



Brownfields 2025

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AUGUST 5-8, 2025 | CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

Rewriting the East Helena Story: The Revival of a Montana Company Town in the Age of “Yellowstone”

Max Greenblum – Senior Assistant Regional Counsel, U.S. EPA Region 8

Kelly Harris – Mayor, City of East Helena, Montana

Cindy Brooks – President, Greenfield Environmental Trust Group, Inc. (Montana Environmental Trust Group, LLC)

Mary Hollow – Executive Director, Prickly Pear Land Trust

Jacob Kuntz – Executive Director, Helena Area Habitat for Humanity

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Max Greenblum Senior Assistant Regional Counsel U.S. EPA Region 8

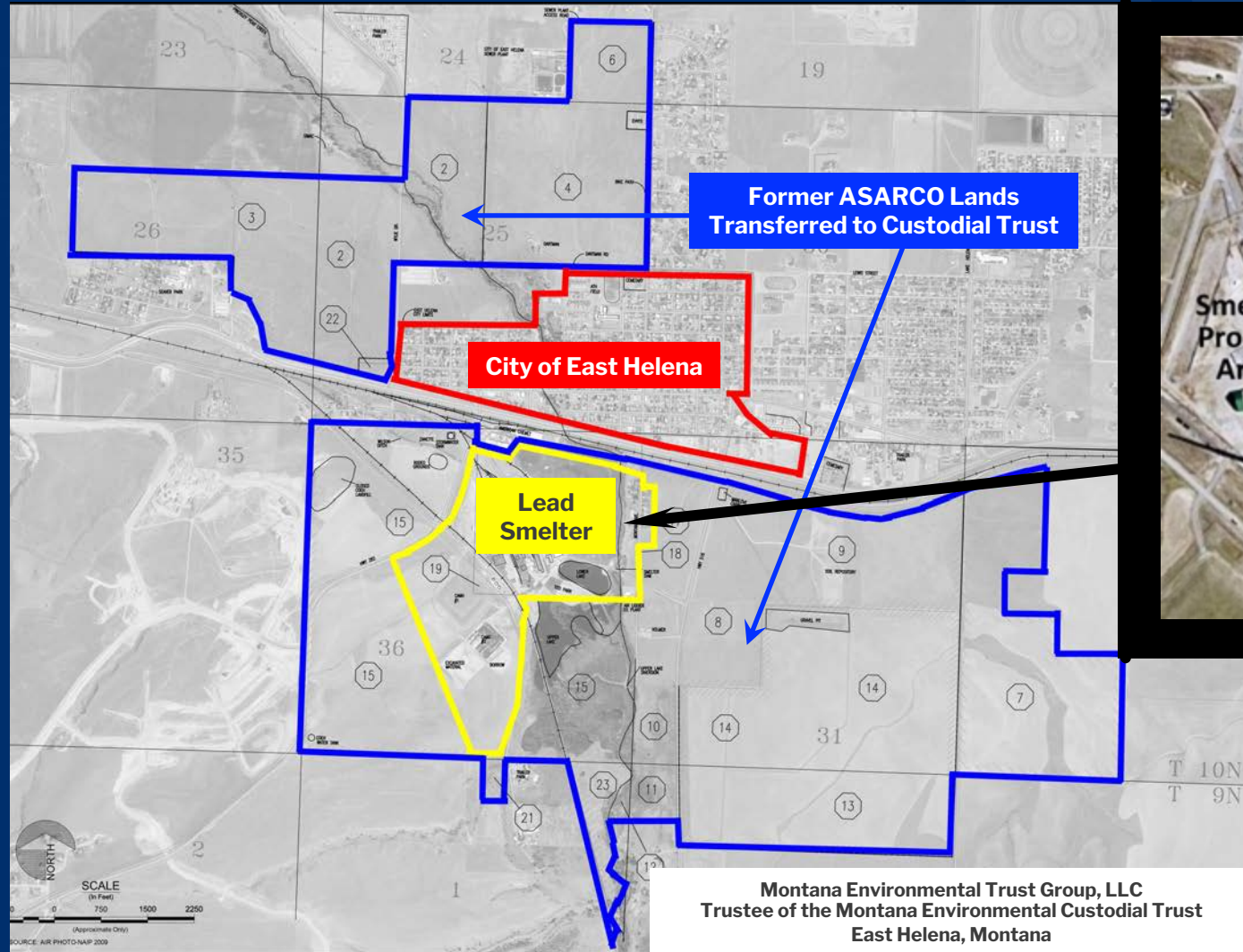
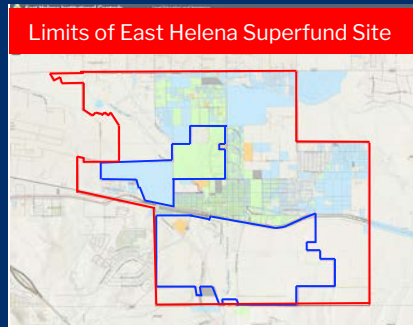
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Former ASARCO Smelter – East Helena, MT



