

## COLORADO

# Idarado report finds sources of zinc in Red Mountain Creek

By SHERIDAN BLOK  
sheridan@ouraynews.com

Representatives of the Idarado Mining Company and the Colorado Department of Public Health and the Environment met with a room full of concerned and curious residents on Tuesday to present a status report on the 20 years of remediation in Red Mountain Creek.

The presentation, hosted by the Uncompahgre Watershed Partnership, was held at the Ouray Community Center. The state health department's Camille Price and Idarado's Sherm Worthington presented background information and their findings during the study.

Remedial procedures taking place at Red Mountain Creek are almost "mirror images" of the San Miguel watershed at the Tomboy Mining District, with the various tributaries and tailings being studied, said Price.

The investigation, conducted by the Idarado Mining Company in September of last year, shared results of their study on water quality and identified the sources of significant zinc unloading to Red Mountain Creek.

In the report, the mining company found that there were eight "major discrete sources" that accounted for nearly 40 lbs/day of dis-



Representatives from the Idarado Mining Company and the state health department answer questions from the audience following their presentation.

*Courtesy Photo by Emily Galanto*

large lead from the next highest contributor, the Rouville Portal that provided for only five lbs/day.

This year, Idarado plans to conduct follow-

solved zinc at RMC, which is 83 percent of the total zinc unloading in the creek. Worthington reported that the greatest contributor of zinc came from the Genesee Adit, which loaded over

14 lbs/day, a

up field investigations to confirm and expand upon last year's findings. More research is necessary to develop and evaluate the feasibility of possible remedial measures, the report stated. The overall goal is to reduce zinc loading in the creek, especially at the Genesee Adit.

Future plans also include: expanding the sampling locations to include the monitoring of the eight key sources identified; monitor the flow at the eight sources monthly; and, evaluate additional remedial measures for the Genesee Adit with hopes of reducing zinc concentration at the other major sources. Mine portal plugs, bulkheads, water collection systems and natural and synthetic materials may be used to assist with remedial efforts.

The detailed 73-page report summarizes the effects at each of the eight major discrete sources and includes sampling graphs and images. The report can be found on the UWP's website, [www.uncompahgrewatershed.org](http://www.uncompahgrewatershed.org).