

Bonita Peak Mining District Update

September 2020 Recap



COLORADO
Department of Public
Health & Environment



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

Site Updates

Red and Bonita Bulkhead Test

EPA has completed the Red and Bonita bulkhead test. On September 21 EPA began the controlled draw down of the water impounded behind the bulkhead. The draw down will take place over a several week period and the water will be diverted and treated at the Interim Water Treatment Plan (IWTP). The draw-down activity has been coordinated with the IWTP operators and the IWTP is ready to temporarily accommodate the extra flow.

Treatment of all Red and Bonita bulkhead water will continue until the Red and Bonita mine pool has been drained. Following the mine drawdown and after water parameters are met, water will return flowing into Cement Creek, as is the pre-test condition.

EPA Regional Administrator Visits Bonita Peak Mining District

At the end of September, EPA Regional Administrator Greg Sopkin and Chief of Staff Jag Sethuraman visited Silverton and Durango, Colorado to meet with stakeholders and local officials. Regional Administrator Sopkin wanted to update community members about the Administrators Emphasis List and share his support for the Bonita Peak Mining District site.

During his trip, Regional Administrator Sopkin announced that the BPMD site will remain on the Administrators Emphasis List for another year. The BPMD site was added to the list in 2017 with the milestone of creating a Site Management Plan. Over the past few years EPA has worked with the community to establish site goals and priorities. These actions helped create a comprehensive planning document, which lays the foundation for site work for the future. The draft Site Management Plan was sent to the Silverton Planning Group and Community Advisory Group at the end of September.

This comprehensive planning document lays out the foundation and methodology for all EPA planning, decision-making, prioritization, scheduling, documentation and knowledge integration for all response actions at the site. By keeping the site on the Administrators Emphasis List, the BPMD team will be able to use the Site Management Plan and go through a planning cycle for a year first.



EPA Regional Administrator Greg Sopkin meeting with Silverton Town Trustees outside the Mayflower Mill

2019 IROD Source Area Work

EPA Koehler, Junction, Longfellow Mines

At the end of September, EPA and our contractors began implementing the IROD work at the Koehler, Junction, and Longfellow mines. The work entails replacing a culvert underneath Road 825 and removing sediment and sludge from the pond located in the area. The culvert has successfully been replaced and EPA is currently in the process of removing the sludge.

United States Forest Service Brooklyn Mine Work

Starting on September 29, 2020, the USFS began work at the Brooklyn Mine. The USFS is working with Colorado Division of Reclamation, Mining and Safety (DRMS) to complete the diversion control site work. During this work there is a chance that turbidity might increase in Emporium Creek, which may cause localized discoloration in Mineral Creek. The work will be ongoing for the next two to three weeks.



Contractors begin the sludge removal process at the Kohler Mine.