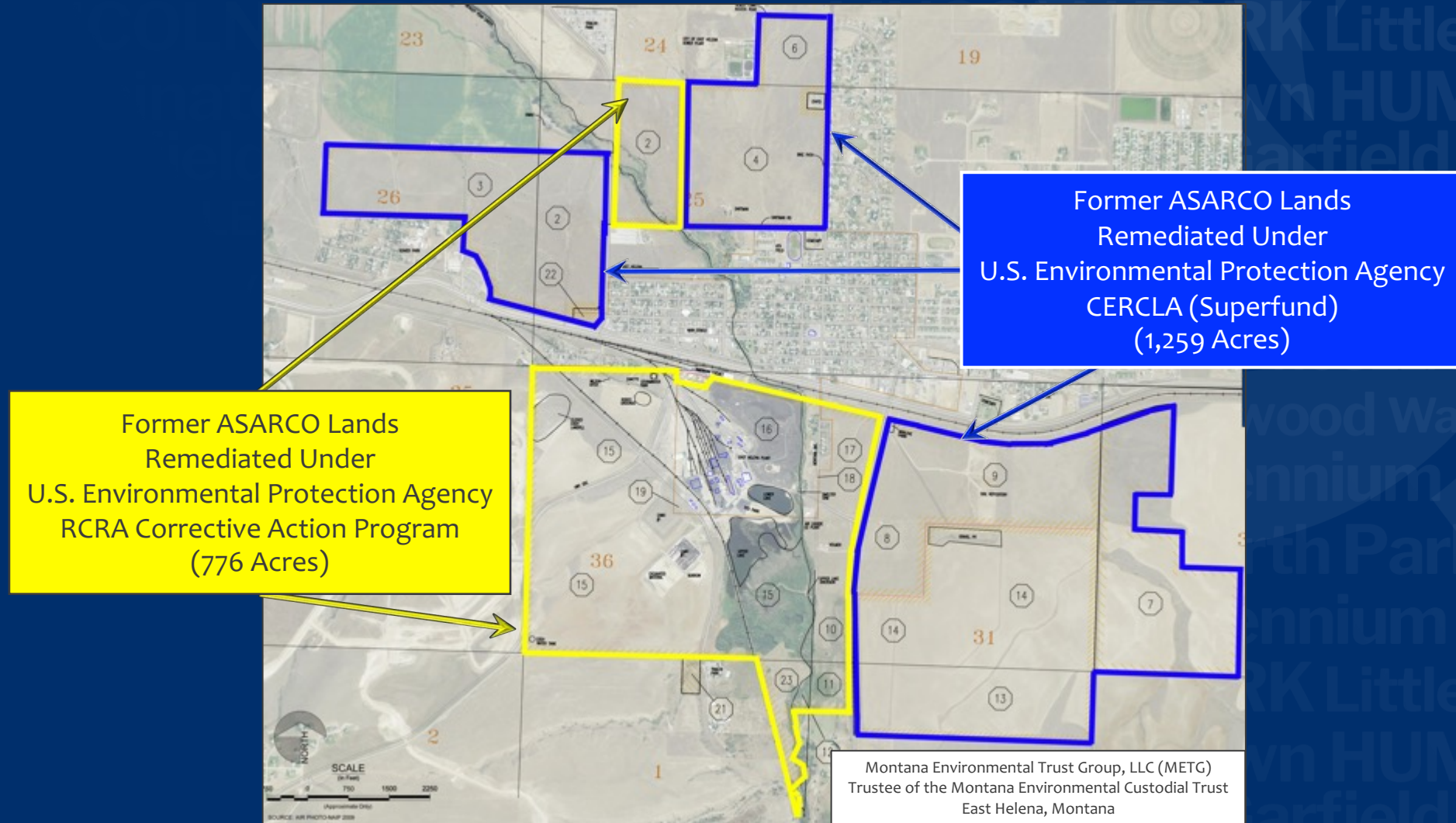
Former ASARCO Smelter – East Helena, MT



12/9/2009: ASARCO transferred title to 2,035 acres to Custodial Trust



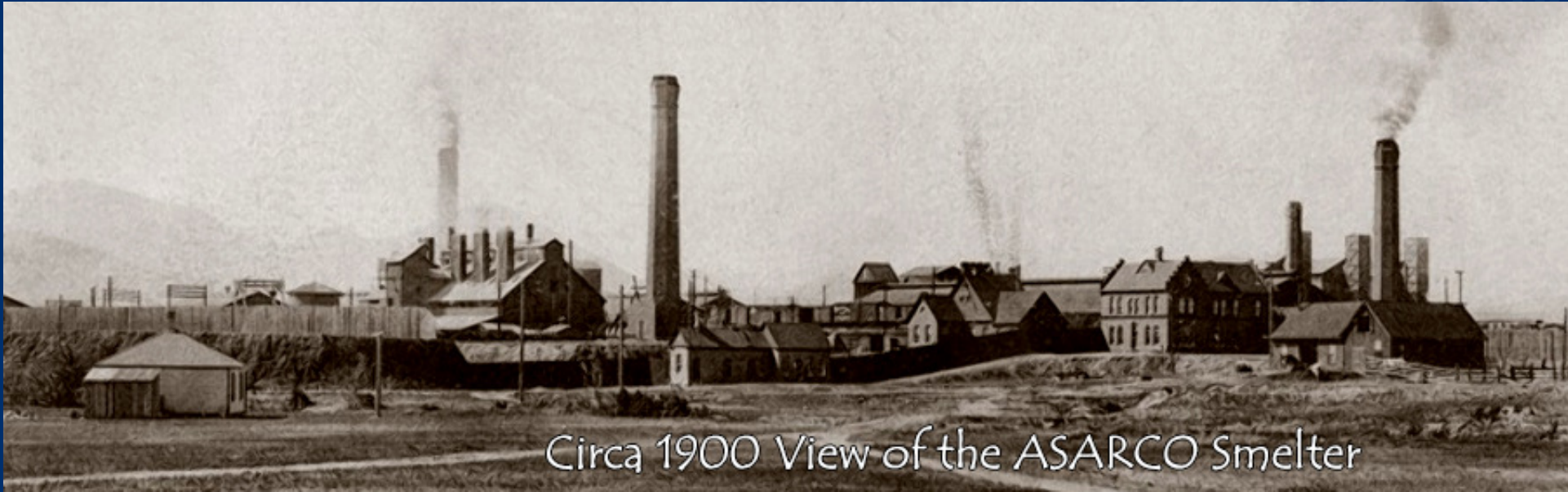
Former ASARCO Smelter Remediated under RCRA and CERCLA



