

Bonita Peak Mining District Update

August 2017



COLORADO
Department of Public
Health & Environment



Recent Activities

- As the site team continues its investigations, it has learned that a number of anticipated early interim actions in the mining district are likely to be completed by private property owners or the Federal land management agencies. EPA had planned to seek public comment on eight proposed early interim actions this year. However, since the majority of that work will now be performed by others, the few remaining proposed early interim actions will be combined with EPA's planned work in 2018. We appreciate the private property owners' interest in performing remedial work on their land and fully support this approach.
- Last month, EPA contractors installed a new valve on the Red and Bonita pipeline. The new valve directs adit flow away from the waste rock pile, which reduces the contaminant load from the mine to Cement Creek.
- As this summer's growing season proceeds, the benefits of last fall's successful revegetation of a field in the BPMD is becoming apparent (see photos below). Pipelines to the Interim Water Treatment Plan were installed in this area last year. The field had also been heavily utilized during the Gold King Mine response in 2015 and was used for water treatment operations prior to the construction of the Interim Water Treatment Plant.

2017 Priorities for Superfund Site Work

Early Actions – initiate interim response actions to address simple water management and waste pile stability concerns.

Stability – identify for future action those mine features that may be the most unstable and at risk of unplanned releases of contamination.

Significant Sources – identify for future action mine features with relatively high contributions of contamination.

Human Health – conduct a Human Health Risk Assessment.



Looking up the valley to the Gold King Mine.



Revegetated field that was heavily impacted by the Gold King Mine response.

Planned Activities

- In mid-August, EPA contractors plan to mobilize to the site for the drilling of the horizontal well at the Gold King Mine. When that work is completed, likely in mid-September, installation of the flow control structure in the adit will begin. Following that, the berm outside the historic level 7 adit at the mine will be constructed. This work is intended to reduce the potential of an unplanned discharge from the mine.
- In mid-September, a new pressure gauge will be installed at the Mogul Mine. Prior to that, work will be done on the adit to make the flowrate easier to measure as well as making access to the mine safer.
- During the week of August 21, XRF (X-ray fluorescence) screening will be done on select waste rock piles in the district. XRF is used for non-destructive, real-time chemical analysis of rocks and minerals. Also during that week, activity-based air sampling will be conducted.
- Low-flow surface water and sediment sampling will take place the week of Sept. 25, with sampling of seeps and springs taking place later in the fall.

Meet the Bonita Peak Site Team

Mark Rudolph, Environmental Protection Specialist, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE)

Mark Rudolph has been an Environmental Protection Specialist with CDPHE for approximately 20 years and has 30 years of experience working on environmental projects, including Superfund project management, site assessments, sampling investigations, and Brownfields redevelopment sites. Mark also has extensive knowledge in mine site reclamation, regulation and operations. Mark provided technical expertise in soil and water conservation, drinking water supply, sanitary system construction and forestry consultation for rural communities while a Peace Corps volunteer in the Dominican Republic. He loves anything outdoors including fishing, hiking, backpacking and backcountry snowboarding. He is an avid gardener, with two bee hives, and lives in the downtown Denver area.



Mark Rudolph

Upcoming Events

Fall Public Meetings and Digging Deeper at Bonita Peak: The Mining District's Environmental Impacts

The site team will be holding the fall BPMD public meetings the week of October 16, 2017, in Silverton, Durango and New Mexico. As part of the meetings, Dan Wall, Brian Sanchez and Andrew Todd will present the third of EPA's Digging Deeper presentations – "The Mining District's Environmental Impacts." The dates, locations and times of the meetings will be announced soon.

New on the Web

Bonita Peak Mining District Community Involvement Plan – Final, August 2017

<http://semspub.epa.gov/src/document/08/100000961>

Bonita Peak Mining District Digging Deeper Presentation – Innovative Technologies, July 25, 2017

<http://semspub.epa.gov/src/document/08/100000901>

Bonita Peak Mining District Update, July 2017 - Spanish (Novedades del distrito minero Bonita Peak, Julio de 2017)

<http://semspub.epa.gov/src/document/08/100000962>

More Information

Visit the Bonita Peak Mining District website <http://www.epa.gov/superfund/bonita-peak>.