

Bonita Peak Mining District Update

July 2020



COLORADO
Department of Public
Health & Environment



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

Site Announcements

EPA will soon be releasing a proposed plan to construct a site-wide repository to centrally manage mine waste. The proposed plan will be accompanied by a feasibility study. On Tuesday, August 11, 2020 from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m., please join the EPA site team for a virtual public meeting to submit formal public comments on the proposed plan for a site-wide repository. The formal public comment period will begin at 7 p.m.

EPA will share a brief presentation about the proposal for a site-wide waste repository. Following the presentation, EPA will address questions and provide clarifications on the presentation prior to the beginning of the formal public comment period. Questions received during the question and answer session will not be considered public comments. Beginning at 7 p.m., EPA will accept formal public comments on the proposed plan.

How to join the meeting:

Visit the EPA [Bonita Peak website](https://www.epa.gov/superfund/bonita-peak) for the meeting link at: <https://www.epa.gov/superfund/bonita-peak> or join the [Adobe Connect](https://epawebconferencing.acms.com/bpmdproposedplan/) session via this link on August 11:
<https://epawebconferencing.acms.com/bpmdproposedplan/>

In addition to this virtual public meeting, interested parties will be able to submit comments via email throughout the comment period. More information on how to review the feasibility study and how to provide comments can be found in the upcoming proposed plan.

Site Updates

Summer work at the site is moving forward in coordination with San Juan County Public Health to ensure extensive health and safety measures are in place. Under the 2019 Interim Record of Decision (IROD), work is beginning at the following source areas: Kohler, Junction and Longfellow, Natalie Occidental, Ben Butler, and Dispersed Campsites (Campground 4 and 7).

Red and Bonita Bulkhead Test

The Red and Bonita bulkhead test started on July 15, 2020. The pressure behind the Red and Bonita bulkhead was raised 50 feet and pressure will be increased to reach 200 feet, at which point, the pressure will be held. During this time, the bulkhead and surrounding structures will be monitored regularly. Sampling of Cement Creek, nearby draining mines, and seeps and springs along Cement Creek will also be conducted.

At the end of the test, the water that has accumulated behind the bulkhead will be drawn down and fully controlled at the bulkhead valve and be treated at the Interim Water Treatment Plan (IWTP).

Natalie Occidental

Currently, the Natalie/Occidental adit discharge flows over the existing waste pile, leading to erosion and waste rock migration to Cement Creek. This summer, the adit discharge will be re-routed so it no longer erodes the waste pile and the portal grate will be cleared to reduce the buildup of mine sediment and debris on the grate allowing adit discharge to freely flow to Cement Creek.



Kohler, Junction and Longfellow

This summer, crews will be removing sediment buildup within the sediment ponds adjacent to the Kohler and the Junction adits. This sediment will be stored on site until a site-wide repository is built. This will ensure water flows safely from the portals, through the ponds, and out to Mineral Creek without causing migration of additional waste in the sediment. Flat areas which could be used for recreation and contain elevated contaminant levels will be covered to mitigate excess exposure to recreational users.

Ben Butler

The State of Colorado will be conducting a safety closure at the Ben Butler Mine. Work at the Ben Butler will include waste rock amendments and backfill with this amended waste rock to close open stopes at the site. The closure will be contoured to physically mitigate the risk of stormwater interacting with the waste rock.

Dispersed Campsites (Campground 4 and 7)

The State of Colorado will be working to characterize high contamination points at Campground 4. After characterization is complete, the state will develop a cleanup design and project construction bids to reclaim the contaminated areas for Campgrounds 4 and 7 during the 2021 construction season.

BLM Mayday Mine Repository

The Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) contractors are conducting maintenance on the Mayday Mine Repository located on BLM managed land adjacent to County Road 110A within the Cement Creek watershed, from July 7–August 17. Work includes regrading, hauling in borrow material, and installing steel sheet pile using a large crane. The BLM is working closely with San Juan County officials during this work to ensure that traffic is minimally interrupted during construction. The BLM will also be conducting maintenance activities at Forest Queen and Lewis Lake during this time frame.

New on the Web

- [BMPD Update, June 2020 \(PDF\)](https://sempub.epa.gov/src/document/08/100008091) (2 pp, 1.3 MB)
<https://sempub.epa.gov/src/document/08/100008091>
- [BMPD Update, June 2020 – Spanish](https://sempub.epa.gov/src/document/08/100008092)
[Novedades del distrito minero Bonita Peak, Junio de 2020 \(PDF\)](https://sempub.epa.gov/src/document/08/100008092) (2 pp, 1.3 MB)
<https://sempub.epa.gov/src/document/08/100008092>