Kelly Harris Mayor City of East Helena, Montana



ASARCO Operated Lead Smelter from 1889 to 2001



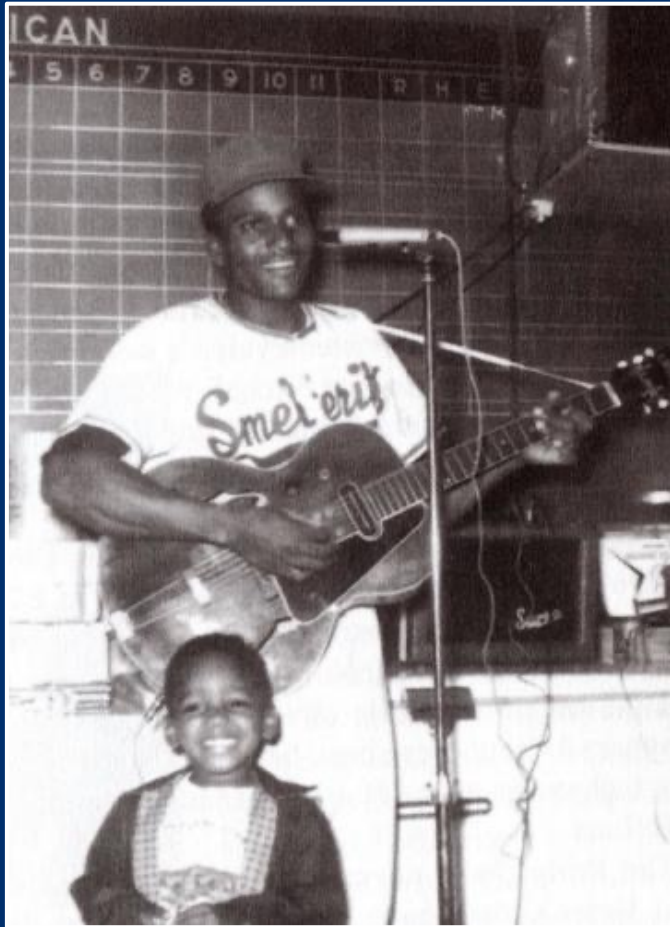
Circa 1900 View of the ASARCO Smelter



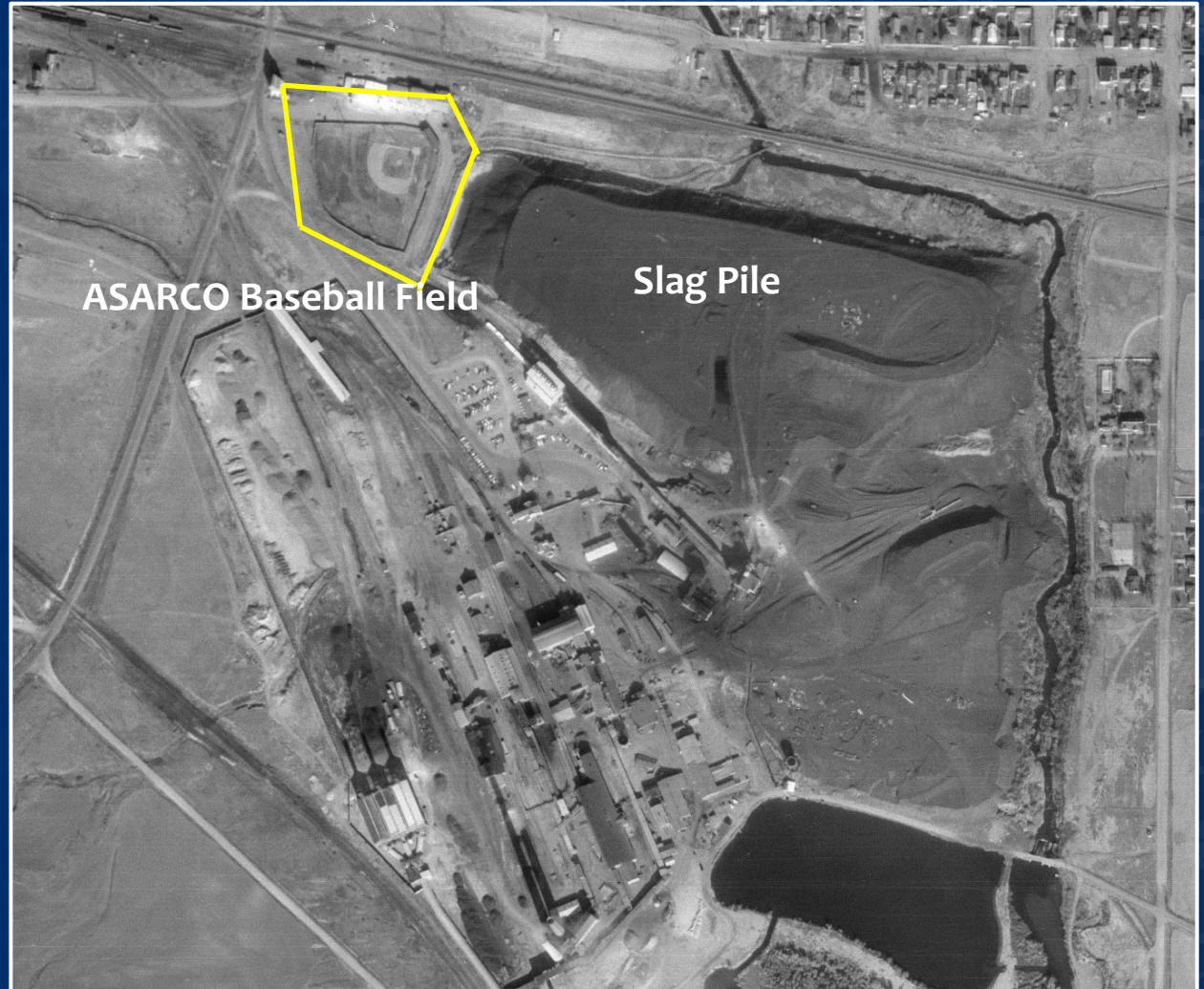
Main Street, East Helena, Montana



ASARCO Baseball Team: Smelterites



Charley Pride, country music superstar, was a “Smelterite” and worked at the Smelter (Circa 1963)



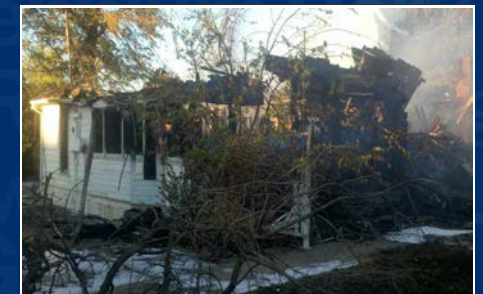
Former ASARCO Manager's House



Constructed in 1888, the ASARCO Manager's House was folk Victorian-style residence with Gothic Revival and Queen Ann influences



METG was working with the State Office of Historic Preservation and National Park Service to list the house on the National Register of Historic Places. On August 24, 2012, the building was totally lost to a grass fire sparked by a downed power line.



