

Former ASARCO Smelter East Helena Facility Annual Project Update



December 13, 2022 – Public Meeting

US Environmental Protection Agency

Montana Environmental Trust Group

Trustee of the Montana Environmental Custodial Trust



Montana Environmental Trust Group, LLC

Trustee of the Montana Environmental Custodial Trust

Welcome Instructions

For Zoom Users

- Unless you are speaking, please mute yourself by using microphone icon and pressing *6 on your phone.
- You can type questions/comments in the Zoom chat box.
- If your Zoom computer audio is not working, mute yourself and phone in to hear the meeting by dialing 1-646-876-9923, and use meeting ID 946 584 8922# and passcode 664564#.
- This meeting is being recorded. By participating, you consent to be recorded.

For In-Person and Zoom Participants

- Please introduce yourself before asking a question or making a comment.
- Questions can be repeated or read from the chat.

THANK YOU JOINING US!



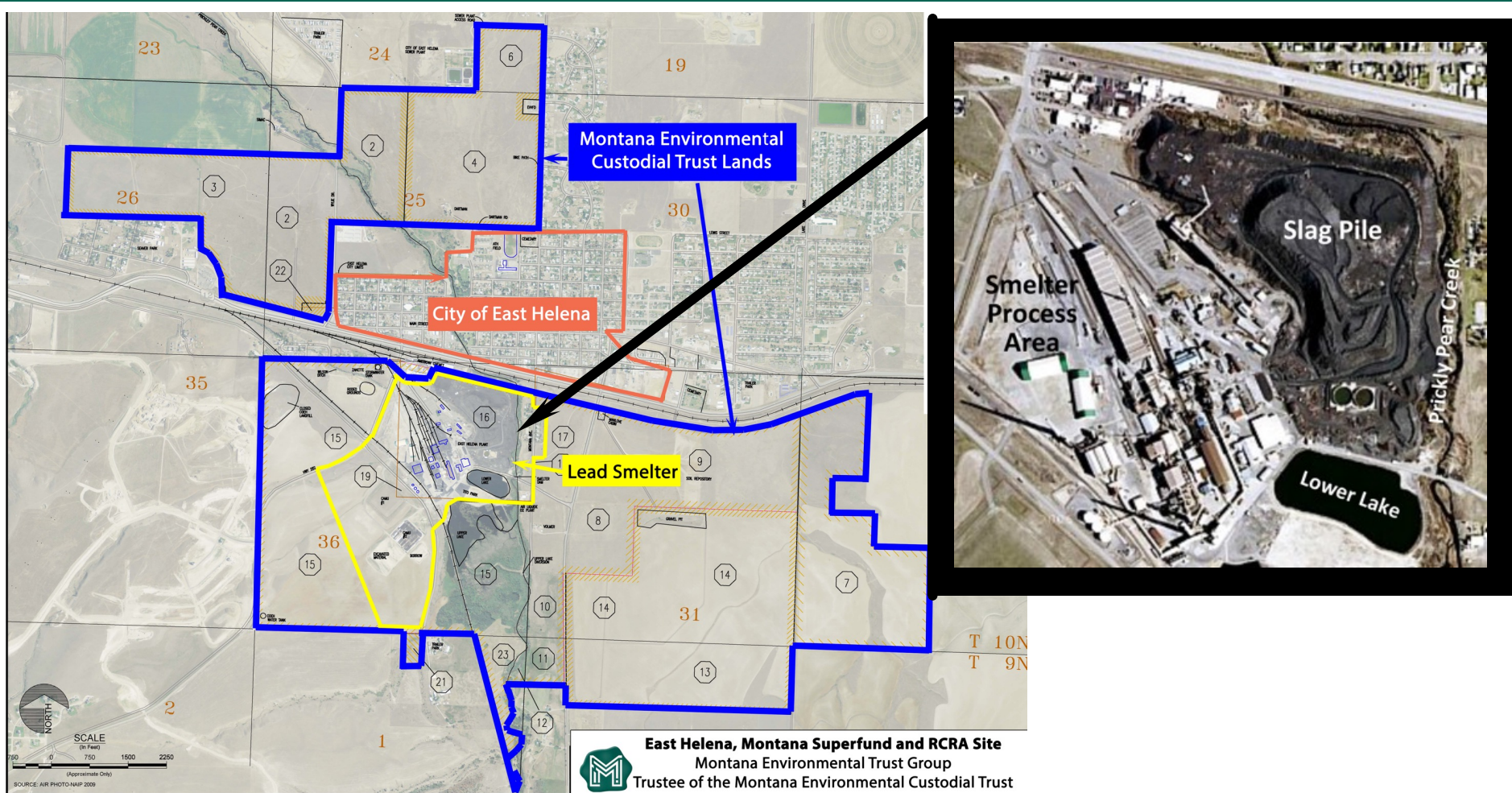
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Agenda

- Welcome and Introductions: Bridget Williams (USEPA) [5 minutes]
- Overview of East Helena Cleanup: Bridget Williams (USEPA) [5 minutes]
- Update on East Bench Construction: Mark Rhodes (Hydrometrics) [10 minutes]
- Unfumed Slag Reprocessing Update: Cindy Brooks (METG) [5 minutes]
- East Helena Redevelopment – Cindy Brooks (METG) [10 minutes]
- Greenway Project Update – Mary Hollow (PPLT) [5 minutes]
- East Helena Institutional Controls--Kathy Moore (County) [10 minutes]
- Questions and Comments – Bridget Williams (USEPA) [5 minutes]



Former ASARCO Smelter and Surrounding Lands East Helena RCRA and CERLCA Site

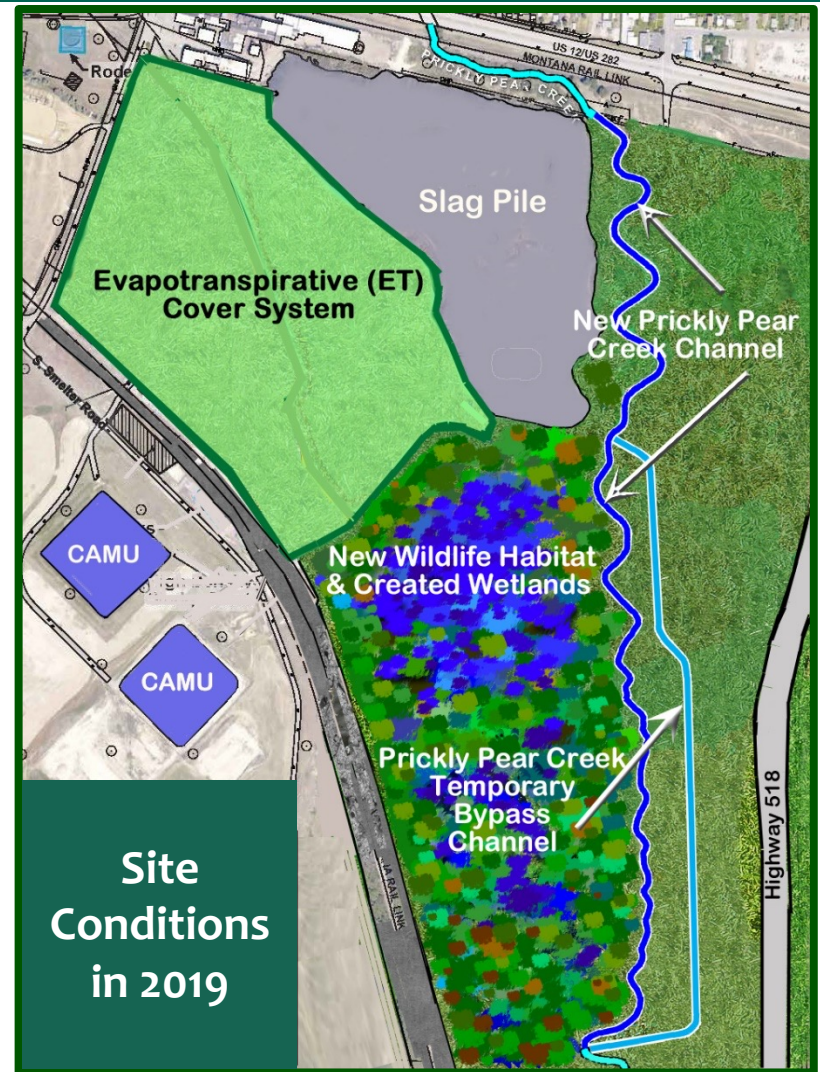
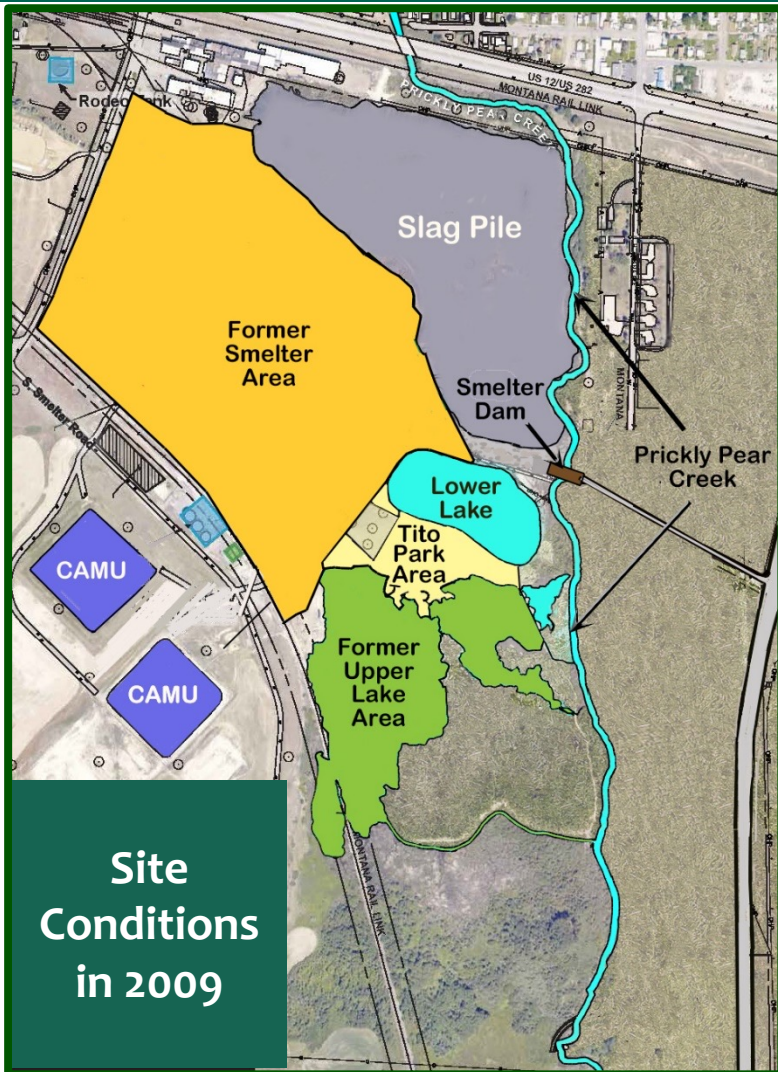


