



# **NEW MEXICO**

## **BONITA PEAK MINING DISTRICT**

### **COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT PLAN ADDENDUM**



**2023**  
**May**

# INTRODUCTION

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## Site Overview

The Site consists of 48 historic mines or mining-related source areas where releases of metals laden water and sediments are occurring within the Mineral Creek, Cement Creek, and Upper Animas River drainages. Near Silverton, Colorado, these drainages join to form the Animas River, which is used for drinking water, recreation and agriculture. The Animas River flows south and meets the larger San Juan River in northern New Mexico. The San Juan River area includes downstream communities in New Mexico and the Navajo Nation.

Contaminants from the 48 source areas include arsenic, cadmium, copper, manganese, zinc, lead, and aluminum. The site continues to release heavy metals into surface water, groundwater, and sediments. The Gold King Mine is one of the source areas in the Bonita Peak Mining District (BPMD). USEPA is investigating the mining district to identify contaminated areas and conduct cleanup activities.

The Site was added to EPA's National Priorities List (NPL) of Superfund Sites in September 2016. EPA Region 8—based in Denver, Colorado—is responsible for EPA's cleanup and community involvement activity in Colorado and coordinates with USEPA Region 6 to share information about the Bonita Peak Mining District Site with New Mexico. USEPA Region 6—based in Dallas, TX—is responsible for EPA cleanup and community involvement activities in New Mexico and shares information from USEPA Region 8 on Bonita Peak Mining District activities with New Mexico communities.



View from Bandora Mine | Photo: EPA

# Key Contacts

## *EPA Region 8*

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## *EPA Region 8*

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Lead Remedial Project Manager  
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## Community Involvement Objectives

The Community Involvement Plan (CIP) is the foundation of USEPA's Superfund community involvement and outreach program. This CIP addendum is a living document, which means it can be updated as needed by the CIC and community leaders to assist communication between New Mexico communities and USEPA. The document outlines opportunities for individual participation and meaningful information sharing regarding USEPA's activities in New Mexico communities. The CIP is also a tool for communities to use to ensure USEPA is responsive to their needs and concerns in relation to the Bonita Peak Mining District.

## Community Overview

This CIP addendum focuses on the larger communities along the San Juan River in northern New Mexico, including Shiprock and Farmington.

Based on 2020 U.S. Census data, Shiprock, New Mexico has a population of 8,588 people with a median age of 35.5 and a median household income of \$36,747. The 5 largest ethnic groups in Shiprock are American Indian & Alaska Native (Non-Hispanic) (92.8%), American Indian & Alaska Native (Hispanic) (2.31%), White (Non-Hispanic) (1.6%), Asian (Non-Hispanic) (1.18%), and Two+ (Non-Hispanic) (1.09%). None of the households in Shiprock reported speaking a non-English language at home as their primary shared language. This does not consider the potential multi-lingual nature of households, but only the primary self-reported language spoken by all members of the household.

Based on 2020 U.S. Census data, Farmington, New Mexico had a population of 125,608 people with a median age of 36.1 and a median household income of \$47,643. The 5 largest ethnic groups in Farmington are White (Non-Hispanic) (37.4%), American Indian & Alaska Native (Non-Hispanic) (37.4%), White (Hispanic) (11.8%), Other (Hispanic) (4.62%), and Two+ (Hispanic) (2.93%). None of the households in Farmington, NM reported speaking a non-English language at home as their primary shared language. This does not consider the potential multi-lingual nature of households, but only the primary self-reported language spoken by all members of the household.

Much of the land on the San Juan River is used for farming, ranching and grazing. The area includes major irrigation efforts—the Fruitland and Shiprock Irrigation Projects—and smaller-scale agricultural operations. The San Juan River is the primary source of irrigation for farms in these communities; it is also a major cultural, drinking water and recreation resource.

# THE COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT ACTION PLAN

## Community Involvement Tools and Activities

EPA has identified and developed a variety of tools and activities to better engage with and involve the community:



### Web Pages

EPA will continue to maintain a web page specifically for the BPMD Superfund site. For past, current and future updates on the Site, please visit: <http://www.epa.gov/superfund/bonita-peak>.

