



# Bonita Peak Mining District Superfund Site Community Involvement Plan



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U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment  
U.S. Forest Service  
Bureau of Land Management  
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## List of Acronyms

°F	degrees Fahrenheit
ATV	all-terrain vehicle
BLM	Bureau of Land Management
BMI	benthic macroinvertebrate
CAG	community advisory group
CDPHE	Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment
CERCLA	Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act
cfs	cubic feet per second
CIP	community involvement plan
EPA	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
IROD	interim record of decision
NCP	National Contingency Plan
NPL	National Priorities List
OHV	off-highway vehicle
RI/FS	remedial investigation/feasibility study
ROD	record of decision
USFS	U.S. Forest Service
USGS	U.S. Geological Survey
WIIN	Water Infrastructure Improvement for the Nation

# Section 1

## Introduction



### 1.1 Purpose and Goals of the Community Involvement Plan

This community involvement plan (CIP) has been prepared in accordance with federal regulation as a guide for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE), U.S. Forest Service (USFS), and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) (collectively, the Agencies). The CIP will help the Agencies engage and inform community members, environmental groups, the Community Advisory Group (CAG), government officials, the media, and other interested parties in the investigation and cleanup activities at the Bonita Peak Mining District Superfund Site.

This CIP will apply to each remedial or removal decision at the Site. It may be supplemented by decision-specific communication strategies as needed. The CIP is a “living” document and will be updated or revised, as appropriate, as conditions change.

Interest in the Bonita Peak Mining District encompasses several local, state, and tribal jurisdictions, all of which are individual communities or tribal nations. However, unless otherwise identified in the CIP, the terms “community” or “communities” refer to all those having an interest in cleanup activities at the Site. This plan does not replace or supersede the federal agencies’ trust responsibilities to those tribal nations that are covered by this CIP.

The main body of this CIP covers Colorado and Utah, which are within EPA Region 8. EPA Region 9 has prepared an addendum covering outreach specific to the Navajo Nation regarding the cleanup work at the Bonita Peak Mining District (see Appendix H).

The Agencies’ goals for the CIP are to:

- Provide community members with accurate, timely and understandable information about Site activities that reflects their communication preferences and culture
- Initiate and support two-way communication between the Agencies and community members
- Ensure community members have appropriate opportunities for involvement in a wide variety of Site-related activities

These goals will be achieved through the implementation of the Community Involvement Action Plan (see Section 5). This CIP is meant to be user-friendly and understandable to the general public. Use of acronyms or scientific terminology has been avoided (where possible). The plan was written after community interviews were conducted and research concerning community demographics was completed so the content could be tailored to fit the needs of the community.

Guidance documents and other resources used in drafting this CIP include:

- *National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan* (NCP 1994)
- *Community Involvement Toolkit* (EPA 2016a)
- *Superfund Community Involvement Handbook* (EPA 2016b)

## 1.2 Regulatory Authority

The Agencies are investigating and cleaning up the Site pursuant to the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) and the National Contingency Plan (NCP). Congress enacted CERCLA, also known as Superfund, in 1980 to address releases and threatened releases of hazardous substances to the environment. CERCLA gives the president broad powers to respond to hazardous substance releases and threatened releases as the president deems necessary to protect the public health or welfare or the environment, including enforcement authority with respect to parties responsible for the releases.

To implement CERCLA, EPA created the NCP, which is a set of regulations that detail how CERCLA cleanups are to be conducted, including requirements for community involvement. At the Bonita Peak Mining District, the Agencies are conducting a remedial investigation to determine the nature and extent of contamination, identify pathways of migration, and assess associated potential risks to human health and the environment. EPA is simultaneously working on interim remedial actions at the Site which are intended to accelerate the cleanup process. The Interim Record of Decision (IROD) for the Site documents the interim remedial actions, which will be completed over the next 3 to 5 years, while the ongoing site investigation is completed. These early actions are meant to achieve immediate environmental and human health benefits while longer term investigative and cleanup activities are underway. The completion of the interim remedial actions will inform the development of a final decision document for the Site.

## 1.3 Project Structure and Roles

The roles of each of the agencies conducting cleanup activities at the Site are described below.

**U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.** EPA is the lead agency for regulatory oversight at the Site. As such, EPA is responsible for ensuring work is done in accordance with Superfund law. EPA and its consultants will oversee field activities and review documents (work plans, quality assurance plans, health and safety plans, and various reports on findings). For more information on EPA, visit [www.epa.gov](http://www.epa.gov).



**Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment.**

CDPHE is the state support agency for the Site. CDPHE will provide input to EPA on investigation and cleanup activities, have the opportunity to comment on documents prior to release to the public and participate in planning meetings. CDPHE and its contractors will also conduct cleanup activities under its delegated authority. For more information on CDPHE, visit [www.colorado.gov/cdphe](http://www.colorado.gov/cdphe).





**U.S. Forest Service.** USFS is the federal land management agency managing property at the Site in the Mineral Creek Watershed and Animas River Canyon below Silverton, Colorado. USFS will conduct cleanup activities in accordance with its CERCLA authorities. It will also provide input to EPA on Site investigation and cleanup, have the opportunity to comment on documents prior to release to the public, and serve as a participant in planning meetings. For more information on the USFS, visit [www.usfs.gov](http://www.usfs.gov).



**Bureau of Land Management.** BLM manages property at the Site in the Upper Animas River and Cement Creek drainages. BLM will conduct cleanup in accordance with its CERCLA authorities. It will also provide input to EPA on Site investigation and cleanup, have the opportunity to comment on documents prior to release to the public, and serve as a participant in planning meetings. For more information on BLM, visit [www.blm.gov/wo/st/en.html](http://www.blm.gov/wo/st/en.html).



## 1.4 Community Involvement Plan Structure

This CIP provides outreach information for the Site in a single location. It is not necessary to read all sections to understand the scope of planned outreach activities; however, the individual sections provide added information about the Site and concerns expressed to EPA during community interviews conducted in late 2016 and early 2017.

The CIP structure is:

- **Section 1 – Introduction.** Purpose and goals of the plan, regulatory authority, project structure and roles, and plan structure.
- **Section 2 – Site Description.** Location and layout, physical description, Site history, regulatory history to date.
- **Section 3 – Community Profile.** Demographics, community/tribal descriptions and community involvement activities conducted to date.
- **Section 4 – Community Concerns and Issues.** Distillations of issues and concerns heard by EPA in interviews, at public meetings, and in other interactions with the public.
- **Section 5 – Community Involvement Action Plan.** Planned actions at the Site
- **Section 6 – References.** List of references cited in preparing this document.
- **Appendices – A through I**
  - Appendix A Agency Contacts
  - Appendix B Federal Elected Officials and Contacts
  - Appendix C State and Local Officials
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- Appendix E Stakeholder Groups
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- Appendix I 2019 Bonita Peak Mining District Alert and Notification Standard Operating Procedure

## Section 2

### Site Description

This section discusses the location and layout of the site, its physical description, and its history.

#### 2.1 Location and Layout

The Site consists of 48 historic mines or mining-related sources where ongoing releases of metal-laden water and sediments are occurring within the Mineral Creek, Cement Creek, and the Upper Animas River drainages. Near Silverton, Colorado, these drainages join to form the Animas River, which is used for drinking water, recreation and agricultural purposes (Figure 2.1).

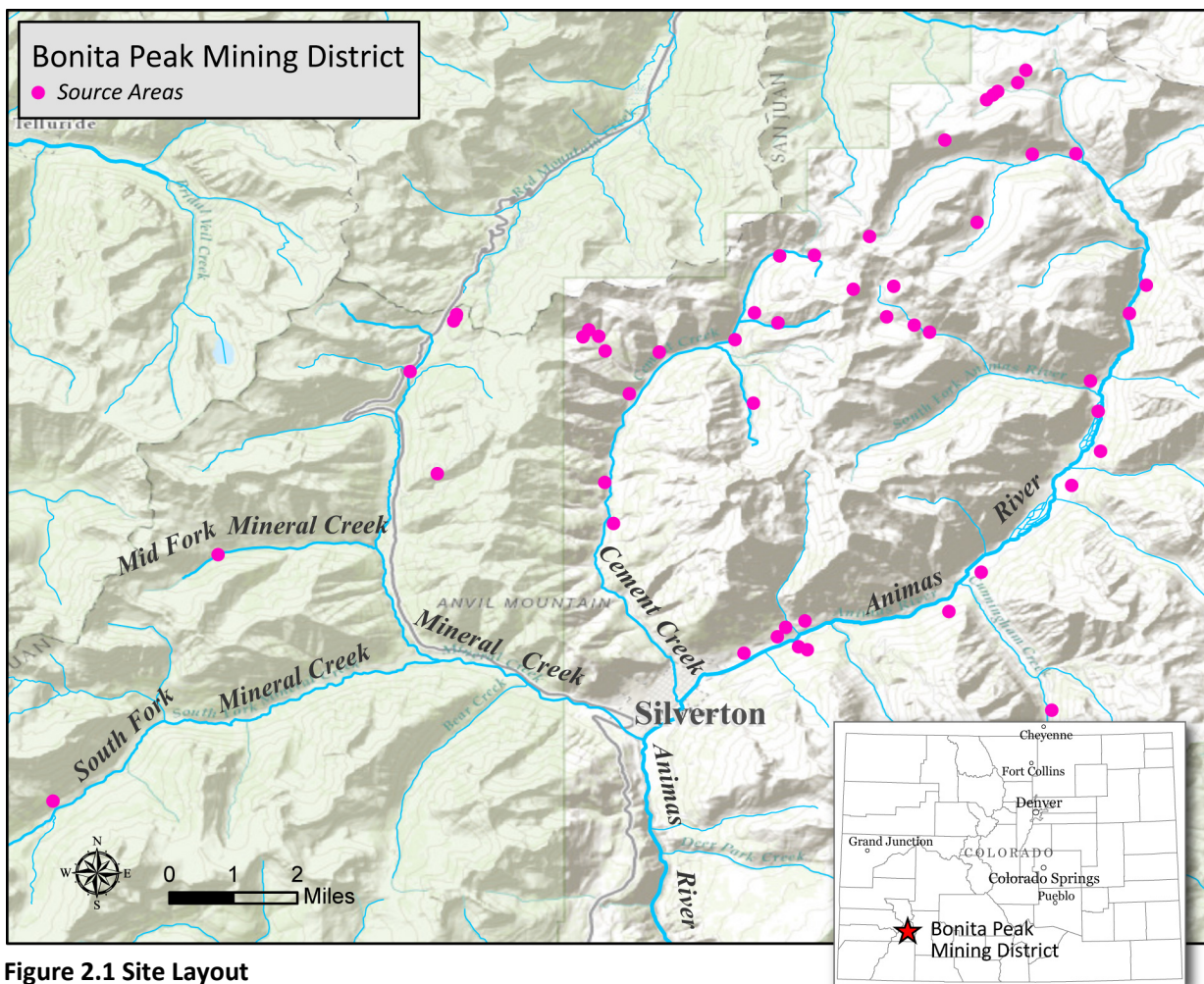


Figure 2.1 Site Layout

## 2.2 Physical Description

The Site is in an area of rugged, steep topography in the San Juan Mountains in southwestern Colorado. The mountain peaks in the area of the Site range from over 12,000 to over 13,000 feet. Elevations drop sharply from the mountains to the creek beds. The elevation in Silverton is 9,308 feet.