East Helena Valley Rodeo Association

61st Annual East Helena Rodeo
July 2024



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East Helena Valley Rodeo Association



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East Helena Annual Fourth of July Fireworks Launched from ASARCO Smelter Slag Pile



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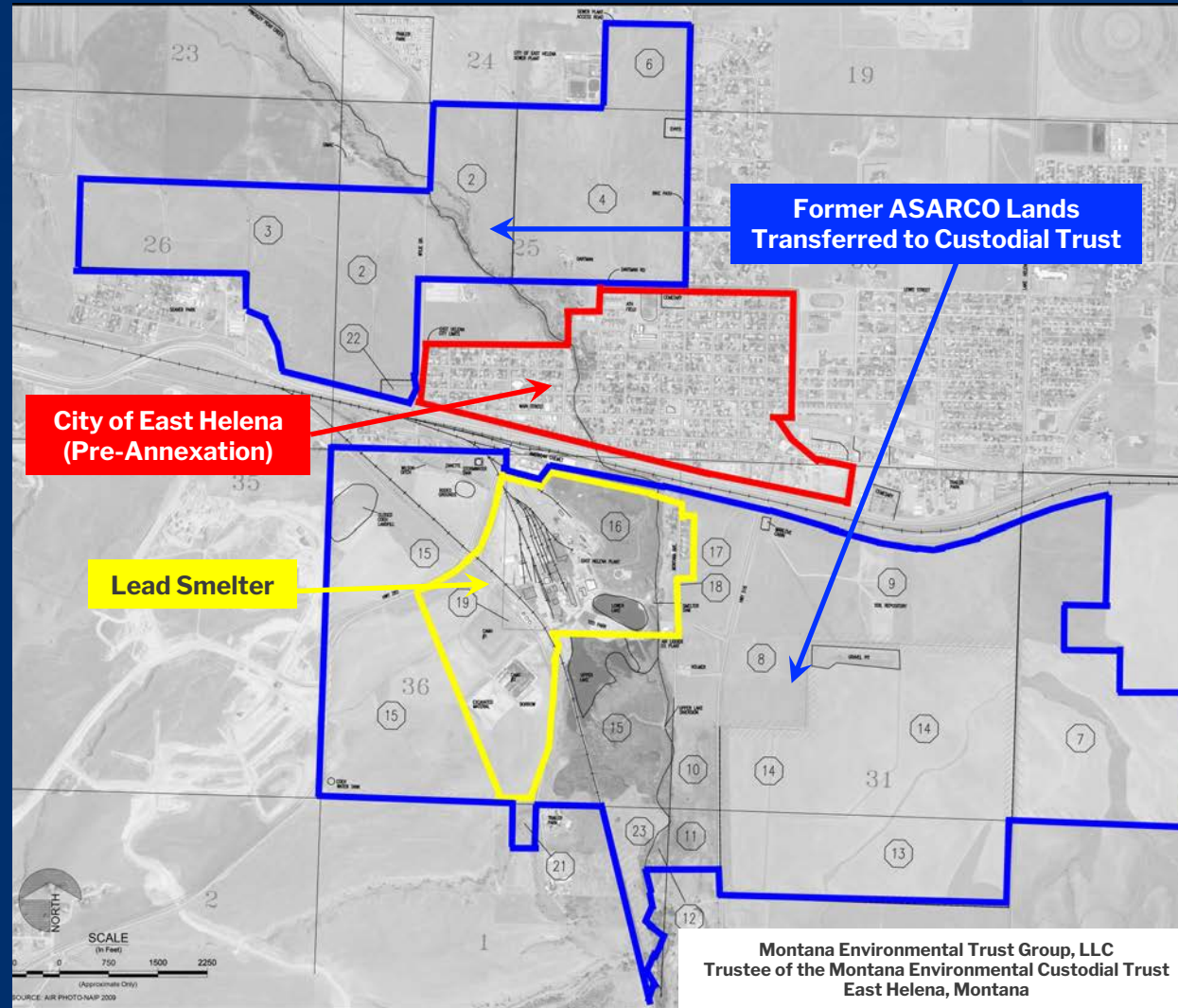
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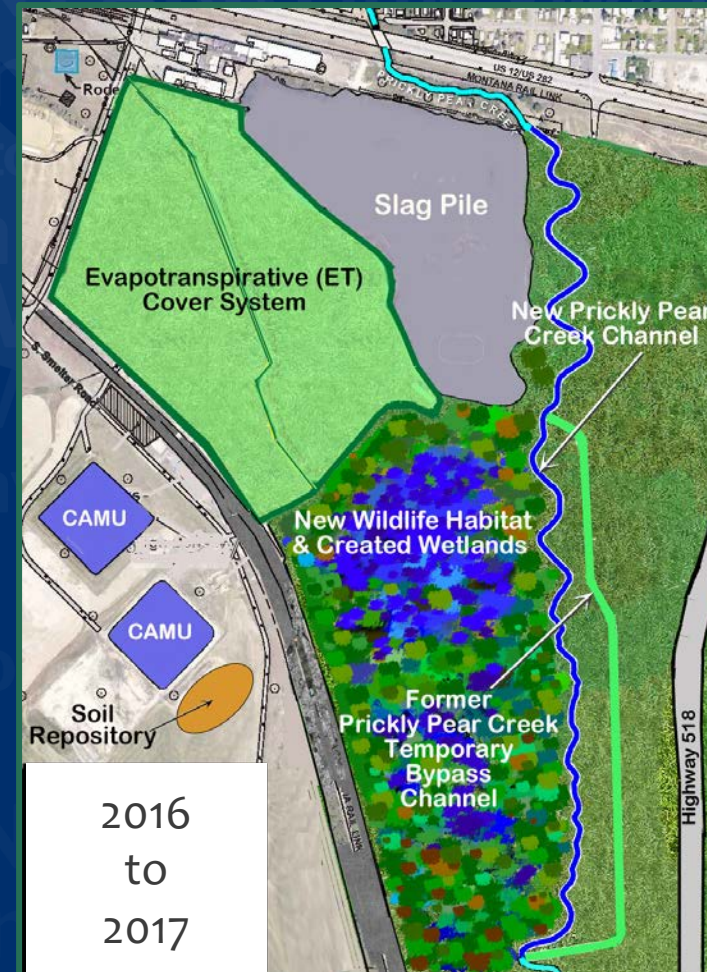
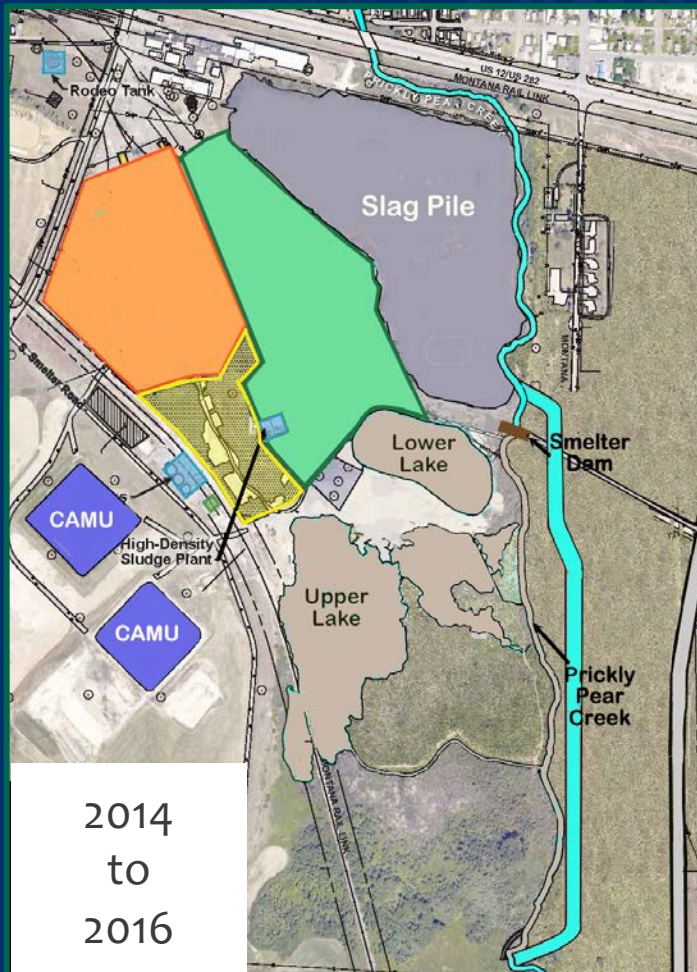
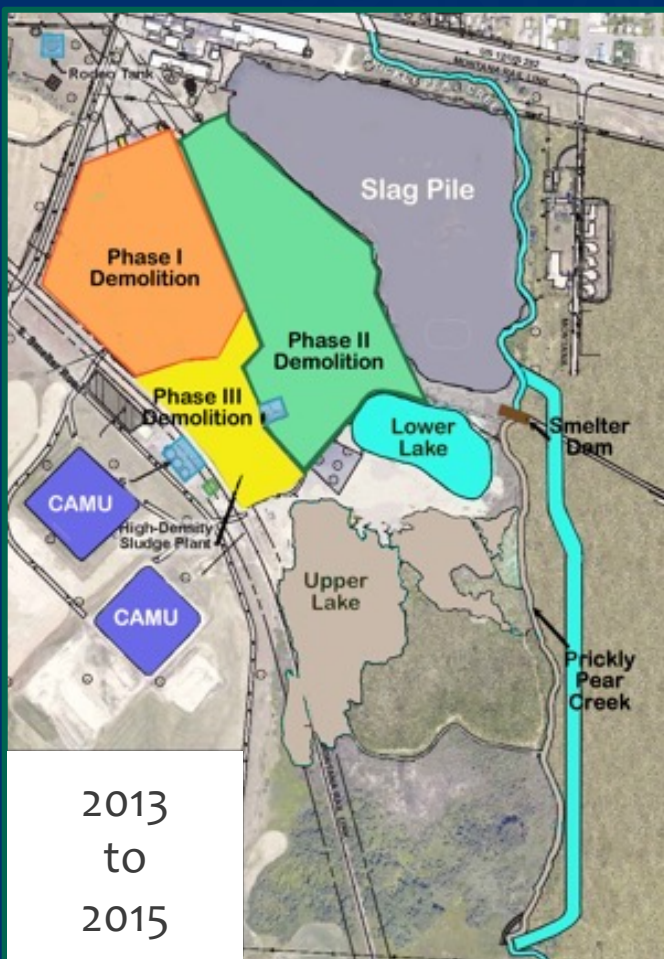
Cindy Brooks
President, Greenfield Environmental Trust Group
Managing Principal, Montana Environmental Trust Group
(METG)