In 2009, Custodial Trust took title to 2,000+ acres in and around East Helena



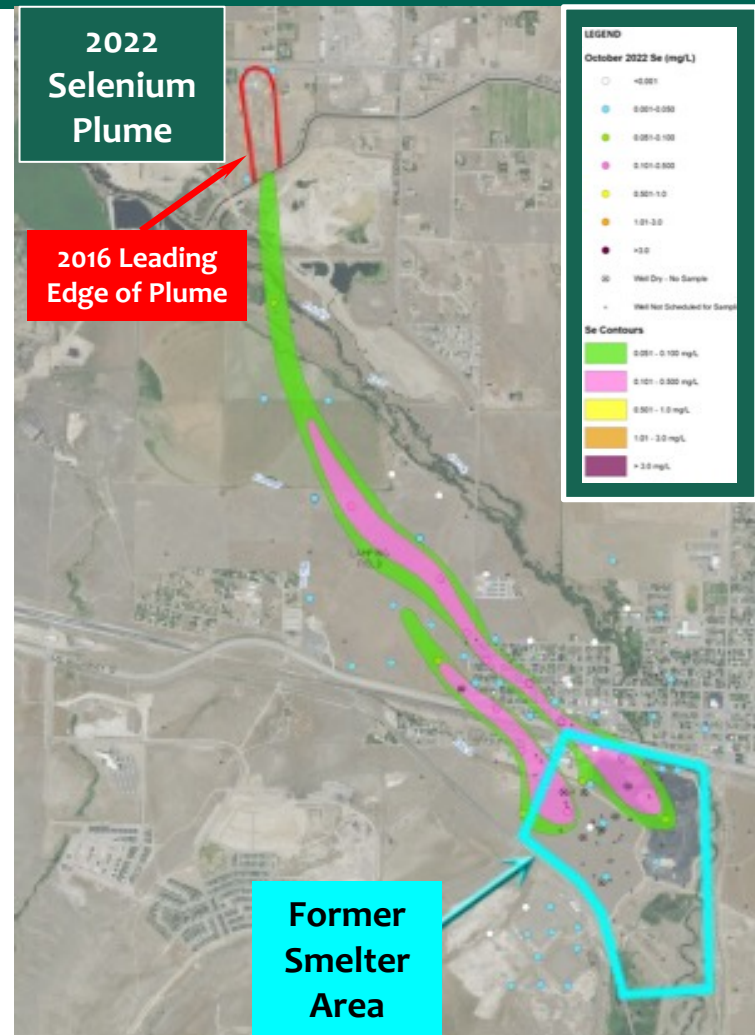
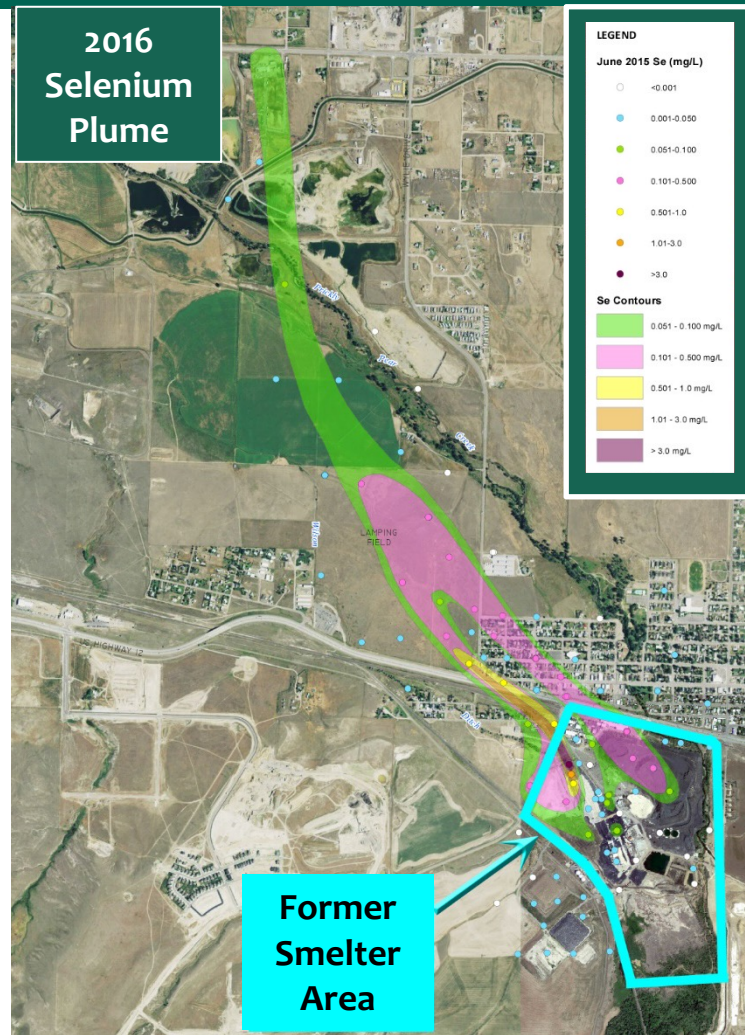
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Former ASARCO Smelter Site Conditions



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East Helena Groundwater Quality Improvements



- ✓ Selenium concentrations have decreased more than 50% at smelter and 35% downgradient of smelter
- ✓ Leading edge of selenium plume has receded more than 2000 feet
- ✓ Selenium plume area has been reduced by more than 40%

East Helena Smelter RCRA Corrective Action

Then



Now



Superfund (CERCLA*) Activities

- August 2022 – Consent Decree finalized with BNSF & Montana Rail Link to remediate the East Helena Railyard
- Residential yard cleanups – last call to be announced next year



* Comprehensive
Environmental
Response,
Compensation, &
Liability Act
(CERCLA)

Update on East Bench Construction and Other Projects Mark Rhodes (Hydrometrics)



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East Bench Construction (2022)

Construction Start: 9/19/22

Project Highlights

- **Remove 3300 LF of Temporary Bypass Channel which included:**
 - **Salvage and Replace 11900 CY of topsoil (80% Complete as of 12/13/22)**
 - **Regrade and Shape 104000 CY of soil (90% Complete as of 12/13/22)**
 - **Salvage 1850 CY Riprap (Complete)**
 - **Salvage and Transplant 18 Trees (Complete)**
 - **Remove Temporary Bypass Channel Bridge (Complete)**
- **Remove slag from former Asarco housing alleyways**
 - **Remove 1450 CY slag from alleyways (Complete)**
 - **Place 1500 CY ULM topsoil over removal area (Complete)**
- **Install 5000 LF of chain link fencing**
- **Remove and place 15,200 CY ULM Topsoil (30% Complete as of 12/13/22)**
- **Remediation of three 1-acre Decision Units on East Bench (Spring 2023)**



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East Bench Construction (2022)

BMP Installation



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Remove PPC Temporary Bypass Channel



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East Bench Construction (2022)



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East Bench Construction (2022)



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East Bench Construction (2022)



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East Bench Construction (2022)



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East Bench Construction (2022)



