

# Bonita Peak Mining District Interim Sludge Management

May 2018



Since October 2015, EPA has treated discharge from the Gold King Mine at the Interim Water Treatment Plant (IWTP) at Gladstone. During that time, sludge generated at the IWTP also has been managed at that location. All the available sludge storage capacity has now been filled, and EPA has identified another location where the additional sludge can be managed. In cooperation with the property owner, the new interim sludge management location will be established at the Kittimac Tailings source area, approximately 6.5 miles northeast of Silverton, along County Road 2.

The sludge contains oxides of heavy metals, such as iron, zinc and aluminum; lime, which neutralizes the acidic mine drainage; and polymers that are used to bind the particles together. The sludge is not considered a hazardous waste and passes the Toxicity Characteristic Leaching Procedure (TCLP). Therefore, it can be managed safely at the interim sludge management location. Any liquids associated with the sludge are also non-hazardous.



*Interim Water Treatment Plant*

EPA will mix the non-hazardous 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 is currently conducting a bench-scale testing of the sludge/tailings mixture to ensure the maximum reduction of metals leaching from the tailings.

Sludge will be transferred to the interim sludge management location by truck using the County Road 110 bypass. EPA is identifying ways to decrease any negative impacts to local residents, including reducing the speed of trucks near homes to minimize noise and using dust suppressants on all haul roads. Signs will be posted and flaggers will be stationed at appropriate locations to alert other drivers. EPA also will repair any damage to the roads caused by truck traffic and return the roads to their current condition.

EPA plans to conduct a pilot test of this transfer process for one week in mid-June. At the request of local officials, EPA will resume transportation of sludge to the interim sludge management location after the summer tourist season (early fall) for a duration of about five weeks.

**For more information:** Contact Kerry Guy, EPA on-scene coordinator, at 303-312- 7288 or [guy.kerry@epa.gov](mailto:guy.kerry@epa.gov)



In May 2017, Administrator Scott Pruitt established a task force to restore EPA's Superfund program to its rightful place at the center of the Agency's core mission to protect health and the environment.



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