

Meeting Summary
Bonita Peak Community Advisory Group
August 27, 2020, 6:30—8:15 PM
Via Computer Conferencing

Introductions and Announcements

Peter Butler, Chara Ragland, Ty Churchwell, Larry Perino, Marcel Gaztambide, Anthony Edwards, Russ Anderson, Parker Newby, John Ott, Charles Smith, Melissa May (not in attendance: Terry Morris, Levi Lloyd, Brian Devine)

Willy and Chris Tookey, Linda Figueroa, Marcie Bidwell, Dennis McQuillan, Lisa Merrill, Aaron, Mark Rudolph, Pat Maley, Katherine Jenkins, Clay Self, Myers, Kirstin Brown, Athena Jones, Michelle Hamilton, David Heinze, Walt Brown, Ryan Bennet, Ian Bowen, James Hou, Forrest Vaughan, Scott Roberts, Laura Dixon, Aaron Urdiales, John Reiter, Jeffrey, BHansen,

EPA Updates

Bonita Peak's Place on the Emphasis List

Aaron Urdiales from EPA described the process. The Administrators Emphasis List (AEL) is not a ranking of Superfund sites. EPA Headquarters uses it as a list of sites that need attention at certain times to progress forward. BPMD is on the AEL, and in order for it to come off, a milestone has to be hit. The list is updated every quarter.

The milestone for BPMD could be the development of the Strategic Site Management Plan. No decision about moving BPMD of the list has been made so far. Final determination will be based on the metrics and will take into account community concerns. The ultimate decision is made by Administrator Wheeler. If a site comes off the AEL, it can still go back on if there is a need. Currently, there are three sites in Region 8 on the list. Taking BPMD off the list should not affect the resources that Region 8 is putting in to the site.

EPA Site Strategy Management Plan Update

Christina Prograss with EPA discussed. The CAG has seen and commented on three draft chapters of the Plan. They are being reworked based upon comments. Those three plus the last two should be sent out to the CAG by the middle of September. The CAG should have 3-4 weeks to review and comment.

Red & Bonita Bulkhead Monitoring Update

James Hou with EPA discussed. We are now in week 7 of the Bulkhead Test. The valve was closed July 20th. Currently, water has reached an elevation of 170 feet behind the bulkhead. The rate of increase in elevation has slowed to about 1.5 feet per day. There is some seepage around the bulkhead and flow at the portal is a trickle – both of which were expected. Weekly monitoring and sampling continues. Some new seeps have emerged in places that show signs where seeps have occurred in the past. EPA is currently developing a plan to sample the new seeps. It appears that the water elevation will not meet the target of 200 feet by mid-September which is when EPA wants to start drawdown behind the bulkhead. Overall, water has not risen as quickly as anticipated. This has been an abnormally dry year with little late summer monsoons and that may play a factor.

Water that was released at the bulkhead valve to hold the head at 50 feet earlier in the test was treated at the Gladstone plant. All the drawdown water will be routed there as well. The R & B is the second largest point source of metals next to the Gold King in the basin. This test gives an opportunity to monitor water quality downstream with the two biggest point sources essentially shut off.

Removing Sites from 46 Site List

Christina says there is a process for delisting sites. Essentially, the site or parts thereof, is investigated to make sure there are not releases of hazardous materials and no further action is needed. If there has been site remediation, then there are stipulations of institutional protocols used to ensure the remediation remains effective. To delist, there must be in an IROD which goes to public comment and notice goes to the Federal Register. EPA is thinking about what upcoming IROD's could be used for delisting sites and is open to feedback on what areas should be considered.

Next Steps on Mayflower Repository

Christina thanked the CAG and other groups that have submitted comments. She was happy to see this level of engagement. EPA is in the process of compiling and responding to the comments. There will be a responsive summary in the upcoming IROD. They hope to have a draft IROD finalized by end of the calendar year if possible. Then they move into the remedial design phase to determine what construction will look like including road improvements. Next, they will move into a more detailed phase of design and will come back to CAG and Silverton Planning Group to seek input. Hopefully the repository can be constructed next summer season.

Pat Maley – Sunnyside Gold Corporation (SGC) investigations. SGC completed sampling in June, analyzed the data in July and submitted a revised workplan a few days ago. They are awaiting a response from EPA.

U.S. Forest Service Activities in the Basin this Year

Walt Brown the U.S. Forest Service discussed the agency's activities. The main activities are at the Brooklyn mine. They are taking four actions.

First, they are working with DRMS, starting in mid-September, to install run off controls related to storm water. Second, they plan to tune up the level one adit area by moving some material to make it safer and look better. Then there will be a general site cleanup consisting of picking up scrap metal and drums. And lastly, they plan to do maintenance and repair of level two adit to prepare for further actions in that area.

The FS is also transitioning from collecting data to analyzing data. They have an agreement with Rocky Mtn. Research lab to analyze and write the report. They are also working to get their Mineral Creek data onto the EPA SharePoint site. SharePoint is a database that is used for storage before it goes into Scribe. Scribe is what EPA uses for interpretation and decision making.

Administrative Items

Meeting Summary

Charlie made a motion to approve the June notes. John Ott seconded. All approved. The July meeting summary was sent out shortly before the meeting, so we will wait to vote on that until next month.

Comments on EPA Feasibility Study on Mayflower Repository

After some discussion about possible final changes to the CAG comments about the Mayflower Repository Feasibility Study, Melissa made a motion to accept the draft as written to make the deadline of today. Charlies seconded. All in favor. Parker has Terry Morris's proxy. Peter will send in comments after the meeting.

CAG Vacancy

Ty sent out an email blast notifying people of the opportunity to apply. He will also place ads in local newspapers next week. A subcommittee of five people to review applications which are due September 14th.

Website Updates

Ty has been working on some website updates. In addition, the website needs to be refreshed. Chara and Peter interested in helping. Let Ty know if you want to participate.

Increasing Outreach Efforts – Local Media

The local radio station, KSUT, did an interview with a Denver reporter about the Gold King spill and the BPMD which several CAG members heard. Those members thought it left out a lot of important information and didn't include any local perspective. Chara reached out to the station with her concerns, and the station did a follow up interview with her which went well. With this experience in mind, the CAG felt we need to do a better job of reaching out to local and state media about the CAG and activities at BMPD. Several CAG members know different reporters, and the group decided a first step is making sure those people are on our email list.

Long-Range Schedule-

Terrestrial assessment is supposed to come out in October. Christina will check up on that.

Let Peter know if there is anything else that should be on an agenda.

Future Agenda Items? Animas Canyon Water Quality Data, BPMD Site Strategies Updates, Macroinvertebrate Data, Tour of Gladstone Treatment Plant, Site Specific plans for interim remedial actions, Terrestrial Baseline Risk Assessment, Sampling and data analysis, Little Dora and North Star Remediation, etc.

Sampling on Wednesday September 2nd if anyone wants to hike down the Cascade Creek Trail or the Colorado Trail below Molas Lake. Contact Peter if you are interested.

8:10 PM

Adjourn