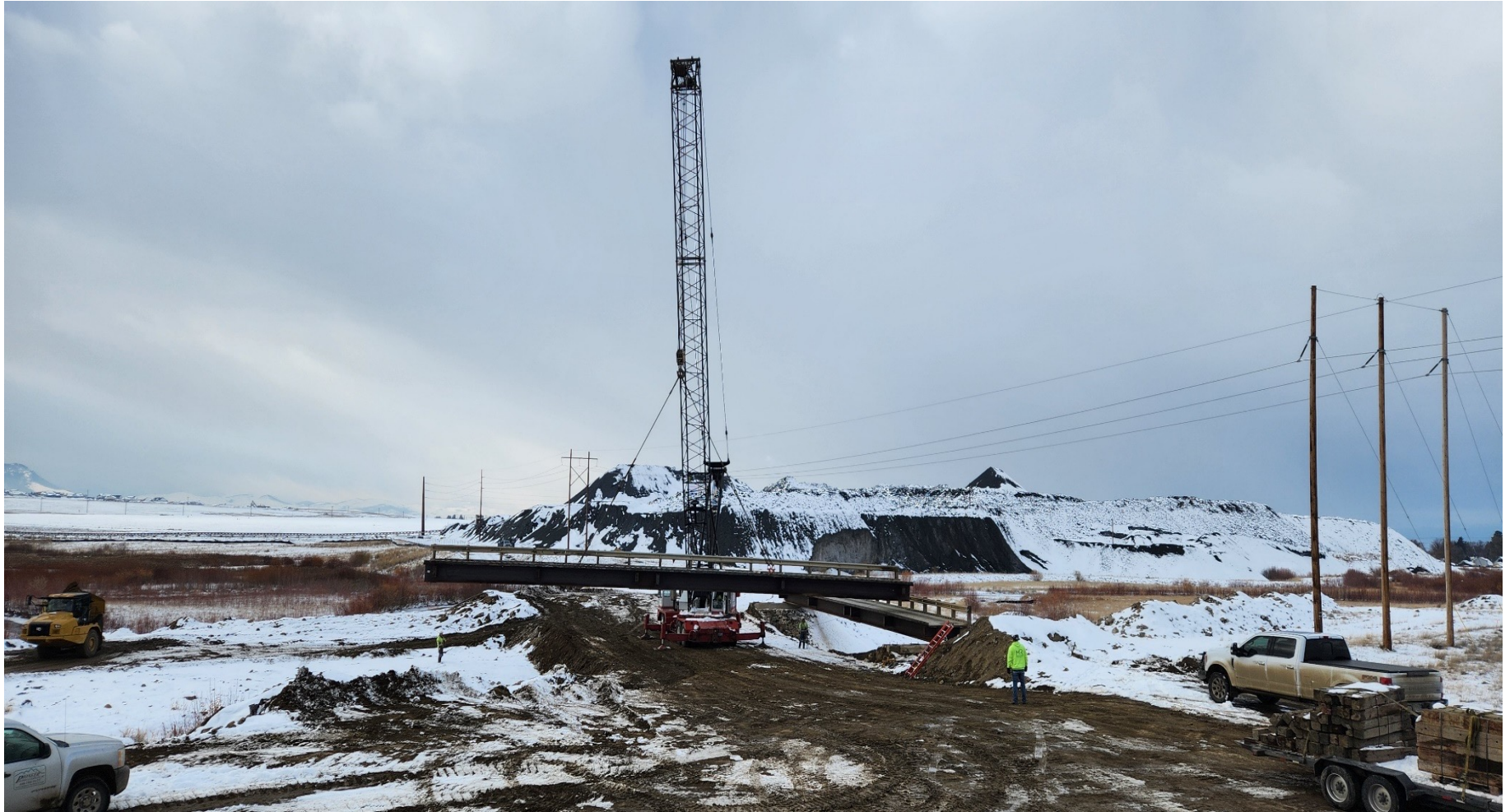
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East Bench Construction (2022)



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East Bench Construction (2022)



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East Bench Construction (2022)

Winter Shutdown: 12/16/22

Remaining Work

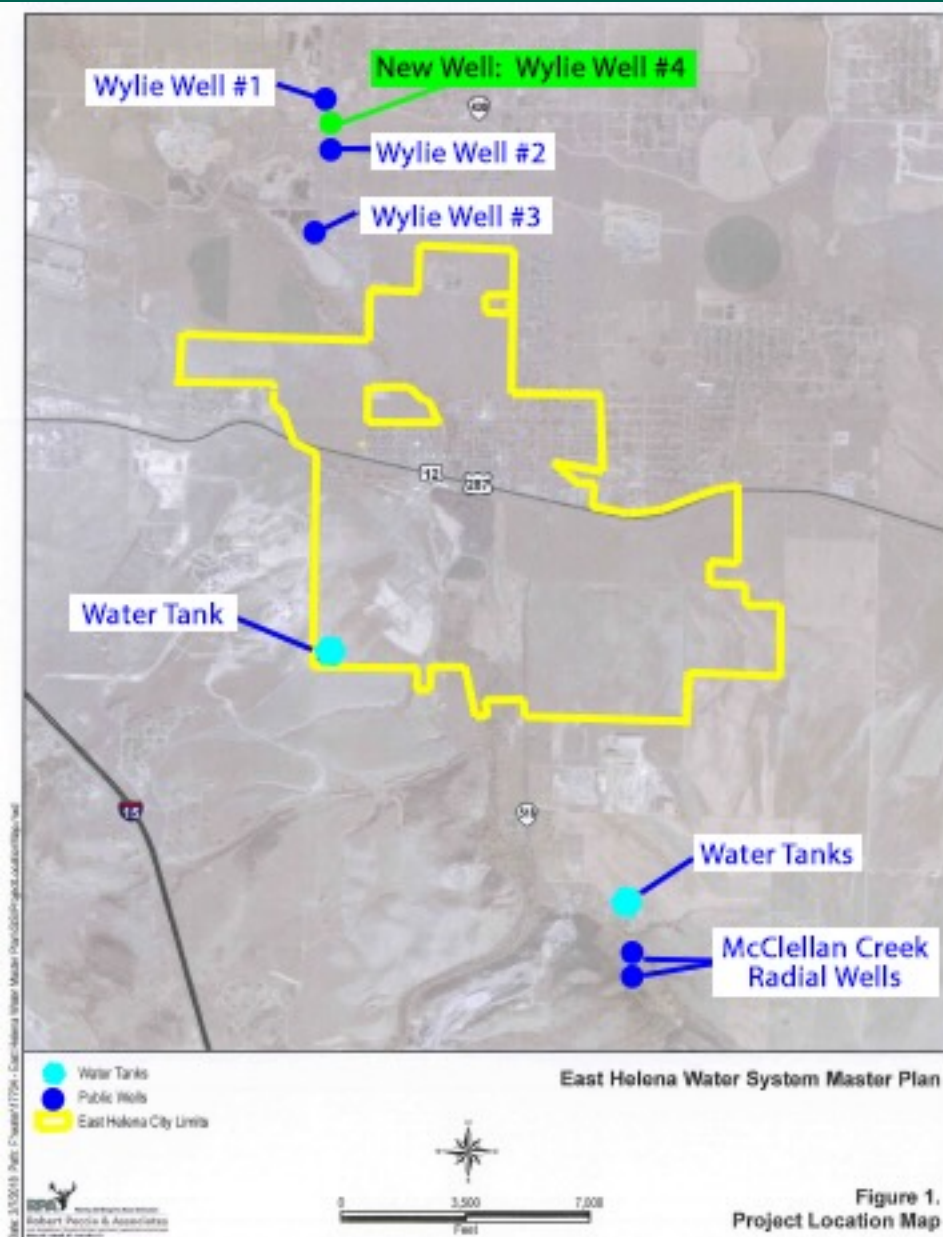
- **Finish final regrading at tie into creek**
- **Finish removal of ULM topsoil pile**
- **Finish wetland grading**
- **Install roadway from existing bridge to Smelter Dam Road**
- **Complete composting, seeding and wetland plantings**
- **Complete remediation of three 1-acre Decision Units**



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City of East Helena Water Projects



- New public water supply well (Wylie #4)
- Improve access to Radial Wells
- Rebuild McClellan caissons
- Potentially upgrade Wylie #3 Chlorination system (if funds available)

Update on Unfumed Slag Removal Project

Cindy Brooks (METG)



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Unfumed Slag Removal Project



- METG partnered with Metallica
- Goal is to remove upper lift (up to 2 million tons) of unfumed slag—primary remaining source of selenium loading to groundwater
 - Crush to 2 inches
 - Transport by conveyor from crushing area to stockpile
- Transport from stockpile to rail loadout by overland conveyor
 - Weigh and load onto railcars
- Transport by rail and ship to South Korea for recycling

Unfumed Slag Removal Project



Crushed Slag Stockpile (June 2022)



Unfumed Slag Removal Project

Crushed Slag Stockpile (October 2022)



- 140,000-ton stockpile
- Peak crushing 30,000 tons/month
- Ongoing dust control

Crushed Slag Stockpile (June 2022)



Unfumed Slag Removal Project

June 2022



Crushed slag loaded
into feed hopper for
transport by
overland conveyor
to rail loadout area



Unfumed Slag Removal Project

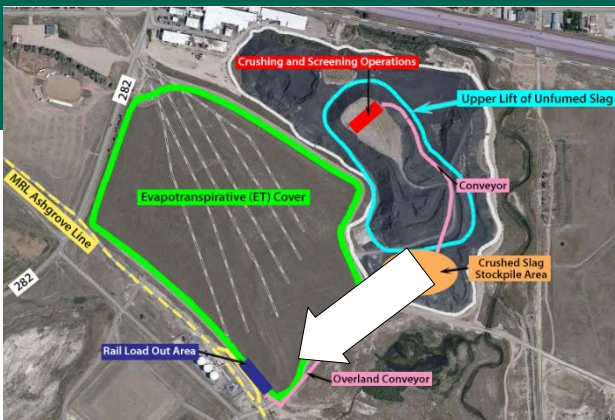
Transport of crushed slag by 1/4-mile overland conveyor to rail loadout area

June 2022



Unfumed Slag Removal Project

Dust suppressant sprayed on crushed slag transported by overland conveyor to rail loadout area

