

Meeting Summary
Bonita Peak Community Advisory Group
April 22, 2021, 6:30—8:15 PM
Via Computer Conferencing

CAG Members in Attendance: Peter Butler, John Ott, Ty Churchwell, Russ Anderson, Chara Ragland, Anthony Edwards, Brian Devine, Melissa May, Marcel Gaztambide, Charlie Smith, Parker Newby, and Susan Livenick. Not in attendance: Levi Lloyd, Teal Lehto, and Terry Morris

Also in attendance were about 30 other people.

6:30—6:40 PM Introductions and Announcements

The CAG comments on the Five-Year Plan and this year's task list were sent to EPA and cc'd to several local and state agencies and elected officials. A number of updates and documents are being added to the CAG website. Ty announced that a memorial to the work of ARSG has been completed and will be dedicated on May 7th at 2:00. The memorial is on the banks of the Animas River in Silverton, downstream of the confluence with Cement Creek.

6:40—7:35 PM EPA Plans Regarding Mayflower Repository

Rob Parker with EPA gave a short presentation on the preliminary design of the repository on Mayflower tailings pond #4. It consisted of two repository cells, one of which was an impoundment for containing sludge from the Gladstone treatment plant. The sludge contains a high percentage of water so it cannot be landfilled unless it is thickened either with amendments or dried. The second cell could either be an impoundment or a landfill. A landfill design can accommodate significantly more waste because it can be built up without the need for large containment berms necessary for an impoundment.

A number of questions were asked, including:

Will the repository cells affect characterization of tailings and determination as to if they are a major metal loading source to the Animas River? EPA response: they will work to avoid or mitigate important well sites, and they believe that most of the well sites will not be impacted.

Will the repository affect the ability to remediate the tailings? EPA response: any remediation of the site will occur on the peripheries of pile so potential remediation should not be impacted.

How will the sludge be dried and transported from Gladstone? EPA response: the logistics of transportation are not part of this preliminary design work. Rob did give a short overview as to how sludge is handled at the Gladstone site.

How will stormwater be managed with the large coverage of lined areas on top of the tailings (it's many acres)? EPA response: they are still working on different scenarios as to how they will manage this issue.

Can the CAG see more detailed engineering documents? EPA response: yes, they will provide the CAG with more detailed documents.

Can EPA move away from an impoundment to a landfill configuration by thickening the sludge, such as mixing the sludge with the Howardsville tailing similar to what EPA did with the sludge and the Kittimac tailings? EPA response: that could be a great solution but would require testing to see what the proper mix would be to stabilize the waste.

Joy Jenkins with EPA brought up another addition to the Five-year plan that might occur this year. EPA would like to drill a horizontal borehole parallel to the Gold King Mine tunnel to better characterize the rock structures. They feel the current tunnel will not be very structurally sound over the long-term and want to explore other options for managing the mine drainage underground.

7:35—7:55 PM Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation Act (WIIN Act) and the San Juan Basin Collaboration

Anthony described the WIIN Act funding for the San Juan Basin. Under the Act, specific funding was set aside for water quality activities in the basin after the Gold King spill. The San Juan Basin Collaboration includes representatives of two Ute tribes, the Navajo Nation, Utah, Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona, and EPA and decides how to allocate the funding.

Currently, funding is being used for a number of different projects including covering the costs of lab processing of the water samples the CAG collects. Other projects include other water sampling, assessing pertinent water quality data and literature for the basin, public communication, potentially beaver restoration, post-416 Fire monitoring, river restoration, demonstration of innovative projects, *etc.* Funding was initially provided for 2017-2021, but it appears more funding will be available for future years. More information can be found at <https://www.epa.gov/san-juan-watershed/san-juan-watershed-program-state-and-tribal-projects>.

7:55—8:15 PM Administrative Items

After a request for any comments on the meeting notes (there were none), Marcel moved to approve the March Meeting summary, and John seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

There was discussion about the May meeting agenda. The CAG plans to set aside time for additional questions regarding plans for the Mayflower repository. Rob is going to provide some more detailed, technical documents about EPA's design work for the CAG to review. The CAG would also like EPA to discuss funding mechanisms for the BPMD, *i.e.* what are the different sources, where does it originate, how can it be used, *etc.* The CAG also discussed possibly doing a tour of a number of locations in the BPMD in September.

A week after the last CAG meeting, a short meeting was scheduled for the CAG members to have some discussion time amongst themselves. CAG members felt that was helpful for understanding each other's perspectives and to learn from one another. So, the CAG decided to have another discussion session in a week's time.

8:10 PM

Adjourn