Bonita Peak Mining District Update

February 2020

United States Environmental Protection Agency

COLORADO Department of Public Health & Environment

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

Meet the New Team Members

James Hou is a new addition to the EPA Region 8 remedial project management team for the BPMD site. He has previous project management experience with the EPA Region 4 office, where he served as a remedial project manager for eight years, overseeing remediation at multiple sites throughout the southeast. He has spent the last five years in Region 8 working on air quality planning. James holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Chemical Engineering from the Georgia Institute of Technology. Outside of work, he enjoys spending time with his family exploring the mountain west.

Will Folland has assumed the duties of EPA human health risk assessor. He serves as a toxicologist in the Region 8 Technical Assistance Branch providing human health and ecological risk assessment support to the Superfund and RCRA programs. Will came to Region 8 in 2016 after previous positions as an environmental toxicologist in consulting and academic roles. He holds a Master of Science degree in Environmental Toxicology from Michigan State University. In his spare time, Will enjoys wildlife and landscape photography.

Athena Jones is a new remedial project manager in the EPA Region 8 working on the BPMD site. She joined the EPA after one-and-a-half years of AmeriCorps service with EarthCorps leading environmental restoration projects in Seattle, Washington. Athena also recently completed her Master of Science degree in Environmental Engineering from the University of Miami in Coral Gables, Florida. Some of Athena's graduate research areas include metals in wood preservatives, per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in landfill leachates, and the degradation of mosquito insecticides in the environment. Athena is a proud parrothead, cyclist, and wildlife spotter.

Mike Fisher joined the Bonita Peak Mining District team to support efforts related to site characterization and a sitewide repository. Mike has a Bachelor of Science degree in Geological Engineering from South Dakota School of Mines and Technology. He joined the EPA in August 2019 after ten years working for an environmental consulting firm on a variety of mining and contaminated groundwater sites. Mike and his wife have lived in the Denver area for nine years. They enjoy spending time with their baby girl as well as outdoor activities like hiking, fishing, and kayaking.

Site Updates

- The EPA has selected a site strategy as part of the Adaptive Management process that follows a reach-by-reach approach. The strategy will focus future CERCLA activities on the Upper Cement Creek and Upper Animas mine drainages. Both reaches contain source areas that contribute significant amounts of metals to the watershed. Prioritization of work in these areas will promote long-term remedial solutions to stabilize sources, reduce metal loading into the Animas River, and improve water quality in areas where aquatic life will benefit the most.

  With this selected site strategy, ongoing work at the site will continue. This includes continued operation of the interim water treatment plant, siting and construction of a sitewide repository, and remedial design and clean-up of the source areas identified in the 2019 interim record of decision.

  Please view our fact sheet on the selected site strategy to learn more about the reach-by-reach approach.

- The Interim Water Treatment Plant (IWTP) is undergoing upgrades which will be completed by summer 2020. In fall 2019, the EPA conducted a comprehensive safety and operational assessment of the IWTP. That assessment resulted in recommendations that focus on the safe, reliable, and efficient operation of the IWTP for the future. The current upgrades being completed at the IWTP are a result of the 2019 assessment.

  The goal of the upgrades is to ensure operational stability and continuous, year-round operation during all weather conditions. The upgrades will address seasonal variations in water flow volume and water quality based on historical conditions since the EPA began operation of the IWTP.