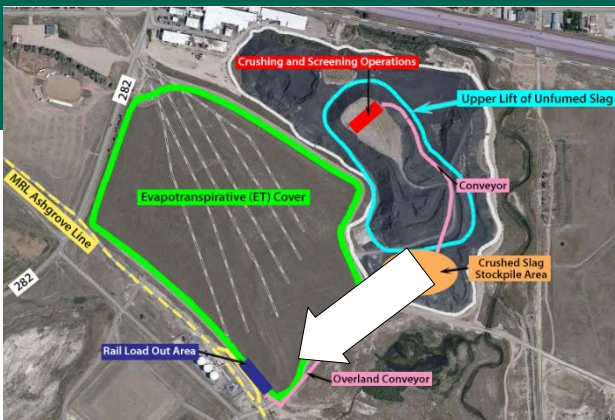


June 2022



Unfumed Slag Removal Project

Transfer of crushed slag from overland conveyor to 150-ton surge hopper by rail loadout area



June 2022

Unfumed Slag Removal Project

Transfer of crushed slag from 150-ton surge hopper to radial conveyor for loading into rail cars



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Unfumed Slag Removal Project

Transfer of crushed slag from radial conveyor into closed (“hopper”) rail cars

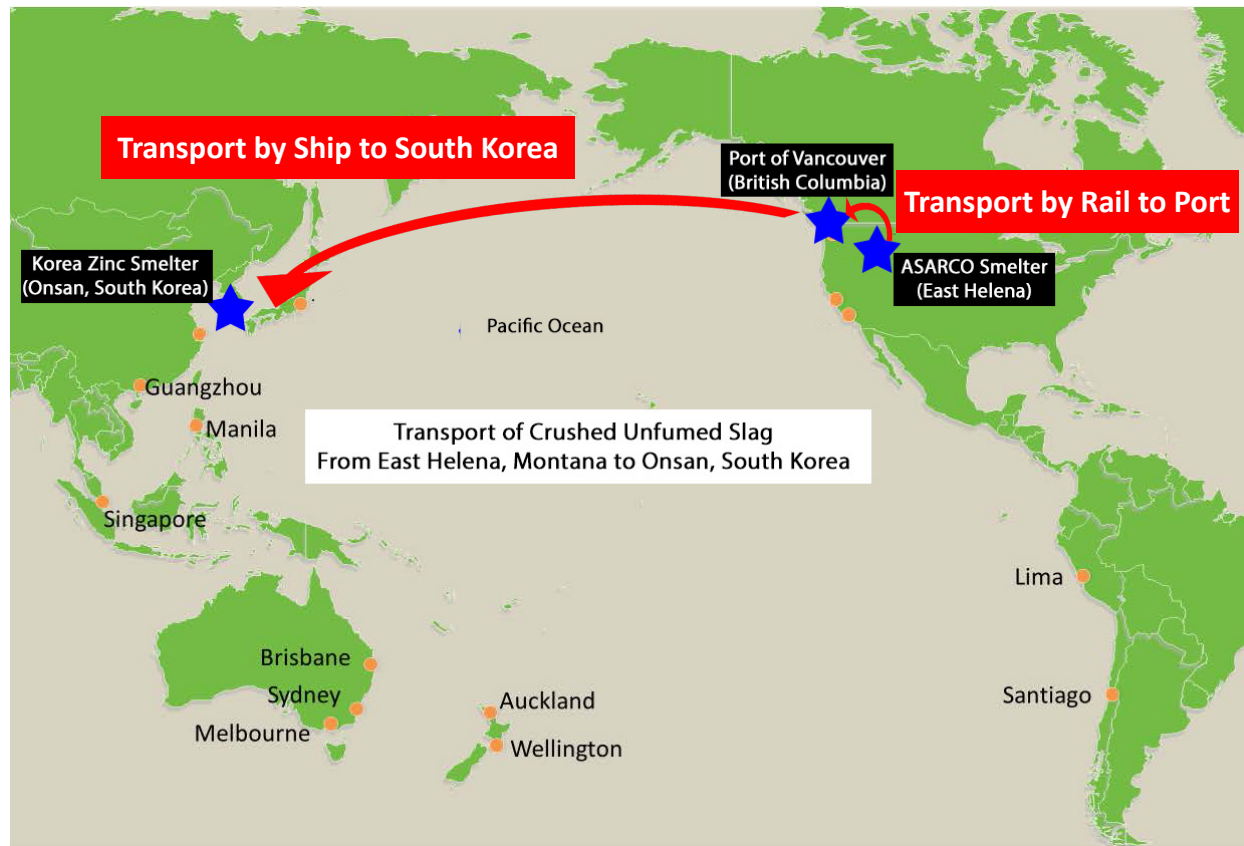


June 2022



Unfumed Slag Removal Project

- ✓ Transport by rail from East Helena to Port of Vancouver, British Columbia
 - ✓ Load material on ships at Port of Vancouver
- ✓ Transport to South Korea by oceangoing vessels

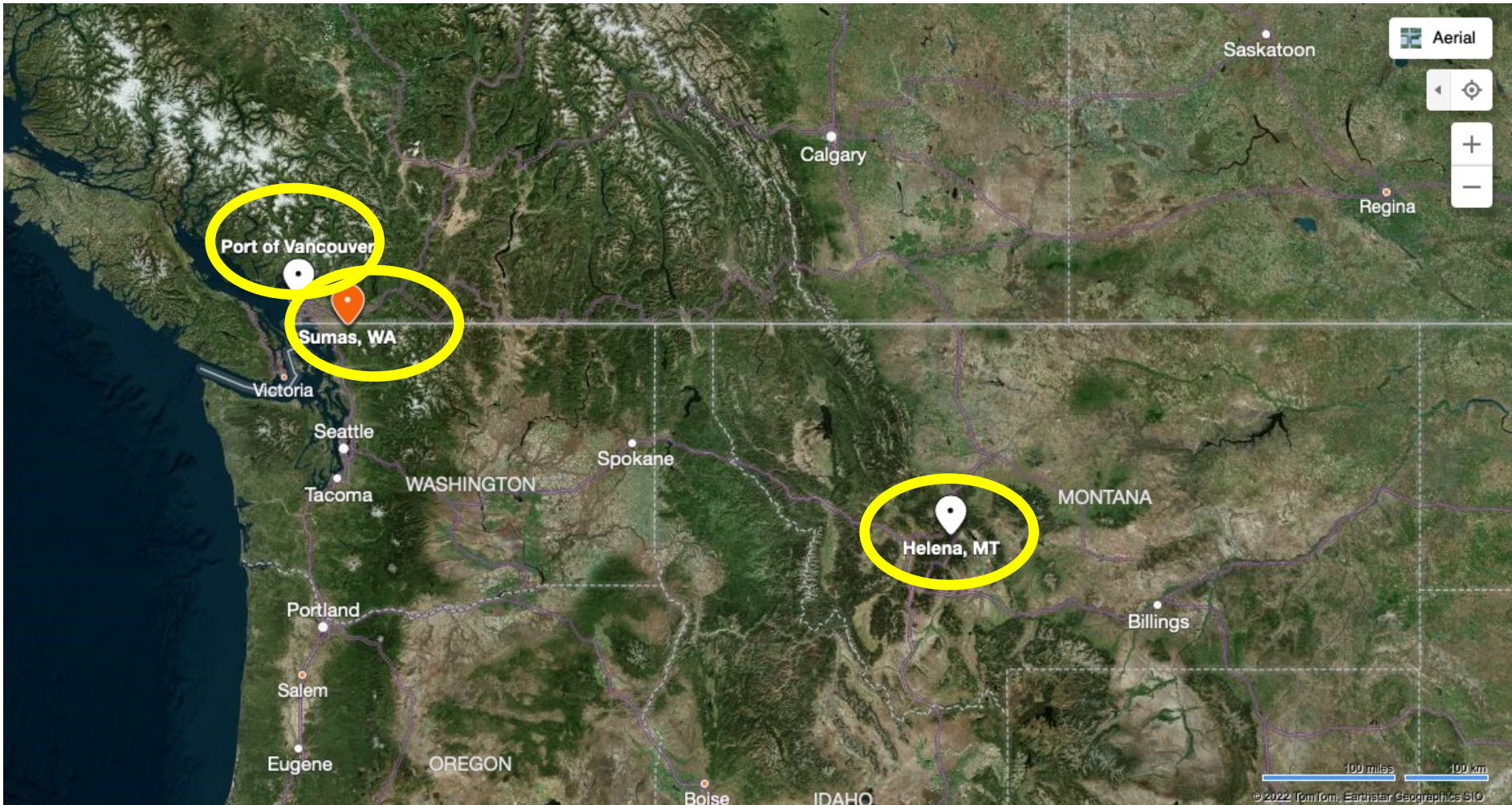


Unfumed Slag Removal Project Challenges

- ✓ Change in transshipment port from Longview, WA to Vancouver, BC
- ✓ Supply chain impacts
 - Equipment delivery delays (custom fabricated equipment)
 - Oceangoing shipping rates (rose by 70%+ during pandemic)
 - Escalation in prices for all goods and services
- ✓ Railroad challenges
 - Labor shortages
 - Due to slow rate of loading “gondola” rail cars, changed to covered “hopper” cars that required transfer to trucks in Sumas, WA
 - Rail bridge weight constraints



Unfumed Slag Removal Project Transfer from Rail to Truck in Sumas, WA



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Unfumed Slag Removal Project Plans

- ✓ Metallica installing equipment in Vancouver for unit trains (65 to 200 rail cars) to transport slag from East Helena to Vancouver
- ✓ Crushing/shipping to increase 20,000 to 30,000 tons/month in 2023
- ✓ Expect removal of 1.2 million tons of unfumed slag by 12/2025
- ✓ Slag pile regrading and capping to follow unfumed slag removal
- ✓ Project benefits
 - Potential to reduce height of slag pile by up to 50%
 - Financial benefits: \$3 million for East Helena cleanup
 - Environmental: 100% recycling project (metals recovery and manufacturing cement) and selenium source removal



