

ARSG MEETING SUMMARY

Aug 25, 2015

ATTENDEES: Almost 70 people signed in on our list. A number of other people did not sign in. We'll keep the meeting list, but will not type them all in here.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Offers for Help with the Gold King Release – A wide range of people have offered to help in any way possible. They range from ex-EPA employees, university professors, various scientists, engineers, inventors, the Colorado Mining Association, *etc.* Most of these people are not simply trying increase their businesses, but are sincere in wanting to help. We very much appreciate their support and will try to work with some of them in the future.
- Bill Simon explained that the ARSG is continuing the search for innovative techniques for treating AMD. Several vendors have made recent contact, explaining their possible application to some of our situations.
- San Juan County, Town of Silverton Resolution – Both entities passed a resolution requesting Congressional Legislation to provide funding for a water treatment facility in upper Cement Creek, funding for improving treatment technologies, funding for economic and environmental recovery in San Juan County and Silverton and downstream counties and municipalities and downstream tribal nations.

Briefs:

1. Progress on the Bullion King – Kirstin Brown with DRMS reported and showed pictures of remediation of the Bullion King mine waste pile. The pile is high above the top of Red Mountain Pass on the west side. It has been regraded to flatter slope and is currently being compacted. A waterproof liner will go on top with the addition of topsoil and native vegetation in the coming months.
2. EPA Sampling above Howardsville – EPA did not attend the meeting, so there is little to report. They may not have had time to analyze the data collected in late May and June yet.
3. Sunnyside Gold Sampling below Howardsville – Larry Perino reported that Sunnyside Gold completed the first round of intense sampling along the Animas from upstream of Arrastra Gulch down to Silverton. This reach sees significant metal loading in the spring before the main runoff period. Sunnyside has spent about \$300,000 this year on its investigations of the Mayflower tailings ponds and this stretch of river to identify potential sources of metal loading. Besides the sampling, they commissioned a geophysical study using helicopters to look for groundwater pathways, and they have been drilling to get core samples to characterize the remediated tailings ponds. There was a request to put the Sunnyside Gold sample plans on the ARSG website (which we've done).
4. Work on the Red & Bonita Bulkhead – As far as we know, work on the bulkhead is continuing. (The bulkhead was poured at the beginning of Sept., but the valve has not been closed.)

5. Arrastra Gulch – ARSG took a water sample at the Royal Tiger above Silver Lake this summer (and last summer). It takes around three hours to hike in and out to get a sample. Back in July 1998, the flow from the adit was estimated to be 50 gpm. Every other time we've visited the site the flow has been around 6 gpm. Because of that one high flow measurement, the mine ended up on our priority list. In talking to the person who took the sample, he thinks there had been a blockage that released and caused the high flow. With the lower flow, the mine doesn't appear to be a large metal loader in the basin.

Topics:

6. Blowout at Gold King. – There was not a lot of discussion about the actual water release at the Gold King, but there was a great deal of discussion about the next steps and the potential role of Superfund. A number of pros and cons related to Superfund were brought up by different individuals. Some people wondered if the notoriety of spill might give the Animas Basin a higher priority for funding if it were listed on the National Priority List (NPL) as a Superfund site. One comment was made that although ARSG doesn't take a position on a Superfund listing (because participants are split on the issue), it appeared in the meeting that ARSG was anti-Superfund. We discussed providing more information on the listing process and its consequences at the next ARSG meeting.
7. Upcoming Water Quality Control Commission meetings - We didn't get to these last two topics.
8. Good Samaritan Legislation.

<http://www.animasriverstakeholdersgroup.org/>

<http://goodsamaritaninfo.org/>

<http://www.sanjuancleanwater.org/>