

Bonita Peak Mining District Update

October 2020



COLORADO
Department of Public
Health & Environment



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

Site Updates

Red and Bonita Bulkhead Test

On September 21, 2020, the Red and Bonita (R&B) bulkhead test transitioned to the drawdown phase having reached a maximum of 184 ft. of head. After treating impounded water behind the R&B bulkhead at the Interim Water Treatment Plant (IWTP), discharge from the mine was returned to Cement Creek on October 22, 2020. Mine discharge flow and chemistry were verified as having returned to pretest conditions. A post-drawdown round of surface-water sampling is scheduled to be conducted within the next two weeks, as conditions allow. A report will be drafted after the data have been analyzed and will provide valuable information on the bulkhead's performance and potential hydrogeologic impacts.

2019 IROD Source Area Work

EPA Koehler, Junction, Longfellow Mines

EPA began work at the Koehler, Junction, and Longfellow mines in September. The work entails replacing a culvert beneath Road 825 and removing sediment and sludge from the pond located in the area. The culvert has successfully been replaced and EPA has installed a safety fence and will continue sludge removal in Spring 2021.

United States Forest Service Brooklyn Mine Work

Beginning on September 29, 2020, the USFS began work at the Brooklyn Mine. The USFS is working with the Colorado Division of Reclamation, Mining and Safety (DRMS) to complete Brooklyn project work. During this work there is a chance that turbidity might increase in Emporium Creek, which may cause localized discoloration in Mineral Creek. Trash and scrap metal have been removed from the site to recycle centers and landfills as appropriate. The Level One and Two diversion controls have been constructed. Over the next two weeks, depending on weather, USFS hopes to complete the Lower Level diversion controls.



Fire preparedness at IWTP

In response to the Ice Lake fire near Silverton, EPA evaluated existing emergency protocols to determine if improvements were necessary in the event that fires, or other natural disasters may require evacuation of the IWTP in the future. EPA updated evacuation protocols and emergency response plans. EPA closely coordinated with county officials and USFS to determine what EPA resources at the IWTP could be used to benefit fire and emergency response crews in Silverton if needed.