

Reuse Situation Assessment

Central City/Clear Creek Superfund Site
Gilpin County and Clear Creek County, Colorado

Introduction

The Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Superfund Redevelopment Program (SRP) provides reuse planning and technical assistance to communities, stakeholders and EPA site teams. These regional support projects help facilitate redevelopment opportunities, remove barriers to productive reuse, and ensure that the future uses of Superfund sites are well aligned with the cleanup and removal/remedial process. These activities are in support of the requirements of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA, also known as Superfund). SRP is providing technical assistance to EPA Region 8 through its contractor Skeo Solutions to conduct a reuse situation assessment for the Central City/Clear Creek Superfund site (the site). The site is a 400-square-mile watershed that spans Gilpin and Clear Creek counties and includes multiple towns, including: Idaho Springs, Black Hawk, Central City, Empire and Georgetown. The goal of a reuse situation assessment is to document preliminary redevelopment goals and challenges and recommendations for additional assistance that may be helpful to support redevelopment and compatible uses at the site.

Between April 21 and 25, SRP, EPA Region 8 and the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) convened meetings in Gilpin County, Clear Creek County, Central City, and the cities of Idaho Springs and Black Hawk to discuss future land use and redevelopment goals and any challenges related to the site. EPA's contractor Skeo Solutions prepared the following summary of information gathered during the April meetings, including a site overview and community-specific priorities for Gilpin County, Central City, Idaho Springs, Clear Creek County and Black Hawk, and options for additional reuse support.

Types of EPA SRP Assistance

SRP provides a range of reuse support assistance, in addition to a reuse situation assessment, to help align community future use goals and site cleanup. A range of options were discussed as part of the April meetings to better understand what type of assistance could be helpful based on each community's needs. For more information, please visit the [Superfund Reuse Planning Support & Technical Assistance website](#) and [fact sheet](#).

- *Site-specific communication support* – summaries, fact sheets and other communication tools to explain site conditions, redevelopment opportunities and reasonable steps to avoid contamination, or successful examples from other communities.
- *Prospective purchaser inquiry support* – tools and process to ensure people have current and accurate information about a site's Superfund cleanup status and timelines, current and potential property restrictions, available liability protections, and any EPA lien status to support redevelopment.
- *Reuse planning and analysis* - integrates community goals, site analysis, land use context and the remedy into a Future Use Framework (showing geographic-specific uses of the site) or Concept Plan (showing layout of potential future use features) to guide local planning, development and the remedial process.

Site Overview

Site History

In 1859, gold was discovered near Idaho Springs, Central City and Black Hawk. This area played a significant role in Colorado's gold rush. For the next two decades, the Black Hawk/Central City area was the leading mining center in Colorado primarily due to the construction of mills to process the gold and silver mined nearby. The silver crash in the 1890s led to a decline in area mining, but mining remained an important industry in Clear Creek and Gilpin Counties until about 1950. Only a limited number of mines are currently in operation. Additionally, towns within the watershed use Clear Creek for recreational, industrial, agricultural and municipal purposes.

The site consists of multiple mine waste piles, tailings impoundments and draining mine adits. Historical mining and milling activities resulted in the watershed becoming contaminated with heavy metals, specifically arsenic and lead. The site was placed on the Superfund program's National Priorities List in September 1983.¹

Cleanup Activities

Cleanup is being addressed through federal, state and potentially responsible party actions. Site investigations are occurring throughout the entire Clear Creek watershed, which has been designated as the Study Area. Locations within the Study Area that are impacted by historical mining activities are considered part of the site. EPA and CDPHE are working to define the formal site boundary. Early cleanup actions focused on surface water quality and resulted in the successful cleanup of Clear Creek and North Clear Creek. Remedial work continues to address other sources of contamination at the site. A primary focus is on mine waste rock piles near homes and residential areas.

Key Activities

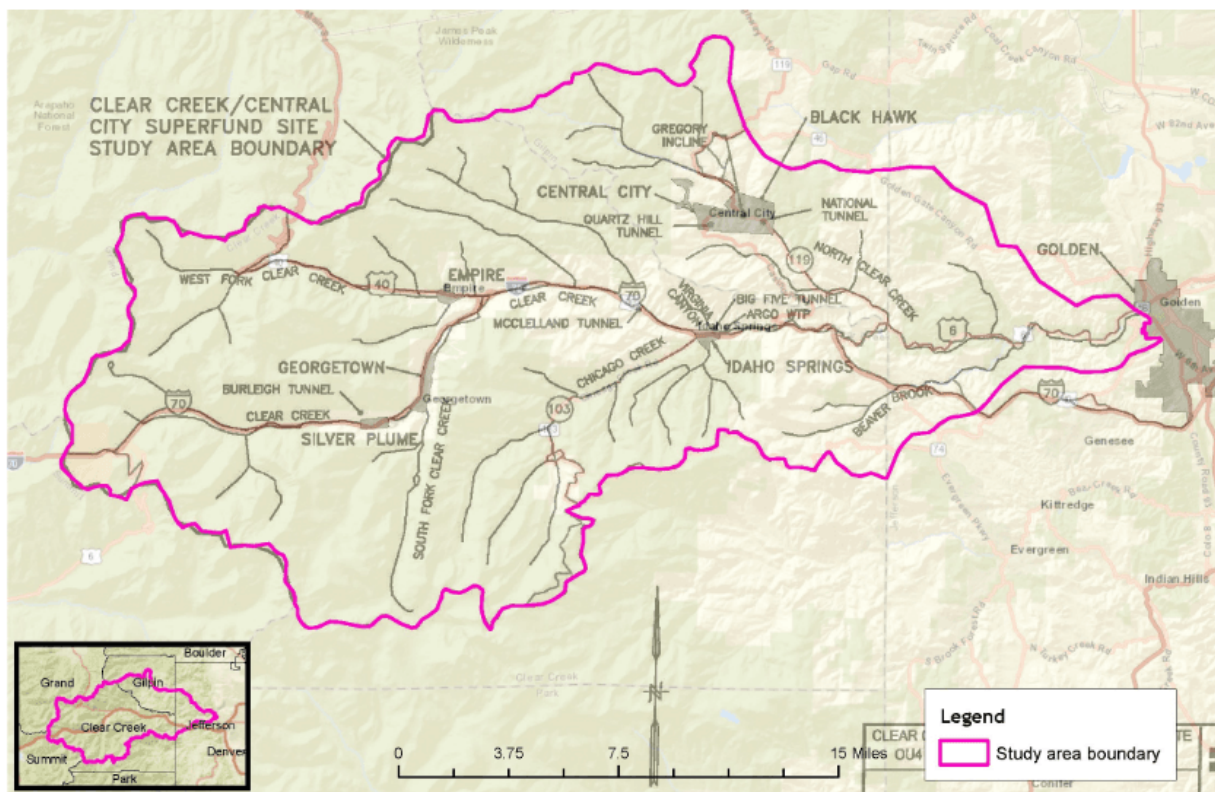
- The initial Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study was completed in 1987 and indicated that mine discharges from the Argo Tunnel, Big Five Tunnel, Gregory Incline Tunnel, Nation Tunnel, and Quartz Hill Tunnel exceeded standards for heavy metals including aluminum, arsenic, cadmium and lead. Streams and groundwater receiving the mine discharge were also impacted by these heavy metals.
- CDPHE initiated a comprehensive evaluation of the site, which was completed in September 1991. This included a Baseline Risk Assessment that identified locations where contaminants of potential concern were present.
- EPA and CDPHE conducted investigations and cleanup actions to address the ongoing release of contamination from five mine tunnels, as well as mine drainage and waste rock in the immediate vicinity of the tunnels and surface water. Waste rock piles contributed contaminants in a variety of ways, including runoff from the piles and the potential for unstable piles to collapse into surface waters. Cleanup actions included slope stabilization, stormwater controls and stabilization of the mine tailings and waste rock piles.

