

Meeting Summary
Bonita Peak Community Advisory Group
March 29, 2023, 6:00—7:30 PM
Via Computer Conferencing and In Person
at Silverton Town Hall
1360 Greene St.

CAG members in attendance: Peter Butler, Helen Mary Johnson, Susan Livenick, Anthony Edwards, Parker Newby, Brian Devine, Charlie Smith, Emily Thorn, Sara Burch, Russ Anderson, Justin Elkins and Ty Churchwell.

Also in attendance: Tom Schillaci, Meg Broughton, Joy Jenkins, Athena Jones, Allen McCaw, Ryan Bennett, Melissa Smeins, David Heinze, Mandy Eskelson, Kirstin Brown, Melissa May and others.

Introductions and Announcements

Peter asked people around the room to introduce themselves. He said that he got a March sample from Cascade by riding the train and that he, Kirstin Brown, and Scott Roberts had skied in from Silverton to sample below Elk Park. Terry Morris collected the Burro Bridge sample.

Review of Afternoon Workshop Discussion on the Need for a Treatment Plant for Mine Drainage.

Peter asked CAG members how they thought the afternoon work session with EPA went. A number of people spoke up. People thought it was very helpful to have an open discussion regarding a number of issues and enjoyed listening to different people's perspectives. They enjoyed the open dialogue. EPA stated at both the work session and the CAG meeting that open discussion with a large number of participants makes them nervous. They are concerned that something said off the cuff in conversation might be brought up in the future as something EPA promised to do or as an official position.

While there was open dialogue in the work session, there wasn't any overall consensus or direction that came out of the session. Most of the participants saw the need for active treatment related to the Gladstone area mine discharges, although a couple advocated for passive treatment. The discussion on zinc standards and possible goals downstream may have been confusing to many people because EPA didn't address the comments Peter had sent EPA on behalf of the CAG, even when he brought them up again in work session. People are still trying to understand the issues.

Peter suggested that EPA should be doing a longer (year or more) test of closing the Red & Bonita bulkhead, because the effectiveness of a permanent closure of the bulkhead would affect the design of a treatment plant. Joy Jenkins noted that EPA frequently thinks of bulkheads as flow through devices that can modulate and control the release of drainage from mines. She brought up several examples where bulkheads have pushed water through geologic structures that have caused problems in other locations.

Meg Broughton with EPA said at the end of the work session that EPA had a facilitator listening and taking notes of the conversation. EPA is thinking about bringing in a facilitator to run future discussions about finer details regarding treatment and other remediation options, locations for options, etc.

EPA Updates on Upcoming Field Season

EPA provided some information about construction of the repository at Mayflower tailings pond #4 slated for this summer. Earlier in the day, EPA and their contractors met with the Silverton/San Juan Planning Group to discuss logistics. There will be three phases that will take several years. Phase one will be construction of sludge repository for the treatment plant material. They expect that 20,000 cubic yards of material will be brought in for construction. The material will likely be brought in from Montrose.

Story Map Comments

Susan discussed the draft CAG comments on EPA's story map. Several CAG members developed the comments (Susan, Chara, Helen Mary, and Parker). All the other CAG members had the opportunity to weigh in as well. She noted that there were lots of suggestions for EPA and the group didn't anticipate that EPA would want to incorporate all of them. Peter asked for a motion to approve the comments and to send them on to EPA. Charlie made the motion and Parker seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Administrative Items

- ✓ Meeting Summary – Emily moved to approve the meeting summary from February and Parker seconded. The motion carried unanimously.
- ✓ April Meeting – The main topic for the April meeting will be the Mayflower #4 Repository.
- ✓ CAG Discussion Time – Peter said he didn't think we needed a discussion session for April.
- ✓ Long-Range Schedule
- ✓ Future Agenda Items? *Macroinvertebrate Data, Prioritization of Mine Sites for Goals 2 & 3, Remedial Actions for Gladstone, Howardsville Mill, etc.*

7:30 PM

Adjourn