The Site has an alpine climate with snowy, cold winters and cool summers. Snowfall is greatest between November and April, with an average snowfall of 12 feet per year. Minimum and maximum mean temperatures for January and July in this area are 8 degrees Fahrenheit (°F) and 24°F, and 36°F and 72°F, respectively (Chapman et al. 2006). The Animas River flows from the mountainous terrain above Silverton south to its confluence with the San Juan River in Northern New Mexico (URS Corporation 2012). The three major tributaries that flow into the Animas River near Silverton include Mineral Creek, Cement Creek, and the Upper Animas River.

The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) stream gauge closest to the Site is located at Silverton, near the confluence of Cement Creek and the Animas River, at 9,386 feet. Daily stream discharge values have been recorded and averaged since 1991. The highest daily discharge occurs in early June, with an average flow of 166 cubic feet per second (cfs). The lowest daily discharges (12 to 13 cfs) occur in January and February (USGS 2016). Cement Creek enters the Upper Animas River on the east side of Silverton. About 1 mile downstream from that confluence, Mineral Creek enters the Upper Animas River south of town.

## 2.3 Site History

In this area, several calderas (collapsed craters of ancient volcanos) are the remnants of eruptions that took place 27 to 28 million years ago. During this volcanic activity, many faults developed in the rocks. Mineral-laden water deposited metals such as copper, gold, lead, silver, and zinc in these faults. These faults became the rich veins of ore that were later mined.

Prospectors found traces of placer gold in the San Juan Mountains in 1860 at Eureka, Colorado. In 1871, lode gold was found in the Little Giant vein at Arrastra Gulch.

Mining activity continued in the area until the last operating mine was closed in 1991. The Animas River drainage basin contains more than 300 formerly producing metal mines. Mine drainage from the former mines and mine-related wastes, such as waste rock piles and tailings, contribute acidic, metal-rich water to the Animas River.

Adding to the impacts from former mining activities is naturally occurring mineralization. Natural weathering leads to metals leaching into surface water, even without mining activity.

### 2.3.1 Contamination Highlights

Contaminants from the 48 Bonita Peak Mining District source areas include aluminum, arsenic, cadmium, copper, lead, manganese, and zinc.

In 2019, two risk assessments were completed for the Site.

The Aquatic Baseline Ecological Risk Assessment:

- Found that benthic macroinvertebrates (BMIs) living in the Bonita Peak Mining District watershed were somewhat impaired by high metal concentrations. The health of BMIs in the watershed impacts larger organisms that feed on these small insects.
- Found that fish in the Bonita Peak Mining District watershed may be impacted by high levels of metals and low pH. Large sections of the watershed do not support trout. Although sections of the greater Animas River watershed have never supported aquatic life, mining-related features may impact fisheries in the district.
- Showed that wildlife in the Bonita Peak Mining District may be impacted by the uptake of toxins from consumed items (water, food, and incidental sediment). This assessment found the highest risk to aquatic-dependent wildlife is lead exposure.

The Human Health Risk Assessment:

- Found that no occupational (road workers and all-terrain vehicle [ATV] tour guides) exposures exceeded levels of health concern.
- Confirmed that exposures at the USFS campground near Mineral Creek do not exceed levels of health concern.
- Verified the need for the interim remedial actions at the two dispersed campsites and three mine waste piles within the Bonita Peak Mining District used for camping; the interim remedial actions were included in the recently released IROD.
- Identified additional source areas posing potential health risks at the site that may require further study and remedial action.

An ethnographic study addendum to the human health risk assessment is being developed by the Southern Ute Indian Tribe, in coordination with the EPA and the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe, to study native plants with traditional tribal uses. Samples of plants growing in the Site will be collected and studied using Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation Act funds.

Future risk assessments will include a terrestrial risk assessment to evaluate risk to terrestrial animals living within the Site.

### **2.3.2 Current Land Use**

Historically, mining was the main industry in the area, but now, tourism (including skiing and recreation) and construction are the most common industries. There is an advanced-terrain ski area north of Silverton. Kendall Mountain Ski Area in Silverton is a recreational area that attracts tourists and families in the winter months. Because the general area of the Site is very mountainous, with limited areas of flat, developable land, there is no significant agriculture use in the area and no significant residential developments outside of Silverton.



## 2.4 Regulatory Involvement to Date

### 2.4.1 The 1990s

EPA and CDPHE conducted a Superfund site assessment of the area in the 1990s. This assessment identified the severe impacts to aquatic life in the Upper Animas River and its tributaries from naturally occurring and mining-related heavy metals. It also acknowledged the community-based collaborative effort that was under way at that time to address those impacts. In recognition of the community-based collaborative effort, EPA agreed to postpone site listing to the Superfund National Priorities List (NPL) since progress was being made to improve Animas River water quality.

### 2.4.2 2005 to 2014

Following the cessation of water treatment activities at Gladstone, Colorado in about 2005, water quality in the Animas River decreased significantly for at least 20 miles below the confluence with Cement Creek. The decrease in water quality coincided with a collapse of the Animas River fishery downstream of Silverton to at least Cascade Creek.

Because of this declining water quality in the Animas River, in 2008, EPA's Superfund Site Assessment Program began investigations in upper Cement Creek to evaluate whether the upper Cement Creek area alone would qualify for inclusion on the NPL. This evaluation indicated that the area would qualify, although after receiving additional community input, EPA again postponed efforts to include the area on the NPL and continued to participate in the community-based collaborative efforts.

In support of the collaborative effort, EPA's Superfund Remedial Program contributed resources for water quality sampling, ecological risk assessment, and data analysis. In addition, the Superfund Removal Program contributed resources for the investigation and closure (by bulkheading—placement of a retaining wall to contain leakage or flooding) of the Red and Bonita Mine tunnel.

EPA, through its Ecosystem Protection program, also provided the Colorado Water Quality Control Division of CDPHE with Nonpoint Source Management Program (Section 319) grant funds. The Animas River Stakeholders Group and others have received grants under that program, along with contributions from other sources, to contribute resources for investigation and cleanup efforts in the Upper Animas watershed.

Sunnyside Gold Corporation, BLM and the State of Colorado also have conducted reclamation activities in the Upper Animas watershed. These efforts have included diverting runoff away from and capping mine waste piles, moving mine waste piles away from drainages, consolidating mine waste piles, placing bulkheads in draining adits, and revegetating mine waste piles.

### 2.4.3 2015 to 2016

Under the Superfund Removal program, an engineered concrete bulkhead was installed in the adit of the Red and Bonita Mine during summer 2015.

On August 5, 2015, EPA's Superfund Removal Program was conducting an investigation and an assessment of the Gold King Mine to evaluate the ongoing water releases from the mine, treat mine water, and assess the feasibility of further mine remediation. While investigating the adit, pressurized water began leaking above the mine tunnel, eventually spilling about three million gallons of metal-laden water stored behind the collapsed material into Cement Creek and ultimately into the Animas River. Since October 2015, EPA has been treating the discharge from the Gold King Mine at the Interim Water Treatment Plant at Gladstone, Colorado.

This event prompted renewed interest in addressing the long-term, mining-related impacts to water quality in the Animas River. On February 29, 2016, EPA received a letter from Colorado Governor John Hickenlooper expressing support for the addition of the Site to the NPL. In his letter, he noted that the Town of Silverton, San Juan County, City of Durango, La Plata County, local Tribes, and other interested stakeholders requested that the site be added to the NPL.

EPA proposed the Site for addition to the NPL on April 7, 2016. A 68-day public comment period, during which EPA accepted comments from the public on the NPL proposal, closed on June 13, 2016. After carefully considering and responding to all comments in a responsiveness summary, EPA officially added the Site to the NPL on September 9, 2016.

#### **2.4.4 2017 to 2019**

EPA continues to treat mine-impacted water from the Gold King Mine at the Gladstone Interim Water Treatment Plant. EPA also established an interim sludge management location at the Kittimac Tailings area. EPA will use monitoring wells to ensure there are no negative impacts from the interim sludge management location. EPA continues its efforts to secure a location for a permanent, sitewide waste repository.

The site team, including EPA, BLM, CDPHE, and USFS, conducted a remedial investigation/feasibility study (RI/FS) at the site. The RI/FS includes a human health risk assessment, ecological risk assessment, and a hydrologic study of the Bonita Peak groundwater system. These investigations provide information that will be used in determining cleanup options for the site.

Samples of soil, invertebrates, and vegetation were collected and will be evaluated in the terrestrial risk assessment. These samples were collected in floodplains, upland areas, and the "halos" around source areas.

While the sitewide remedial investigation is ongoing, mining-related sources in the Bonita Peak Mining District were identified, where contaminant migration issues could be addressed through interim remedial actions. EPA issued for public comment a proposed plan to conduct these actions on June 14, 2018. EPA presented the proposed plan at a public meeting and, by request, extended the comment period from 30 to 60 days. The proposed plan identified a preferred alternative for each of five types of contaminant migration issues and compared it to the "no action" alternative. EPA has issued an IROD, which takes all comments into consideration.

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## Section 3

# Community Profile

This section includes a profile of San Juan County, in which the Site is located, and La Plata County, the county immediately downstream. Profiles are also provided for the two sovereign nations, the Southern Ute Indian Tribe and the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe, who have rights at the Site through the Brunot Agreement. A summary of the community involvement activities conducted to date at the Site is also provided.

### 3.1 Demographics

Profiles are provided for:

- San Juan County
  - Silverton
- La Plata County
  - Durango
  - Bayfield
  - Ignacio
- Southern Ute Indian Tribe
- Ute Mountain Ute Tribe

Demographic data presented were obtained from on-line resources, as noted. Data for the Navajo Nation will be prepared by EPA Region 9 and included in Appendix H in a future revision.

#### 3.1.1 San Juan County

The Site lies within San Juan County, which is one of Colorado's smallest (387 square miles) and least populous (720 people) counties. Most county residents (655) live in Silverton. San Juan County is in the southwest corner of the state and is bordered by five other counties: Ouray, Dolores, San Miguel, Hinsdale, and La Plata (Figure 3.1). Other towns in the county (Eureka and Gladstone) are now ghost towns. Much of San Juan County is included in the San Juan National Forest.

San Juan County has a three-member, elected board of county commissioners. The board appoints a county administrator to carry out the policy directions of the board and to supervise and coordinate the work of the staff in the departments that fall under direct control of the board. The county planning and building department, a public health department, and sheriff's office may also have an interest in the site.

There is one newspaper published in the county, *The Silverton Standard*. It has been publishing since 1875 and is recognized as a National Historic Site in Journalism. San Juan County is part of Colorado’s 3rd Congressional District, State Senate District 6, State Congressional District 59 (Appendix B).

