

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



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
Region IX

Subject: POLREP #11
Transport of Mine Waste via the Skyline Yarder System Nearing Completion
Skyline Abandoned Uranium Mine (AUM)
09SY
Monument Valley, UT
Latitude: 37.0205530 Longitude: -110.2308250

To:
From: Jason Musante, OSC
Date: 9/12/2011
Reporting Period: 08/29/11 - 09/10/11

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

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

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

Transport of stockpiled mine waste to the repository via the skyline cable yarder continues as the main work activity at the Site. Approximately 1,300 yd³ of waste remains in the stockpile on the valley floor and transport to the top of the Mesa is expected to be completed by 9/17/11. Inspection of the skyline system cables identified excessive wear on the haulback cable and it was replaced proactively. The skyline system has had additional maintenance issues, including a leaking air coupling and a compressor motor failure that have slowed work progress. Additional monsoon events have brought high winds and significant rainfall in the late afternoons.

August 29 – September 3, 2011

OSC Dunkelman onsite this week.

This week ERRS:

- Completed replacement of the haulback cable on the skyline yarder system.
- Continued water conveyance system operations.
- Continued site-wide road improvements and maintenance.
- Continued dust control program using water for dust suppression.
- Continued transport of stockpiled mine waste materials to top of Mesa via the skyline cable yarder.

START performed air sampling around work zones as part of the effluent dust sampling program.

September 5 – 10, 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 transport of stockpiled mine waste materials to top of Mesa via the skyline cable yarder.

START performed air sampling around work zones as part of the effluent dust sampling program.

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.

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

- Transport of uranium mine waste excavated from the valley floor areas to the repository is expected to be complete by 9/17/11.
- Once all the mine waste has 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.
- Radiation surveys of the stockpile area and loading area on top of the Mesa, clean up of work areas, and demob of equipment.
- Areas impacted by removal activities will be seeded with native plant species to help restore the land.

2.2.2 Issues

- Maintenance and repair of the skyline yarder system have caused delays in the transport of mine waste to the repository.

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

2.7.2 Community Involvement Coordinator

OSC Musante attended the Oljato Chapter monthly meeting on August 21st to give an update on site progress. EPA provided a translator to also communicate the update in Navajo.

3. Participating Entities

3.1 Unified Command

N/A

3.2 Cooperating Agencies

Navajo Nation EPA Superfund (NN EPA)

4. Personnel On Site

- 1 EPA OSC
- 1 START – E&E
- 13 ERRS – EQM, 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

6.2 Reporting Schedule

The next POLREP will be submitted on 9/27/11.

7. Situational Reference Materials

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