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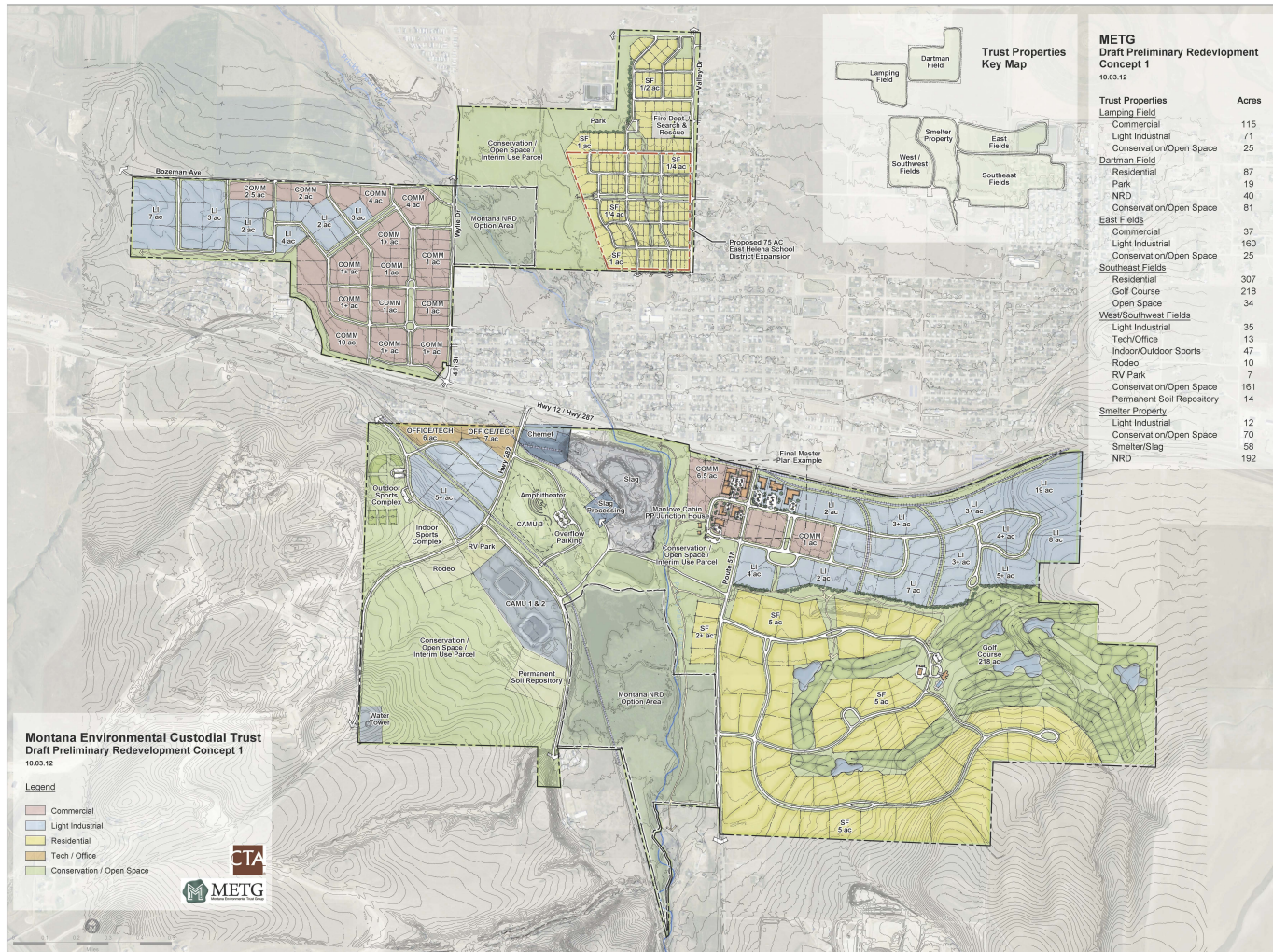
Update on East Helena Property Redevelopment

Cindy Brooks (METG)



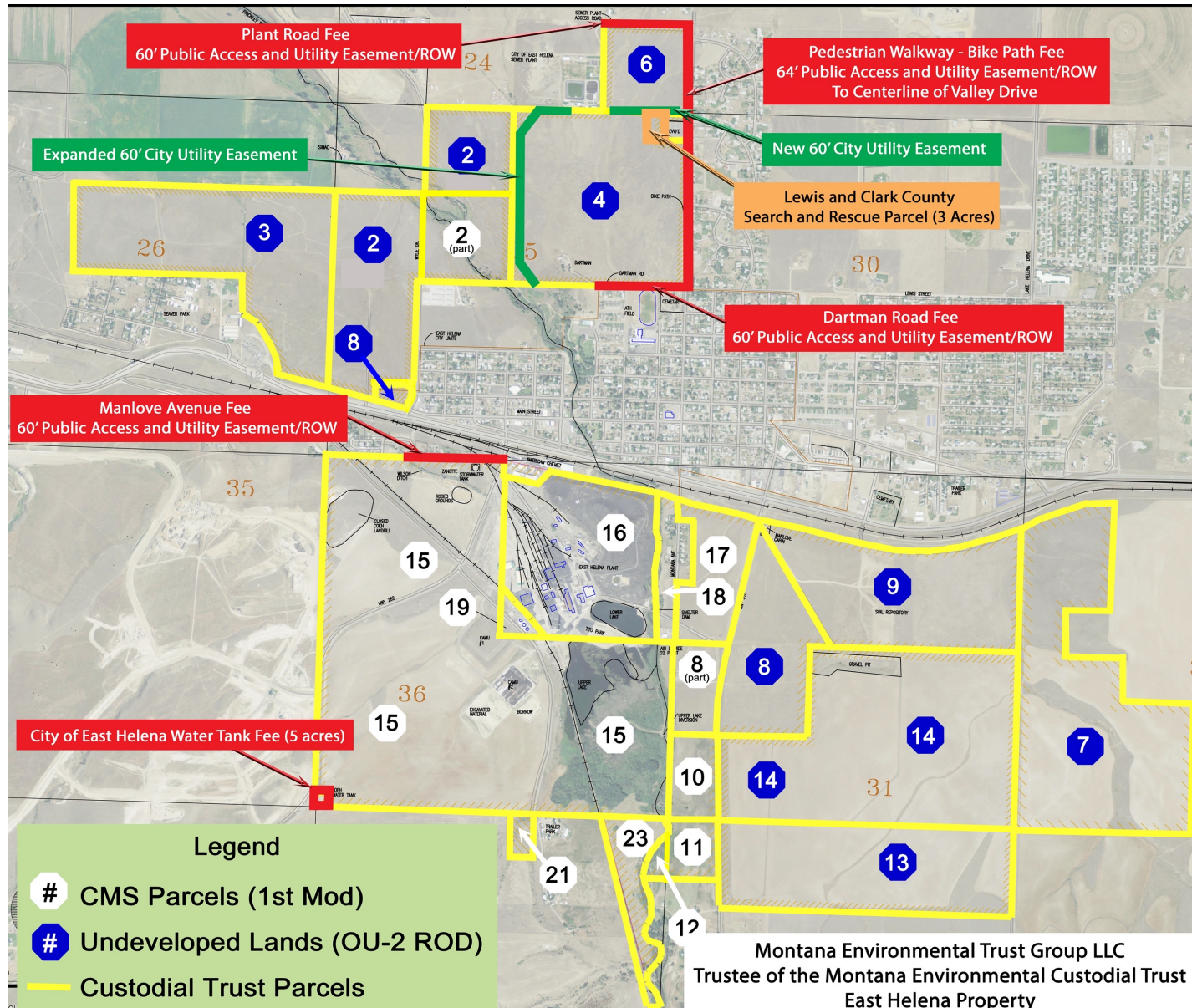
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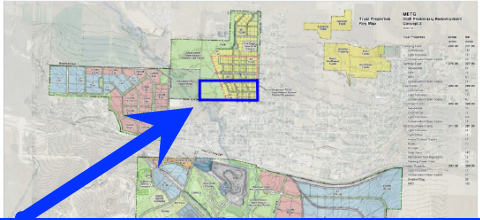
Redevelopment Planning Initiative (2011 and 2012)



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Land Donations to City of East Helena/Lewis and Clark County





East Helena Prickly Pear Elementary School and Community Health Center

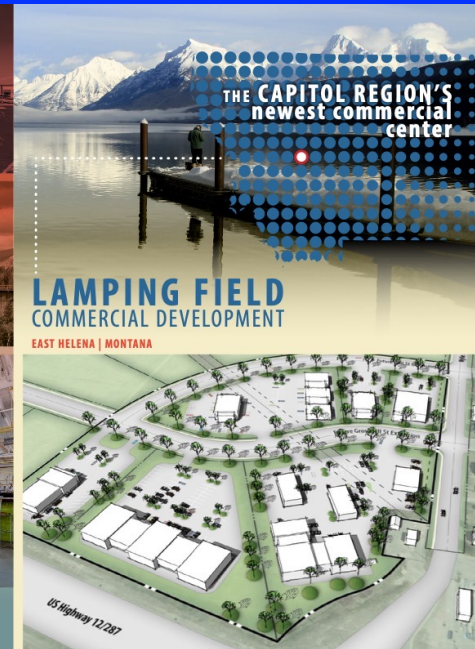
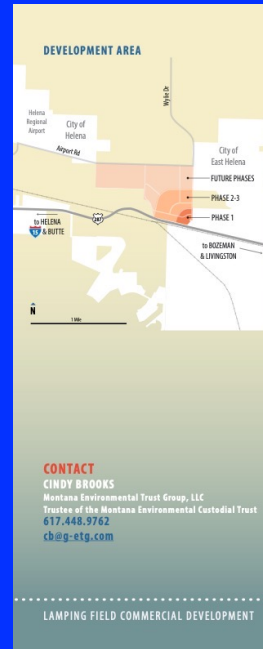