Because 90 percent of people in the county reside in Silverton, the demographics for the county and the town are very similar and are presented below in the description of Silverton.

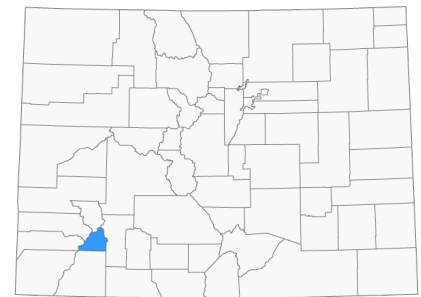


Figure 3.1 Location of San Juan County

### Silverton

Silverton, Colorado is a small, mountain community in southwestern Colorado at an elevation of 9,305 feet and with a land area of less than a square mile. Silverton is a former silver mining camp, most or all of which is now included in a federally designated National Historic Landmark District, the Silverton Historic District. The town was incorporated in 1885.

Like many towns in this area, Silverton depends, in large part, on recreational resources attractions. Silverton no longer has active mining, but it is supported by tourism, maintenance of US 550 (which links Montrose with Durango via Silverton), mine pollution remediation, and retirees. In 2002, an advanced-terrain ski area, Silverton Mountain, opened near the town (Wikipedia 2017).

The Silverton Chamber of Commerce states, *“Silverton is a National Historic Landmark, part of the San Juan Skyway (with the Million Dollar Highway connecting Silverton to Ouray), home to Animas Forks and the Alpine Loop, and the summer destination for the Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad train ride. With the Weminuche Wilderness close by, Silverton is a recreational paradise in Winter for snowmobiling, skiing (downhill, extreme, heli, snowcat, cross country), sledding, ice skating, ice climbing, and ice fishing, and in Summer for rafting, backcountry touring, Jeeping (Jeep rentals and Jeep tours are available), ATV and OHV riding, fishing, hiking, biking, rafting, horseback riding, hunting, and camping.”*

Silverton had a population of 655 (358 males and 297 females) in 2014. The population has increased by 23.4 percent since 2000, which puts it among the fastest growing areas of the country. The median resident age is 46 years, which is older than that of Colorado (36 years); 42 percent of the population over age 15 is married.

English is the most common language spoken in the home (92 percent). Almost all of those living in Silverton were born in the United States, with the most common ancestries being English, European, German, Irish, Norwegian, and Scottish. As of 2015, 74 percent of residents identify as White, 21 percent as Hispanic, 3 percent as Other, 1 percent as American Indian, and 1 percent as Two or More Races. A total of 12 residents were reported to be foreign born.

Estimated per capita income in Silverton was \$37,630 in 2015, which is well below the state median of \$63,909. The estimated median sales price for a house or condo in Silverton in 2015 was \$255,512 (up from \$130,100 in 2000) (City-Data 2017). The median value of a house or

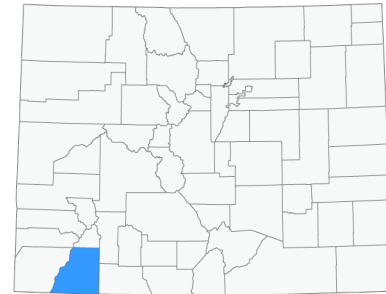
condo in Colorado in 2015 was \$283,800. Median gross rent in Silverton in 2015 was \$1,042. The 2016 cost of living index in Silverton was 99.2, near the United States average of 100.

For those 25 and over, 92 percent reported having a high school diploma, 28 percent have a bachelor's degree, and 6 percent have a graduate or professional degree. Unemployment is low (3.2 percent). The most common occupations in 2015 were reported as sales; construction and extraction; management; personal care and services; installation, maintenance, and repair; production; and food preparation and serving.

There were 64 students reported in Silverton in 2015: Silverton High School (13 students), Silverton Middle School (35 students), and Silverton Elementary (16 students). Fort Lewis College in Durango is the nearest location for higher learning. Silverton has a public library and is served by a volunteer fire department.

### 3.1.2 La Plata County

La Plata County is the 26<sup>th</sup> largest county in Colorado (1,692 square miles). It has a population of 51,940 people. La Plata County is bordered by four other Colorado counties (San Juan, Montezuma, Archuleta, and Hinsdale) and by the State of New Mexico to the south (Figure 3.2). Roughly a third of the population lives in Durango. The county also includes two much smaller towns (Bayfield and Ignacio) (Figure 3.3) in the southern portion of the county and about a dozen unincorporated communities, including Hermosa, Florida Mesa, and Fort Lewis Mesa. The northern portion of La Plata County is very mountainous and is included in the San Juan National Forest. There are no population centers in that area. The Southern Ute Indian Reservation covers most of the southern third of the county.



**Figure 3.2 Location of La Plata County**

There are 10 grocery stores and 1 supercenter/club store, 28 convenience stores (most with gas service), and 77 full-service restaurants listed for the county. The estimated per capita income in 2015 for county residents was \$31,822, which is about half of that seen in Durango or Colorado. The median value for a house or condo in 2015 was \$332,700, which is higher than the median for Colorado (\$283,800), mainly due to housing prices in Durango. Median gross rent in 2015 was \$984 (HomeFacts 2107).

For La Plata County, English is the most common language spoken in the home (90 percent). Because of population numbers, schools outside of Durango, Bayfield, and Ignacio are limited in number. Fort Mesa, Florida Mesa, and Sunnyside each have an elementary school. Ninety-five percent of residents reported having a high school diploma or higher, 27 percent have a bachelor's degree, and 16 percent have a graduate or professional degree.

Like San Juan County, La Plata is part of Colorado's 3rd Congressional District, State Senate District 6, and State Congressional District 59. La Plata has a county manager and three elected commissioners.

Community profiles for the three largest towns in La Plata County (Durango, Bayfield, and Ignacio) are provided below in order of population.

### Durango

Durango was organized in September 1880, to serve the San Juan Mining District. It covers an area of almost 7 square miles and sits at an elevation of 6,512 feet in the Animas River Valley, surrounded by the San Juan Mountains. The Animas River runs through downtown and is a popular site for fly fishing, whitewater rafting, kayaking, and canoeing. Durango is also popular for outdoor activities such as hiking, mountain biking, road biking, backpacking, slacklining, rock climbing, hunting, off-roading, year-round fishing, and golfing. Durango is near five major ski areas.



Figure 3.3 Three Largest Towns in La Plata County

The Durango Chamber of Commerce website states, *“We are home to a four-year college, regional medical facility, modern commercial airport, and a wide variety of boutiques, specialty shops, galleries and many diverse restaurants. We are proud of our three prominent historic districts: Main Avenue Historic District, East Third Avenue Residential District and the Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad right-of-way between Durango and Silverton, Colorado. Our mountain scenery and excellent quality of life make it a great place to visit or relocate.”*

Durango has a population of 16,887 (2010 census), which is an increase of 28 percent since 2000. Median age of residents is 31.7 years and 36 percent of residents over the age of 15 are married.

English is the most common language spoken in the home (89 percent). Over 96 percent of those living in Durango were born in the United States, with the most common ancestries being American, English, European, Italian, Irish, and German. As of 2015, 79 percent of residents identify as White, 12 percent as Hispanic, 5 percent as American Indian, and 2 percent as Two or More Races. Asian and Black are both less than 2 percent. A total of 670 residents are reported to be foreign born.

The estimated per capita income in 2015 was \$60,109, which is very close to that for Colorado (\$63,909). The median value for a house or condo in 2015 was \$416,538, which is significantly higher than the median for Colorado (\$283,800). Median gross rent in 2015 was \$1,218. Average household size in 2015 was reported to be 2.2 people, and 13 percent of residents were living in poverty.

For those 25 and over, 96 percent reported having a high school diploma or higher, 53 percent have a bachelor’s degree, and 19 percent have a graduate or professional degree. Unemployment is low (2.9 percent). The most common occupations in 2015 were reported as food preparation and serving, sale, construction and extraction, management, office and support, business and financial, and building and grounds cleaning and maintenance.

There were roughly 4,600 public and 400 private students in prekindergarten through high school, and 3,631 college students, reported in Durango in 2015. Durango has a public library. The city is served by the Durango Fire and Rescue (4 paid-staff and 12 volunteer positions) and by the Durango Police Department (59 full-time officers). Durango has two airports and several heliports.

Durango is the county seat of La Plata County. The city government includes a mayor, a mayor pro tem, and three councilors. Durango has two newspapers (*Durango Herald* and *Durango Telegraph*). There is also a public radio station (KDUR 91.9 and 93.9 FM Fort Lewis College) and a public access television station (Durango TV). Media contact information is included in Appendix F.

### **Bayfield**

Bayfield is about 20 miles east of Durango. The Town of Bayfield had 2,533 people in 2015, up 63 percent from 2000 (City-Data 2017). The median age of residents was 32 years. The town covers 1.08 square miles and sits at an elevation of 6,892 feet. Bayfield has an elementary school and a middle school and students go to Durango to attend high school. Bayfield has a public library (Pine River Library), a ranger station, a fire department, and many businesses. It has no listed hospital or medical centers.

The Bayfield website states, *"The Town of Bayfield has experienced a huge population increase since the beginning of 2000. In 2001, the Town agreed to form a special improvement district to build a business park, which has 38 commercial parcels on 56 acres. There are a number of substantial businesses located in this Business Park. Lewis True Value, First National Bank of Durango, Pine River Valley Bank, Alert Signs, Autocrafters, the Pine River Library, Brenda's Old West Cafe, Tequilas Mexican Restaurant, Hong's Garden Grill & many other businesses are all located in this area of Town."* It also states *"Bayfield prides itself on our small town atmosphere and long-standing sense of community. Our Bayfield School District has long been recognized as one of Colorado's finest and was awarded "Colorado School Board of the Year" in 2007. The Town of Bayfield was incorporated in 1906 when the Bay family and the Schiller family each donated land to create a supply Town near the Pine River."*

Bayfield is a statutory municipality that is governed by an elected town board. The board is comprised of a mayor, a mayor pro tem, and five board members.

Compared to the rest of Colorado, Bayfield is reported to have lower unemployment, lower median age, and lower age of housing stock. The estimated median household income in Bayfield for 2015 was \$67,554, which is higher than that for Colorado (\$63,909). The median value for a house or condo in 2015 was \$251,406, which is slightly less than the median for Colorado (\$283,800). Median gross rent in 2015 was \$1,405. Average household size was 2.6 people and 10 percent of residents were living in poverty in 2015. The March 2016 cost of living index in Bayfield was 90 (less than the United States average of 100).

For those 25 and over, 92 percent reported having a high school diploma or higher, 23 percent have a bachelor's degree, and 10 percent have a graduate or professional degree. Unemployment was 4.3 percent in 2015. The most common occupations in Bayfield for 2015 were reported as

installation, maintenance, and repair; construction and extraction; management; transportation; sales; architecture and engineering; and law enforcement.