¹ EPA Site Profile Page (Accessed in May 2025).

<https://cumulis.epa.gov/supercpad/SiteProfiles/index.cfm?fuseaction=second.cleanup&id=0800257>

- Cleanup efforts for the North Fork of Clear Creek included actions to reduce in-stream metals concentrations and sediment transport, control runoff from waste rock piles, reduce groundwater metals loading and control airborne metals contaminants in residential areas.
- In 2017, the National Tunnel, Gregory Incline/Gregory Gulch waters and North Clear Creek Water Treatment Plant (NCCWTP) were constructed and began operations to treat and discharge impacted waters. The NCCWTP effluent is discharged directly to North Clear Creek and the solid, metal-containing sludge is disposed of at a municipal landfill.
- In 2022, EPA and CDPHE began evaluating potential human exposures to heavy metals, primarily lead and arsenic from mine waste piles in residential areas of the site. EPA's January 2024 Updated Lead Guidance lowered the recommended lead screening levels and required additional evaluation for residential areas. This evaluation is ongoing throughout the site.
- The most recent Five-Year Review, completed in 2024, concluded that the remedy remains protective of human health and the environment, but that the potential risk posed by heavy metals in waste piles in residential areas should be investigated.²

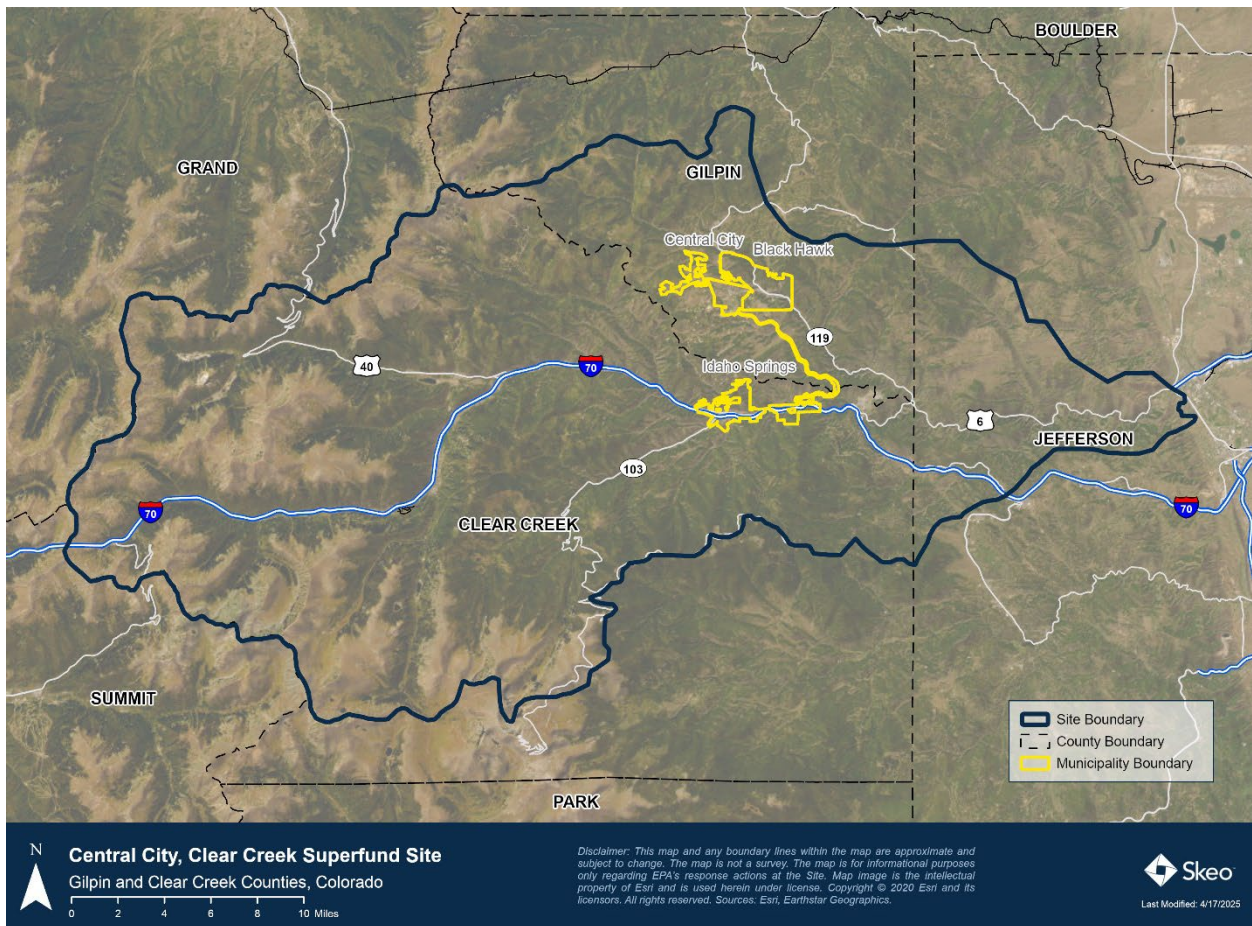
Central City-Clear Creek Study Area map



² EPA 6th Five Year Review (Accessed in May 2025). <https://semsub.epa.gov/work/08/2216507.pdf>

Site Visit and Meeting Summaries