- ✓ 2016: METG donated 50 acres to East Helena Public Schools
- ✓ 2017: Soils remediated to residential standard and school construction commenced
- ✓ 2018: East Helena Prickly Pear Elementary School opened to 250 students



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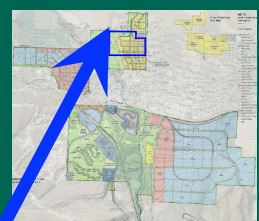
Lamping Field



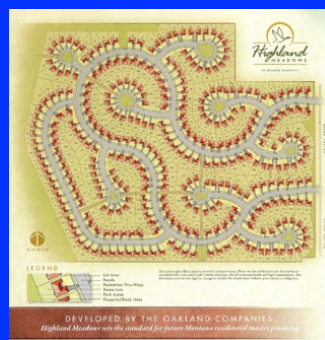
- ✓ 2017: METG partnered with MBAC to develop master plan and marketing strategy with Big Sky Trust Fund Grant with matching funds from METG
- ✓ 2018: METG sold land (~254 acres) to Town Pump
- ✓ 2021: Town Pump initiated development plans for southeast parcel



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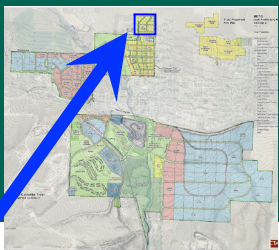
Highland Meadows Residential Subdivision



- ✓ 2018: METG sold 100 acres to Highland Meadows (Oakland Companies)
- ✓ 2019: Property remediated to residential standard, and buyer secured City approvals
- ✓ 2020: Commenced construction of 319+ single-family home residential subdivision
- ✓ 2021: Completed and sold out first 2 phases of 5-phase development (52 new homes)
- ✓ 2022: Built lots on phase 3 and expect to sell to home builders in 2023



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East Helena High School

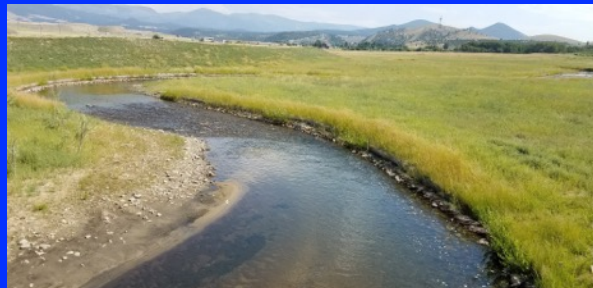
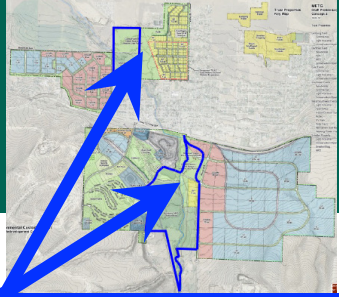


- ✓ 2017: Legislature approved bill allowing vote to build new high school
- ✓ 2018: Electors approved \$29.5 million bond; METG sold 35 acres to East Helena Public Schools
- ✓ 2019: Soils remediated to residential standard and school construction commenced
- ✓ 2020: East Helena High School opened to 260 students



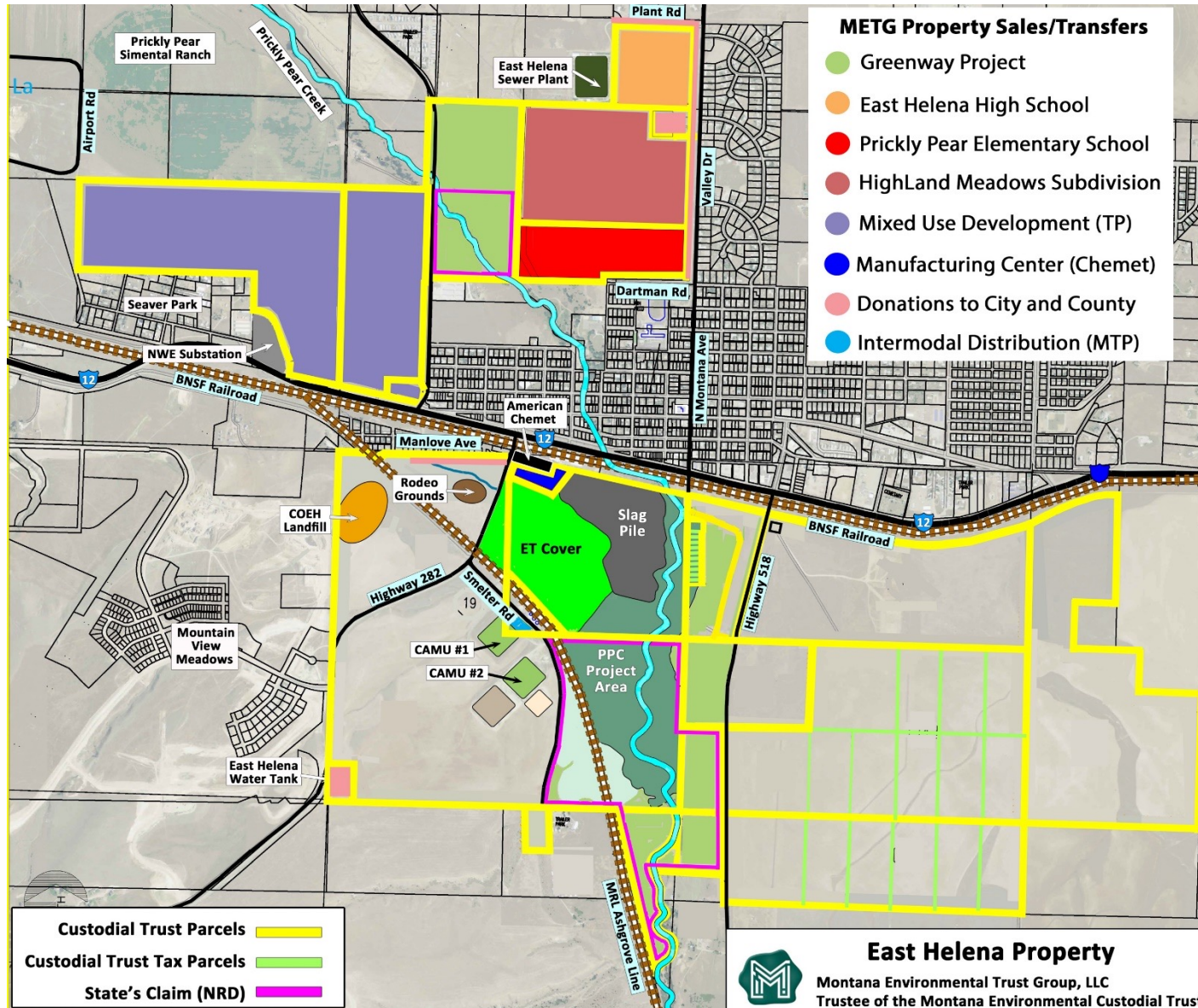
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Prickly Pear Land Trust Greenway Trail



- ✓ 2011 to 2016: Greenway envisioned by community
- ✓ 2017: Prickly Pear Land Trust (PPLT) received feasibility study grant for Greenway Trail
- ✓ 2019: NRDP awarded PPLT \$3.2 million for Greenway Trail
- ✓ 2020: METG donated 322 acres/\$1.2M to PPLT for 8-mile trail along revitalized creek
- ✓ 2021/2022: Custodial Trust remediated and restored 80-acre parcel
- ✓ 2022: First segment of Greenway Trail constructed and open to public