EPA also has other web pages available for information about the Superfund program:

- National Superfund program: [www.epa.gov/superfund](http://www.epa.gov/superfund)
- Superfund Community Involvement: [www.epa.gov/superfund/superfund-community-involvement](http://www.epa.gov/superfund/superfund-community-involvement)



### Stakeholder Email Updates

USEPA provides email updates about site status and upcoming activities to a growing number of stakeholders. To join the email list, please email USEPA Community Involvement Coordinator Meg Broughton,

[broughton.meg@epa.gov](mailto:broughton.meg@epa.gov).

## BPMD Alert & Notification Plan

At the Bonita Peak Mining District Superfund site, USEPA Region 8 uses the *Bonita Peak Alert and Notification Plan* for all alerts and notifications related to appearance or water quality impacts in the Animas River. USEPA reserves the right to notify stakeholders through the plan at its discretion. Individuals on the distribution list will receive email notifications regarding confirmed or suspected unplanned releases, and proactive notification of potential discoloration of the Animas River due to cleanup activities or natural processes. For more information about the plan or to provide updated contact information, please contact Beth Archer, [archer.beth@epa.gov](mailto:archer.beth@epa.gov).



### Annual Virtual Meeting

USEPA expects to hold at least one meeting a year, through 2024, to provide an update on cleanup activities at the BPMD Superfund site. EPA staff may host or participate in meetings virtually, as coordinated with stakeholders. To best accommodate community members, EPA staff may provide options to participate by phone for people unable to join a web-based meeting. EPA staff may share meeting materials ahead of the meeting so people unable to view the presentation can follow along.



### Community Advisory Group

The Bonita Peak Mining District Community Advisory Group was formed for the Site in May 2019. This group includes community representatives from La Plata County, San Juan County, and Farmington, New Mexico. Its purpose is to provide a public forum for community members to present and discuss their needs and concerns related to the Superfund decision-making process. EPA regularly coordinates with the CAG to provide technical presentations and solicit feedback. The Bonita Peak Mining District CAG maintains a website at [www.bonitapeakcag.org](http://www.bonitapeakcag.org)



## Community Meetings

In addition to at least one annual meeting, USEPA will share informational updates about BPMD at other meetings, as necessary. Depending on the topics to be discussed, USEPA may use the following formats for these meetings:

- *Meetings and Open Houses* – larger community meetings that may include USEPA presentations, poster sessions and time for community members to ask questions and share feedback.
- *Small Venue Meetings and Focus Groups* – smaller, more informal gatherings focused on a geographic region, interested group or extended family, providing opportunities for community members to share their thoughts and concerns with USEPA representatives.
- *Workshops and Facilitated Discussions* – facilitated meetings designed to answer specific questions or address specific community concerns.



## Written Educational Materials

To help address community concerns about the Site, EPA staff may prepare and distribute user-friendly documents to help people understand site conditions. Examples of these materials include:

- Site Update Newsletters
- Factsheets or presentations summarizing cleanup activities
- Topic-specific flyers announcing meetings or other events

EPA will make every effort to provide readily understandable written materials that are more accessible to an audience not trained in environmental issues, with graphics and text that follow USEPA's writing guidelines. Content may include updates on project status, listings of recent documents, names of individuals to contact for more information, and descriptions of study techniques or technologies or project milestones.



## Local Information Repositories

USEPA is required by law to create and maintain a collection of documents and information about the BPMD site cleanup. This collection of information, called an "information repository," is to be kept current and stored locally so the community can easily access. Information repositories contain copies of technical or planning documents, fact sheets, results of previous meetings and other similar types of information. Three information repositories have been created for the site:

***Farmington Public Library***  
2101 Farmington Avenue  
Farmington, NM 87401  
Contact: Kathi Browning  
Phone: (505) 599-1270

***Diné College Shiprock Campus Library  
(Senator John Pinto Library)***  
BIA Road 0570  
Shiprock, NM 87420  
Contact: Samantha Hewakapuge  
Phone: (505) 368-3644

***USEPA Superfund Records Center***  
1595 Wynkoop Street  
Denver, CO 80202-1129  
To request copies of administrative  
record documents, call: (303) 312-7273