During the site visit from April 21 to 25, 2025, EPA Region 8, SRP and CDPHE held discussions with staff from Gilpin County, Clear Creek County, Central City, Idaho Springs and Black Hawk to discuss future use and potential support available through SRP. The following sections summarize the discussions held during each meeting, as well as the support needs identified.



Gilpin County

April 21, 2025

Attendees

Gilpin County: Ray Rears (County Manager), Jeff Aiken (District 1 Commissioner), Susan Berumen (District 2 Commissioner), Rachel Vigil (Planner/Historic Preservation Liaison), Rob Gutierrez (Director of Community Development)

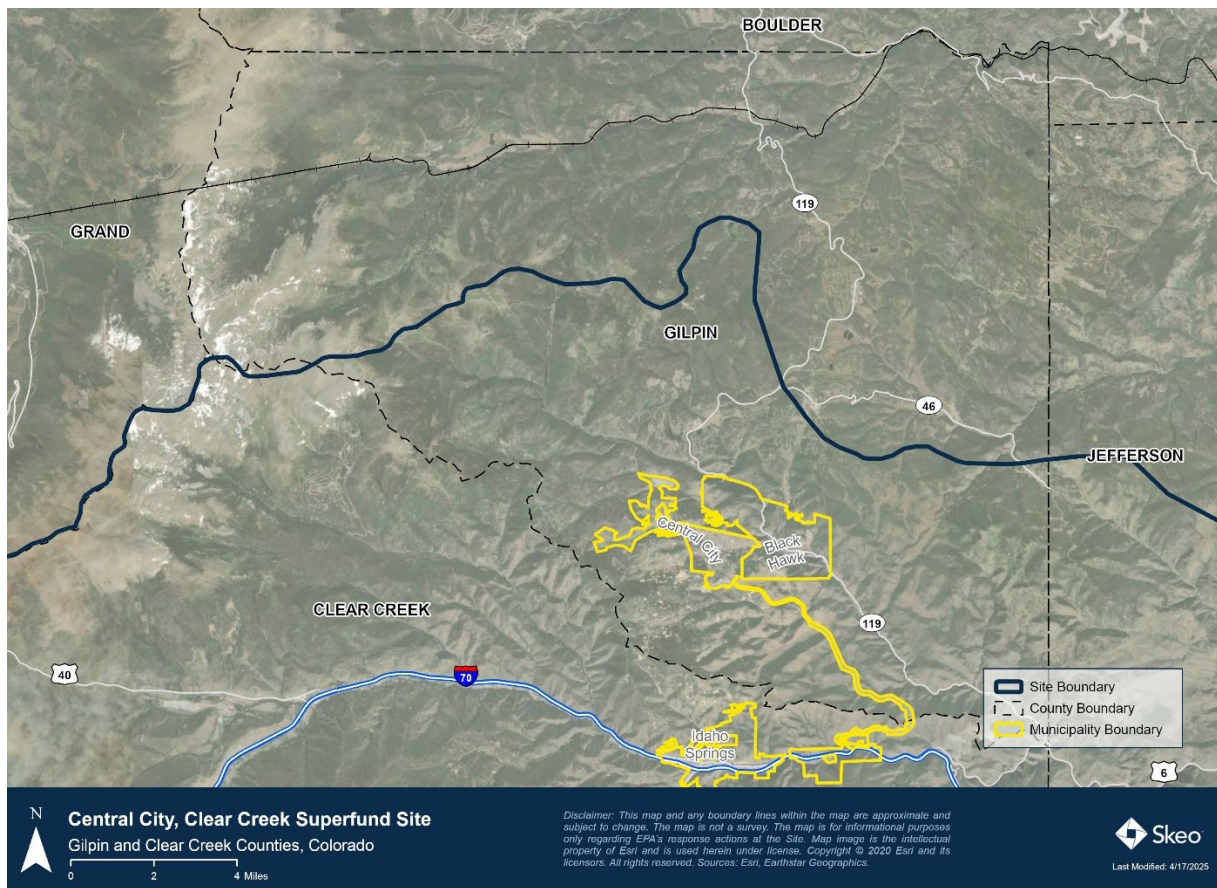
EPA Region 8: Angela Fowler, Fran Costanzi, Ashlin Brooks, Valerie Doornbos

CDPHE: Kyle Sandor, Branden Ingersoll

Skeo: Alisa Wilson, Sophie Delzell

Community Overview

Gilpin County is a rural community in Colorado's high country, neighboring the Continental Divide and located less than an hour's drive west of downtown Denver. It is the state's second smallest county in geographical area and ranks 47th in population out of Colorado's 64 counties. The major towns are the county seat, Central City, and Black Hawk. The gaming industry in Black Hawk and Central City generates significant income, employment and tax revenue for the county. The county's 2020 Comprehensive Plan prioritizes preserving the county's rural character, diversifying the economic base and protecting historic sites. Cleanup actions in the county have included the removal and capping of waste rock piles, the construction of erosion control structures in areas such as Gregory and Russell Gulch, and environmental covenants in some areas to limit access to or use of areas addressed by previous cleanup actions.



