

Bonita Peak Mining District Update

August 2023



COLORADO
Department of Public
Health & Environment



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

Site Updates

- Videos from the Silverton Miners Oral History Project are now [available on YouTube](#)! The videos are part of a DRMS-led project that help tell the story of Silverton's mining history. These videos will also be shared with the Silverton community at a premiere event in Fall 2023.
- EPA completed an [addendum](#) to the Bonita Peak Mining District Superfund Site Community Involvement Plan, specific to the state of New Mexico.

Field Work Update

EPA

EPA's Removal Program conducted a response action to clean up contaminated soils at two trespass campgrounds located on private land within the BPMD Superfund Site.

Soils in this area contain lead and other metals that may be harmful to children and pregnant women. More information on these risks can be found in the [ATSDR Health Consultation](#). During the response action, clean fill material was placed in hummocks to minimize exposure risk and deter future camping activity.



Clean fill material at trespass campground in July



Screening material at the Bonita Peak Repository site

Construction of the Bonita Peak Repository is underway. The Repository is located on Tailings Impoundment 4 of the Mayflower Mill, as selected in EPA's [Interim Record of Decision](#). Contractors mobilized to the site to begin construction in June. Earth-moving work began in July. Workers are screening material onsite and utilizing material from a local quarry to minimize the number of loads of clean material that will need to travel through the Town of Silverton.

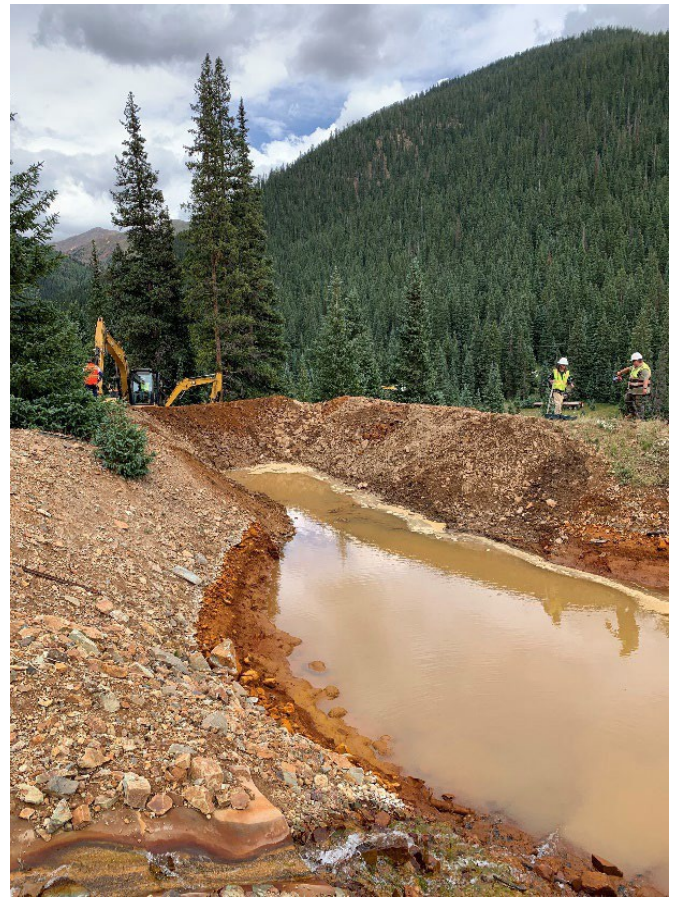
Several local contractors, connected through the BPMD Community Liaison, have been hired for the project.



Drilling Equipment at Lake Emma in early July

In June, EPA mobilized drilling equipment to the Lake Emma Area to install three monitoring wells into the Sunnyside Gold mine workings. The monitoring wells allow EPA to gather critical data on water quality, and how groundwater moves within the mine workings and throughout the Bonita Peak groundwater system.

Each of the three monitoring wells target narrow mine workings from approximately 600-1000 feet above. EPA successfully reached the mine workings on the F level in early July and drilling at the second monitoring well location is underway.



Expanded pond at Mammoth

EPA completed additional cleanup work at the Mammoth this summer, in continuation of the 2019 Interim Record of Decision. To improve the flow of mine-impacted water, EPA expanded the settling pond to approximately double capacity. Cleanup actions also included widening the channel below the collapsed adit and replacing the existing culvert with a larger one.

EPA's Removal Program has begun work on two additional response actions, one at Gold King Mine and one at Red & Bonita Mine.

Gold King: EPA will extend the portal shed to permanent specifications, minimizing the risk of rock and avalanche debris blocking access. Access to the flow control structure in Level 7 of the Gold King is critical for maintenance, inspections, and other cleanup activities.

More information, including the administrative record for this project, can be found at the [response webpage](#).

Red & Bonita: Acidic mine drainage water has flowed across and through an iron fen, a sensitive wetland ecosystem fed by groundwater. EPA has adjusted the location of the mine drainage to avoid the iron fen to prevent heavy metal solids from smothering the sensitive plants.

More information, including the administrative record for the Red & Bonita project, can be found at the [response webpage](#).



Adjusted drainage at Red & Bonita

Iron terrace at Wynona Mine



BLM

BLM's contractors have completed work at the Wynona and Joe and John Mine Sites and will be working at the Forest Queen Site this fall.

Construction work at the Wynona included removing the cement box that was used for a short period of time for water treatment and to support development of innovative techniques for water treatment. The box has not been in use due to reduced flows at the Wynona Site leading to the BLM's decision to remove the box. Due to the high iron content of the water at the Wynona, the BLM installed an iron terrace in the footprint of the box.

Work at the Joe and John Mine Site included removing avalanche debris from the area around the adit and replacing the pipe that conveys water from the adit under the County Road. The BLM also replaced culverts to keep water flowing past the adit and under the County Road.

New on the Web

- Red & Bonita Mine Discharge Relocation: [Response Webpage](#)
- Gold King Mine Portal Extension: [Response Webpage](#)
- Campgrounds 2&3: [Response Webpage](#)
- [Bonita Peak Repository Construction Factsheet](#)
- [BPMI Community Involvement Plan New Mexico Addendum](#)