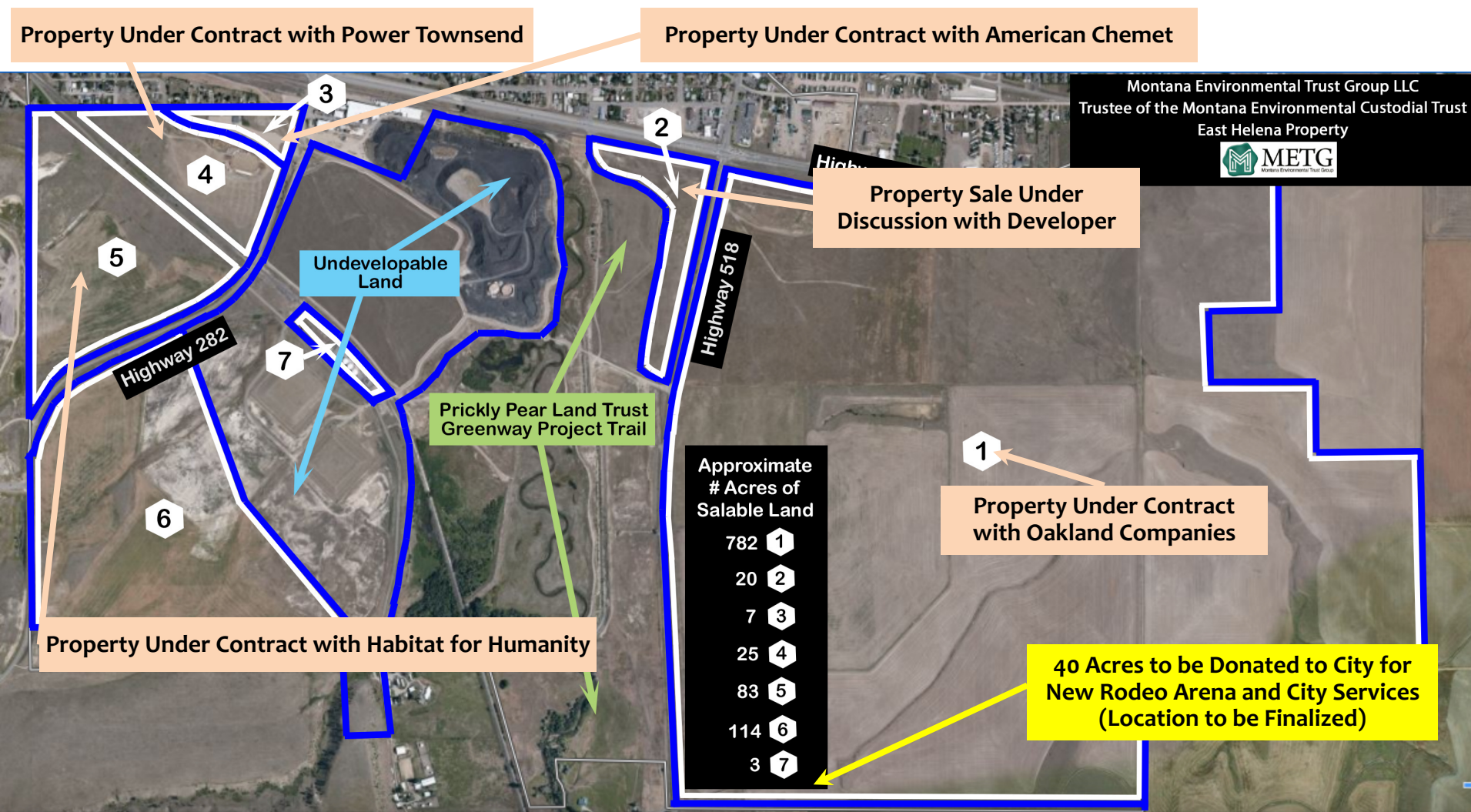
Sold or Transferred All Property North of Highway 12



Land Sales and Transfers to Date

East Helena Land Transfers and Sales—2012 to 2022		
Purchaser/Grantee	Land Use	Acres
American Chemet	Sale for Expansion of Manufacturing Plant	6
City of East Helena and County	Donations for Search & Rescue, Water Tank, Roads, etc.	12
East Helena Public Schools	Donation for Prickly Pear Elementary School	50
Town Pump	Sale for Mixed Use Development	254
East Helena Public Schools	Sale for East Helena High School	35
Oakland/Highland Meadows	Sale for 320 Single Family Home Residential Subdivision	100
Prickly Pear Land Trust	Donation for Greenway Trail and Conservation Land	322
Montana Propane	Sale for Intermodal Distribution Center	3
	Total METG Land Sales or Transfers To Date:	782
	Remaining Land Holdings	1,279

Sale Status for Property South of Highway 12



East Helena Planned/Potential Land Sales

Purchaser or Grantee	Land Use	Acres
American Chemet	Office Building and Warehouse Space	7
Power Townsend	Light Manufacturing and Distribution Center	25
Habitat for Humanity	Single and Multi-Family Residential and Commercial Uses	83
Oakland	Residential, Commercial and Recreational Uses	742
City of East Helena	Rodeo Arena, School District Facilities and COEH Services	40
	Total METG Property Under Agreement	897
Developer	Discussions underway for mixed use development	20
Remaining Developable Land	Expect to begin active marketing/sale in 2023	114
	Total METG Remaining Property Available for Redevelopment	134
	Remaining Unsalable Land	248
	Total METG Property South of Highway 12	1,279

✓ Working with City and purchasers on water and sewer access

✓ Working with City and Rodeo Association to finalize 40-acre land donation

Potential Growth in East Helena

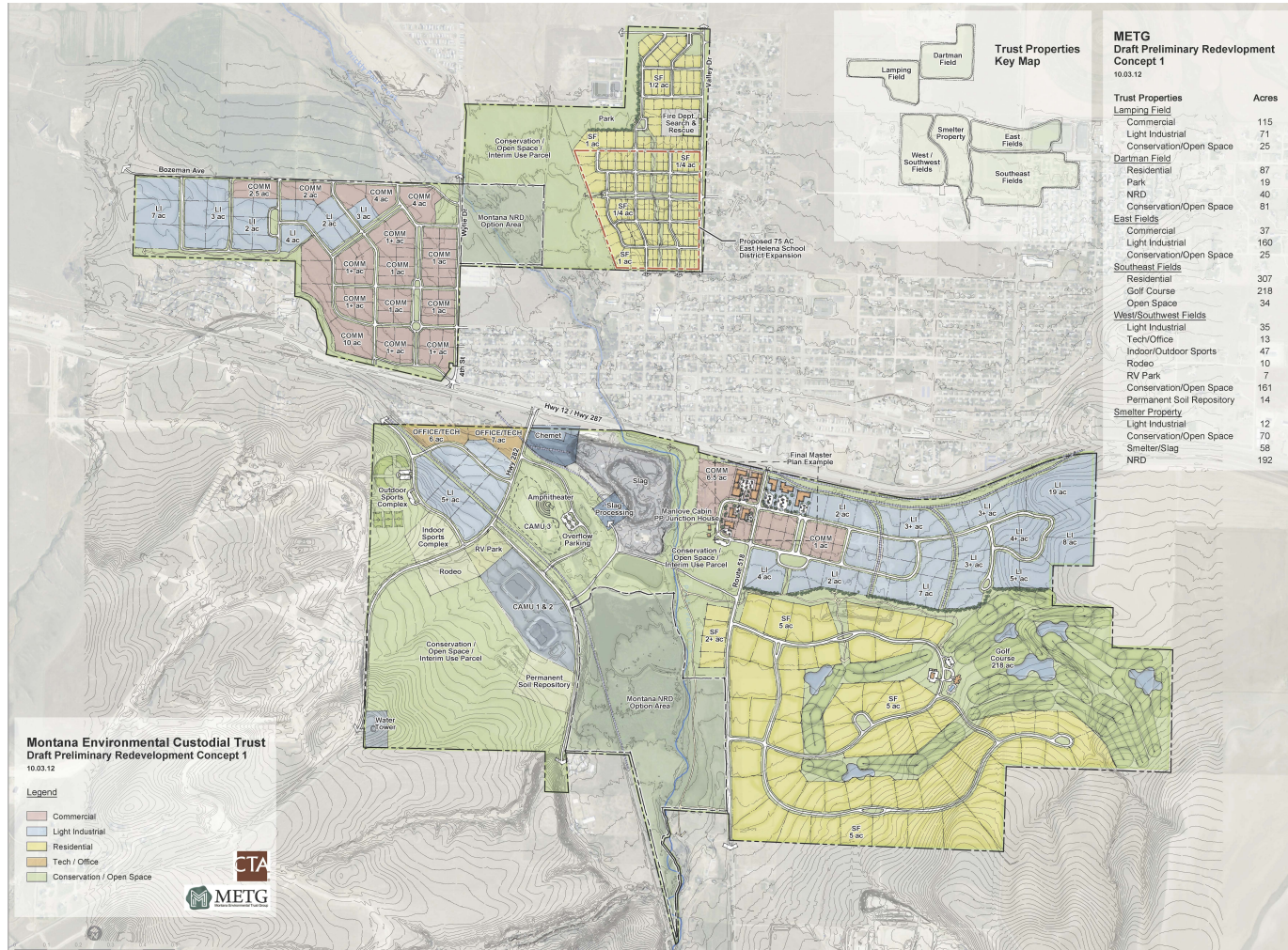
- ✓ In next 5 years, development could potentially add
 - 200 to 350 new (diverse) residential units
 - 5 or more new commercial/light industrial businesses
 - Additional parks and open space

- ✓ In next 5 to 20 years, development could potentially add
 - 500+ new residential units
 - 100,000 square feet of new commercial development
 - Additional parks and open space

- ✓ Key factors that will influence scope and timing
 - Market conditions
 - Cost and timing to provide water and sewer service
 - Rezoning and permitting process
 - Expansion of City services