Summary of Community Priorities

Russell Gulch and Developing Areas

The Russell Gulch area is experiencing increased residential development and growth due to its proximity to Denver. The area is zoned for residential use, and individuals can build single-family homes on mining claims, many of which are smaller than one acre. However, in these more remote areas, the county lacks infrastructure to support such development, particularly water supply, sewer capacity and county maintained roads. By-right residential development can also be difficult to monitor. Some of these areas are impacted by past mining activities and include soils and waste rock at concentrations not suitable for residential exposure. Due to limited access to potable water, most who reside in the area rely on bringing in water from other distribution locations.

Planning for Future Growth

The county is currently updating their land use regulations and codes, which will include community engagement. There is a recognized need to address difficult issues related to future growth, especially in areas that are difficult to support development (such as areas that lack drinking water, access for emergency vehicles or contamination from past mining). Examples from other communities on how to guide and support future growth in suitable areas could be helpful.

Support for Prospective Purchasers

When new property owners contact the county, staff provide information about the site and development considerations but expressed interest in having standard information to share. Support developing consistent messaging or factsheets and outreach to realtors could be helpful in informing potential purchasers.

Property Boundaries

Identifying and mapping property boundaries in the area is a challenge. The County Assessor, GIS Contractor and County Surveyor are working on a multi-year project to accurately map and identify properties. This information will be helpful for EPA and CDPHE to ensure protections are in place, such as an environmental covenant, that can be accurately recorded and maintained as ownership may change.

Cleanup Communication

Effectively communicating the cleanup process and the roles of state and federal agencies is a challenge. Information about the economic impacts of cleanup efforts could help address potential stigma associated with the site. Materials, such as fact sheets, would be beneficial.

Reprocessing Mine Tailings

The county has received inquiries from individuals interested in reprocessing mine tailings. Colorado Division of Reclamation, Mining and Safety (DRMS) is the state agency responsible for overseeing mining operations and ensuring that land affected by mining is properly reclaimed, meaning it's restored to beneficial use after mining is finished. Anyone wanting to operate a construction materials mine in Colorado needs to obtain a permit from DRMS. Information about the process and DRMS contact could be helpful.

Recommendations for Technical Support

Based on the discussion with Gilpin County representatives, the following types of assistance from SRP might be helpful:

- Reuse Fact Sheets
 - Fact sheet with introductory Superfund information, including beneficial economic impacts of cleanup.
 - Information for residential property owners with potential mine waste.
 - Site information to support communities updating their Comprehensive Plans.
- Prospective Purchaser Support
 - Fact sheet for prospective purchasers and developers.
 - Information for municipal planning staff to provide new or potential property owners.
 - Support for prospective purchaser inquiries (could be a call with a prospector purchaser or an informational call with staff to discuss key issues and opportunities).
- Training, Outreach and Presentations
 - Outreach support to local stakeholders (such as realtors) to share reuse fact sheets described above and provide a tailored presentation about buying and developing property within a Superfund site.
 - Host regular public meetings and/or events to support communication with impacted land owners and key stakeholders.
- Other resources
 - Examples of tools and approaches from other communities to guide development.

Central City

April 22, 2025

Attendees

Central City: Dan Miera (City Manager), Bob Young (land owner, local businessman), Jeff Noffsinger (Planning and Community Services Director), Joe Loyet (Project Manager)

