



February 2024 Superfund Update

Current Activities

Silver Bow Creek Corridor Project Remedy Design Progress Slows

Things are quiet on the Silver Bow Creek corridor project remedy design front. Atlantic Richfield emailed their monthly Consent Decree update which says they are working on their internal design process for corridor projects (Grove Gulch, Buffalo Gulch, Diggings East, Northside Tailings, Butte Reduction Works, and groundwater control). However, the last Remedy Design/Remedy Action progress meeting was December 5, 2023. These meetings were monthly prior to this, and no future meetings are currently scheduled. It's unclear if the slowdown is related to EPA staff reorganization or other factors.

The most recent remedy design submittal for the corridor projects was the Grove Gulch 95% design submitted in September. After the 95% design was reviewed by the agencies, it was clear there were several remaining issues on the Grove Gulch design that EPA and State of Montana Natural Resource Damage Program (NRDP) needed to agree on, including ambiguity about the extent and depth of waste removal required by the Consent Decree which was discussed in our January update. EPA had planned to meet with NRDP in January to attempt to resolve this but is unclear if this has occurred.

Unreclaimed and Insufficiently Reclaimed Site Progress

Progress continues on design and remedy construction of Unreclaimed and Insufficiently Reclaimed sites. Unreclaimed Sites are mining waste areas that have not yet received caps. The sites must be reclaimed if they exceed the human health standards in the Record of Decision (ROD) or if they exceed waste identification criteria and are contributing to storm water contamination. Insufficiently Reclaimed Sites were reclaimed prior to establishment of the final Butte Hill Revegetation Specifications which are used in the Butte Reclamation Evaluation System (BRES) to cap, monitor, and maintain mine waste areas. Similar to Unreclaimed Sites, Atlantic Richfield is assessing Insufficiently Reclaimed Sites to see if additional reclamation work is required to improve the site to standards required by the Consent Decree.

Recent pre-design sampling work was completed at the "UR-31 Site", which is an area surrounding the Big Butte Volunteer Fire Department on Lexington Ave uptown. Recent remedy construction work was completed at the UR-23 Site, located near the corner of New and Mahoney Streets west of Maroon Activities Center. Waste removal and grading were completed there in November and the site will be sodded this year.

RMAP Parks and Playground remediation

Residential Metals Abatement Program (RMAP) remedial action work also continues. Atlantic Richfield is responsible for parks and playground remediation and most recently performed work at the Gold Hill Lutheran Church Creativity Factory Preschool where soil with lead was removed and replaced with clean soil. Butte-Silver Bow's RMAP Program continues normal testing and remediation of private residences.

Upcoming Remedy Design Schedule

Atlantic Richfield has the following Remedy Design documents scheduled this year:

The Grove Gulch 100% Design was most recently planned for February. This was not released as expected.

The revised Butte Reduction Works Pre-Design Investigation Evaluation Report is planned for first quarter 2024. The Butte Reduction Works 60% Design is planned for Summer 2024.

The Diggings East 60% Design is planned for April and the Buffalo Gulch 95% Design is planned for July.