Redevelopment Plans Align With Actual and Proposed Uses



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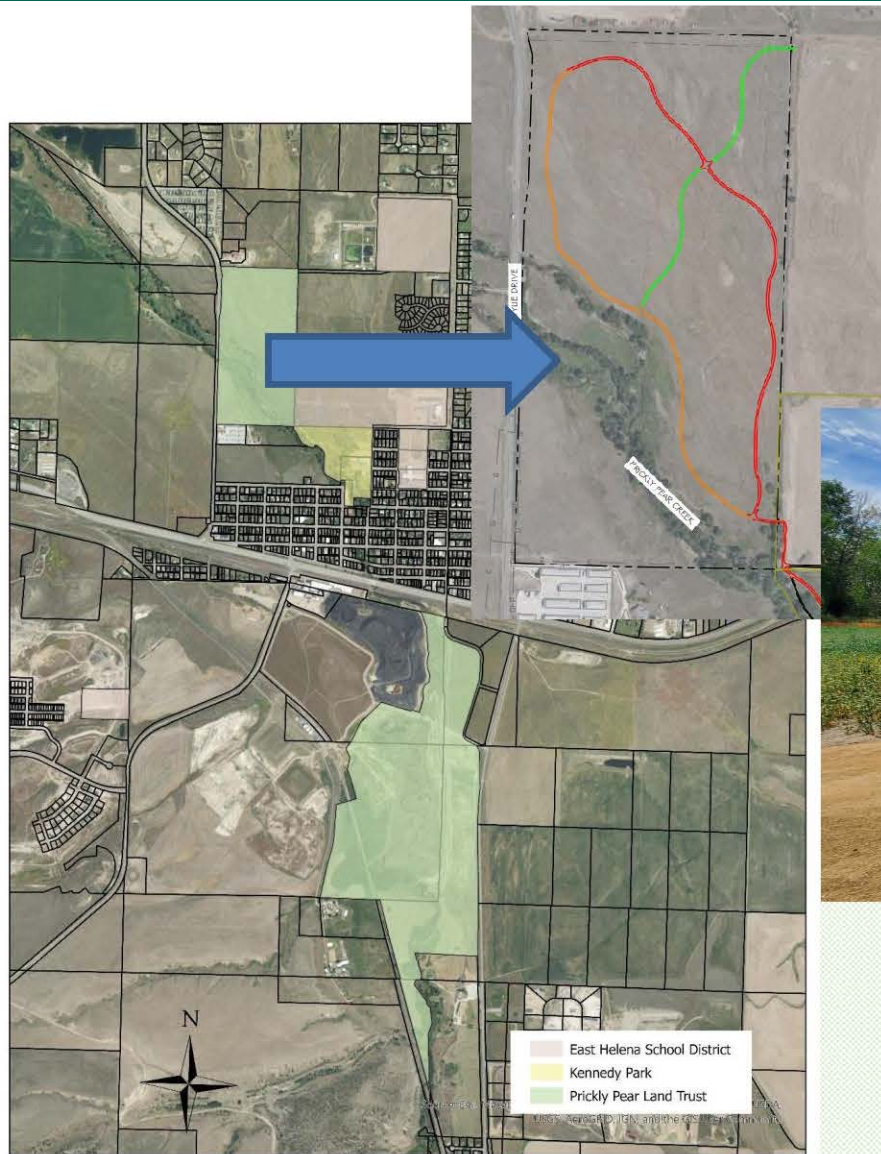
Greenway Project Update

Mary Hollow
Prickly Pear Land Trust (PPLT)



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Greenway Project – Prickly Pear Land Trust



Prickly Pear Land Trust Greenway Project



Greenway Project – Prickly Pear Land Trust

Timeline

- Summer 2022 – trails constructed at Wylie Drive property, park design ongoing on southern parcel
- Fall/Winter 2022 – Wylie Drive property reseeded and bypass channel removed at southern parcel
- East Helena Christmas Stroll trail name voting
- Spring 2023 – grand opening of Wylie Drive Park (park, trail names and signs to be revealed soon!)
- 2023 – southern parcel design completed and construction begins
- 2023-2024 – park and trail developments on southern parcel, open to the public
- 2024 and beyond – work continues on Greenway project connecting by trail Montana City, East Helena and Helena



Nate Kopp – Program
and Trails Director
nate@pricklypearlt.org
(406)475-5083

Mary Hollow –
Executive Director



East Helena Christmas Stroll

East Helena Institutional Controls

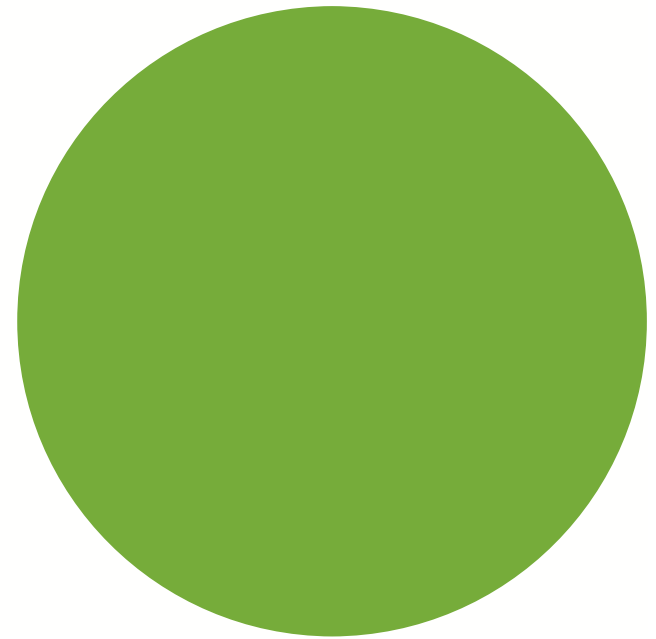
Kathy Moore (Lewis and Clark County)



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EAST HELENA LEAD EDUCATION & ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

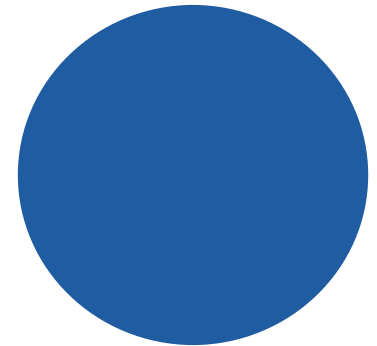
Environmental Services Division
Kathy Moore & Franchesca Talbot



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History

Public Health Actions Timeline



**MDHES & EPA
investigate
environmental
contamination**

**MDHES
establishes lead
SIP requirements
for Asarco facility**

**Asarco begins
soil removal
action**

**Asarco closes
smelter**

**Bankruptcy
Settlement**

1969

1972

1983

1984

1991

1995

2001

2009

2009

2012

**MDHES and
CDC conduct
first blood lead
sampling
event**

**Smelter site
listed on NPL**

**Lead Education
& Abatement
Program begins**

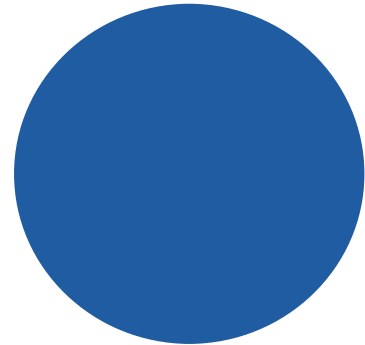
**Record of
Decision for
soils**

**Institutional
Controls
established**

Institutional Controls

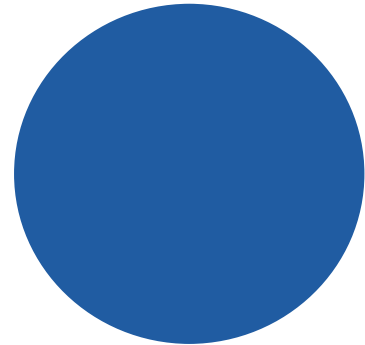
- are defined as administrative and/or legal controls that help minimize the potential for human exposure to contamination and/or protect the integrity of a remedy by limiting land or resource use.

- Lead health risk prevention and education
 - Residential environmental assessments
 - Blood lead screening for all area residents
- Soils regulation
- 8-1-1 membership
- GIS data layer accessible to the public
- HEPA vacuum loan program for residents
- Outreach and education as needs



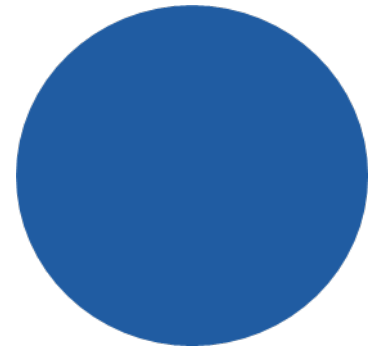
Recent Changes

- Reduction in staff from 2 full time people to 1 full time person
- New staff – long time staffer Jan Williams retired
- New activities to align with the redevelopment planned by METG
- And an introduction!



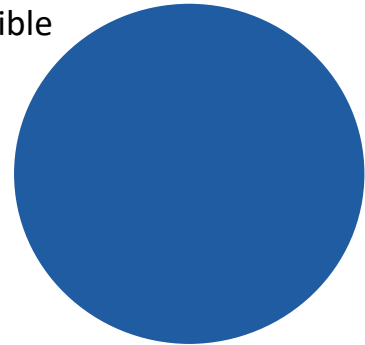
Current Activities & Updates

- New Staff
- Elevated blood lead investigations (2 in East Helena since July 1, 2022)
- Environmental Assessments
- Review of 811 locate tickets (669 since July 1, 2022)
- Soil displacement permits (14 since July 1, 2022)
- East Helena Lead Certification Program (16 certified since July 1, 2022)
- Outreach



Future

- METG Redevelopment plans
 - Working together with METG to ensure redevelopment is done in such a way that the community and residents are protected from lead exposure.
- May result in some changes to the regulations governing soil displacement and soil disposal in the East Helena Superfund area.
 - Changes will not result in any significant modifications to the current program.
 - All services will continue to be provided free of charge.
 - We are working to make all forms, training, and other requirements easily accessible to the public.
- We are still early in the process and will keep the public informed as we move forward.



THANK YOU



Lewis & Clark
**Public
Health**



Lead Education and Assistance Program
LEWIS AND CLARK PUBLIC HEALTH



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East Helena Smelter Public Meeting

Questions and Comments?



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East Helena Team Contact Information

- Bridget Williams
U.S. EPA Remedial Project Manager
williams.bridget@epa.gov
406-594-8792 (call or text)
<https://cumulis.epa.gov/supercpad/cursites/csitinfo.cfm?id=0800377>
- Cindy Brooks
METG (Custodial Trust) Managing Principal
cb@g-etg.com
617-448-9762
<https://www.mtenvironmentaltrust.org>