English is the most common language spoken in the home (89 percent). As of 2015, 81 percent of residents identify as White, 13 percent as Hispanic, 3 percent as American Indian, and 2 percent as Two or More Races. Asian and Black races were below 1 percent. A total of 148 residents were reported to be foreign born.

### **Ignacio**

The town of Ignacio has a population of 721 people, with a median age of 39 years. The population increased 8 percent between 2000 and 2014. The town covers 0.27 square miles and sits at an elevation of 6,445 feet. Businesses or organizations in Ignacio include a public library (Ignacio Community Library), museum, Baptist church, post office, supermarket/pharmacy, natural food store, winery, and casino. It has no listed hospital or medical centers. It is 11 miles south of Bayfield and 24 miles southeast of Durango.

The Town of Ignacio website states, *“We are a tri-ethnic community of about 800 people nestled in the southeast corner of La Plata County along with the Southern Ute Indian Tribe. We are a quick drive to the Navajo Lake State Park, the San Juan Mountains and National Forest, thousands of acres of State/Federal lands, Mesa Verde National Park, and the Four Corners Region. The Town consists of a variety of businesses and residential homes with a unique Southwest Colorado feel. Our businesses range from local family run restaurants, galleries, locally owned and run grocery stores, banking, chiropractic and dental clinics, as well as a wide variety of other goods and services. The Ignacio School District serves hundreds of children from the Town all the way to the Colorado/New Mexico Border. We also are home to the Pine River Community Learning Center for adult education.*

Ignacio is a statutory town that is governed by an elected mayor, a mayor pro tem, and five trustees. The estimated median household income in 2015 was reported as \$50,948, which is lower than that for Colorado (\$63,909). The median house or condo value in Ignacio in 2015 was \$187,597, which is significantly below that for Colorado (\$283,800). Median gross rent was \$1,205. Average household size was 2.5 people and 19 percent of residents were living in poverty in 2015. The March 2016 cost of living index in Ignacio was 94.2 (less than the United States average of 100).

Races in Ignacio in 2015 were reported to be Hispanic (50 percent), White (28 percent), American Indian (16 percent) and Native Hawaiian (2 percent). Asian, Black and “Two or More Races” were all below 1 percent. The percentage of residents who speak English at home is 79 percent, while 18 percent of residents speak Spanish at home. Only two residents are reported to be foreign born.

Ignacio has a public elementary, middle, and a high school, as well as the private Southern Ute Indian Montessori Academy. For those 25 and over, 88 percent report having a high school diploma or higher, 17 percent have a bachelor’s degree, and 3 percent have a graduate or professional degree. Unemployment was 2.9 percent in 2015. The most common occupations in Ignacio for 2015 are reported as: building, grounds cleaning, and maintenance; construction and extraction; management, transportation; sales; food preparation and serving; and education.



### 3.1.3 Southern Ute Indian Tribe

The Southern Ute Indian Tribe is located on the Southern Ute Indian Reservation in Southwest Colorado. The reservation covers 1,059 square miles in three counties (La Plata, Archuleta, and Montezuma). The Southern Ute Tribe comprises two bands, the Mouache and Caputa. In 1868 a large reservation was established for the Southern Utes that covered the western half of Colorado consisting of 56 million acres.

*The Tribal website states, “In 1873, after gold and silver was discovered in the San Juan Mountains, the Brunot Agreement was created. The Agreement substantially diminished Southern Ute lands, depriving the Tribe of seasonal camps, and annual elk and deer harvests. The Southern Ute reservation was created around 1895. It was 15 miles wide and 110 miles long. In 1895 the Hunter Act enabled lands within the Ute Strip to be allotted to tribal members, and the surplus lands homesteaded and sold to non-Indians. The reservation includes timberlands on high mountains, with elevations over 9,000 feet, in the eastern portion and flat arid mesas in the west. Seven rivers run through the reservation (Piedra, San Juan, Florida, La Plata, Animas, Navajo, and Los Pinos). Water rights were settled by the 1988 Ute Water Rights Settlement Act.”*

The Southern Ute Tribe has about 1,400 members, with half the population under the age of 30. It is a sovereign nation, with its reservation land being held in trust by the federal government through the BLM. It is headquartered in Ignacio and governed by a seven-member, elected tribal council that includes a chairman and six council members. Tribal government is based on a Tribal Constitution adopted in 1936 and revised in 1975. The tribe strives to provide strong social welfare and education programs, while also emphasizing the importance of their traditional way of life. They sponsor the annual Sun Dance and Bear Dance. Tribal members of all ages participate in pow wows. The mission statement of the tribal council is *“The Southern Ute Indian Tribal Council exercises its inherent sovereignty and the authority granted by the Southern Ute people through the Constitution to enhance and sustain the Tribe’s resources, traditions, language and culture, and improve quality of life for enrolled Tribal members (the Mouache and Capote people) of today and tomorrow.”*

*The Tribe’s website also states, “The Southern Ute Indian Tribe Growth Fund operates and manages the Southern Ute Indian Tribe’s businesses and business investments. In this role, the Growth Fund oversees a significant portfolio of companies and investments in energy, real estate, construction, and private equity. The Growth Fund’s headquarters are located in the heart of the Southern Ute Indian Reservation in Ignacio, Colorado. Since the Tribe created the Growth Fund in 2000, it has committed substantial capital to a broadening range of businesses and investments. In just nine years, the value of the Growth Fund’s holdings has grown. Operations and assets are spread out over fourteen states and the Gulf of Mexico.”*

The Sun Ute Community Center houses a gymnasium, fitness center, swimming pools, and the local Boys and Girls Club. The Southern Ute Tribal Academy is a private school that provides education and day care for children from the ages of 6 months to the sixth grade. Its curriculum includes a comprehensive Ute language program.

In Ignacio, the Southern Ute Indian Tribe also owns and operates the Sky Ute Casino, *SUIT Drum* newspaper (see Appendix F for media information), a museum, a public radio station (KSUT), and a health center.

Demographic data for the tribe itself are not available. Historical information from the Tribe's website states, "At one time the town of Ignacio as well as the surrounding land around the town was owned by Southern Ute tribal members. Now, there are a few private homes owned by tribal members within town limits. Shoshone Town Park is tribal land leased by the town of Ignacio. The Southern Ute Education offices are located within city limits, as is the Tribal Housing entity and rental homes located on reservation lands that border town limits; the Southern Ute Community Action program is also situated within city limits and operates under the umbrella of the Tribe.

*Many tribal members lived in and around the Ignacio area in the early 1900s on up to the 1950s, and others lived on the reservation outside of town. Housing sites were established in the 1970s under the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development, one of the many programs established to alleviate poverty in cities and on Indian reservations. Rental and private housing was constructed, however, as federal housing budget cuts increased the tribe sought ways to assist tribal members in obtaining affordable housing. This resulted in a new housing development called Cedar Point Housing sub-division, financed in part by the Southern Ute Tribe, with qualifying tribal members purchasing homes. Cedar Point East began as rental units and converted to tribal member owned homes. Cedar Point West is comprised of privately-owned homes, modular and trailer homes."*

The tribe allows access to the Animas River within the tribe's jurisdiction for fishing by nontribal individuals with a special permit. This is a valued amenity for local anglers.

### **3.1.4 Ute Mountain Ute Tribe**

The Ute Mountain Ute Reservation comprises 597,288 acres of allotted and deeded lands. It is located largely in Colorado, but some of the reservation lands extend into New Mexico and Utah. In Colorado, the reservation is primarily in Montezuma County, which is adjacent to La Plata County. The reservation was created in 1897 (Tiller 2005). The elevation of the reservation ranges from 4,600 feet to 10,000 feet. The San Juan River flows for 3.4 stream miles in the southwest corner of the reservation.

The Ute Mountain Ute Agency is in Towaoc, which is the only town in the reservation. The town covers 3.46 square miles and is at an elevation of 5,843 feet. Towaoc is located east of Sleeping Ute Mountain, a sacred mountain of the Ute people, northeast of the Four Corners Monument.

Demographic data for the tribe itself are limited, but they are available for Towaoc. The 2010 population in Towaoc was reported to be 1,087. In 2015, the median age was reported as 30 years and the median household income was \$25,825, which is substantially lower than that for Colorado (\$63,909). The median house or condo value in 2015 was \$121,743, which is significantly below that for Colorado (\$283,800). Median gross rent was \$309. Average household size was 3.1 people and 48 percent of residents were below the poverty level in 2015. The 2016 cost of living index in Towaoc was 91.3, which is less than the United States average of 100.



In Towaoc, for those 25 and over, 77 percent reported having a high school diploma or higher, 8 percent have a bachelor's degree, and 2 percent have a graduate or professional degree. Unemployment was 19 percent in 2015. The most common occupations in Towaoc for 2015 were reported as construction and extraction; management; installation, maintenance, and repair; production; health technologies; and business and financial.

Races in Towaoc in 2015 were reported to be American Indian (74 percent), Hispanic (10 percent), White (4 percent), Black (1 percent) and Asian (1 percent). The percentage of residents who speak English at home was 58 percent, while 3 percent of residents speak Spanish at home, and 38 percent speak another language. Only seven residents were reported to be foreign born.

Per the 2010 census, per capita income for residents of the entire Ute Mountain Ute Reservation was \$8,159. The tribal government is a major employer on the reservation, including governmental departments, casino facilities, and tribal enterprises. The economy is also supported by revenue from the energy sector, including coal and oil leases. The total labor force on the Ute Mountain Ute Reservation was 717, with an unemployment rate of 5 percent.

Like the Southern Ute Indian Tribe, the Ute Mountain Tribe is a sovereign nation, with its reservation land being held in trust by the federal government through the BLM. Tribal government consists of a chairman, a vice chairwoman, and a tribal council.

Towaoc has a senior center, a post office, a casino, and a justice center. All education and health services are in Cortez, about 16 miles to the northeast. The Ute Mountain Ute Tribe Youth Opportunity Program works with local schools and other programs to provide school-to-career support and educational assistance to students. Several secondary schools are available to tribal members: Cortez High School, Southwest Open Alternative School, and San Juan High School in White Mesa, Utah. Student may also attend Bureau of Indian Affairs boarding schools in California and Oklahoma. Fort Lewis College and Pueblo College provide local postsecondary programs. Per the 2010 U.S. Census, 58.3 percent of residents have a high school degree or higher, and 2.8 percent have a bachelor's degree or higher.

## 3.2 Community Involvement History

The agencies have conducted a variety of community involvement activities to date at the Site to meet Superfund requirements and enhance engagement. These include but are not limited to:

- **Agency Contacts.** The Agencies have maintained one or more designated spokespersons to inform the community of actions taken, respond to inquiries, and provide information concerning the release of hazardous substances (see Section 5).
- **Community Engagement.** The Agencies regularly:
  - Brief congressional representatives.
  - Update local government elected and appointed officials.
  - Update tribal representatives.