Former ASARCO Lands: East Helena, MT



Corrective Measures Implemented at Former ASARCO Smelter

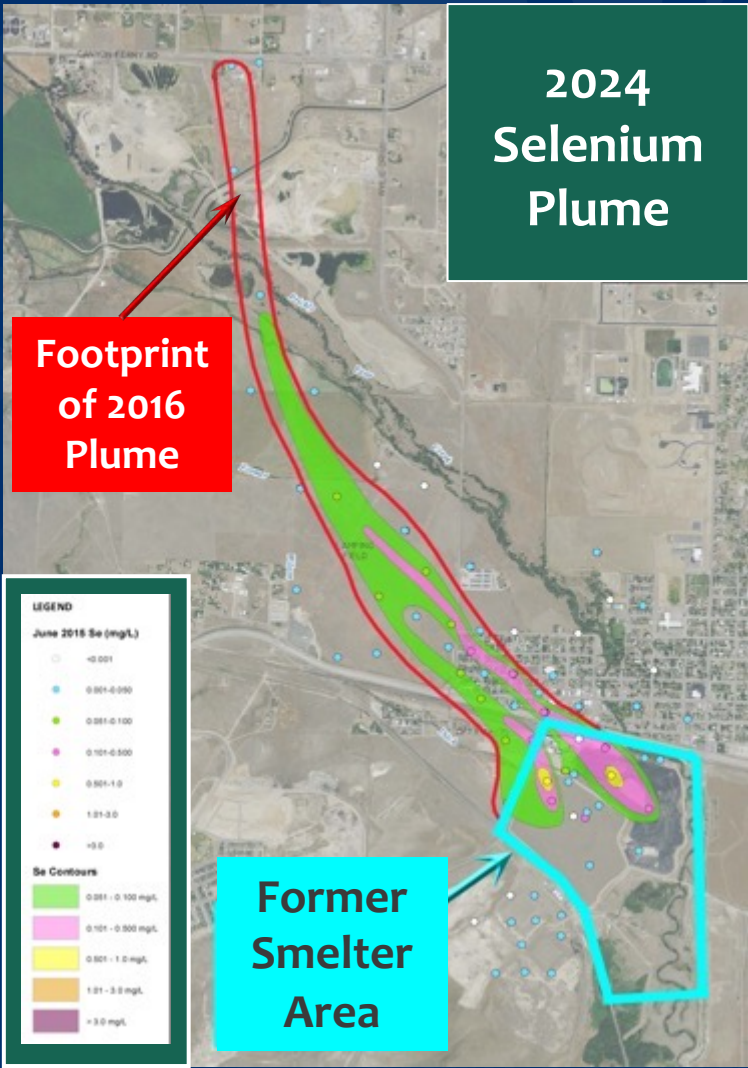
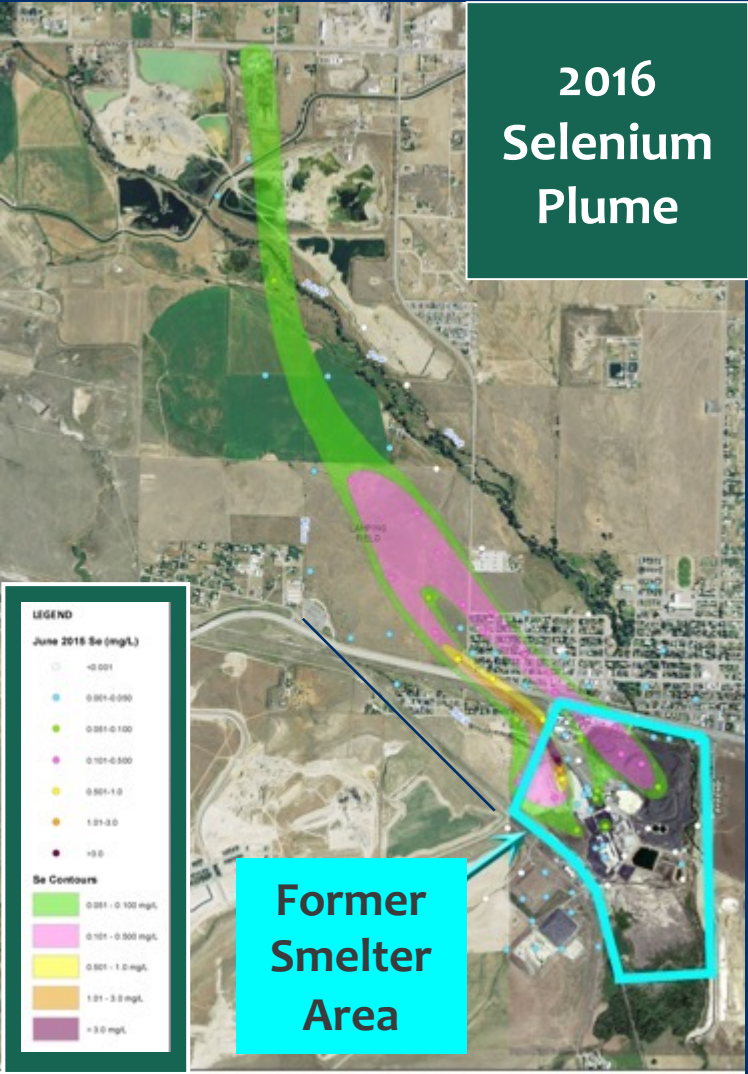


