

Bonita Peak Community Advisory Group May 23, 2019 MEETING NOTES

The Bonita Peak Community Advisory Group (CAG) met on May 23th from 6 to 8:50 PM at the Silverton Town Hall. Fifteen of the 17 CAG Members were in attendance: Peter Butler, Ty Churchwell, Paul Montoia, Charles Smith, Chara Ragland, Anthony Edwards, Larry Perino, John Ott, Melissa May, Jenna Emerick, Terry Morris, Parker Newby, Levi Lloyd, Brian Devine, and Marcel Gaztambide. Approximately five members of the public attended plus representatives of EPA, CDPHE, DRMS, BLM, and USGS.

Peter opened the meeting with introductions by CAG members and other attendees. Then Jenna made a motion to approve the previous meeting's notes. Anthony seconded the motion; there was no discussion, and the April 2019 Meeting notes were approved unanimously.

Possible Sub-Group to Develop Public Outreach

As a follow up to an item suggested from the last meeting, there is discussion about exploring other ways to increase public outreach. Several CAG members met informally to start a discussion several weeks ago. Peter suggests that a sub-group be created to brainstorm ideas and to bring those ideas back to the overall CAG. He recommended a motion to appoint a chair to the sub-group and let any other interested CAG members participate in the sub-group as they wish with the idea that about four or five members would do so. Charlie makes a motion to create the sub-group with Marcel as chair. Melissa seconds and the motion carries unanimously. Other members who may participate in the sub-group include Ty, Chara, Jenna, and Terry.

Discussion on Technical Assistance Grant (TAG)

There was a lot of discussion about potentially applying to EPA for a TAG. Although some of a TAG can be used for administrative costs, the main purpose is to fund technical expertise to assist local groups in understanding technical documents produced for a Superfund site. Only one TAG can be authorized per site, although it can be renewed. The TAG has to go to an incorporated non-profit. When an application is received EPA publishes a notice and potentially other groups can also express interest in receiving the grant.

Much of the discussion centered on what non-profit would apply for a grant or if one would have to be created. There were concerns expressed about how much control the CAG might have over administration of the grant. People also felt that the CAG already has a great deal of expertise and bringing an outside expert up to speed may not be worth the time and effort.

CAG members expressed interest in pursuing other funding sources particularly for administrative needs. Currently TU is funding the website and other expenses. Several funding possible sources were discussed.

Charlie moved that we table the TAG discussion until a need for a TAG arises. Paul seconded and the motion passed unanimously. Peter asks if there is interest in forming a sub-group to look at

other funding sources. Several people suggest we need to develop a set of funding needs first. Brian moved that we discuss a sub-group at the next meeting. Levi seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

EPA: Planned 2019 Activities and Cultural Resources:

Before EPA began its discussion, Cynthia Peterson distributed some EPA documents that the CAG had requested including a primer for Superfund, an acronym list, and organizational chart for the Bonita Peak site. Ty said he will get links for these documents to put on the website.

Christina Progress, Rob Parker, and Natasha Davis of the EPA moved into the circle. Christina discussed EPA activities for 2019. Rob said EPA has signed the IROD and only a few small changes have been made. Several sites were removed because landowners or state will do work voluntarily. EPA will focus on the human health risk sites first.

There was quite a bit of discussion regarding prioritization of sites, human health contaminants, road construction costs to access sites under the IROD, and the new unilateral order EPA has issued Sunnyside Gold requiring wells to be drilled in the Lake Emma area. There was also much discussion on this year's sampling plans with a particular focus on characterizing groundwater inflows.

EPA then presented the process they are going through with respect to cultural and historic significance of sites under the IROD. They look to see if cultural surveys already exist and discuss significance of sites with the San Juan Historical Society and the Utes. They will also conduct cultural surveys themselves or through contractors if needed.

Gladstone Area, Sunnyside Gold – CDPHE Consent Decree:

Peter made a presentation on the Gladstone area and the Consent Decree. He emphasized that that this area is easily the biggest source of mining-related metal loading and will likely be the most expensive to remediate. It is also likely to be the area of the most legal contention, and there are widely differing opinions on what should be done and who should ultimately be responsible.

Peter described how the consent decree came about, the basics of the decree, and how the metal loading around Gladstone changed before and after the decree was implemented. He also touched upon some the legal and ownership issues.

Treatment of the Gold King discharge costs about \$1.5 - \$2.0 million annually. There is currently no permanent location for all the sludge produced. The plant could treat other nearby mine drainages as well, but that would increase the costs and sludge production. EPA, with a lot of assistance from MSI, is investigating the hydrology of the area to see if hydrologic controls can be implemented to reduce metal loading and reduce potential future treatment of mine drainage.

The CAG asked a number of questions, and there was a lot of discussion about the different issues.

Administrative Items

The CAG discussed next month's meeting. It decided to have a tour of mine sites in the basin during the day on June 27th and have its regular meeting in Silverton in the evening. The main topic for the meeting will be EPA's Human Health Risk Assessment.

The group also discussed topics for future meetings. Topics that were of primary interest in the near-term include more detail as to what will occur at sites listed in the IROD, issues regarding bulkheads in mines, and water quality standards.

Two members of the CAG have had to resign. The CAG asked the executive committee to send out a notice requesting applications to fill the seats to all the various email lists that different CAG members have. The applications will be due before the next meeting so that the CAG will know how many applicants there are and can discuss a process for moving forward from there.

Public Comment

There was no public comment other than those given during discussion of various topics above.