- Meet with the Silverton/San Juan County Planning Group, which is the group designated by the Silverton and San Juan County to represent their jurisdictions when interacting with the Agencies.
  - Host public meetings to update community members about Site activities. The meetings are organized to convey Site information via presentations/discussions and to answer questions from the community.
  - Email the *Bonita Peak Mining District Update* monthly newsletter, meeting notices, fact sheets, and other announcements to interested parties via an email distribution list. In addition, the Agencies rely on their community partners to help distribute information about the Site.
  - Post public notices in local newspapers about public comment opportunities, upcoming events and other Site-related information.
  - Attend meetings of the Bonita Peak Mining District CAG, as requested.
  - Participate in meetings of other interested groups and attend local events.
- **Information Repositories.** EPA Region 8 has established two information repositories in Colorado and assisted Regions 6 and 9 in establishing information repositories in New Mexico and the Navajo Nation. The repositories contain basic information for public review, documents about Site activities, technical documents, this CIP, and general information about the Superfund program.
  - **Website.** EPA maintains a website for the Site at [www.epa.gov/superfund/Bonita-Peak](http://www.epa.gov/superfund/Bonita-Peak).
  - **Technical Assistance.** EPA has provided information about the availability of technical assistance to communities in presentations and in writing. There have been discussions in the communities about forming an organization to apply for a technical assistance grant. However, community representatives have expressed the opinion that enough technical expertise is available within the community to provide technical assistance as needed. EPA provided a technical advisor and a technical expert to the Silverton/San Juan County Planning Group through the Technical Assistance Services for Communities program.
  - **Silverton/San Juan Planning Group.** The Agencies recognize and acknowledge that the Silverton/San Juan Planning Group is the entity comprised of local officials and residents that serves to provide Silverton and San Juan County the decision-making “seat at the table,” as requested by the Governor of Colorado, and Silverton and San Juan County in their NPL listing letters to the EPA. The Agencies will coordinate with and involve the Silverton/San Juan Planning Group as much as possible in all phases of work and all decisions concerning the Bonita Peak Mining District. The scope of this coordination and involvement with the Silverton/San Juan Planning Group will not be limited to the typical review and comment on Agency proposals, but instead will include active and meaningful involvement throughout this process and particularly in the formulation and evaluation of any Agency proposal.

- **San Juan County Communications Liaison.** A community member, Anthony Edwards, has been identified as the communications liaison for the Site to support the agencies in keeping the communities informed of current and planned activities. This position is funded by the Water Infrastructure Improvement for the Nation (WIIN) Act through a grant from the State of Colorado to San Juan County,
- **Bonita Peak Mining District Community Advisory Group.** A CAG 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. The Bonita Peak Mining District CAG maintains a website at <https://www.bonitapeakcag.org>.
- **Alert and Notification Plan.** The EPA has used an alert and notification process to notify emergency managers of affected communities of water quality concerns or of color changes to the Animas River. This process ensures all members of affected communities are informed in a timely manner of water quality concerns.

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## Section 4

# Community Concerns and Issues

To better understand the communities that have an interest in the Bonita Peak Mining District, EPA and CDPHE interviewed community members, local officials and stakeholders Silverton, San Juan County, Durango, La Plata County and the Southern Ute Indian Tribe. Interview findings were supplemented with information gathered during face-to-face interactions between the Agencies and the communities.

All individuals interviewed knew about the Bonita Peak Mining District Superfund Site. For many, the introduction to the Site was the Gold King Mine release in August 2015, and they are just learning about the other sources of contamination from past mining activities in the area. Others, who have long been involved in studying the area and participating in voluntary cleanup efforts, have a great deal of knowledge about the watershed, its history, and past cleanup work.

Regardless, in many cases, each individual's experiences during the Gold King Mine release and subsequent emergency response influenced how they perceived work at the Bonita Peak Mining District. Although some mentioned that public interest has lessened from the high level immediately after the discharge, others said that the effects of that event have had a continuing impact on their communities. Some hope that the Superfund cleanup in the Bonita Peak Mining District will help bring a sense of closure and healing to those affected by the release.

## 4.1 Concerns Related to Technical Work

### 4.1.1 Clean-up Goals

Many interviewees listed a lack of defined cleanup goals for the project as a concern. One said that there may be more than one measure of success. Others noted that the level of background contamination in the mining district may prevent significant goals from being met. Their questions about the remediation goals included:

- When and how will cleanup/remediation goals be defined?
- Is there a human health standard that will be used at the site?
- What is going to be the measurement of success for cleanup?
- How will costs be controlled and efficiency ensured?

Many interviewees noted their concern for the cost of the project and the need for efficiency in the Site cleanup. They expressed concern that funding to complete such a large, complex site won't be made available over the life of the project. Several interviewees stated that if the cleanup isn't completed efficiently, taxpayer dollars will be wasted.

One interviewee expressed concern about the bidding process used to hire firms to work at the Site. They felt that low bidders in that process may cut corners and that the Bonita Peak Mining District should be a first-class project.

#### 4.1.2 Desired Outcomes of Cleanup

Interviewees listed numerous desired outcomes for the Superfund cleanup at the Bonita Peak Mining District. These can be summarized as:

- A healthy watershed that supports fish and aquatic life, specifically trout, living further upstream in the Animas River.
- Enhanced recreational opportunities with hiking, biking, and walking trails that would connect the community to the backcountry and public lands, and informational signs.
- Nothing inhibiting future mining in the area, while preserving mining history and acknowledging that mining is not inherently bad.
- Water quality that restores natural conditions in the Animas River and its tributaries, meets water quality standards at A-72, and poses no negative impact to wildlife and fish, and assurances to downstream communities that water is not contaminated.
- Physical changes in the watershed that include the creation of structured wetlands, putting the water back in the mountain where it belongs through bulkheads, and preventing future unanticipated discharges.
- Creation of a model project as a living incubator for technology testing and information sharing that would develop new technologies, new ideas, and outside-the-box thinking.
- Creation of jobs for local community members at the Interim Water Treatment Plant and engagement of former miners, during investigation and cleanup.

#### 4.1.3 Other Technical Issues

- A few interviewees stated they were not sure all the source areas should have been included in the Superfund site and that some could probably be deleted. One interviewee said that the Site is too big and wanted to know its specific boundaries.
- A number of people mentioned that members of their community lack trust in state and federal agencies. Some were concerned that the Agencies don't understand background levels of contamination sufficiently to conduct an appropriate cleanup. One individual wondered if anyone has the expertise to tackle such a complicated project.
- A number of interviewees were concerned that the Animas River might pose a threat to human health in their communities. One emphasized the importance of communicating any human health risks effectively to residents because it is so important to community members. Two respondents mentioned that the Animas River is used as a backup source of drinking water for the City of Durango. They are concerned about continued leaching of metals into the river or the possibility of another unanticipated release of contaminants in the mining district.

- A few interviewees mentioned concerns about the Interim Water Treatment Plant at Gladstone, including the ongoing expense and the potential impact of sludge disposal. While some expressed concern that the plant is currently treating drainage only from the Gold King Mine and not from other area sources, many mentioned a desire that less expensive and environmentally impactful alternatives to water treatment be found.
- Several people mentioned the impacts of the cleanup on the Town of Silverton, including property values, tourism, roads, and emergency services. These concerns were largely focused on the bad publicity they perceived coming with the Superfund designation.
- Many interviewees mentioned the importance of historic preservation in the Bonita Peak Mining District. One respondent noted that it is a famous geological area, about which people have been writing textbooks about since the 1880s. All those who mentioned this concern noted that they felt historic sites in the mining district need to be protected.

## 4.2 Concerns and Issues Related to Community Involvement

### 4.2.1 Overall Community Involvement

Many interviewees mentioned they had concerns with the Agencies' community engagement related to the Site. However, all stated that they had either voiced those concerns to the appropriate agency or felt they have had an opportunity to do so. Concerns heard in the interviews are summarized below:

- Several mentioned the communications challenges for a site with community interest that crosses several state, tribal, and EPA regional boundaries. They stated that consistent messages from all the agencies involved in the cleanup is important.
- A few respondents stated a concern that communication from the Agencies is not as open and effective as it could be because of ongoing litigation related to the Gold King Mine release. Others wondered if active community engagement efforts would continue now that the Site has been added to the NPL.
- A few people mentioned their desire that communications about the cleanup be a collaborative effort that is respectful of tribal interests and does not create conflict or competition in the community. Several people mentioned the concern that some communities might be getting more or different information than others. Most recognized that the communication needs of each community were unique, but they want to make sure communication is equal among all communities.
- Most interviewees characterized the Agencies' community involvement efforts as good to very good. Some stated that they didn't know what the Agencies could be doing to improve their engagement activities.
- Although most felt that the Agencies' community involvement efforts have been adequate for them personally, many identified other individuals or groups that might not be as effectively engaged. Some interviewees said those who would like more detailed technical information about the Site may not be receiving it. They said those individuals may not have enough detailed information to ask questions about the cleanup. However, others

thought that those who are knowledgeable about the Site can come to the EPA or the other agencies and get the information as they need it.

- Several people suggested that the Agencies could do a better job of providing information to average citizens, including basic information about the Superfund process, the Site and planned cleanup activities.
- Several interviewees noted that information needs may be different in upstream versus downstream communities, and the Agencies should engage them appropriately.
- A few interviewees said working with local partners was reported to be an effective way for the Agencies to establish trust in the communities. One person mentioned the goodwill created when Agencies staff attend local events, such as the MSI Conference, SuperFUN Days, the 9Health Fair, and the Economic Development District meeting.
- One interviewee said the fact that the Agencies are engaging very well with elected officials gives residents some comfort that they're being represented. They said elected officials are then doing their part to get the word out.
- Several people mentioned that having a "seat at the table" through the Silverton/San Juan County Planning Group is working well, though others felt the Agencies could do a better job of communicating directly with local elected officials and residents in Silverton and San Juan County.

#### **4.2.2 Current Information Sources for the Site**

Interviewees reported they are currently receiving information about the Bonita Peak Mining District from several sources. These include:

- *The Bonita Peak Mining District Update* newsletter
- Public meetings held by the Agencies
- Meetings held by other stakeholder groups
- Talking to other stakeholders
- Newspapers
- Briefings for local officials
- Personal meetings with staff from the federal and state agencies
- Facebook
- Websites (the Agencies and other organizations)



## 4.3 Improving Community Involvement

### 4.3.1 Content Suggestions

Almost all interviewees had ideas of how the Agencies could improve community involvement. These ideas included:

- When seeking community input, ask specific questions rather than soliciting general feedback.
- Be specific when the Agencies representatives discuss “community.” Each jurisdiction is unique and they should not be confused with one another.
- Better coordination between the various states and EPA regions, leading to better communications across boundaries.
- Communicate what the impact of the Superfund cleanup is going to be to the individual; explain why the Agencies are doing work in this area, and identify what does and doesn’t fall within the Superfund process.
- Communicate that the Bonita Peak Mining District is only one of many sources of contamination in the watershed.
- Use timelines and roadmaps; explain what the Agencies are doing now, in the next 6 months, in the next year, and in future years; explain that it’s a long-term process.
- Reach out to other groups and organizations that haven’t been engaged so far.

