

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY  
ALBUQUERQUE OPERATIONS OFFICE  
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# DOE NEWS:

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## DOE ISSUES RECORD OF DECISION ON CLEANUP OF GRAND JUNCTION TAILINGS

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) has issued the Record of Decision (ROD) concerning cleanup of radioactive mill tailings from the inactive Climax uranium processing site at Grand Junction, Colorado.

Issuance of the ROD concludes compliance activities required under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) before cleanup of the tailings may proceed.

In the ROD, the DOE states, "after consideration of all reasonable project alternatives, the DOE has decided to relocate the residual materials from the Grand Junction site to the Cheney Reservoir site for long-term stabilization and control in compliance with the EPA standards."

Contaminated materials from the tailings site and associated vicinity properties will be transported to the Cheney Reservoir site, buried partly below ground, and covered with layers of earth and rock. The mode of tailings transportation (truck or truck/train combination) will be determined by a competitive bidding process. Among the factors to be considered in evaluating bids are the bidders safety plan, environmental impact mitigation plan, transportation option/scheme, and schedule.

The Cheney Reservoir disposal site is located approximately 18 miles southeast of Grand Junction.

In March, 1987, the DOE released a final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) examining environmental impacts from the Cheney Reservoir disposal option and four other remedial action alternatives. Radiation exposure, transportation impacts, air quality effects, land use impacts, and costs were among the issues evaluated in comparing the alternatives.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has promulgated standards for the remedial actions. To comply with the EPA standards, the stabilized tailings piles are designed to reduce emissions of radon gas to safe levels, to withstand the forces of erosion for at least two hundred years, and to protect groundwater.

Cleanup of the tailings at Grand Junction and eight other Western Slope locations has been mandated by Congress under the Uranium Mill Tailings Radiation Control Act of 1978. The State of Colorado entered into a cooperative agreement with DOE in 1981 to participate in the remedial action program. Remedial actions are being administered by the DOE's Albuquerque Operations Office.

Persons wishing additional information on the Grand Junction ROD or the UMTRA Project in general may reach the DOE toll-free at 1-800-523-6495. (In New Mexico, call 1-800-423-2539.) Please leave a message on an answering machine and a project representative will return the call.

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