Corrective Measures Implemented at Former ASARCO Smelter



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Former ASARCO Smelter Groundwater Quality Improvements: Selenium Plume

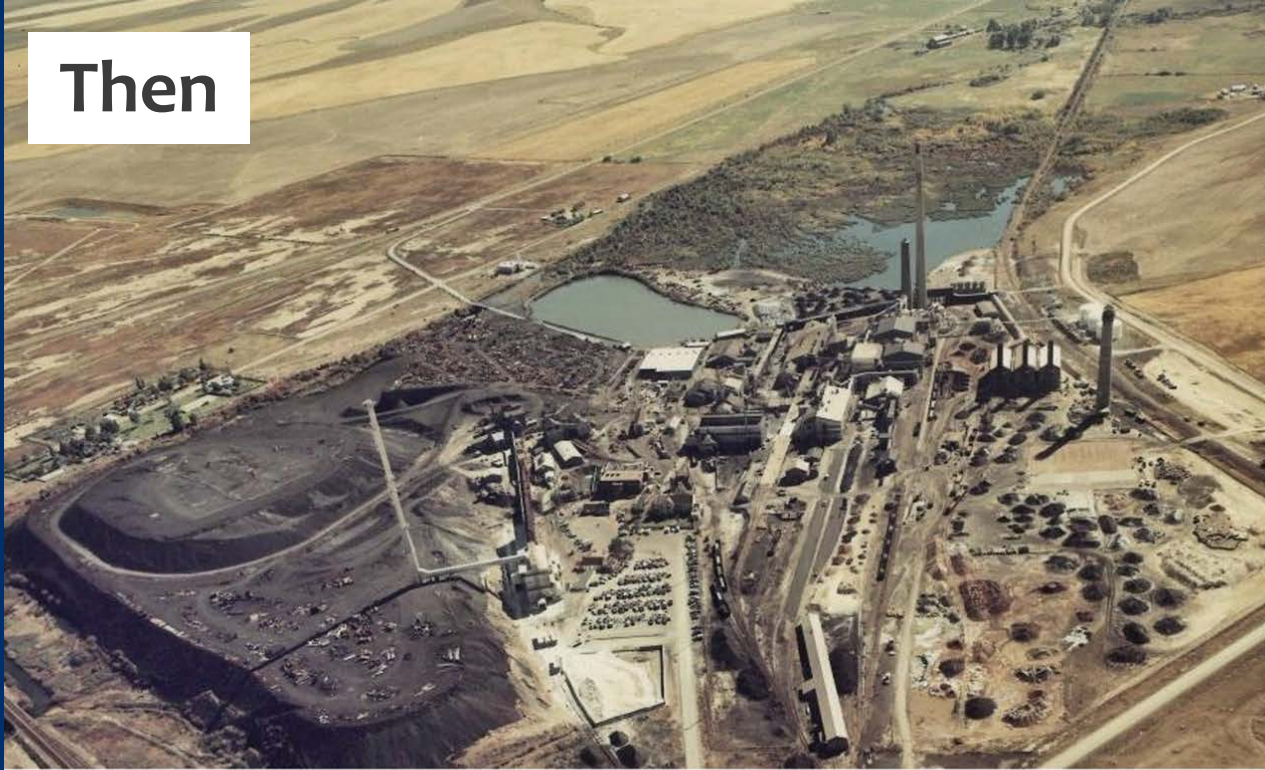


✓ Plume receded 4,000 ft

✓ Contaminant concentrations reduced 50% to 70%

The Former ASARCO Smelter in East Helena, Montana

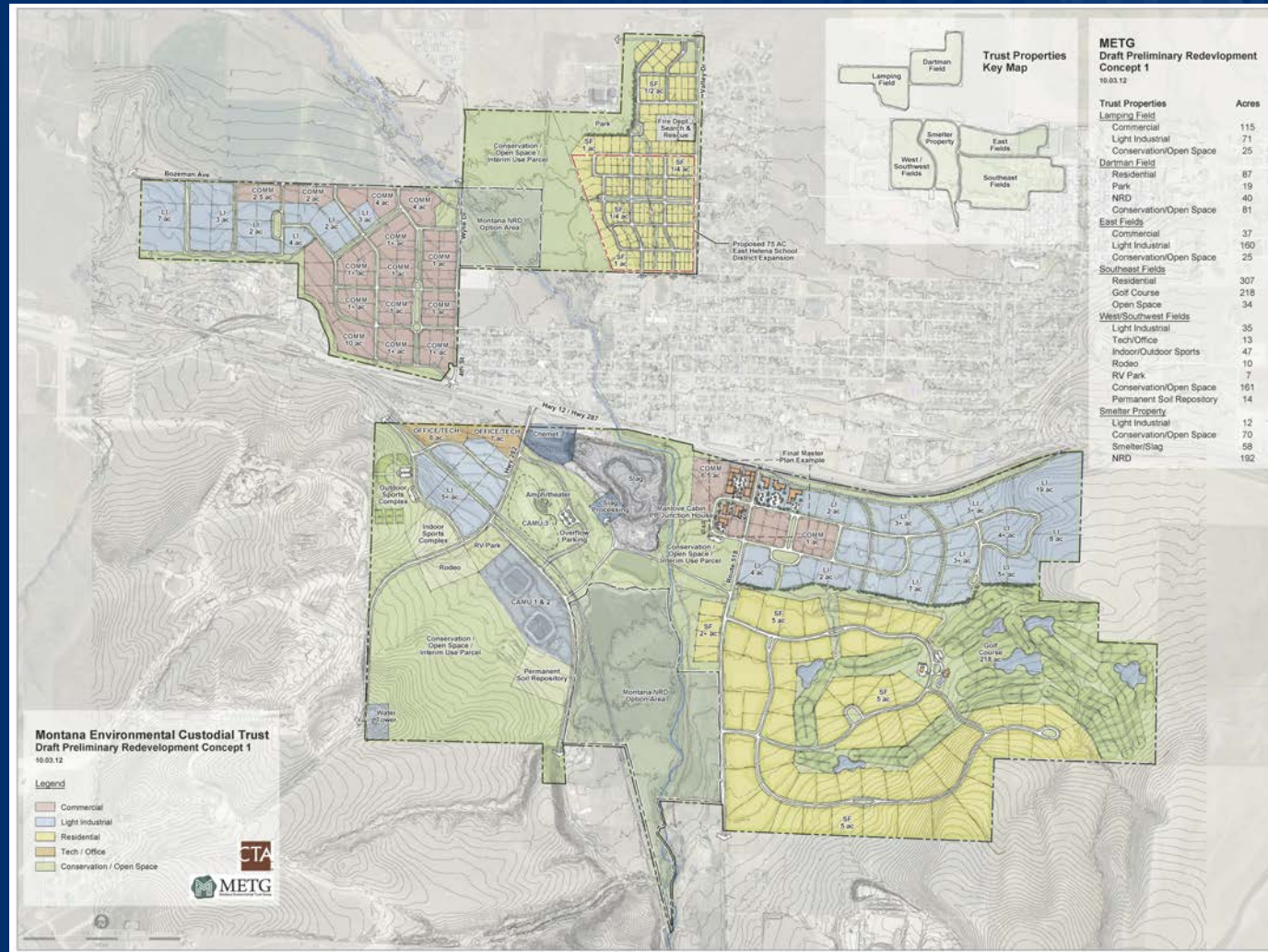
Then



Now



Former ASARCO Lands East Helena Community-Driven Redevelopment Vision





Former ASARCO Lands

East Helena Public Schools: Prickly Pear Elementary School



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- ✓ **Property remediated under CERCLA**
- ✓ **50,000-square-foot building**
- ✓ **Opened to 270 students in 2018**



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Former ASARCO Lands Town Pump Commercial Center



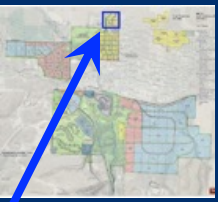
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- ✓ Property remediated under CERCLA
- ✓ 26,000-square-foot grocery/convenience store
- ✓ Opened in 2023



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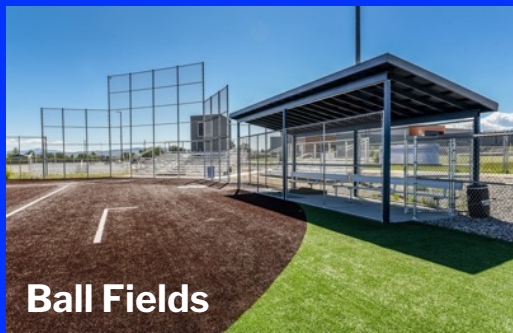
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Former ASARCO Lands East Helena Public Schools: New High School



New Football Stadium



Ball Fields

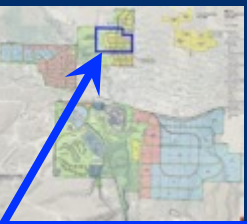


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- ✓ Property remediated under CERCLA
- ✓ 79,000-square-foot building and performing arts center
- ✓ Opened to 600 students in 2020



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Former ASARCO Lands Highland Meadows Residential Subdivision



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- ✓ Property remediated under CERCLA
- ✓ 319 New Single Family Residential Subdivision
- ✓ First families moved in 2021



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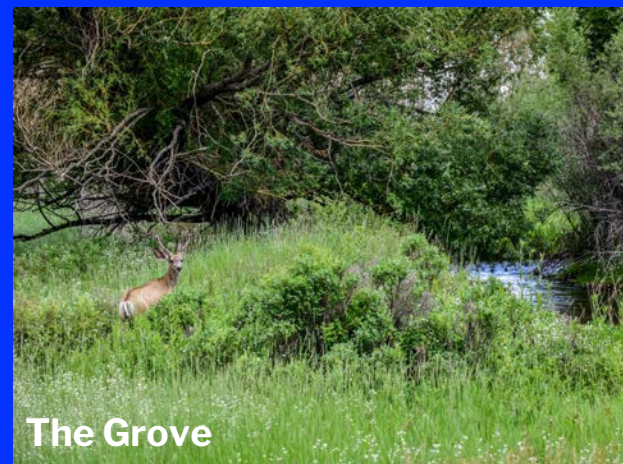
Former ASARCO Lands Prickly Pear Land Trust: Greenway Trail



Prickly Pear Park



The Grove



The Grove

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✓ **Property remediated and restored (migratory birds)**

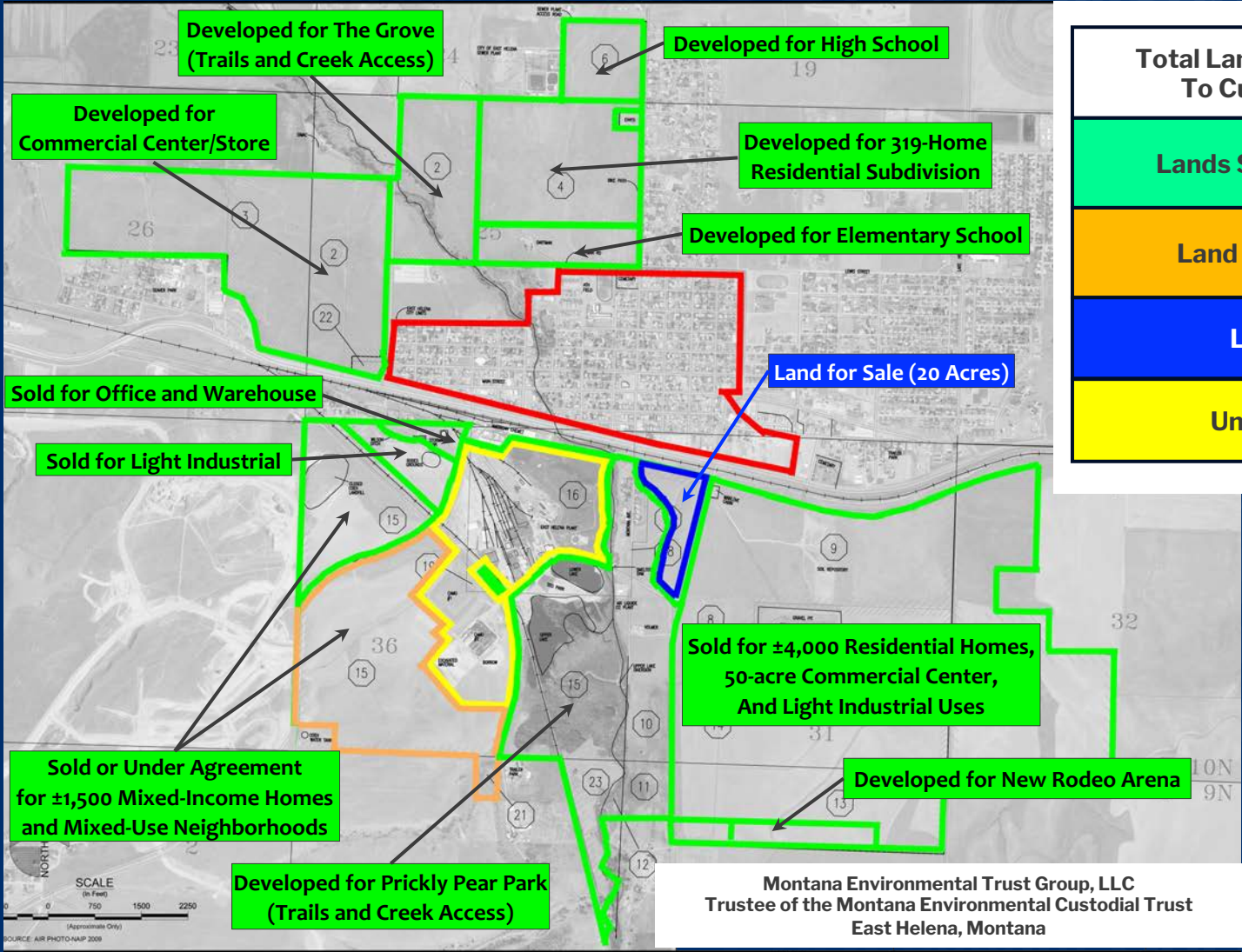
✓ **322 acres transferred to PPLT in 2020**



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Former ASARCO Lands – East Helena, Montana



Total Lands Transferred From ASARCO To Custodial Trust: 2,035 Acres
Lands Sold or Donated - 1,663 Acres
Land Under Contract – 172 Acres
Land for Sale – 20 Acres
Unsalable Land – 180 Acres

Mary Hollow Executive Director Prickly Pear Land Trust



Prickly Pear Land Trust – East Helena Greenway Project

DEFINING OUR FUTURE

East Helena Redevelopment Initiative
East Helena, Montana

FINAL
OCTOBER 2011



OVERVIEW

On May 24, 2011, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 8 hosted a community planning charrette and open house to develop a vision for future redevelopment in East Helena, Montana. The charrette, a day-long planning workshop, provided a venue for community representatives and other key stakeholders to develop a preliminary vision, goals and priorities that can help shape and coordinate remediation, local planning and development at the East Helena Superfund Site. This document summarizes the outcomes from the community planning charrette and includes site background, future land use concepts, specific revitalization priorities and strategies, and recommended action steps. The following vision represents ideas from East Helena, Lewis and Clark County, community leaders and other interests and can help shape cleanup and future redevelopment processes.