### 4.3.2 Communication Tool Suggestions

Interviewees provided the following suggestions for communicating information to their communities:

- Continue the monthly publication of the *Bonita Peak Mining District Update* newsletter.
- In addition to regular public meetings, look for opportunities for informal engagement, such as “office hours” in Silverton and Durango, attending local events, or joining the breakfast roundtable at the Brown Bear restaurant. The Agencies should also participate in meetings of other established groups to share information.
- Use public access television, radio, and newspapers as good ways to communicate about the Site. Some thought that placing regular advertisements in the newspapers would be especially useful in their communities (see Appendix F for media information).
- Develop signage in the Bonita Peak Mining District and along the Animas River to educate and inform.
- In Silverton, use existing bulletin boards (town hall, county courthouse, post office, bank, grocery store and public library) for posting the newsletter and notices. Once a year, send a mass mailing to all residents about the Site.

- Use social media cautiously. Overall, the most common sentiment about the use of social media was, “I don’t use it, but a lot of people do.” Several people mentioned the potential perils of social media and that it should be used with caution. They thought it can be a powerful tool, but it is easy to do wrong. Websites and Facebook were most often mentioned as useful. One person said that Twitter can create an opportunity for dialogue, but that it can’t just be used by EPA to say the agency is doing a great job. Teleconferencing and Skype were mentioned as good ways to stay in touch with the community when the Agencies can’t attend meetings in person.

### 4.3 Technical Assistance Needs

Several people commented that technical advisors paid by EPA are not seen to be independent and credible sources of technical assistance because they don’t understand the community. In addition, they said it looks as though EPA has stacked the deck by providing the technical advisor. Many people commented that the Agencies should look to local groups to provide technical information and interpretation for the community, and they provided the names of those groups and organization that are perceived to be the most credible. However, to some, local groups are seen as promoting their own agenda, and they expressed a concern that those groups might not provide unbiased technical assistance to the public. On the other hand, one person stated that technical assistance shouldn’t be delegated to other organizations; only EPA should be providing this information.

Other comments heard during the interviews related to technical assistance are:

- Several people noted that different communities have different perspectives and different levels of interest. They added that the Agencies must tailor their information to each community.
- A few noted that different cultures need to be considered when providing technical assistance. One person said there can be communities within communities that may need different types of technical assistance.
- Two people said that the context of technical assistance is vital. They felt it was an ongoing challenge for citizens to understand what is important. They suggested Agencies flag the important information and provide a road map for it.
- Several people said that average people need very basic information, but it’s important they have a way they can ask questions.

Some suggestions for effective technical assistance were:

- Provide information as a story
- Publish a quarterly report covering progress to date in lay language
- Use summaries and fact sheets to share technical data in an easily understood format
- Place an advertisement in the newspaper asking what would be helpful to citizens

- Use more pictures and diagrams
- Use bullets instead of text
- Put documents on the website, but also include an executive summary for each

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## Section 5

# Community Involvement Action Plan

The most important objective of a CIP is to ensure that community members and others are aware of their opportunities for involvement in response action selection and implementation activities, including understanding how EPA got to that point in the process.




This CIP is intended as a blueprint for work that EPA intends to implement based on current knowledge of outreach needs. It is a living document and will change as work progresses. Dates and times for community involvement activities are not specified in the community involvement action plan to allow for flexibility in addressing community needs and interests.

The Agencies have designated points of contact for the Site. A complete list of contact information is provided in the appendices to assist the public in better determining who to contact.

### 5.1 Planned Actions

Planned actions consist of individual activities that the Agencies intend to implement or continue implementing, as needed, to inform the community of project progress and to engage community members so they can actively participate during the cleanup decision-making process. For ease of reading, these actions have been divided into three categories: face-to-face, written materials/news media, and electronic, and are described in the following subsections and shown in Table 5.1.

**Table 5.1 Types of Outreach Available at The Site**

Face to Face	Written Materials/News Media	Electronic
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Public meetings/open houses/CAG meetings</li> <li>▪ Open communication with key stakeholders</li> <li>▪ Community networking</li> <li>▪ Briefings of elected officials</li> <li>▪ Tribal consultations</li> </ul> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Community involvement plan</li> <li>▪ Newsletter, fact sheets, flyers, posters, and other materials</li> <li>▪ Advertisements and notifications</li> <li>▪ Press releases</li> <li>▪ Project technical documents</li> </ul> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Social media</li> <li>▪ Websites</li> <li>▪ Email group</li> <li>▪ Repositories</li> </ul> 

### 5.1.1 Face-to-Face Interactions

These interactions are meetings or other exchanges between the Agencies and stakeholders/community. They are effective in educating and fostering relationships that increase trust and understanding about work being conducted.

These interactions are described below and include but are not limited to:

- Public meetings/open houses/CAG meetings
- Open communication with key stakeholders
- Community networking
- Briefings of elected officials
- Tribal consultations



#### Public Meetings/Open Houses/CAG Meetings

EPA will sponsor general public meetings/open houses at appropriate times during the Superfund process at the Site. Meetings will be held at times and days that are the most convenient for residents and business owners, as determined through community input.

Meetings will include handouts and visual aids to explain topics in lay terms. Advance notice will be provided in the form of notices/advertisements in the local newspapers and other news media (see Appendix F for media information), meetings, emails, and through partner organizations.



EPA will continue to attend CAG meetings when requested to provide information and engage with the group.

#### Open Communication with Key Stakeholders

EPA will continue to coordinate with key stakeholders to keep them informed of project activities and obtain feedback on their concerns. This process will foster communication and clarify roles. Stakeholders will help disseminate information to groups with whom they are associated.

EPA's communication efforts will include:

- Holding small group meetings on a regular basis to stay in touch
- Periodic (but regular) one-on-one conversations



Either of these settings will provide a relaxed atmosphere conducive to effective dialog, thus, maximizing two-way communication between the Agencies and stakeholders. The Agencies have no set schedule for this communication and will rely on input from the stakeholders as to how often and what format is preferred.

## Community Networking

Additional networking activities will be considered. For example:

- Partnering with environmental and civic organizations to announce project updates, meetings, and community involvement opportunities
- Engaging local agencies such as public health departments and emergency management organizations to share information about site work that may impact their jurisdictions
- Participating in local cultural and civic events and project area activities
- Exploring opportunities to advance the communities' goals for using the Site as a platform for establishing a research and education center related to abandoned mine cleanup in the west
- Partnering with existing programs for public education, such as local schools, community organizations, and youth organizations

## Briefings of Elected Officials

Regularly scheduled briefings for elected officials will be held to communicate significant events during the Superfund process. These briefings will keep leaders involved and informed on Site progress and will provide an opportunity for questions or resolution of concerns. Briefing packages may also be provided to assist officials in responding to public inquiries. The agencies will communicate with local governments to disseminate information to their constituents regarding activities at the site or upcoming public events.

## Tribal Consultations

It is EPA's desire to conduct investigative and response activities in a manner that is sensitive to the needs and customs of the tribe. In 2019, EPA finalized the EPA/Southern Ute Indian Tribe Communications Plan, which recognizes that the Site contains areas in which the tribe has had both historical and contemporary interests and uses. The plan briefly describes the types of activities EPA anticipates performing, as well as communication methods and contacts for the parties involved. EPA will consult the plan as it conducts its work at the Site. EPA intends to review the plan on an annual basis and to ask the tribe for its input on the effectiveness of the plan and any changes tribal representatives might like to see.

In addition, informal and formal tribal consultations will take place in accordance with the Agencies' respective policies related to tribal activities.

### 5.1.2 Written Materials/News Media

Written materials include a wide variety of tools that may help to expand understanding and engagement. These include:

- A CIP
- Newsletter, fact sheets, flyers, posters, and other materials
- Advertisements and notifications

- Press releases
- Project technical documents

### **Community Involvement Plan**

This CIP is a living document that will be reviewed periodically to ensure it is up to date, particularly for the contacts lists in the appendices. If necessary, additional community interviews will be conducted and the plan will be redrafted.

### **Fact Sheets, Flyers, Posters, and Other Materials**

The Agencies will continue to prepare written materials specific to the Site to increase community awareness and knowledge of the project and its status. These will include:

- Monthly *Bonita Peak Mining District Update* newsletter (English and Spanish)
- Topic-specific flyers for meetings, other events, or updates
- Posters or other displays for events



The Agencies will also work to provide written materials to address the concerns listed in Sections 4.1 and 4.2. These may include fact sheets on a specific topic or individual flyers.

All written materials will continue to be written in language that is understandable to an audience that is not trained in environmental issues, with graphics and text that are as non-technical as possible. 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.

The Agencies will keep in mind the information learned during the interviews (Section 4) when developing these materials. Key points from those interviews are captured in Table 5.2.

### **Advertisements/Notifications**

Notifications will be placed in the appropriate newspapers and other news media as documents become available for public review and at opportunities for public involvement. Media contacts are listed in Appendix F.

### **Press Releases**

EPA will provide news releases and develop media contacts with local newspapers. Media contacts are listed in Appendix F. Media briefings can also be arranged if media representatives have the need for additional background information on the Site, the specific issues of concern, or the status of the project.

### **Project Technical Documents**

EPA will work with the partner Agencies to provide a clear path for stakeholder engagement on technical documents. This effort will include providing:



- Identification of documents being prepared and an estimate of when they will be available for review
- Links to electronic copies of the documents
- Clear direction on what input is needed, how it should be provided, and when it must be received

**Table 5.2 Highlights of Input from Community Interviews**

Things to Remember	
Community Interests	Desired Outcomes of Cleanup
Technical Concerns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Understanding cleanup goals</li> <li>▪ Human health standards</li> <li>▪ Agency measurement of success</li> <li>▪ Cost control and efficiency</li> <li>▪ Agency expertise</li> <li>▪ Superfund impacts to Silverton</li> <li>▪ Protection of historic mining features</li> <li>▪ Site size and number of source areas</li> <li>▪ Effective communication of human health risks</li> <li>▪ Less expensive and impactful alternatives to water treatment</li> </ul>
Community Needs	Outreach Tools and Techniques
Outreach Concerns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Open and effective communication</li> <li>▪ Basic information on the site and the Superfund process</li> <li>▪ Information on non-Superfund sources of contamination in watershed</li> <li>▪ Discussion of expected impacts of cleanup</li> <li>▪ Explanation of roles of different agencies</li> <li>▪ Better coordination between the agencies and consistent messages</li> <li>▪ Clarification of what does and doesn't fall within Superfund</li> <li>▪ Care in discussing a "community," as each is unique</li> <li>▪ Understanding that information needs differ in upstream versus downstream communities</li> <li>▪ Understanding of the varying levels of interest in individuals</li> <li>▪ Respect for tribal interests</li> <li>▪ Care to not create conflict or competition between groups</li> </ul>

### 5.1.3 Electronic Media and Repositories

The last category of outreach tools identified in this action plan is electronic media, including social media, websites, an email list, and information repositories.

