

# Bonita Peak Mining District Update

July 2018



COLORADO  
Department of Public  
Health & Environment



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

## Recent Activities

- In response to a citizen request, the public comment period for the *Proposed Plan for Interim Remedial Actions for the Bonita Peak Mining District Superfund Site* has been extended through August 15, 2018.

EPA hosted a public meeting to present the proposed plan and take public comments on June 21, 2018. You may view the presentation at <https://youtu.be/aGFA3zeQ8IQ>. A transcript of the presentation and public comments is available at <https://semspub.epa.gov/src/document/08/100004961>

A fact sheet with a summary of the proposed plan is available at <https://semspub.epa.gov/src/document/08/100004624>.

You may obtain a copy of the proposed plan and the associated administrative record collection on the EPA website at <https://www.epa.gov/superfund/bonita-peak> or by calling the EPA Superfund Records Center at (800) 227-8917 ext. 312-7273. You can also view them at one of the following locations:

- Silverton Library  
1117 Reese Street, Silverton, Colo.
- Durango Public Library  
1900 East Third Avenue, Durango, Colo.
- Farmington Public Library  
2101 Farmington Avenue, Farmington, N.M.
- Dine College South Campus Library  
1228 Yucca St., Shiprock, N.M.

Comments on the proposed plan may be submitted through **August 15, 2018**, via email to [peterson.cynthia@epa.gov](mailto:peterson.cynthia@epa.gov) or by postal mail to:

Cynthia Peterson (8OC-PAI)  
U.S. EPA, 1595 Wynkoop Street  
Denver, CO 80202-1129

### 2018 Priorities for Superfund Site Work

Continuously **improve environmental conditions** in the mining district by implementing identified early, interim cleanup actions and prioritizing additional response activities for future years.

**Increase overall understanding** of the mining district through ongoing investigations, site modeling and adaptive goal development.

**Involve potentially responsible parties (PRPs), property owners and others** in site investigative and cleanup activities.

Continue to **foster active engagement** with all interested parties.

- On July 10 and 11, 2018, EPA Region 8 Administrator Doug Benevento toured the BPMD. He was joined by Assistant Regional Administrator Betsy Smidinger and the regional administrator's special advisor for public engagement, Patrick Davis. From EPA Headquarters, Steven Cook, deputy assistant administrator for the Office of Land and Emergency Management, Erin Chancellor, counsel to the Administrator, and Dana Stalcup, deputy director of the Office of Superfund Remediation and Technology Innovation also participated in the tour.

During the trip, Mr. Benevento met with stakeholders in Silverton and Durango. In answer to questions about the recent change in leadership at the agency, he stated that the new Acting Administrator, Andrew Wheeler has reassured him that there will be no changes to the agency's commitment to the BPMD, and it will continue to be a high priority Superfund site for the agency.

- EPA has established an interim sludge management location at the Kittimac Tailings source area for sludge generated at the Interim Water Treatment Plant. It is located approximately 6.5 miles northeast of Silverton, along County Road 2.

EPA is mixing the sludge with mine tailings located at Kittimac. This will reduce the high water content of the sludge and allow it to be more efficiently managed. A secondary benefit will be to immobilize heavy metals found in the tailings.

EPA originally planned to conduct a pilot test of this transfer process for one week in mid-June and complete the transfer in the early fall.

However, at the request of local officials, EPA has continued the transfer process after the initial pilot phase. We plan to have moved all the sludge from the IWTP to the Kittimac location by the end of August.

A fact sheet about the interim sludge storage location is available at <https://semspub.epa.gov/src/document/08/100004554>.

A Q&A fact sheet about the interim sludge storage location is available at <https://semspub.epa.gov/src/document/08/100004830>



*Sludge from the interim water treatment plant being mixed with Kittimac tailings (background) at the interim sludge management location.*

## Planned Activities

- EPA Region 8 Assistant Regional Administrator Betsy Smidinger will present the keynote address at the Second Annual Silverton Innovation Expo on Tuesday, Aug. 28, 2018. The expo is sponsored by Mountain Studies Institute and runs from Aug. 28–30, 2018.

## New on the Web

- Bonita Peak Mining District Update, June 2018- Spanish (Novedades del distrito minero Bonita Peak, Junio de 2018)  
<https://semspub.epa.gov/src/document/08/100004905>
- Interim Sludge Management Questions and Answers Fact Sheet, June 2018  
<https://semspub.epa.gov/src/document/08/100004830>