Administrator's Superfund Emphasis List
Talking Points for RA Benevento
12.8.17

Bonita Peak Mining District

Key Messages:

- EPA Region 8 appreciates the high level of ongoing interest Administrator Pruitt has shown for the Bonita Peak Mining District Superfund Site and his willingness to facilitate the development of a remedial plan to achieve long-term protectiveness of human health and the environment.
- Both Administrator Pruitt and his Senior Advisor Albert (Kell) Kelly have visited the site, and the inclusion of the BPMD on the Administrator's Superfund Emphasis List reflects what they learned about community interest in site remediation.
- EPA is currently working with the State of Colorado as well as its federal partners, the U.S. Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management, to develop a Five-Year Plan that outlines cleanup activities and remediation objectives.
- In the short term, EPA is using an adaptive management approach at the site that supports early interim actions to improve water quality, stabilize mine features and address hots spots that pose a risk to human health.
- EPA is working closely with the State of Colorado, U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management, to engage local governments and interested stakeholders in addressing community concerns related to site cleanup.

Optional

- Through his hands-on engagement at the BPMD site, Administrator Pruitt will advance progress on site cleanup without expending additional taxpayer dollars.
- This cleanup of the BPMD is in its early phases, and EPA Region 8 appreciates Administrator Pruitt's support in developing long-term plans and objectives.

General Comments on Montana sites:

EPA Regional Administrator Doug Benevento recently visited Butte and Anaconda and met with key stakeholders and members of the communities. In response to seeing and hearing the issues associated with Superfund first hand, and in recognition of the magnitude and complexity of these issues, EPA has prioritized the Silver Bow Creek/Butte Area and Anaconda Smelter sites to move more quickly in the Superfund process to ensure remedies protect human health and the environment.

Silver Bow-Butte

- EPA has taken steps to accelerate the enforcement negotiations for implementation of the Butte Priority Soils Operable Unit Record of Decision and has set the end of January as a key date for parties to reach an agreement in principle so that the remaining elements in the ROD can be designed and implemented. If an agreement in principle cannot be reached, EPA will issue a Unilateral Administrative Order to ensure the remaining work (further capping, removals, and stormwater controls along upper Silver Bow Creek and Blacktail Creek) is implemented in a timely fashion.

- An adequacy review for the water treatment plant that will pump and treat water from the Berkeley Pit water is underway. EPA will ensure this process is completed in the short term to understand what is needed for the plant (upgrades) to have the capacity to pump and treat water at the necessary scale. After this review is completed, EPA will act quickly to ensure the plant is ready well in advance so that the level in the pit forever stays safely below any risk of contaminating the alluvial groundwater. An updated Waterfowl Mitigation Plan will be finalized next year that will lay out actions to be employed to prevent birds from landing in the Berkeley Pit and hazing the birds from the pit.
- Next year, EPA will begin further remedial investigations to characterize the nature and extent of contamination in the West Side Soils Operable Unit so that cleanup options can be identified, agreed upon, designed and implemented as soon as feasible.

Anaconda

- EPA has directed Atlantic Richfield Co. to complete residential and commercial property sampling and cleanup for lead and arsenic on a rigorous schedule. One thousand homes have been addressed since 2015, and 1000 more homes will be addressed over the next three years.
- EPA will start sampling (and remediating where necessary) school grounds for lead and school interiors for lead and arsenic early next year.
- EPA and Anaconda-Deer Lodge County are discussing the final plan for institutional control measures that will be put in place to address residual contamination that may be encountered through excavation or redevelopment; raise awareness of potential sources of contamination in the community; and sample interior dust.
- Based on feedback from the community, EPA will oversee implementation of a health study that will examine health issues in Anaconda and how they are related to exposure pathways and other health risks.

Colorado Smelter

- The Colorado Smelter site continues to be a priority at Region 8 to address the human health risk posed at the site by lead, arsenic and other heavy metals.
- EPA is conducting a removal action next week to remove soils at depth under the eastern play area of Benedict Park to prevent future risks that might arise from contaminants found at the park.
- We have conducted indoor cleanups and will continue to address those homes with elevated levels of contaminants. Future plans include preparing for and completing outdoor cleanups of those homes affected by smelter contamination.
- Future site work includes air monitoring near the former smelter area, continuing to sample residences' indoor dust and soils in targeted areas, and working with the community on revitalization opportunities.
- EPA recently signed an interim-Record of Decision that secures funding to continue indoor dust removal actions and to initiate residential soil cleanups in early 2018.