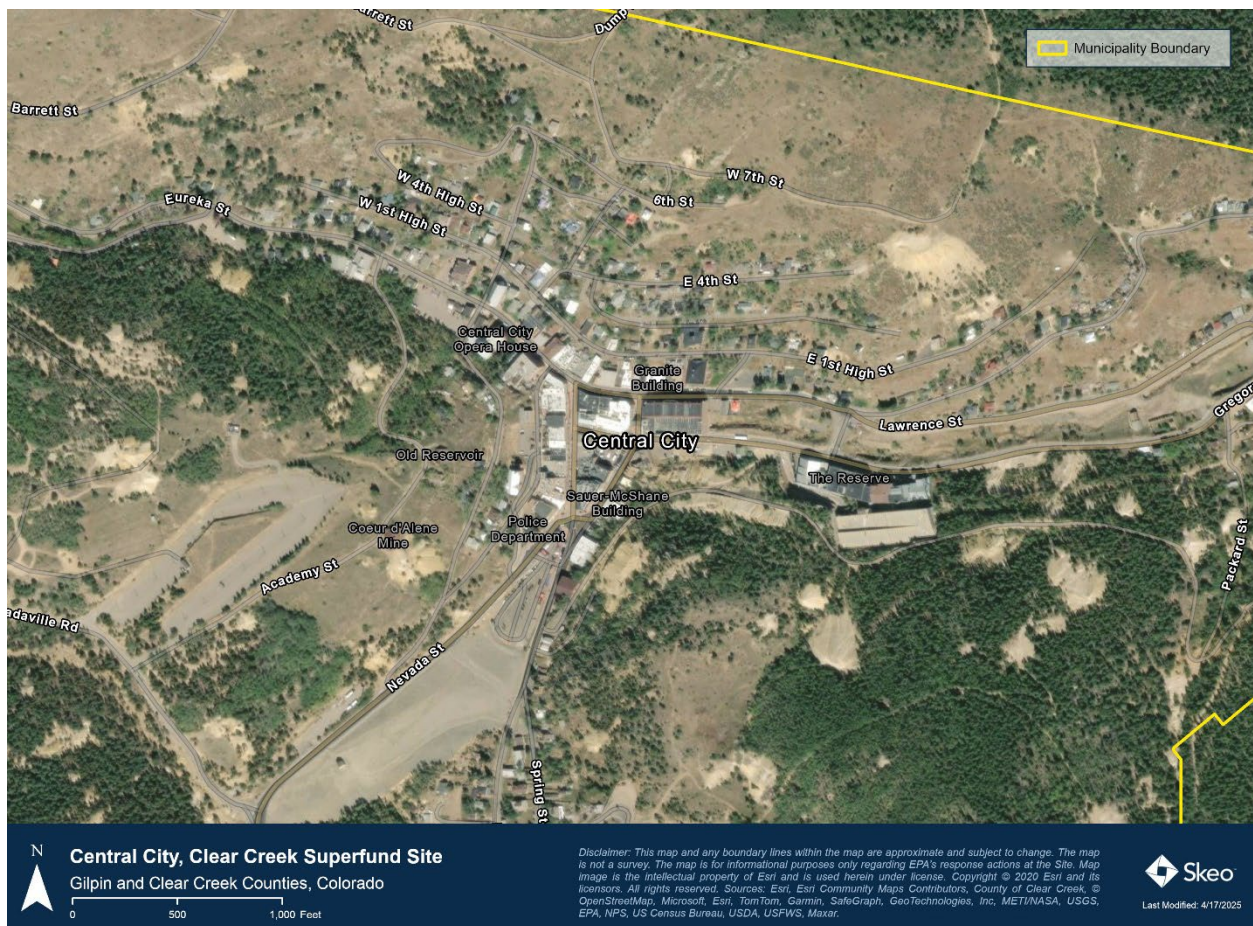
EPA: Angela Fowler, Ashlin Brooks

CDPHE: Kyle Sandor, Branden Ingersoll

Skeo: Alisa Wilson, Sophie Delzell

Community Overview

Central City is a historic mining town in Gilpin County, about 35 miles west of Denver. Central City is the county seat and the most populous municipality in Gilpin County. It was part of the Pike's Peak Gold Rush and is known for being the "Richest Square Mile on Earth." Tourism, including casinos, the opera, heritage tourism and recreation are primary economic contributors for the city. Cleanup actions in Central City have included the removal and capping of waste rock piles, such as the Quartz Hill Pile, the construction of erosion control structures in areas including Gregory and Russell Gulch, and environmental covenants in some areas to limit access or use to areas addressed by previous cleanup actions.



Summary of Community Priorities

Quartz Hill

The city is interested in developing Quartz Hill, which is a consolidated and capped waste rock pile in the heart of downtown. Developers have expressed interest in the site, which is part of the city's Quartz Hill Overlay Zone and Planned Unit Development. There is interest in redeveloping this area consistent with the city's vision and historic character of downtown. Uses could include a hotel, casino, parking and affordable housing.

It is estimated that about 500,000 cubic yards of waste material need to be removed before development can occur. Any change to the remedy for Quartz Hill would require an amendment to the Record of Decision and coordination with EPA and CDPHE. The city is gathering additional information including a flyover to help estimate the volume of material.

The city would like to understand what information is available for Quartz Hill before engaging with developers. This includes a summary of work completed to date, available sampling data, and a summary of known and unknown information. There may be different owners involved, including those who own the land and those who own the rock pile with mining interest. Clarifying ownership, chain of title and lien status could clarify the next steps for development.

Other Areas for Redevelopment

The **Boodle Mill** site is another cleanup area that the city is interested in clarifying redevelopment opportunities. It includes two city-owned parcels: one contains a wetland, and the other contains the former mill. The 13-acre area is zoned for commercial use and a portion is thought to be developable. The wetland would need to remain designated as open space, but a municipal facility could potentially be located behind the mill. The property has access to utilities and a primary road. There are plans to expand the nearby water treatment plant.

Gregory Gulch is an area near downtown and there is interest in its redevelopment. It has several areas with riprap stabilization, and a covenant is associated with the property. While this covenant would not restrict future use, it would require coordination with EPA and CDPHE. The area includes city-maintained drainage, and there is no Superfund remedy associated with the drainage.

The **Church Placer** area is a repository owned by the state and is in Gilpin County. There is interest in whether this area could be repurposed as a bike park. The bike system could connect to the Clear Creek Greenway, encouraging tourism and increased visitation to the town. The capped area to the south could be used for parking, but guidance on whether this capped area is viable for reuse would be helpful. The area is currently used by the state for waste rock storage, and one cell has remaining capacity for additional waste material.

There is also an area of fill across from **Russell Gulch**. If the repository was expanded, the area could potentially be used for waste rock excavated from the Quartz Hill.

Planning for Future Development

A Comprehensive Plan update began in May 2025. The city suggested that it would be helpful for EPA to attend meetings to answer questions related to the Superfund cleanup.

Residents are interested in revitalizing Main Street, and some expressed support for making it pedestrian-only. Additionally, there is interest in rerouting nearby streets to encourage traffic flow toward the commercial strip. A casino on Quartz Hill could generate revenue and attract visitors, helping to support other local businesses.

The area around Academy Street is currently zoned for commercial use but may be better suited for housing. Some funding is available for master planning in this area, with a focus on residential development.

Historic Character of Tailings Piles

Some residents have expressed interest in retaining some tailings piles, as they are considered part of the area's historic character. Caps can be designed to resemble the original piles, preserving the visual and cultural landscape. This topic could be addressed during master planning sessions to balance preservation with environmental and development goals.

Other Issues

There have been some inquiries about reprocessing mine waste tailings. CDPHE defers to the Division of Reclamation, Mining and Safety about this issue. Additionally, there has been interest in producing biochar for sale to ranchers and feed lots.

Recommendations for Technical Support

Based on the discussion with Central City representatives, the following types of assistance from SRP might be helpful:

- Reuse Fact Sheets
 - Information for residential property owners with potential mine waste.
- Prospective Purchaser Support
 - Fact sheet for prospective purchasers and developers.
 - Support for prospective purchaser inquiries (could be a call with a prospector purchaser or an informational call with staff to discuss key issues and opportunities).
- Reuse Suitability Analysis
 - Suitability analysis to clarify redevelopment options based on cleanup for Quartz Hill and Boodle Mill.
- Other resources
 - Information and examples of building on capped areas.

