



# CTEC



## September-October 2025 Superfund Update

### Recent Superfund Activity

#### **EPA Replaces Biden Administration's Residential Lead Directive**

On October 16<sup>th</sup>, EPA issued a new Residential Lead Directive: <https://www.epa.gov/superfund/residential-soil-lead-directive-cercla-sites-and-rcra-hazardous-waste-cleanup-facilities>

This replaces the January 2024 Directive that is the basis for residential lead cleanup level in the *Proposed Plan to Amend the Remedial Action for the Butte Priority Soils Operable Unit (October 2024)* that EPA was previously working to finalize and will alter the trajectory of the plan. That October 2024 Proposed Plan would have implemented a new lower cleanup level of 175 parts per million (PPM), based on a target child blood lead level of 3.5 micrograms of lead per deciliter of blood ( $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$ ). One major change in the new national EPA directive is it removes the 3.5  $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$  target blood lead level which previously applied where other sources of lead are present. The new directive uses a target of 5  $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$  for all Superfund residential cleanups. This change would result in a higher residential soil cleanup standard for Butte. The October 2024 Proposed Plan indicates the cleanup standard would be 456 PPM if a 5  $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$  target were used. This higher cleanup level may be what will be used in Butte if the new directive is fully implemented.

An interesting footnote in the new directive appears to suggest that insufficiently reclaimed capped mining waste and unreclaimed sites, which can be found in open space within Butte neighborhoods, would have to meet residential lead cleanup levels. Currently these are handled under the higher recreational lead cleanup level of 2,300 PPM. The full footnote is, "EPA defines residential properties as any area with high or unrestricted accessibility to sensitive populations (e.g., young children less than 7 years old) and includes, but is not limited to, properties containing single- and multi-family dwellings, apartment complexes, vacant lots in residential areas, schools, daycare centers, community centers, playgrounds, parks and other recreational areas, green ways, and any other areas where young children may be exposed to site-related contaminated media."

#### **EPA Superfund Five Year Review**

EPA recently began the sixth Five Year Review for the entire Silver Bow Creek/ Butte Area Superfund Site which stretches from the Berkeley Pit to Warm Springs Ponds including the Butte Hill. The Five Year Review is a periodic evaluation of the cleanup to ensure the remedy remains protective of human health and the environment and makes recommendations for any necessary changes. The reviews are required for every Superfund Site in the U.S. where contaminants remain onsite above levels which would allow unrestricted use. As part of the review, EPA performs community interviews with members of the public who would like to voice ideas and concerns. Interviews can be conducted in person, over the phone, or via email.

