

**Meeting Summary**  
**Bonita Peak Community Advisory Group**  
**January 23, 2019, 2:30—5:15 PM**  
**Durango Rec. Center, 2700 Main Ave.**

Attendees: Peter Butler, Ty Churchwell, Anthony Edwards, Parker Newby, Melissa May, Jenna Emerick, Trevor Downing, Larry Perino, Terry Morris, Marcel Gaztambide, Charlie Smith, John Ott, Levi Lloyd, Russ Anderson, Chara Ragland. Not in attendance: Brian Devine and Paul Montoia who just resigned.

There were also representatives from DRMS, MSI, BLM, Rep. Tipton's office, the Southern Ute Tribe and several members of the public.

**Introductions, Announcements, and Approval of Meeting Summary**

After introductions, Russ moved to approve the December meeting summary, Charlie seconded. All were in favor for approval.

CAG members have continued winter sampling by riding the train into Cascade each month. Parker and Chara went in January; Ty and Peter plan to go in February. TU purchased a nine-foot sampling pole for the CAG which will make sampling safer when there is ice along the banks of the river. Lab costs for samples are being covered through CDPHE.

Through Duranglers, TU has received a grant from Patagonia to help the CAG with its work within the BPMD. TU has to produce several deliverables, but those are generally things the CAG was planning on doing anyway.

The CAG submitted a grant application to the Southwestern Water Conservation Board to fund updating the ARSG water quality database and doing some analysis of the data. We won't hear about funding for a couple of more weeks. Scott Roberts from MSI asked about how far down the river will the database go because they have quite a bit of data below Bakers Bridge and if we would include macroinvertebrate data. Peter said the data went below Durango and initially the focus would be on water quality. There was some discussion as to what data may be available, what format would it be in and how it would be housed on the Bonita Peak CAG website.

The CAG received a copy of a letter SGC sent to EPA complaining about EPA's lack of transparency regarding certain issues, particularly the use of the Kittimac tailings as a sludge repository.

There was also discussion of a letter in the Silverton Standard from Todd Hennis, the owner of the Gold King, Mogul, and a number of other mining sites decrying the CAG's support of installing more bulkheads near Gladstone instead of removing the American

Tunnel bulkheads and draining the Sunnyside mine pool. There was also an article in the Durango Herald describing Mr. Hennis's perspective.

There is some discussion on if statements in the letter are accurate and on whether or not to respond to the letter. That lead to a more general discussion about how to respond inaccurate information that might be circulating around. Having CAG members aware of issues can be helpful because we can all address questions in our own networks of people and institutions. No decision is made on drafting a more formal response to the letter.

### **Follow Up on BPMD Site Strategies**

BPMD is one of six sites around the nation where EPA is trying a different approach to speed up the Superfund process. At this site, EPA is looking to develop Interim Records of Decision (IROD's) so that some on the ground work can occur before all final decisions are made. Over the past few months, a number of entities including the CAG and the San Juan County/Silverton Planning Group have had discussions with EPA about a site strategy management plan. The CAG drafted a letter outlining its position with regards to a site strategy which was closely aligned with the Planning Group's position. Ty, Peter, and Anthony had a conference call with EPA a couple of days ago, and EPA indicated that they going to move in the direction that the CAG and Planning Group suggested. EPA will discuss the site strategy in more detail in the following meetings.

### **Presentation on Bulkheads and Mine Sites with Backed Up Water**

Kirstin Brown with the Colo. Div. of Reclamation, Mining and Safety (DRMS) gave a presentation on the pros and cons of bulkheading mines. There are 17 bulkheads currently in the BPMD. Those that are accessible have been inspected by DRMS during the past couple of years. There was a lot of discussion during the presentation. The powerpoint will be available on the Bonita Peak CAG website.

Kirstin also discussed the potential for different types unplanned releases from mining facilities. She gave a number of examples and discussed how DRMS is identifying those mine sites with potential for releases around the BPMD. This presentation is tacked on to the bulkhead presentation on the CAG website.

### **Animas River Keeper Mapping Project**

Marcel Gaztambide with San Juan Citizens Alliance and Animas River Keeper presented a mapping project of the Animas River watershed that he has been working on. It's similar to Google Earth and provides detailed satellite pictures of the various mine sites in the BPMD. He has mapped EPA's list of BPMD sites and added a few others. He has also uploaded information from EPA, DRMS, and USGS about the various sites. One can click on each site to pull it up. Overall it should be very useful as an educational tool to help people understand where sites are and what they look like.

In addition, Marcel is working on a river runners map with detailed information about rapids, river hazards, and property ownership. A link has been provided to CAG members to review both maps, but is not yet available to the general public.

### **Administrative Items**

CDPHE asked the CAG to produce a Sampling and Analysis Plan (SAP) for the sampling the group is doing. The CAG is following the same standard operating procedures as EPA in collecting samples and is using an EPA approved lab for processing. Peter is putting together a SAP.

We are hopefully scheduling a presentation on sampling and groundwater flows by Rory Cowie in the Gladstone area for the next meeting on Feb. 27<sup>th</sup> in Silverton. We may also discuss water quality data the CAG has been collecting in the Animas Canyon. Anthony and Peter are working to coordinate the CAG meetings and Planning Group meetings so we can both attend some of the same presentations.

We also discussed doing a broader, community update during an evening in April. That also might be a good time announce an opening on the CAG with Paul's resignation.

Melissa brought up the CAG might want to present or have a New Mexico meeting in conjunction with the 4<sup>th</sup> annual San Juan/Animas conference on June 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>. Ty and Andrew Todd presented on the Animas River fisheries last year at the conference

### **Executive Committee Appointments**

Under the bylaws, CAG needs to appoint an executive committee at the beginning of each year. This year there was only one nomination for each position. Ty nominated Peter Butler as chair. Terry moved to approve Peter as chair, and Melissa seconded. All voted in favor. Vice Chair: Peter nominated Ty Churchwell as vice chair; Jenna motioned for approval and Charlie seconded. All voted in favor. Secretary/Treasurer: we have some money coming in from sources so we added the title "treasurer" to that of secretary. Peter nominated John Ott as Secretary/Treasurer. Marcel motioned approve John Ott and Charlie seconded. All voted in favor.

**5:10 PM**

**Adjourn**