

Bonita Peak Mining District Update

March 2019



COLORADO
Department of Public
Health & Environment



<http://www.epa.gov/superfund/bonita-peak>

Community Meeting and Open House Introducing EPA's Goals for the Bonita Peak Mining District

Please join EPA Regional Administrator Doug Benevento and the Bonita Peak Mining District site team to discuss EPA's goals for the site and activities that are planned for 2019. There will be a presentation followed by ample time for questions and answers. Agency representatives will be available at the end of the meeting for one-on-one conversations.

Wednesday, March 13, 2019, from 6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.
Silverton Town Hall, 1360 Greene St, Silverton, Colo.

Recent Activities

- Site investigation activities by the CDPHE and the ASARCO Multi-State Environmental Custodial Trust are planned at the Aspen Mine and Amy Tunnel for the summer and fall of 2019. This work will further characterize the site and waste rock piles as well as identify viable stabilization alternatives to address the acid generation potential of the waste rock piles. Revegetation studies will be performed using test plots in the field at a later date, following the application of the selected stabilization remedy.
- EPA has completed the BPMD Aquatic Baseline Ecological Risk Assessment (BERA). Using multiple, independent lines of evidence, the BERA evaluated risks to aquatic receptors associated with BPMD mine features. These included small animals living on the bottom of streams and rivers, fish and aquatic wildlife. EPA appreciates the assistance of the Biological Technical Advisory Group (BTAG) in the development of the BERA. The BTAG is a group of scientists from various organizations formed to advise and assist with ecological studies produced for the BPMD. Members include State and Federal agencies, natural resources trustees, State and Tribal governments, and other stakeholder groups. EPA has prepared a fact sheet on the BERA, which is available at <https://semspub.epa.gov/src/document/08/100005967>. The BERA can be viewed at <https://semspub.epa.gov/src/document/08/1915915>.
- The most recent BPMD Community Advisory Group (CAG) meeting was February 28, 2019. The next meeting is scheduled for March 28, location and time to be determined. For more information visit: <https://go.usa.gov/xECCD>.

Upcoming Events

- Citizens should expect to see a low-flying helicopter towing a large wire-loop hanging from a cable in the Bonita Peak Mining District Superfund area near Silverton, Colo., starting in March and continuing for approximately two weeks. This helicopter is under contract to the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) and will

be operating in cooperation with the U.S. Forest Service, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE), and EPA.

The helicopter-borne geophysical system will collect measurements in the Bonita Peak Mining District, with focused efforts in Mineral Creek basin, upper Cement Creek basin, Eureka, Placer, California, and Arrastra Gulches. These surveys involve flying low to the ground on a specific planned path to measure the electrical properties of the Earth's subsurface. Data collected during this survey will assist USGS scientists in mapping shallow to deep groundwater flow paths of varying water quality, faults that may be permeable for groundwater flow, and subsurface bedrocks associated with altered and mineralized zones that have been mined historically.

- On April 23, 2019, EPA is hosting a live webinar on Long-Term Performance of Biochemical Reactors for Passive Treatment of Mine-Impacted Water. Register here: <https://clu-in.org/conf/tio/mining-bcr/>.
- During the 2019 field season, EPA Region 8, EPA's Office of Research and Development (ORD), and CDPHE will be using high-resolution water sensors to provide pH, conductivity, and temperature monitoring in Cement Creek and the Animas River. The investigation using these water sensors will be coupled with a fiber optic distributed temperature sensing project being conducted with USGS. Both technologies are innovative and will provide accurate water quality and groundwater seepage measurements with high spatial resolution to support BPMD site investigation and remediation efforts.



Water sensors to be deployed in 2019.

New on the Web

- Bonita Peak Mining District Update, February 2019 – Spanish (Novedades del distrito minero Bonita Peak, Febrero de 2017) <https://semspub.epa.gov/src/document/08/100005922>
- Aquatic Baseline Ecological Risk Assessment Fact Sheet <https://semspub.epa.gov/src/document/08/100005967>
- Aquatic Baseline Ecological Risk Assessment <https://semspub.epa.gov/src/document/08/1915915>