



July-August 2025 Superfund Update

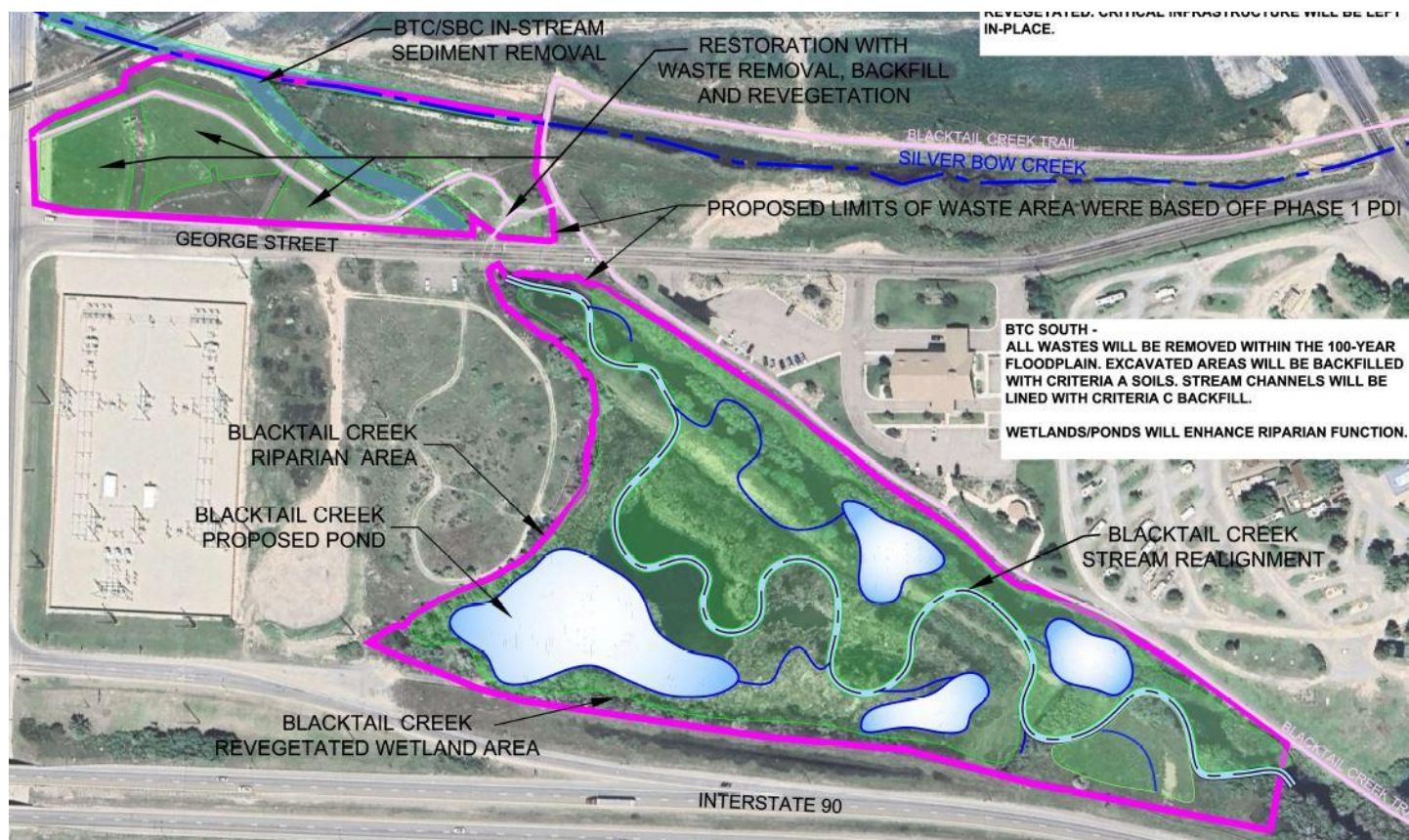
Recent Superfund Activity

Blacktail Creek Remedy and Restoration Design

Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) released their 30% design plan for the Blacktail Creek Riparian Actions project. Under the Butte Priority Soils Consent Decree, DEQ is responsible for removing contaminated materials, reconstructing the creek, and revegetating the riparian area. The proposed creek restoration alignment is shown in the drawing below.

DEQ plans to excavate mining waste to a depth of up to 20 feet, with the main area of waste being underneath the Blacktail Creek channel and wetland located behind the Blacktail berm. The volume of waste that will be removed is now estimated to be 135,100 cubic yards, which is 30% less than the first estimate in the Pre-design Investigation.

Drawing showing DEQ's conceptual Blacktail Creek restoration plan



Storm Basin Leak Evaluation

Atlantic Richfield released their Leak Infiltration Evaluation for the stormwater basins that are part of the Buffalo Gulch, Diggings East, and East Buffalo-Northside Tailings Consent Decree projects. The plan proposes three methods to monitor for leaks: stormwater water balance, groundwater monitoring using wells surrounding the basins along with subdrain inflow, and visual inspections. The Consent Decree states the leak detection plan for the Diggings East basin must be capable of monitoring for leaks at a fraction of a centimeter per second (1×10^{-6} cm/s) "to the extent feasible." Atlantic Richfield's report says using these three methods it is not feasible to measure leaks at this small of a flow rate, which is

approximately 3 gallons per minute. They do not report considering using a double liner with leak (leachate) collection. Atlantic Richfield believes their proposal meets the Consent Decree requirements.

Sister Dump in Walkerville Sampling

Atlantic Richfield and EPA are working to finalize the sampling report for the Sister Dump in Walkerville (Insufficiently Reclaimed Site BRES No. 38). The historic mining site was partially reclaimed by Atlantic Richfield in 1990, 1991, and 1998. Recent sampling found lead in surface soil exceeding the non-residential human health action level and other metals and acidity (pH) exceeding reclamation standards. Atlantic Richfield will prepare a remedial action work plan to improve the site to current reclamation standards. EPA asked that Atlantic Richfield provide best management practices (BMPs) in the interim to prevent sediment and surface water run-off.

Google photo of the Sister Dump from Seal Terrace in Walkerville



Publicly Observable Superfund Remedy Design Meetings

August 12 (Tuesday), 9:00-10:00 AM: Residential Metals Abatement Program (RMAP) Progress Meeting.

August 19 (Tuesday), 9:00-11:00 AM: Atlantic Richfield Remedial Design/Remedial Action Progress Meeting.

Publicly observable meetings can be accessed using EPA's Community Engagement Calendar here:

<https://www.epa.gov/butte/community-engagement-calendar>

Upcoming Remedy Design Schedule

Repository Siting Study Committee Recommended Repository (planned for July, we have not received an update).

Atlantic Richfield's Diggings East (waste removal and stormwater treatment basin) 95% Design (planned for July, we have not received an update).

September: Atlantic Richfield's Butte Reduction Works (waste removal, groundwater capture, and stream restoration) 60% Design.