

Meeting Summary

Bonita Peak Community Advisory Group

February 24, 2022, 6:30—8:25 PM

Via Computer Conferencing

CAG members in attendance: Peter Butler, Russ Anderson, Anthony Edwards, Helen Mary Johnson, Charlie Smith, Susan Livenick, Justin Elkins, Ty Churchwell, and Marcel Gaztambide. Not in attendance: Melissa May, Brian Devine, Chara Ragland, John Ott, Parker Newby, and Terry Morris.

Also in attendance: Rusty Lowdermilk, David Heinze, Rob Parker, Scott Roberts, Michelle Fury, James Hou, Pat Maley, Neil Westesen, Christina Proggess, Samantha Wright, Ryan Bennett, KC Becker, Athena Jones, Chris Stoneback, Scott Fetchenhier, Taryn Chaya, Doug Jamison, Josie Nusz, Joel Krech, Ben Martinez, Beth Anderson, Sarah Graves, James Evangelist, Tom Schillaci, Katherine Jenkins, Meg Broughton, and Haley Farnell.

Introductions and Announcements.

Peter welcomed KC Becker, the new Region 8 EPA Administrator. She was attending the meeting to learn more about the Bonita Peak CAG.

We were sad to hear that Mark Esper had passed away recently. Mark had run the Silverton Standard for many years, up until about a year or so ago. He did a great job running what was mostly a one-man operation and covered water quality and mine remediation issues very well.

Apparently, an ice dam broke in Cement Creek upstream of the Yukon which discolored the creek. EPA sent a contractor to check on the source of the discoloration and to take some samples.

Peter noted that there was an announcement that the State of New Mexico and EPA were close to reaching a settlement over damages related to the Gold King spill.

WQ Standards Proposal for Upper Mineral Creek

Peter gave a presentation on the CAG's water quality proposal for a segment of upper Mineral Creek. Because of the past twenty years of mine remediation projects, water quality has greatly improved in the stretch between Mill Creek and the Middle Fork of Mineral Creek to the point where it now supports brook trout. There is no aquatic-life use classification on the segment, so the CAG is proposing to add one along with standards protective of the use. The CAG is proposing Table Value Standards (TVS) for all constituents with an acknowledgement in the Statement of Basis and Purpose that TVS for lead, cadmium, and copper is not attainable during spring runoff and TVS for zinc is not

attainable year-round. Site-specific standards will need to be developed in the future for these metals for these specific time periods. Complete removal of metal loading from the four Superfund designated sites upstream of the segment would not come close to making TVS attainable during spring runoff. The two main mining-related sources of metals are the Silverledge and the Koehler Tunnel.

United States/Sunnyside Gold Corp. Settlement

The CAG developed comments on the United States/Sunnyside Gold Corp. draft settlement. The main comment was that the CAG wanted to ensure that money going to the federal agencies was utilized in the BPMD. At the January CAG meeting, BLM had indicated that its part of the settlement would go to a general hazmat fund where it could be used in other parts of the country. The CAG also supported efforts to designate additional settlement funds to offset Silverton/San Juan County's outlays related to the site; and to compensate for losses incurred by Colorado residents and businesses related to the Gold King spill.

EPA Planned Activities for 2022 at BPMD

EPA gave a short summary of their planned activities for the coming field season. They started with reiterating the three main goals of the site: improving water quality, stabilizing sources, and minimizing unplanned releases. Then they discussed continuing investigations in many different locations and continuing the site stabilization work at the 2019 IROD sites. There will be an opportunity to discuss these activities in more detail at a future CAG meeting this spring.

Administrative Items

Meeting Summaries:

No meeting summaries were approved because a quorum of ten CAG members was not present.

CAG Discussion Time. Peter suggested that we schedule a discussion time in the middle of March. He will send out an email proposing dates and times.

Future Agenda Items? Planned 2022 Field Activities, Tailings Sampling between Eureka and Howardsville, Plans for Howardsville Mill, Macroinvertebrate Data, Mayflower Repository, Site Specific Plans for Interim Remedial Actions, etc.

8:20 PM Adjourn