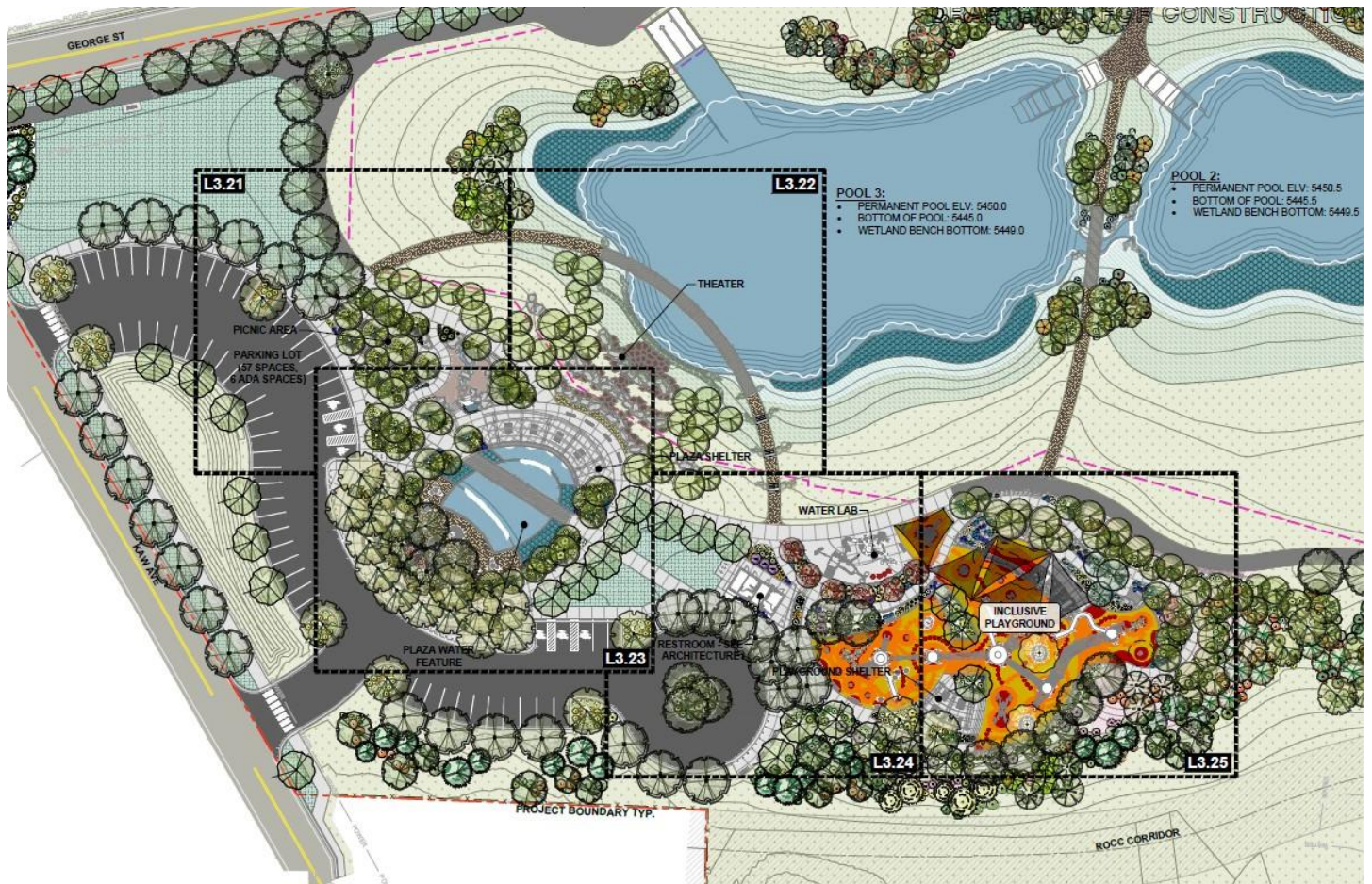
Contact Mackenzie Meter if you are interested in an interview: [meter.mackenzie@epa.gov](mailto:meter.mackenzie@epa.gov), (406) 970-5806

#### **Diggings East Stormwater Basin and Community Park Design is Near Completion**

The Diggings East Consent Decree project, located at the corner of George St and Kaw Ave, reached the 95% design phase last month. An excerpt of the design plan is shown on page 2 below. The project will have four large stormwater ponds that will collect and retain stormwater which runs off the Butte Hill during rain and snowmelt. The ponds are designed to settle out sediment in stormwater which contains heavy metals, prior to releasing the water to Silver Bow Creek. Stormwater commonly contains relatively low levels of heavy metals. Although not a risk to humans, it is a risk to fish and aquatic life which have very low tolerance for copper and zinc. The project will also include a community park with trails, a playground that is accessible for children and adults with disabilities and special needs, and a plaza with a

decorative pool and theatre. Currently, it is hoped that the 100% final design will be approved and ready for construction to begin in 2026.

*Atlantic Richfield and Land Design Inc's plans for the Diggings East storm basin pools, playground, and plaza.*



## Publicly Observable Superfund Remedy Design Meetings

November 11 (Tuesday), 9:00-10:00 AM: Residential Metals Abatement Program (RMAP) Progress Meeting.

November 18 (Tuesday), 9:00-10:00 AM: Monthly 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

The following Butte Priority Soils Remedy Design milestones are currently scheduled.

November: Repository Siting Study Committee Recommended Repository

December: Storm Basin Leak Infiltration Evaluation, which should now include a leak monitoring plan. Blacktail Creek Hydraulic Control 60% Design. Copper Mountain Recreation Complex Conceptual Site Model.

January: Butte Reduction Works 60% Design. Diggings East 100% Design.