GOALS

During the charrette, participants divided into work groups to develop strategies for the following three focus areas:

- Land Use: Identify a vision for growth in East Helena that considers the undeveloped land annexed in 2009.
- Cultural Heritage: Develop a vision for the former Plant Manager's property that serves as a catalyst for celebrating East Helena's history and cultural heritage.
- Habitat and Recreation: Identify habitat restoration and recreational opportunities around the Prickly Pear Creek corridor that build upon existing parks, trails and creek corridors.

CHARRETTE OUTCOMES

The outcome of the charrette is summarized in this document. The document contains several sections:

- Site Background p. 2-3
- Future Land Use Concepts p. 4-5
- Land Use and Development p. 6-7
- Cultural Heritage p. 8-9
- Habitat and Recreation p. 10-11
- Implementation p. 12

Sponsored by EPA Region 8 and the EPA Superfund Redevelopment Initiative



Superfund Redevelopment Initiative

EPA's Superfund Redevelopment Initiative (SRI) and EPA Region 8 sponsored a reuse assessment and charrette process to develop a vision for future land use that can help shape cleanup and redevelopment efforts at the East Helena Site.

HABITAT & RECREATION

Opportunities & Principles

- Increase multi-purpose trails to connect communities.
- Connect schools to outdoor learning opportunities.
- Promote healthy lifestyles including walking and biking.
- Promote outdoor recreational tourism and retail.
- Increase fish passage and habitat.
- Increase nature trails and access to the creek.



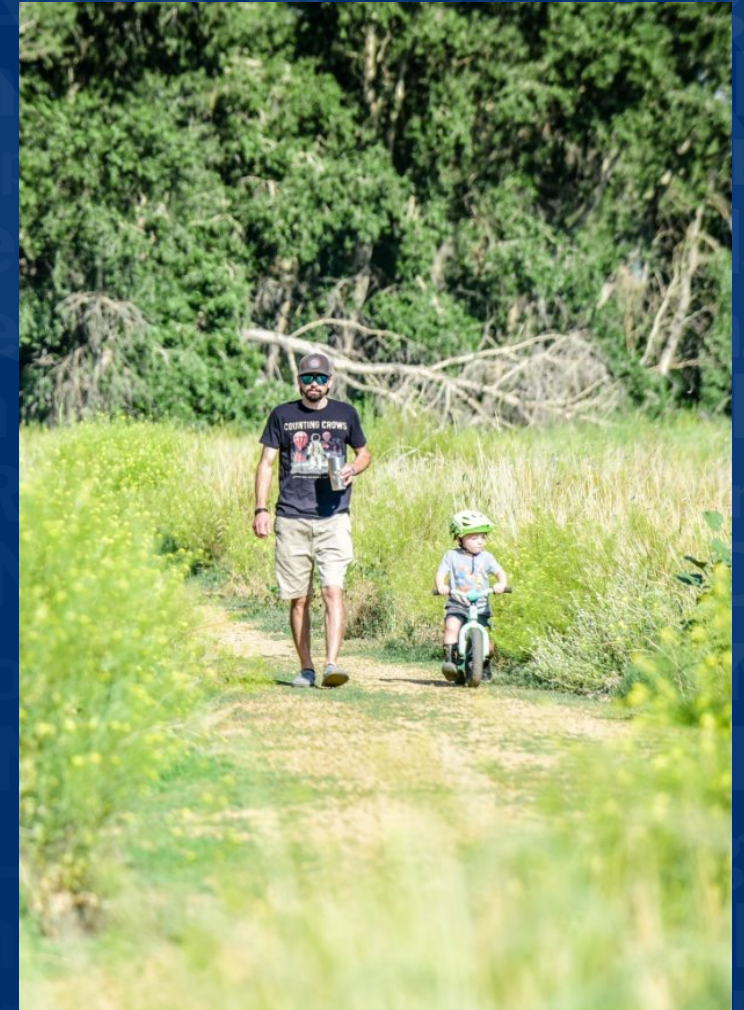
Prickly Pear Creek Corridor Restoration & Trails

Participants outlined the following strategies to enhance trails and habitat along Prickly Pear Creek.

- Ensure in-stream flows are secured to sustain fish populations.
- Consider options to restore trout fish passage upstream of the dam at the plant access road.
- Maintain and restore where possible current alluvium path.
- Consider removing dam to return constructed wetlands to former riparian channel habitat.
- Maintain stream elevations at Kleffner Ranch.
- Restore riparian corridor and add trail access along South Montana Avenue and through southern NRD property.
- Install trail head parking at the Plant Manager's property.
- Consider bike/pedestrian improvements for crossing US Highway 12.
- Restore riparian corridor and add trail access through northern NRD property.



Prickly Pear Land Trust – The Grove



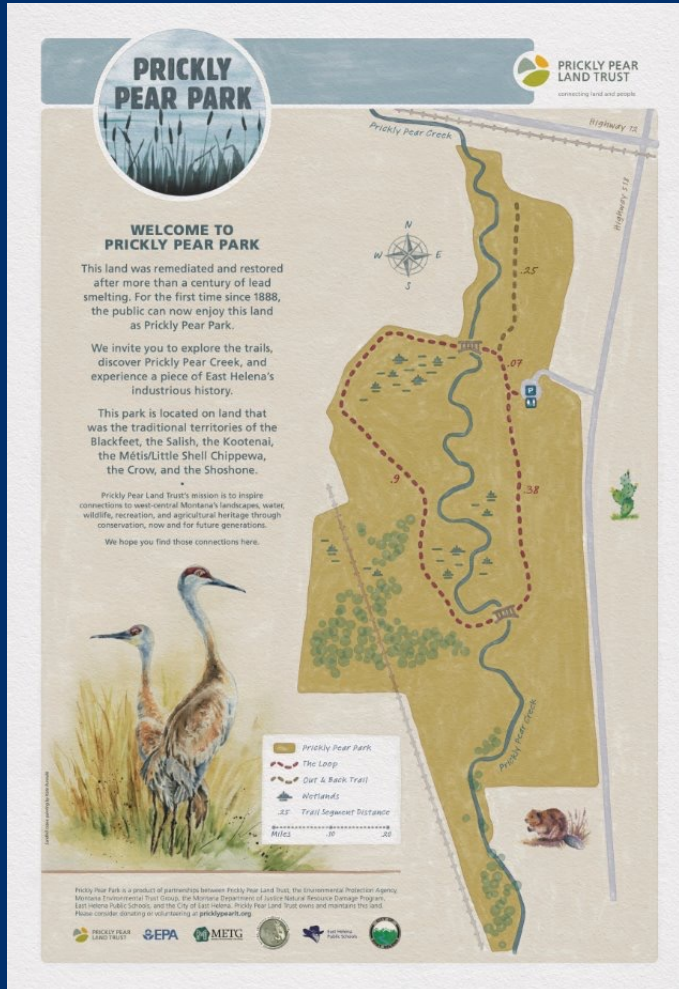
Prickly Pear Land Trust – Education Program



Prickly Pear Land Trust – Prickly Pear Park



Prickly Pear Land Trust – Prickly Pear Park



Prickly Pear Land Trust – Prickly Pear Park



Prickly Pear Land Trust – Prickly Pear Park



Prickly Pear Land Trust – Prickly Pear Park



Prickly Pear Land Trust – National Trails Day



Prickly Pear Land Trust – National Trails Day



Prickly Pear Land Trust – Community Conservation



HAPPY TRAILS!