Idaho Springs

April 22, 2025

Attendees

Idaho Springs: Dylan Graves (Community Development Planner), Guy Patterson (Assistant City Administrator), Chuck Harmon (Mayor), Andrew Marsh (City Administrator)

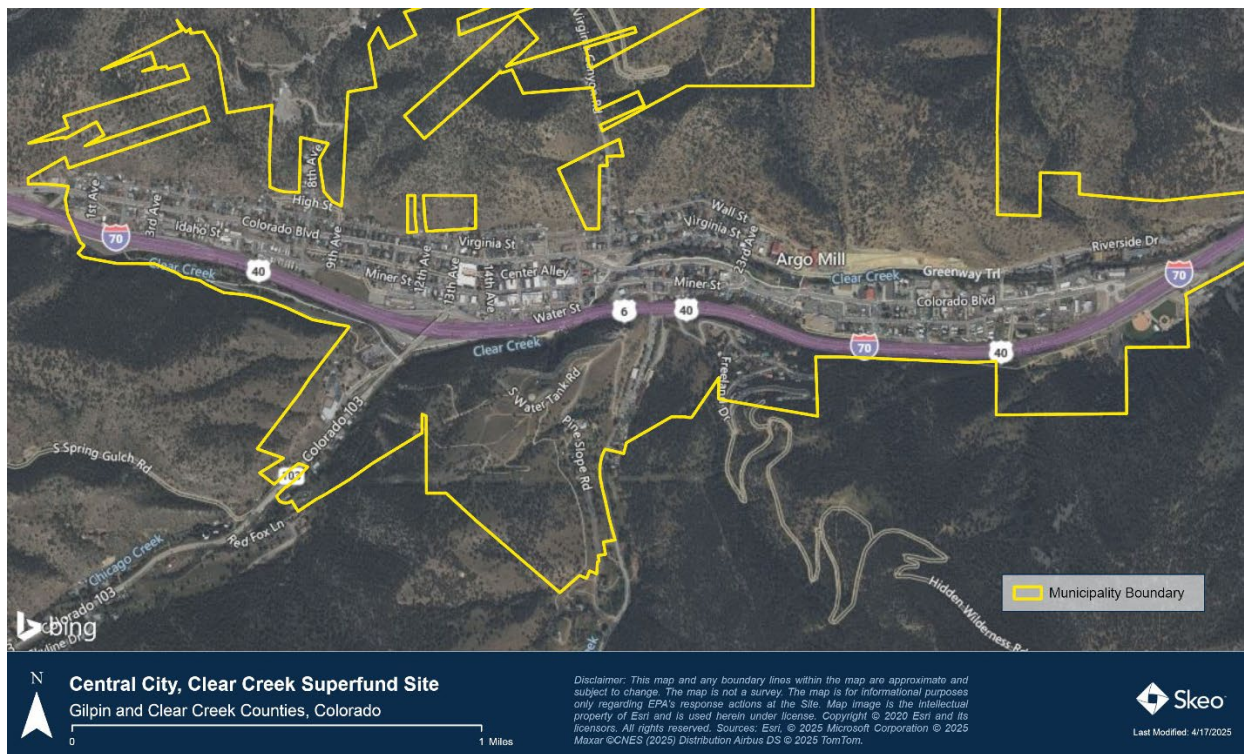
EPA: Angela Fowler, Ashlin Brooks

CDPHE: Kyle Sandor, Branden Ingersoll

Skeo: Alisa Wilson, Sophie Delzell

Community Overview

Idaho Springs is a town about 20 miles west of Denver in Clear Creek County. It is known for its historic downtown and outdoor recreational assets. Part of the Clear Creek Greenway is under construction in Idaho Springs and will connect the town with nearby recreational amenities and other parts of the trail, which will eventually lead to Denver. The town is home to the Argo Mill and Tunnel, a former gold mining and milling property and one of the largest, most well-preserved historic gold mills in the world. The Argo Mill offers tours and is a tourist destination for the town. The Argo Water Treatment Plant is situated next to the Argo Mill, and treats effluent discharges from the Argo Tunnel, Big Five Tunnel and Virginia Canyon groundwater, discharging into the nearby Clear Creek, which runs through the town. Cleanup actions have included the removal and capping of waste rock piles, the construction of erosion control structures, treatment of effluent and environmental covenants in some areas to limit access to or use of areas addressed by previous cleanup actions.



Summary of Community Priorities

Planning for Future Development

The town has begun a Comprehensive Plan update. The kickoff meeting was held on April 30, 2025. The year-long process will include public meetings, a community survey, data collection, demographic research and discussions on a range of topics.

The town does not anticipate major changes in land use. While most land within city limits is used for single-family residences, much of the zoning is not designated as residential. Many areas are already oriented toward mixed-use development. The town expects future development to occur in the eastern portion of town, near the Argo Mine, where a developer has already expressed interest in building. It has also strategically annexed land to the west, toward the Stanley Mine.

Preserving the historic character of Idaho Springs remains a priority, especially in areas with existing historic significance. To support this goal, the town limits the height of new buildings to 35 feet.

Future Development

The town would like to encourage sustainable growth. While there is sufficient water and sewer capacity to support new development, the availability of flat, buildable land is limited.

Although many people visit the area on day trips, few stay overnight. The development of a hotel affiliated with a recognized brand could encourage longer visits and increased economic activity. During peak times, parking is a challenge. Additional surface parking or a parking garage would help accommodate demand.

The town is actively developing residential and mixed-use buildings. Recently, it acquired two properties near the cemetery, which are planned for senior, affordable and multi-family housing. A grant is in place to help support the development of affordable housing, and a letter of support from EPA could support the project.

The former Carlson Elementary School was recently purchased by a developer for a middle-income housing project. The building, constructed in 1933, may contain asbestos and lead-based paint. There is minimal concern about exposure to contaminated soil exposure because most of the parcel is paved. CDPHE awarded the School District with a Brownfields grant for building related cleanup at the Elementary School in 2024. However, federal and state Brownfields funding cannot be used for cleanup of soils and metals associated with the Superfund site. Additional information about available funding sources, especially Brownfields funding, would be helpful for moving this project forward.

Development Restrictions

Some landowners are uncertain about what uses are allowed on their properties. For example, residents have expressed concerns about whether it is safe to grow food in their gardens. Providing clear information for homeowners, including guidance on property use and available options for soil testing, would be helpful in addressing these questions and promoting safe land use.

