

# Bonita Peak Mining District Update

May 2020



**COLORADO**  
Department of Public  
Health & Environment



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

## Site Announcements

- EPA is taking the necessary steps to ensure that decisions about ongoing activities at Superfund sites are made with the health and safety of communities, EPA staff, federal and state partners, and contractors as the priority. After careful coordination with San Juan County Office of Emergency Management and San Juan Public Health, EPA contractors have completed two critical maintenance activities necessary to continue operations of the Interim Water Treatment Plant (IWTP). The corrosion repairs to the two clarifiers were completed in the first two weeks of May and the pond desludging was started mid-May.

For the corrosion repairs of the clarifiers, the existing lining was removed, welding repairs were made, the clarifier was relined, and cathodic protection was installed. The pond desludging and cleaning is done each spring. This process includes adding lime to the sludge and pumping the sludge down to the containment bags located outside of the IWTP.

- Colorado Department of Public Health is hosting the FREE 8-Hour Health and Safety Training virtually on June 22.

Please note that the 40-hour certification should be considered a pre-requisite for taking this refresher class. There is no charge for participants. For more information or to register, please go to the following link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83910087781>. You can also reach out to Laura Dixon ([laura.dixon@state.co.us](mailto:laura.dixon@state.co.us)) at CDPHE with any questions.



*Clarifier prepped for work and in the process of having the lining removed from the inside.*

## Site Updates

All tentatively planned field work for summer 2020 will follow strict adherence to COVID-19 guidance from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) as well as requirements from the State of Colorado and San Juan County. All site work plans will include extensive health and safety plans and coordination with San Juan County Public Health.

### Priority Field Work Tentatively Scheduled for Summer 2020:

#### 1. Red and Bonita Head Test

EPA is planning to conduct the Red and Bonita bulkhead test later in summer 2020. This will include a visual inspection of the bulkhead before closing it to bring the water pressure behind the bulkhead up to

200 feet. The process is expected to take one to two months to complete. The seeps and springs along Cement Creek will be sampled during this time. At the end of test, the water will be drawn down and treated at the IWTP before discharging the water. EPA will provide more detailed information about this test during the June CAG meeting.

## 2. 2019 IROD work

EPA would like to continue the 2019 IROD site work at additional source areas. Actions at the Koehler, Junction, Longfellow will include removing sediment from the pond and addressing areas with elevated metal concentrations. IROD work at the Natalie/Occidental source area involves replacement of the existing culvert under the county road.

## 3. Dispersed Campground Cleanup

CDPHE plans to work with DRMS to finish site characterization of two dispersed campground areas. After that is completed a cleanup design will be developed and contractor procured for fall 2020 or spring 2021 construction.

## 4. Ben Butler Safety Closure

CDPHE will work with DRMS pertaining to their safety closure at the Ben Butler Mine so that the work being conducted will meet requirements for the BPMD criteria. Work at the Ben Butler will include waste rock amendments and backfill with this amended waste rock to the open stopes at the site. Additional surface water run on controls will be installed to limit potential water intrusion into the mine workings.

## New on the Web

- [BPMD Update, April 2020 \(PDF\)](https://semspub.epa.gov/src/document/08/100007645) (3 pp, 1.2 MB)  
<https://semspub.epa.gov/src/document/08/100007645>
- [BPMD Update, March 2020 – Spanish \(Novedades del distrito minero Bonita Peak, marzo de 2020\) \(PDF\)](https://semspub.epa.gov/src/document/08/100007582) (2 páginas, 1.2 MB)  
<https://semspub.epa.gov/src/document/08/100007582>
- [2016-2018 Seeps, Springs, and Draining Mines Characterization Report \(PDF\)](https://semspub.epa.gov/src/document/08/100007694) (481 pp, 15.2 MB)  
<https://semspub.epa.gov/src/document/08/100007694>
- [Digging Deeper: 2019 Year in Review and 2020 Site Planning Presentation \(PDF\)](https://semspub.epa.gov/src/document/08/100007684)  
<https://semspub.epa.gov/src/document/08/100007684>