Site to better understand the status of EM's cleanup.

To assess the extent to which EM followed leading practices for engaging stakeholders in environmental cleanup regarding the future use of the Moab Mill Site, we identified a nongeneralizable selection of five key stakeholder groups, which capture some of the main groups involved in the efforts. We selected the stakeholder groups based on factors including

- participation in stakeholder activities,
- communication with other stakeholders, and
- state and federal agencies with a role in site action or monitoring.

The five selected key stakeholder groups were (1) the Steering Committee, (2) the Steering Committee's Site Futures Committee, (3) Moab's city government, (4) the Utah Department of Natural Resources, and (5) the National Park Service (Arches National Park).¹⁷ Findings from our nongeneralizable selection cannot be used to make inferences about all DOE sites and views of all stakeholders we did not interview.

For each of our five key stakeholder groups, we conducted an interview with a representative using set of semi-structured questions and compared the

responses to leading practices identified in [GAO-24-106014](#). We defined the extent EM followed the leading practices into three categories:

- Followed: EM took actions that addressed all aspects of the selected key questions we examined for the practice. This includes representatives we interviewed noting clear connections between EM actions and the key questions for each practice.
- Partially followed: EM took actions that addressed some, but not all, aspects of the selected key questions we examined for the practice.
- Did not follow: EM did not take any actions to address any aspects of the selected key questions we examined for the practice.

We conducted this performance audit from July 2025 through July 2026 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

List of Committees

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We are sending copies of this report to the appropriate congressional committees, the Secretary of Energy, the Chair of the NRC, and other interested parties. In addition, the report is available at no charge on the GAO website at <https://www.gao.gov>.

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Endnotes

¹Floyd D. Spence National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2001, Pub. L. No. 106-398, § 3403, 114 Stat. 1654A-1, 487-89 (2000). Title I of UMTRCA authorized a federal remedial action program for uranium processing sites that were inactive prior to 1978 and Title II authorized the regulation of commercial uranium mills operating on or after UMTRCA's 1978 enactment. See Uranium Mill Tailings Radiation Control Act of 1978, Pub. L. No. 95-604, 92 Stat. 3021. The Moab Mill Site was originally considered a Title II site under UMTRCA because it was an active, privately operated uranium-processing site when UMTRCA was passed. As noted above, the Moab Mill Site was added to the list of Title I sites in 2000 and, subject to certain exceptions, Title I applies to the Moab Mill Site in the same manner as other Title I sites. 42 U.S.C. § 7912(f).

²While most UMTRCA Title I sites involve a 90/10 cost share with states, that requirement does not apply to Moab and the Moab Cleanup Project has been entirely funded by DOE. Funding for the Moab Cleanup Project is generally included in appropriations to DOE under the Non-Defense Environmental Cleanup account.

³For the purposes of our report, we refer to the Moab Uranium Mill Tailings Remedial Action Project as the Moab Cleanup Project.

⁴Once UMTRCA sites are addressed in accordance with the law and regulations, LM generally takes responsibility for long-term federal management of the sites. There are 52 UMTRCA sites. Twenty-eight have been transferred to LM and 24 will be transferred in the future. The Moab Mill Site is the last of the Title I sites left to be transferred to LM for long-term federal management. DOE completed the last UMTRCA Title I site cleanup in 1998.

⁵In 40 C.F.R. Part 192, EPA has promulgated standards for the cleanup and control of residual radioactive material at inactive uranium processing sites, including the Moab Mill Site, and associated disposal sites as required by UMTRCA. 42 U.S.C. § 2022.

⁶Residual radioactive material means "(1) [w]aste (which [DOE] determines to be radioactive) in the form of tailings resulting from the processing of ores for the extraction of uranium and other valuable constituents of the ores; and (2) [o]ther wastes (which [DOE] determines to be radioactive) at a processing site which relate to such processing, including any residual stock of unprocessed ores or low-grade materials." 40 C.F.R. § 192.01.

⁷40 C.F.R. § 192.22.

⁸40 C.F.R. § 192.21.

⁹40 C.F.R. §§ 192.11; 192.21.

¹⁰In addition to the requirements under UMTRCA, the Moab Cleanup Project is subject to other relevant laws and regulations. For example, Moab has a Fugitive Dust Control Plan to comply with

certain Utah laws and regulations governing fugitive emissions. DOE also holds various permits with the state of Utah with respect to the Moab Cleanup Project.

¹¹The system, which includes eight extraction and more than 30 freshwater injection wells, is designed to protect surface water quality and to recover ammonia, uranium, and other contaminants prior to discharge to the Colorado River.

¹²When Congress directed DOE to clean up the Moab Mill Site under UMTRCA, Congress exempted the site from certain provisions of the original law—including those under which states can acquire Title I processing sites and retain the land following DOE's cleanup activities. 42 U.S.C. § 7912(f)(2)(A). Because of these exemptions, UMTRCA itself does not give DOE the authority to transfer ownership of the Moab Mill Site.

¹³See 42 U.S.C. § 2201(g), which gives DOE authority “sell, lease, grant, and dispose of” real property in the performance of its functions under the law.

¹⁴S. 1321, 119th Cong. (2025); H. R. 2681, 119th Cong. (2025).

¹⁵Moab Tailings Project Site Futures Committee, *2023 Community Vision Update for Future Use of the Moab Uranium Mill Tailings Remedial Action Project Site* (Moab, Utah: Apr. 25, 2023).

¹⁶GAO, *Nuclear Waste Cleanup: Adopting Leading Practices Could Strengthen DOE's Engagement with Stakeholders and Governments*, [GAO-24-106014](#) (Washington, D.C.: Sept. 9, 2024). The leading practices apply to federal agency engagement in the context of environmental cleanup issues, decisions, and actions. This includes nuclear and hazardous waste cleanup and other types of environmental cleanup. The leading practices are not intended to replace or supersede stakeholder and government engagement processes required under applicable laws, regulations, or legal agreements. For example, the practices do not describe or replace how an agency should conduct consultation with federally recognized Tribes. Instead, they are intended to apply to engagement practices and activities independent of those that are required.

¹⁷Additionally, we contacted several other entities who had previously attended Steering Committee meetings, including one Tribe, but did not receive a response.