

Bonita Peak Mining District Update

August 2018



COLORADO
Department of Public
Health & Environment



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

Recent Activities

- EPA is continuing to transfer sludge generated at the Interim Water Treatment Plant at Gladstone to the interim sludge management location at the Kittimac Tailings source area.

EPA is mixing 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 of the process will be to immobilize heavy metals found in the tailings.

EPA has prepared two fact sheets about this work:

- <https://semspub.epa.gov/src/document/08/100004554>
- <https://semspub.epa.gov/src/document/08/100004830>
- On August 8, 2018, in coordination with the Bureau of Land Management, EPA resumed work initiated in 2017 to stabilize and maintain access to the American Tunnel adit and bulkhead. That work included installation of a flume and piping just inside the adit to maintain and measure discharge, a sump and piping outside the adit to convey drainage, grading on the hillside and area around the portal structure to stabilize slopes, and maintenance of the settling pond and drainage outside the adit.

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.



Jamie Miller mapping the flow path from the Sunbank Mine.

- During the week of August 6, 2018, EPA teams visited source areas in the BPMD to delineate mining related features. The teams used GPS technology to locate mine adits and discharge flow paths, identify areas of erosion, and delineate waste rock piles. This information will be used to design cleanup remedies at each source area. It will also be used in conjunction with LIDAR data to more accurately estimate waste rock pile volumes.
- As part of its ongoing evaluation of bulkheads in the BPMD, Colorado Division of Reclamation, Mining and Safety entered the American Tunnel to collect samples and assess the condition of the bulkhead on August 21, 2018.

Planned Activities

- On August 28 and 29, 2018, the Deputy State of Colorado Historic Preservation Officer and a representative of the State Historical Fund will tour the Bonita Peak Mining District. Joining them on the tour will be representatives from EPA, BLM, U.S. Forest Service, Silverton/San Juan County and the San Juan County Historical Society. The group will visit mining related features in Cement Creek, Mineral Creek and the Upper Animas drainages.
- Betsy Smidinger, EPA Region 8 Assistant Regional Administrator for Ecosystems Protection and Remediation, will be speaking at the Silverton Innovation Expo on August 29, 2018. She will be discussing EPA's support of innovative approaches in the Bonita Peak Mining District.

Below are some additional resources for information about innovative technologies.

- **Technology Innovation News Survey Corner**

The Technology Innovation News Survey contains market/commercialization information; reports on demonstrations, feasibility studies and research; and other news relevant to the hazardous waste community interested in technology development. Recent issues, complete archives, and subscription information is available at <https://clu-in.org/products/tins/>.

- **Research Briefs**

The monthly Research Briefs highlight innovative research outcomes from projects supported by the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS) Superfund Research Program. Each issue summarizes a current research accomplishment, discusses the significance of the work, and provides contact information so readers can interact with the researcher to learn more. For more information, visit <https://tools.niehs.nih.gov/srp/researchbriefs/index.cfm>.

Water Quality Information

The Colorado Division of Water Resources administers water rights and interstate compact agreements throughout the state. To administer these, the Division maintains a network of stream and reservoir monitoring sites that collect and transmit periodic data values.

As part of this network, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment and U.S. Geological Survey have a joint funding agreement in place for real-time sondes, which automatically transmit information about water quality, at five gages in and around Silverton and Durango. Data being collected at these monitoring sites include temperature, discharge, gage height, specific conductivity, pH and turbidity. These sondes are active from April to November and are shut down over the winter – December through March. This real-time monitoring will continue until August 2020.

Data from the monitoring sites on the Animas River can be accessed at <https://www.dwr.state.co.us/SurfaceWater/data/division.aspx?div=7>.

New on the Web

Bonita Peak Mining District Update, July 2018 – Spanish (Novedades del distrito minero Bonita Peak, Julio de 2018)
<https://semspub.epa.gov/src/document/08/100005038>