Support for Potential Purchasers

Support for potential purchasers, including information about environmental liability protections, could help to encourage development that complies with cleanup restrictions.

Cleanup Communication and Stigma

The town would like to better understand where waste rock piles are located. It is difficult to know where mining has impacted the area. There is a concern about the level of risk that communities face. Russell Gulch is an area of concern.

The town is concerned about the stigma of the Superfund site affecting development. Support for messaging could be helpful.

Recommendations for Technical Support

Based on the discussion with Idaho Springs representatives, the following types of assistance from SRP might be helpful:

- Reuse Fact Sheets
 - Fact sheet with introductory Superfund information, including Brownfields funding limitations and how to address Superfund stigma.
 - Information for property owners including options for individuals conducting soil lead tests.
 - Site information to support communities updating their Comprehensive Plans.
- Prospective Purchaser Inquiry Support
 - Fact sheet for prospective purchasers, realtors and developers.
 - Information for municipal planning staff to provide new or potential property owners.
 - Support for prospective purchaser inquiries (could be a call with a prospector purchaser or an informational call with staff to discuss key issues and opportunities).
- Other resources
 - Information on areas with residential waste rock and potential areas with high lead levels based on recent investigations.

Clear Creek County

Attendees

EPA: Angela Fowler, Ashlin Brooks

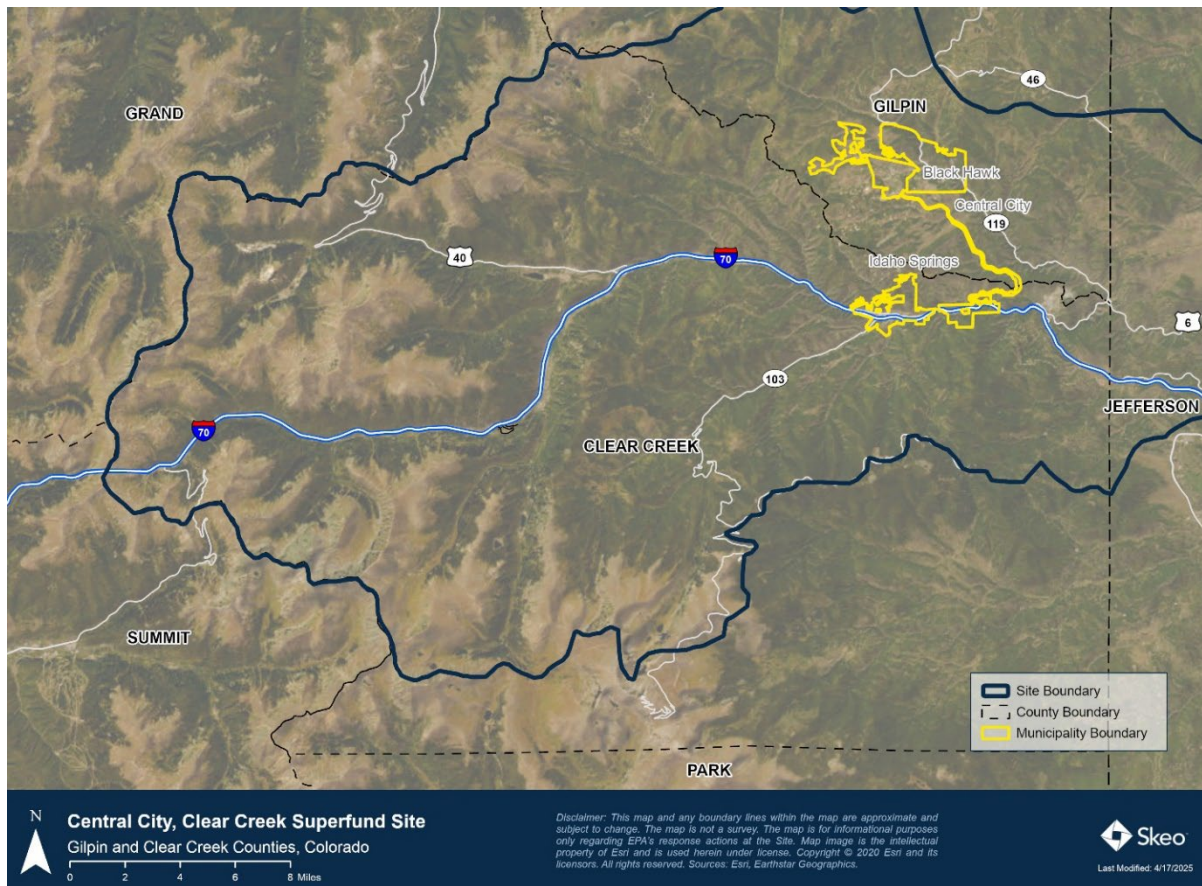
CDPHE: Kyle Sandor, Branden Ingersoll

County: Rebecca Lloyd (District II County Commissioner), Colton Rohloff (Deputy County Manger), Garrett McAlister (Planning Manager), Brian Bosshardt (County Manager)

Skeo: Alisa Wilson, Sophie Delzell

Community Overview

Clear Creek County is located 35 miles west of Denver on Interstate 70 and has a population of approximately 9,000 people. The county experiences a large influx of visitors and recently reported over 50,000 in a single day in June. Major towns include Georgetown, Idaho Springs, Empire and Silver Plume. Tourism, retail and mining play a significant role in the county's economy. The county's 2017 Master Plan prioritizes improving the existing quality of life in the county by supporting a diverse economy, protecting resources and encouraging recreation. In 2005, the county finalized a Greenway Master Plan, which provides a vision for a recreational trail corridor linking the Platte River Greenway in Denver to the Continental Divide National Scenic trail. Parts of the greenway have been built and provide recreational access to parts of the county. Cleanup actions within the county have included the removal and capping of waste rock piles, the construction of erosion control structures, the treatment of mine impacted water at the NCCWTP, and environmental covenants in some areas to limit access or use to areas addressed by previous cleanup actions.