### Emergency Alerts and Notifications

Some response activities undertaken by the Agencies, such as removing waste rock from creeks or streams, may cause discoloration of the Animas River or its tributaries. In addition, natural events, such as large thunderstorms, or incidents not related to activities at the site may also impact the river. In order to notify stakeholders of these events in the most efficient and prompt way, the EPA is using *2019 Bonita Peak Mining District Alert and Notification Standard Operating*

*Procedure* for its communications to stakeholders related to any events that affect the appearance or water quality in the Animas River (Appendix I). The EPA will use the plan for proactive notifications regarding planned activities at the site and to alert stakeholders about any impacts to the river from work being conducted at the site. In addition, field crews will use the plan if they observe any situations not related to site activities that impact the river.

### Social Media and Websites

The primary website related to the Site is found at:

- EPA. [www.epa.gov/superfund/bonita-peak](http://www.epa.gov/superfund/bonita-peak)

EPA will continue to use social media and websites in the following ways:

- EPA will explore the use of social media, such as Twitter and Facebook, in notifying the community of upcoming meetings, available documents, and opportunities for involvement at the Site.
- EPA will ensure the Bonita Peak Mining District website is up to date.
- EPA will encourage stakeholders to share information about the Site that may be of interest to their group using social media and websites. This effort will include the face-to-face interactions described in Section 5.1.1 and the written materials described in Section 5.1.2.



### Email List

EPA will continue to maintain an email list for distribution of information on the Site. EPA will add anyone to the Site email list upon request. To be added to the list, please contact Katherine Jenkins, EPA Community Involvement Coordinator, at (303) 312-6351 or [jenkins.katherine@epa.gov](mailto:jenkins.katherine@epa.gov).



### Administrative Record and Information Repositories

EPA will continue to make information available to the public at the information repositories.

The administrative record holds the documents that EPA considers or relies upon in selecting the response action at a Superfund site. Administrative records are housed at the EPA Region 8 Superfund Records Center and the Site information repositories (Appendix A).



Information repositories contain documents useful to the public, such as CIPs, fact sheets, information sheets, notices, work plans, reports, proposed plans, IRODs, and records of decision (RODs). In some cases, a summary will be provided with technical reports to relay the facts in simple terms and enhance understanding.

The information repositories for the Site are listed below. Addresses, contact information, and times of operation are provided in Appendix G:

- Silverton Library
- Farmington Public Library
- Diné College Shiprock Campus Library (Senator John Pinto Library)
- Durango Public Library

## 5.2 Coordination of Community Involvement Activities

The Superfund process for remedial actions includes:

- A remedial investigation to determine the nature and extent of contamination, identify pathways of migration, and assess associated potential risks to human health and the environment
- A feasibility study evaluating cleanup alternatives
- A proposed plan that identifies the preferred option
- A final decision document in the form of a ROD

The NCP requires certain community involvement activities be taken at each step along the way. However, additional community involvement activities are usually undertaken to ensure active and meaningful engagement of all stakeholders with an interest in the cleanup.

At the Site, the Agencies will coordinate with and involve the Silverton/San Juan Planning Group as much as possible in all phases of work and all decisions concerning the Bonita Peak Mining District. The scope of this coordination and involvement with the Planning Group will not be limited to the typical review and comment on Agencies' proposals, but instead will include active and meaningful involvement throughout this process and particularly in the formulation and evaluation of any Agencies' proposal. After consultation with the Planning Group, the Agencies will look for opportunities to conduct early actions throughout the remedial process to reduce contaminants at the Site. These simple measures are meant to achieve immediate environmental and human health benefits while longer term cleanup activities are under way.

The Agencies will also coordinate with the CAG to ensure the community interests are represented. As a formal advisory group, the CAG will provide information to the public and communicate with the Agencies about future activities at the Site. The advisory function of the CAG may change and adapt over time to meet the needs of the communities. The Agencies and CAG may bring Agencies' representatives to CAG meetings to share information about the Site and provide relevant updates.

This year, an IROD was prepared for the Site. The IROD is an early action decision document that identifies which interim remedial actions will be conducted at the Site. EPA provided the proposed plan for interim remedial actions for public review on June 14, 2018, presented the

proposed plan at a public meeting on June 21, 2018 at the Town Hall in Silverton, Colorado, and made the proposed plan available on the Site website. EPA reviewed all comments submitted during the comment period. Though no significant changes to the remedy were needed, many comments were received on topics outside the scope of the proposed plan and IROD. These comments are valuable to EPA and will be taken into account, based on the substance of the comment, at the time the future actions are being considered by the agency. Additional IRODs may be developed for future remedial actions and will follow the same community involvement activities.

Actions may also be taken under the Agencies' removal authorities. These can include emergency responses, time-critical responses, and non-time-critical responses, each with its own community involvement requirements.

It is the intent of the Agencies that this CIP will be applicable to all the response actions that may take place at the Site and will guide community involvement activities throughout the cleanup process. The Agencies will supplement this community involvement plan with decision-specific communication strategies as needed.

## Section 6

### References

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# Appendix A

## Agency Contacts

### U.S. Environmental Protection Agency – Region 8

1595 Wynkoop Street, Denver, CO 80202-1129

- **Christina Progress, Team Lead**, (303) 312-6009, [progress.christina@epa.gov](mailto:progress.christina@epa.gov)
- **Rob Parker, Remedial Project Manager**, (303) 312-6664, [parker.robert@epa.gov](mailto:parker.robert@epa.gov)
- **Natasha Davis, Remedial Project Manager**, (303) 312-6225, [davis.natasha@epa.gov](mailto:davis.natasha@epa.gov)
- **Katherine Jenkins, Community Involvement Coordinator**, (303) 312-6351, [jenkins.katherine@epa.gov](mailto:jenkins.katherine@epa.gov)
- **Ian Bowen, Hydrologist, Surface Water**, (303) 312-7029, [bowen.ian@epa.gov](mailto:bowen.ian@epa.gov)
- **Dan Wall, Technical Assistance Branch Chief**, (303) 312-6560, [wall.dan@epa.gov](mailto:wall.dan@epa.gov)
- **Andrew Todd, Toxicologist, Ecological and Terrestrial Risk**, (303) 312-7821, [todd.andrew@epa.gov](mailto:todd.andrew@epa.gov)
- **Steven Merritt, Toxicologist, Human Health Risk**, (303) 312-6146, [merritt.steven@epa.gov](mailto:merritt.steven@epa.gov)

### Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment

- **Mark Rudolph, Project Manager**, (303) 692-3311, [mark.rudolph@state.co.us](mailto:mark.rudolph@state.co.us)
- **Laura Dixon, Public Affairs Manager**, (303) 692-3373, [laura.dixon@state.co.us](mailto:laura.dixon@state.co.us)
- **Anthony Edwards, Bonita Peak Mining District Communications Liaison**, (970) 417-0610, [solkepler@gmail.com](mailto:solkepler@gmail.com)

### Bureau of Land Management

- **Krista “Kris” Doebbler, Abandoned Mine Lands Program Lead**, (303) 239-3711, [kdoebble@blm.gov](mailto:kdoebble@blm.gov)
- **Kirby Shedlowski, Public Affairs Specialist**, (303) 203-3671, [kshedlowski@blm.gov](mailto:kshedlowski@blm.gov)
- **Elizabeth Francisco, Archeologist**, (970) 642-4940, [efrancisco@blm.gov](mailto:efrancisco@blm.gov)

### US Forest Service

- **Ben Martinez, Project Manager, Abandoned Mine Lands (AML) Program Leader**, (970) 385-1202, [benerito.martinez@usda.gov](mailto:benerito.martinez@usda.gov)
- **Julie Coleman, Archeologist**, (970) 247-4874, [jacoleman@fs.fed.us](mailto:jacoleman@fs.fed.us)

## Administrative Records

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 8  
Superfund Record Center  
1595 Wynkoop St, Denver, CO 80202-1129  
*To request copies of administrative record documents, call: 303-312-7273 or  
800-227-8917 ext. 312-7273 (toll free Region 8 only)*

Silverton Library  
1117 Reese Street  
Silverton, CO 81433  
Contact: Jackie Kerwin, (970) 387-5770

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

Diné College South Campus Library (Senator John Pinto Library)  
1228 Yucca Street  
PO Box 580  
Shiprock, NM 87420  
Contact: Samanthi Hewakapuge, (505) 368-3644

Durango Public Library  
1900 East Third Avenue  
Durango, CO 81301  
Contact: Sandy Irwin, (970) 375-3380



## Appendix B

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### Federal Elected Officials and Contacts

#### U.S. SENATE

**Michael Bennet, Senator** [www.bennet.senate.gov](http://www.bennet.senate.gov)

- *Four Corners Office*, 835 East 2nd Avenue, Suite 206, Durango, CO 81301, (970) 259-1710  
John Whitney, Field Representative

**Cory Gardner, Senator** [www.gardner.senate.gov](http://www.gardner.senate.gov)

- *Durango Office*, 329 S. Camino Del Rio, Suite I, Durango, CO 81303, (970) 415-7416  
Ann McCoy-Harold, Field Representative

#### U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

**Scott Tipton, Representative** (District 3) no email address provided

- *Durango Office*, 835 E. Second Avenue, Suite 230, Durango, CO 81301 (970) 259-1490  
Darlene Marcus, Field Representative

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# Appendix C

## State and Local Officials

### COLORADO GOVERNOR

- **Jared Polis**, 200 E. Colfax Ave., Denver, CO 80203, (303) 866-2471

### COLORADO STATE LEGISLATURE

- **Don Coram, State Senator** (District 6), 303-866-4884, [don.coram.senate@state.co.us](mailto:don.coram.senate@state.co.us)
- **Barbara McLachlan, State Representative** (District 59), (303) 866-2914, [barbara.mclachlan.house@state.co.us](mailto:barbara.mclachlan.house@state.co.us)

### TOWN OF SILVERTON

1360 Greene St., PO Box 250, Silverton, CO 81433, (970) 387-5522

- **Chris Tookey, Mayor**, [chris@frontier.net](mailto:chris@frontier.net)
- **Jess Wegert, Trustee**, [jwegert@gmail.com](mailto:jwegert@gmail.com)
- **Barbara Renowden, Trustee**, [safetydocs@q.com](mailto:safetydocs@q.com)
- **Tiffany deKay, Trustee**, [info@tellerhouse.com](mailto:info@tellerhouse.com)
- **Molly Noel Barela, Trustee**, [mollybtown@yahoo.com](mailto:mollybtown@yahoo.com)
- **Judith Graham, Trustee**, [jg.wingatebnb@gmail.com](mailto:jg.wingatebnb@gmail.com)
- **Austin Lashley, Trustee**, [alashley@silverton.co.us](mailto:alashley@silverton.co.us)
- **John Reiter, Town Administrator**, [jreiter@silverton.co.us](mailto:jreiter@silverton.co.us)

