



# October 2023 Superfund Update

## Current Activities

### Butte Reduction Works Pre-Design Investigation Continues

The Butte Reduction Works or “BRW” was a custom smelter built in 1883 that processed ore into copper, zinc, and manganese. Smelting continued until 1910 when William Clark sold it along with his other operations to the Anaconda Company, after which smelting was consolidated at the Washoe Smelter in Anaconda. Anaconda Company continued to use the BRW property to process manganese and phosphorus until the early 1970s.

Located just west of Montana Street, the property is currently Butte-Silver Bow’s road asphalt and gravel facility. The Consent Decree requires Atlantic Richfield to both remove and cap mining waste and relocate Silver Bow Creek from its current location within the slag canyon to its pre-mining location along the south side of the BRW. A rendering of Atlantic Richfield’s proposal for the site after remediation is shown below. The county’s asphalt and crushing operations will be moved to another location as part of this work.

This fall Atlantic Richfield is continuing field investigations for their remedial design, including drilling boreholes to collect geotechnical information for replacement of the North Bridge which crosses Silver Bow Creek and connects to Atlantic Richfield property on Centennial Ave. The soil borings will also provide geotechnical data to evaluate land settlement during construction dewatering which is the pumping down of the water table that is needed when they excavate mining waste from the floodplain of the newly restored Silver Bow Creek.

*Rendering of the Butte Reduction Works area after cleanup and restoration. Image courtesy of bpsou.com.*



## **Copper Mountain Recreation Complex Investigation**

Atlantic Richfield has been conducting drilling and sampling at Copper Mountain since early September to assess the overall condition of the existing repository that underlines the recreation complex. The drilling will investigate the soils and aquifer that appear to be impacted by leakage from the repository. More information is available at the [bpsou.com](https://bpsou.com) website which is a joint effort of Butte-Silver Bow (BSB) and Atlantic Richfield Company at this link:

<https://bpsou.com/bpsou-construction-advisory-clark-tailings-consolidated-waste-management-area-copper-mountain/>

## **Park and Playground Remediation**

Soil sampling at Butte parks and playgrounds has been completed for the year. Work on sampling and remediation of parks and playgrounds that exceed cleanup levels will resume in 2024 when the weather allows.

New playground equipment has been ordered for Copper/Emmett Park, which underwent soil remediation this summer. The playground equipment will be installed next year when the construction season resumes.

## **Upcoming Remedy Design Schedule**

Atlantic Richfield issued the Grove Gulch Remedial Design 95% Re-Submittal Package on September 22, 2023. This re-submittal responds to agency comments on the original 95% design which was issued on December 12, 2022. EPA and DEQ are currently reviewing the re-submittal. Montana Department of Justice's Natural Resource Damage Program (NRDP) issued comments on the re-submittal on October 11, 2023.

Atlantic Richfield expects to issue a revision to the Butte Reduction Works Pre-Design Investigation Evaluation Report in late 2023 that responds to EPA and DEQ comments.

Atlantic Richfield issued the Draft Blacktail Creek Groundwater Hydraulic Control System Pre-Design Investigation Evaluation Report on September 1, 2023. This includes the Sitewide Groundwater Model which is used to compare several alternatives for groundwater capture to protect Blacktail Creek. CTEC is in the process of reviewing the report and model.