Summary of Community Priorities

Cleanup Communication

The county is concerned about communicating the impacts of the Superfund site to community members. Letters sent to the community from CDPHE about mining waste in residential yards triggered anxiety among community members about risk and safety and the timeline for cleanup. The county is concerned about how the cleanup will be prioritized and how this will be communicated to residents. There is an opportunity to coordinate between the agencies and the county. In the abundant recreational areas, the county is also concerned that mountain biking activities may disturb mining waste piles.

Future Development

The county was historically the center of mining activity and the Henderson Mine served as a primary economic driver. The county has become increasingly concerned about the economic impact of the mine closing. The county does not benefit financially from the high volume of traffic that passes through the area via the highway and is landlocked with limited land available for development. It would like to see environmental cleanup prioritized in areas that are both developable and already served by infrastructure. Some homes are located on flatter land created by former mine waste tailings piles in an otherwise steep terrain. A new regulation prohibits building on these waste piles, but many homes were constructed before this rule was enacted. The county is uncertain about the exact locations of all existing homes.

There is concern about how soil cleanup efforts will affect economic development, the local housing market and future growth. Support for prospective purchasers, as well as information about the potential economic impacts of cleanup activities, would be helpful in guiding decisions and setting priorities.

Comprehensive Planning Support

The county's long-term vision is unclear with the mine closing and limited land available for development. The county is kicking off a Comprehensive Plan update with an initial meeting on May 12, 2025.

Recommendations for Technical Support

Based on the discussion with Clear Creek County representatives, the following types of assistance from SRP might be helpful:

- Reuse Fact Sheets
 - Fact sheet with introductory Superfund information, including beneficial economic impacts of cleanup.
 - Information for residential property owners with potential mine waste.
 - Site information to support communities updating their Comprehensive Plans.
- Prospective Purchaser Inquiry Support
 - Fact sheet for prospective purchasers and developers.
 - Support for prospective purchaser inquiries (could be a call with a prospector purchaser or an informational call with staff to discuss key issues and opportunities).
- Reuse Suitability Analysis
 - Conduct a suitability analysis for developable areas in Clear Creek County based on residential yard investigations to clarify redevelopment options.
- Training, Outreach and Presentations
 - Coordination with local governments for cleanup communication.

Black Hawk

Attendees

Black Hawk: Steve Jackson (Maintenance Services Manager), Tom Isbester (Public Works Director), Lance Hillis (Finance Director), David Spellman (Mayor), Stephen Cole (County Manager), Cindy Linker (County Planning and Development Director)

EPA: Angela Fowler

CDPHE: Kyle Sandor, Branden Ingersoll

Skeo: Alisa Wilson, Sophie Delzell

Community Overview

Black Hawk is a city in Gilpin County that is known for its casinos and gambling industry. In 2008, Colorado voters approved Amendment 50, which allowed Black Hawk to expand its gambling operations.

Downtown is in a valley and characterized by large casinos. Cleanup activities in Black Hawk have included removal and capping of waste rock piles and environmental covenants in some areas to limit access to or use of areas addressed by previous cleanup actions. Some areas with mine waste issues have also been addressed during private redevelopment projects.



Summary of Community Priorities

Support for Developers

The city has expressed concern that EPA may fund cleanup of developable land in other communities, while in Black Hawk, developers were responsible for funding their own cleanup. Providing clear information for developers about cleanup responsibilities, funding options, and available support could help ensure consistency and transparency.

Cleanup Information and Needs

The city is unclear about why the cleanup strategy has shifted and has questions regarding site identification, cleanup standards, and overall strategies. Some remediation work remains at the Gregory Incline, and there is a need to update the sampling and analysis approach for Clear Creek.

Future Development

The city indicated that there are no issues in Black Hawk and that there are likely no residential properties that would take advantage of the EPA-funded residential cleanup. Any future residential development would likely be limited to infill, primarily around Chase Street. However, the city owns most of this area and does not plan to actively encourage residential development. There may be interest in developing 500 Chase Street for commercial use.

Historic Character of Tailings Piles

The city is interested in preserving the mining history and character of the tailings piles.

Funding Information

The city is interested in learning about funding sources. Although SRP cannot provide funding, EPA could help to identify grant funding sources.

Recommendations for Technical Support

- Prospective Purchaser Inquiry Support
 - Fact sheet for prospective purchasers and developers.
 - Support for prospective purchaser inquiries (could be a call with a prospector purchaser or an informational call with staff to discuss key issues and opportunities).
- Other Resources
 - Information about grant funding.
 - Top 10 Questions to Ask When Buying a Superfund Site handout.

Potential Next Steps

During the discussions with local government representatives, participants shared ideas for key opportunities and considerations to support future use, address Superfund site stigma and advance the Superfund cleanup. Based on the information shared, the following SRP reuse assistance could be helpful:

Site Specific Reuse Fact Sheets

- Introduction to the site and frequently asked questions about the site and stigma.
- Information for residential property owners and homeowners.
- Site information to support communities updating their Comprehensive Plans.
- Summary of relevant examples of reuse on top of capped waste areas.

Prospective Purchaser Support

- Site-specific document or factsheet for prospective purchasers and developers.
- Summary memo for municipal planning staff to refer to when screening calls from prospective purchasers related to site use limitations and considerations.
- Support for prospective purchaser inquiries.

Reuse Suitability Analyses

- Conduct a suitability analysis for Quartz Hill, a repository located in the heart of downtown Central City, to help identify reuse options.
- Conduct a suitability analysis for Boodle Mill, a vacant city-owned property adjacent to a municipal building and growing area, to help identify reuse options.
- Conduct a suitability analysis for developable areas in Clear Creek County based on residential waste rock investigation information to clarify redevelopment options.

Targeted Superfund Redevelopment Education

- Conduct outreach to local stakeholders (such as realtors) to share the fact sheets described above and provide a tailored presentation about buying and developing property at the site.

EPA Region 8 can use the information gathered during the situation assessment to coordinate with SRP to request additional reuse planning assistance for the site's communities.

Moving forward, EPA and CDPHE will continue to coordinate with the municipalities throughout the cleanup process to help align future use goals and cleanup goals.

August 2025

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