### SAN JUAN COUNTY

#### COMMISSIONERS AND ADMINISTRATOR

1557 Greene St., PO Box 466, Silverton CO 81433, (970) 387-5671,

- **Pete McKay, County Commissioner** (District 1)
- **Scott Fetchenier, County Commissioner** (District 2)
- **Ernest Kuhlman, County Commissioner** (District 3)
- **Wiley Tookey, County Administrator**, [admin@sanjuancolorado.us](mailto:admin@sanjuancolorado.us)

#### PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE

1315 Snowden St., PO Box 619, Silverton, CO 81433, (970) 387-0242

- **Becky Joyce, Director**, [director@sjchealth.org](mailto:director@sjchealth.org)

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

1315 Snowden St, Silverton, CO 81433, (970) 903-7039

- **Jim Donovan, Emergency Manager**, [jem@sanjuancolorado.us](mailto:jem@sanjuancolorado.us)

**CITY OF DURANGO**

MAYOR, COUNCIL, AND MANAGER

City Hall, 949 E. 2nd Ave., Durango, CO 81301

- **Melissa Youssef, Mayor**, (970) 759-6477, [MelissaYoussef@DurangoGov.org](mailto:MelissaYoussef@DurangoGov.org)
- **Dean Brookie, Mayor Pro Tem**, (970) 749-3189, [deanBrookie@durangogov.org](mailto:deanBrookie@durangogov.org)
- **Kim Baxter, Councilor**, (970) 799-5799, [KimBaxter@DurangoGov.org](mailto:KimBaxter@DurangoGov.org)
- **Chris Bettin, Councilor**, (970) 903-7951, [ChrisBettin@DurangoGov.org](mailto:ChrisBettin@DurangoGov.org)
- **Barbara Noseworthy, Councilor**, (970) 633-0448, [BarbaraNoseworthy@DurangoGov.org](mailto:BarbaraNoseworthy@DurangoGov.org)
- **Ron LeBlanc, City Manager**, (970) 375-5005 [Ron.LeBlanc@durangogov.org](mailto:Ron.LeBlanc@durangogov.org)

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

1101 E 2nd Ave, Durango, CO 81301, (970) 375-4739

- **Terry Hoecker, Emergency Manager**, [terry.hoecker@durangogov.org](mailto:terry.hoecker@durangogov.org)

**LA PLATA COUNTY**

COMMISSIONERS AND ADMINISTRATOR

La Plata County Courthouse, 1101 E 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave, Durango, CO 81301

- **Julie Westendorff, County Commission Chair (District 3 – Eastern)**, (970) 382-6219, [Julie.Westendorff@co.laplata.co.us](mailto:Julie.Westendorff@co.laplata.co.us)
- **Gwen Lachelt, County Commissioner – Vice Chair (District 2 – Central)**, (970) 382-6219, [gwen.lachelt@co.laplata.co.us](mailto:gwen.lachelt@co.laplata.co.us)
- **Clyde Church, County Commissioner (District 1 – Western)**, (970) 382-6216, [Clyde.Church@co.laplata.co.us](mailto:Clyde.Church@co.laplata.co.us)
- **Chuck Stevens, County Administrator**, (970) 382-6210, [Chuck.Stevens@co.laplata.co.us](mailto:Chuck.Stevens@co.laplata.co.us)

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

1101 E 2nd Ave, Durango, CO 81301, (970) 382-6275

- **Butch Knowlton, Acting Emergency Manager**, [Butch.Knowlton@co.laplata.co.us](mailto:Butch.Knowlton@co.laplata.co.us)

**SAN JUAN BASIN PUBLIC HEALTH**

281 Sawyer Dr., Durango, CO 81303

- **Liane Jollon, Executive Director**, (970) 247-5702, [ljollon@sjbhd.org](mailto:ljollon@sjbhd.org)

## Appendix D

### Tribal Government Contacts

#### **Southern Ute Indian Tribe**

P.O. Box 737, 356 Ouray Dr., Ignacio, CO 81137

Executive Assistant, (970) 563-0100 x 2319

[www.southernute-nsn.gov](http://www.southernute-nsn.gov)

- **Christine Sage, Chairman**
- **Cheryl Frost, Vice Chairman**
- **Lorelei Cloud, Tribal Council**
- **Melvin Baker, Tribal Council**
- **Bruce Valdez, Tribal Council**
- **Cedric Chavez, Tribal Council**
- **Adam Red, Tribal Council**
- **Peter Diethrich, Water Quality Program Manager, (970) 563-2206, [pdiethrich@southernute-nsn.gov](mailto:pdiethrich@southernute-nsn.gov)**
- **Don Brockus, Emergency Response Director, [dbrockus@southernute-nsn.gov](mailto:dbrockus@southernute-nsn.gov)**
- **Forrest Vaughan, Gold King Mine Coordinator, (970) 563-2201, [fvaughan@southernute-nsn.gov](mailto:fvaughan@southernute-nsn.gov)**

#### **Ute Mountain Ute Tribe**

124 Mike Wash Road, Towaoc, CO 81334, (970) 565-3751, [www.utemountainutetribe.com/](http://www.utemountainutetribe.com/)

- **Harold Cuthair, Chairman**
- **Colleen Cuthair, Vice Chairman**
- **Prisllena Rabbit, Tribal Council**
- **Marissa Box, Tribal Council**
- **DeAnne House, Tribal Council**
- **Kermit Palmer, Tribal Council**
- **Elaine Cantsee, Tribal Council**

- **Scott Clow, Environmental Director**, (970) 564-5432, [sclow@utemountain.org](mailto:sclow@utemountain.org)
- **John Trocheck, Emergency Manager**, (970) 564-5441, [jtrocheck@utemountain.org](mailto:jtrocheck@utemountain.org)

## Appendix E

### Stakeholder Groups

**Animas River Community Forum** – <https://www.animasrivercommunity.org/>

**Animas River Stakeholders Group** – [www.animasriverstakeholdersgroup.org](http://www.animasriverstakeholdersgroup.org)

**Animas Watershed Partnership** – [www.animaswatershedpartnership.org](http://www.animaswatershedpartnership.org)

**Center for Snow and Avalanche Studies** – [www.snowstudies.org](http://www.snowstudies.org)

**Community Advisory Group** – [www.bonitapeakcag.org](http://www.bonitapeakcag.org)

**Fort Lewis College** – [www.fortlewis.edu](http://www.fortlewis.edu)

**Mountain Studies Institute** – [www.mountainstudies.org](http://www.mountainstudies.org)

**San Juan Citizen’s Alliance** – [www.sanjuancitizens.org](http://www.sanjuancitizens.org)

**San Juan County Historical Society** – [www.sanjuancountyhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.sanjuancountyhistoricalsociety.org)

**Silverton Area Chamber of Commerce** – [www.silvertoncolorado.com](http://www.silvertoncolorado.com)

**Trout Unlimited** – [www.tu.org](http://www.tu.org)



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# Appendix F

## Local Media Contacts

### Newspapers

#### **Silverton Standard**

1315 Snowden St #308, Silverton, CO 81433

(970) 387-547

[editor@silvertonstandard.com](mailto:editor@silvertonstandard.com)

#### **Durango Herald**

1275 Main Avenue, Durango, CO 81301

(970) 247-3504

[herald@durangoherald.com](mailto:herald@durangoherald.com)

#### **Durango Telegraph**

PO Box 332, Durango, CO 81302

(970) 259-0133

[lainie@durangotelegraph.com](mailto:lainie@durangotelegraph.com)

#### **San Juan Independent**

PO Box 1289, Telluride, CO 81435

(970) 764-7438

[Samantha@sjindependent.org](mailto:Samantha@sjindependent.org)

#### **The Southern Ute Drum**

356 Ouray Drive, PO Box 737 #96, Ignacio, CO 81137

(970) 563-0118

[www.sudrum.com/contact](http://www.sudrum.com/contact)

### Radio

#### **KDUR 91.9 and 93.9 FM Fort Lewis College**

1000 Rim Dr #210, Durango, CO 81301

(970) 247-7262

#### **KSJC 92.5 FM (LP) Silverton Community Radio**

414 Greene St, Silverton, CO 81433

(970) 387-5752

#### **KSUT/KUTE 91.3 FM Southern Ute Tribal Radio/90.1 FM Four Corners Public Radio**

PO Box 737, Ignacio, CO

Sheila Nanaeto – Station Manager, Tribal Radio, [sheila@ksut.org](mailto:sheila@ksut.org)

Rob Rawls – Station Manager Four Corners Public Radio, [rob@ksut.org](mailto:rob@ksut.org)

(970) 563-0255

**Television**

**Durango TV**

1139 Main Ave, Durango, CO 81301

News, business, or event tips or ideas call (970) 247-8137 or email [ideas@durangoTV.com](mailto:ideas@durangoTV.com)

**Inside Durango**

Durango Area Tourism Office

802 Main Ave, Durango, CO, 81301

(970) 247-3500

## Appendix G

# Meeting Locations, Information Repositories, and Website

### Potential Meeting Locations

- **Silverton Town Hall**  
1360 Greene St, Silverton, CO 81433  
Contact Town Clerk, (970) 387-5522 ext 10
- **Kendall Mountain Ski Area**  
1 Kendall Pl, Silverton, CO 81433  
Contact Town Clerk, (970) 387-5522 ext 10
- **Durango Public Library**  
1900 East Third Ave, Durango, CO 81301  
Contact: Steve Scales, (970) 375-3388, <http://www.durangopubliclibrary.org/>
- **Durango Recreation Center**  
2700 Main Ave, Durango, CO 81301  
(970) 375-7300
- **San Juan Public Lands Center**  
15 Burnett Ct, Durango, CO 81301  
(970) 247-4874

### Information Repository Locations

- **Silverton Library**, 1117 Reese St, Silverton, CO 81433, Jackie Kerwin, (970) 387-5770, Tuesday through Thursday 11 a.m. to 8 p.m., and Friday and Saturday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- **Durango Public Library**. 1900 East Third Ave, Durango, CO 81301, Sandy Irwin, (970) 375-3380, Monday through Wednesday 9 a.m. to 8 p.m., Thursday 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., and Friday and Saturday 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.
- **Farmington Public Library**. 2101 Farmington Ave, Farmington, NM 87401, Kathi Browning, (505) 599-1270, Monday through Thursday 9 a.m. to 9 p.m., Friday and Saturday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Sunday 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.
- **Diné College Shiprock Campus Library (Senator John Pinto Library)**. BIA Road 0570, Shiprock, NM 87420, Samantha Hewakapuge, (505) 368-3644, Monday through Thursday, 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. (fall), 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. (summer), 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. (intercessions); Friday 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.; and Sunday 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. (fall), closed summer and intercessions

## Website

- <https://cumulis.epa.gov/supercpad/cursites/csitinfo.cfm?id=0802497>

## Appendix H

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# Community Involvement Plan for Navajo Nation – EPA Region 9

**To be added**

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## Appendix I

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# 2019 Bonita Peak Mining District Alert and Notification Standard Operating Procedure

**To be added**

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