PRICKLY PEAR
LAND TRUST



Jacob Kuntz Executive Director Helena Area Habitat for Humanity



Habitat for Humanity

Rose Hills will Redefine what a Montana Neighborhood can Be



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Habitat for Humanity Rose Hills



ROSE HILLS

Rose Hills is a thoughtfully designed neighborhood in East Helena. It will offer housing options and community spaces that foster connection and opportunity

Here, people will be able to rent their first apartment, buy their first home, grow a family, and downsize in retirement



Habitat for Humanity Rose Hills

Rose Hills is planned for 1500+ homes on over 200 acres in East Helena

This is more than a housing development. It will be a place where Montanans can thrive throughout their lives, and where residents can build their futures surrounded by Montana's stunning natural beauty.



A neighborhood for everyone.



Naming the Neighborhood

Honoring East Helena's Roots



The neighborhood is named after Al and Ann Rose, lifelong residents and pillars of East Helena.

Al served as the town's chief of police, and Ann was the first woman hired at the local smelter during WWII, working as a "Rosie the Riveter."

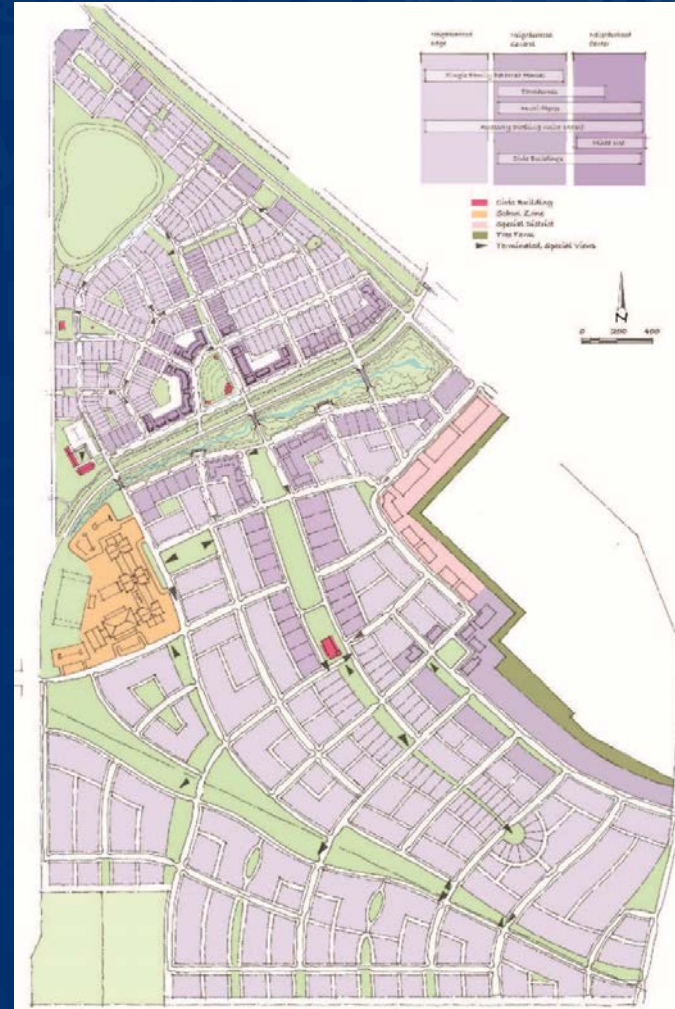
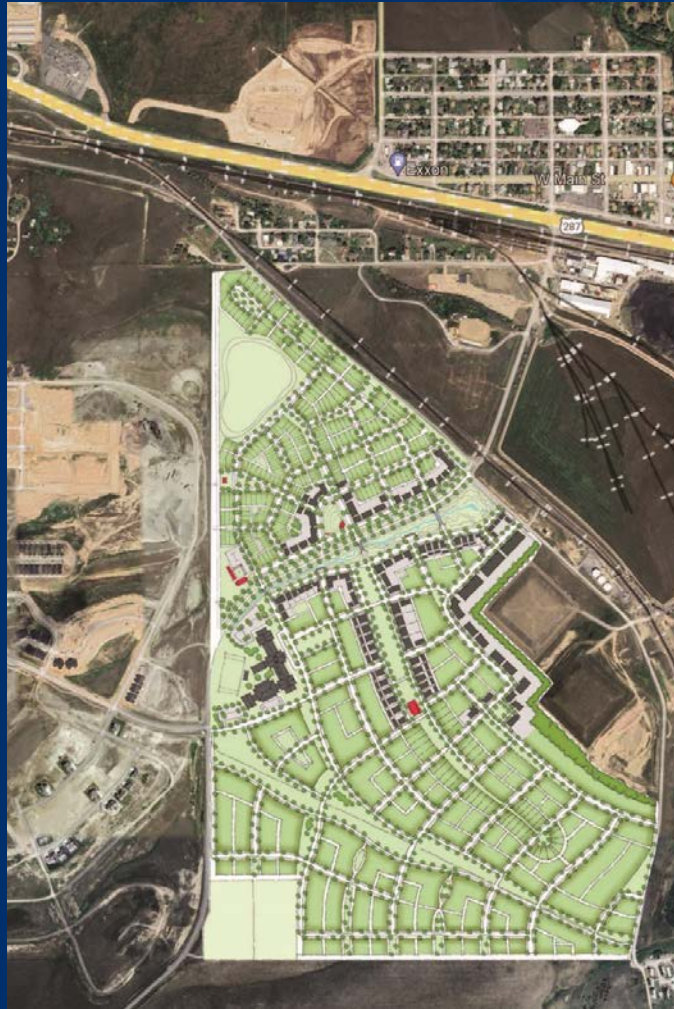
The Roses raised their children in the area, one of whom lives just a block from the family home.



Rose Hills - East Helena, Montana



Rose Hills - East Helena, Montana



Key Features of Rose Hills



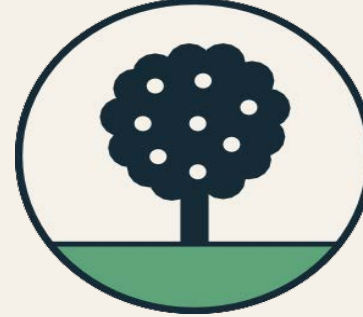
Town Center

A town center will feature small businesses, services, and community spaces. Design plans have incorporated the ability to support a local elementary school as families move into the area.



All Ages and Incomes

Rose Hills will appeal to families, young professionals, retirees, and first-time home buyers with housing options for every stage of life. Habitat for Humanity will ensure some homes remain permanently affordable.



Sustainability

The development will prioritize sustainable building practices and energy efficiency, with homes designed for durability, water conservation, and long-term value.



Rose Hills Parks, Trails, and Recreation



The neighborhood will have over 46 acres of green space, providing abundant outdoor recreation opportunities.



Every home will be within two blocks of open space, trails, or parks.



Rose Hills Housing Types



Townhomes

- 1,000-1,400 sq. ft.
- 2,3,4 bedroom
- Prices start in the low \$200,000s



Medium to Large Family Homes

- Over 1,500 sq. ft.
- 2,3,4 bedroom
- Prices start in the \$400,000s



Apartment Homes

- 150-250 apartment homes



Rose Hills Cottages



Rose Hills Townhomes and Duplexes



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What is Habitat's Role in Rose Hills?



Founded by
Helena Area
Habitat for
Humanity



350-450
Permanently
Affordable
Homes



Partnering with
Developers to
Expand Housing
Access



Housing Trust
Model



Helena Area
Habitat
for Humanity®



Questions?

- ✓ To learn more about Rose Hill and get involved, visit rosehillsmontana.com and follow us on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and BlueSky @[rosehillsmontana](https://www.instagram.com/rosehillsmontana).
- ✓ If you want to partner on a project, are a developer, or are interested in investing or donating to this visionary effort, contact Jacob Kuntz at jacob@rosehillsmontana.com.



Together, we can build a vibrant neighborhood in East Helena where people of all ages, incomes, and backgrounds can thrive.



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