

U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
POLLUTION/SITUATION REPORT  
Skyline Abandoned Uranium Mine (AUM) - Removal Polrep



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
Region IX

**Subject:** POLREP #8  
Excavation of Upper Slope area complete  
Skyline Abandoned Uranium Mine (AUM)  
09SY  
Monument Valley, UT  
Latitude: 37.0205530 Longitude: -110.2308250

**To:**  
**From:** Jason Musante, OSC  
**Date:** 8/1/2011  
**Reporting Period:** 07/18/11 – 07/30/11

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Background

<b>Site Number:</b>	09SY	<b>Contract Number:</b>	EP-W-07-022
<b>D.O. Number:</b>	022-9075	<b>Action Memo Date:</b>	9/27/2010
<b>Response Authority:</b>	CERCLA	<b>Response Type:</b>	Time-Critical
<b>Response Lead:</b>	EPA	<b>Incident Category:</b>	Removal Action
<b>NPL Status:</b>	Non NPL	<b>Operable Unit:</b>	
<b>Mobilization Date:</b>	3/28/2011	<b>Start Date:</b>	11/1/2010
<b>Demob Date:</b>		<b>Completion Date:</b>	
<b>CERCLIS ID:</b>		<b>RCRIS ID:</b>	
<b>ERNS No.:</b>		<b>State Notification:</b>	
<b>FPN#:</b>		<b>Reimbursable Account #:</b>	

Please see any previous POLREP for additional Site Background information.

## 2. Current Activities

### 2.1 Operations Section

#### 2.1.1 Narrative

##### 2.1.1.1 Current Situation

The skyline yarder is being used with a hopper bucket attached to transport the stockpile of contaminated soils excavated from the north side of Oljato Mesa up to the repository on top. "Monsoon Season" thunderstorm events have impacted the Mesa access road and Oljato Road, necessitating significant road repair and maintenance activities. Demobilization of personnel and equipment as reduction in scope of operations allows is ongoing in an effort to reduce overall site costs.

#### July 18 – 23, 2011

OSC Benson onsite this week.

This week ERRS:

- Completed excavation on lower portion of upper slope area below the mine opening using the skyline with a dredge bucket.
- Completed site-wide flood contingency improvements.
- Continued water conveyance system operations.
- Continued site-wide road improvements and maintenance.
- Continued dust control program using water for dust suppression.

START performed air sampling around work zones as part of the effluent dust sampling program, and performed confirmation radiation surveys.

#### July 25 – 30, 2011

OSC Musante onsite this week.

This week ERRS:

- Continued water conveyance system operations.
- Continued site-wide road improvements and maintenance.
- Continued dust control program using water for dust suppression.
- Continued restoration of the soil borrow area on top of the mesa.
- Resumed transport of stockpiled mine waste materials to top of Mesa via the skyline cable yarder.

-Began decontamination of the skyline dredge bucket and carriage.

START performed air sampling around work zones as part of the effluent dust sampling program, and excavation completion radiation surveys in the TLDA and stockpile areas.

### 2.1.2 Response Actions to Date

Mobilization for removal activities and site setup began the week of March 28, 2011. Construction of the repository began the week of April 4, 2011, and was completed at the end of May. Excavation of mine waste from valley floor areas on the north side and the upper slope below the mine opening of Oljato Mesa was completed by July 24.

### 2.1.3 Enforcement Activities, Identity of Potentially Responsible Parties (PRPs)

EPA to date has been unable to identify any existing PRPs. EPA will continue to analyze the voluminous responses to the information requests it sent to numerous parties associated with mining in general on the Navajo Reservation. Because of the urgency of this removal, EPA is proceeding with a fund-lead action. EPA will continue to review the information referenced above to determine whether viable and liable parties may be identified, and will pursue recovery of the removal costs if appropriate.

### 2.1.4 Progress Metrics

There are no progress metrics to report at this time. Off-site disposal is not planned for this removal. Uranium tailing wastes at the Site will be transferred to the on-site repository. Total volumes of waste moved into the repository may be reported in future POLREPs.

<i>Waste Stream</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Quantity</i>	<i>Manifest #</i>	<i>Treatment</i>	<i>Disposal</i>

## 2.2 Planning Section

### 2.2.1 Anticipated Activities

#### 2.2.1.1 Planned Response Activities

- 1) Archeological clearance of all areas impacted by removal activities;
- 2) Construction/improvement of limited access road on southern side of Oljato Mesa;
- 3) Secure a water supply for dust suppression activities, including the potential development of a groundwater well near the Site;
- 4) Development and implementation of an effluent dust monitoring program to prevent offsite release of contaminated particulate;
- 5) Construction of a subsurface repository on top of Oljato Mesa near the Skyline AUM;
- 6) Relocation of contaminated soils from the existing NN AML Skyline AUM repository to allow access to mine tailings on the edge of Oljato Mesa;
- 7) Excavation and internment of contaminated soils from the TLDA, TSDA, and unnamed arroyo in the onsite repository;
- 8) Development and implementation of a confirmation survey and sampling plan.

#### 2.2.1.2 Next Steps

- Uranium mine waste from the slope below the mine and the foot of the mesa will continue to be moved into the repository. A skyline yarder, like the old Skyline, will be used to transport the mine waste up to the top of the mesa. Water will be used to control dust and make sure the mine waste doesn't spread from the site. Air sampling will be conducted around the work areas to check for any radioactive dust.
- Once all the tailings have been placed in the repository, another plastic liner will be installed over the top. Then a soil cap will be placed over the top liner to protect it from sun and wind.
- Areas impacted by removal activities will be seeded with native plant species to help restore the land.

### 2.2.2 Issues

- Repository excavation was slowed due to hard rock formations underlying surface soils. This delay has resulted in an extended project schedule and additional project costs.
- “Monsoon season” weather with heavy rains and thunderstorms have impacted site access roads and work progress.
- Nearby residents who were offered temporary lodging were informed of the extended project schedule. Effluent dust sampling results to date all below action level was discussed with the residents. Based on this, residents of two home sites decided return to their homes. EPA continues to provide temporary lodging for residents of three home sites.

## 2.3 Logistics Section

N/A

## 2.4 Finance Section

No information available at this time.

## 2.5 Other Command Staff

### 2.5.1 Safety Officer

## **2.6 Liaison Officer**

## **2.7 Information Officer**

### **2.7.1 Public Information Officer**

N/A

### **2.7.2 Community Involvement Coordinator**

OSC Musante is working with CIC Brian Davidson to develop a written CIP that documents community outreach to date. An Information Repository will be established at the Oljato Chapter House.

## **3. Participating Entities**

### **3.1 Unified Command**

N/A

### **3.2 Cooperating Agencies**

Navajo Nation EPA Superfund (NN EPA)

Navajo Nation Abandoned Mine Lands Reclamation Program (AML)

Navajo Nation Department of Water Resources

## **4. Personnel On Site**

1 EPA OSC

2 START – E&E

20 ERRS – EQM, H2O, ES, Skyline subcontractor

## **5. Definition of Terms**

No information available at this time.

## **6. Additional sources of information**

### **6.1 Internet location of additional information/report**

website: [www.epaosc.org/SkylineAUM](http://www.epaosc.org/SkylineAUM)

### **6.2 Reporting Schedule**

The next POLREP will be submitted on 8/15/11.

## **7. Situational Reference Materials**

-maps: Skyline Fig 1 Site Location, Skyline Fig 2 Site Features