

2024 Project Update

ANACONDA SMELTER SUPERFUND SITE

EPA Region 8, Montana Office

March 2024

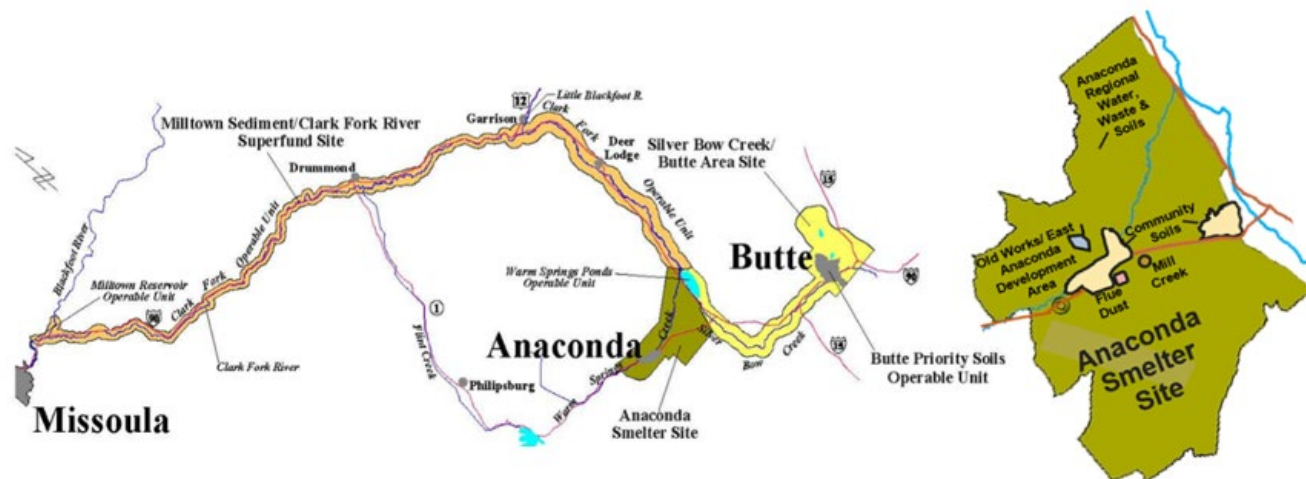
The Anaconda Smelter Complex was a key component of Montana's mining and smelting history for almost a century (see box at right). It became a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Superfund site in 1983 based on the impacts from almost a century of mining. The site is now in the remedial action (cleanup) phase; and, after decades of hard work, the goal to complete construction for all approved work plans is in site.

EPA, the Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), and the Atlantic Richfield Company made significant progress, and this fact sheet provides a summary of work completed in 2023 in the various operable units (OUs) and remedial design units (RDUs). Information regarding work planned for 2024, redevelopment, and community outreach is also included in this fact sheet. For more information, please visit EPA's [website](#) or contact one of the people listed on the last page.



Site History

- One of three Superfund sites in the Clark Fork drainage.
- Over 200 square miles of land impacted by smelter emissions and ore-processing wastes.
- Includes Anaconda and Opportunity.
- Copper concentrating and smelting began in 1884.
- Purchased by Atlantic Richfield in 1977. Operations ended in 1980.
- Major features remaining are the 585-foot tall brick smelter stack and the slag pile.
- Human-health and ecological risks from arsenic- and metal-laden wastes.
- Over 260 million cubic yards of mill tailings, furnace slag, and flue dust spread over 20,000 acres of soils.
- Large portions of local aquifers were polluted.
- Added to EPA's National Priorities List in 1983.
- The potentially responsible party, Atlantic Richfield, has been actively involved in completed investigations and ongoing cleanup work.
- EPA is the lead agency and Montana DEQ is the support agency.
- Divided into smaller and more manageable operable units, subareas, and remedial design units to make cleanup and long-term management more efficient.



The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's mission is to protect human health and the environment.

Anaconda Regional Water, Waste and Soils Operable Unit (OU4)

This OU addresses all remaining contamination and impacts to surface and groundwater, waste source areas, and non-residential soils not cleaned up under work in other Ous. The 200+ square miles of land with elevated arsenic and metals in the OU have been divided into 15 RDUs for cleanup.

Progress in 2023

Work done by Atlantic Richfield under EPA oversight included:

- **RDU 2 Lost Creek Uplands and RDU 3 Smelter Hill Uplands.** Continued steep slope reclamation and in-place soil treatment. Roughly 360 acres were finished in RDU 2 and 570 acres in RDU 3.
- **RDU 1 Stucky Ridge Uplands and RDU 9 Fluvial Tailings.** Completed cleanup work for these RDUs (57 acres in RDU 1 and 12 acres in RDU 9).
- **RDU 12 Slag.** Roughly 600,000 cubic yards of slag on the north face of the Main Granulated Slag Pile was graded and a 30-acre temporary soil cover was installed in 2022. Repairs to the soil cover and seeding took place in 2023.
- **RDU 6 South Opportunity Uplands, RDU 9 Fluvial Tailings RDU 10 Warm Springs Creek, West Galen Expansion Area, and Sitewide Stormwater Engineering Controls.** Completed maintenance work.

In addition, Natural Resource Damage Program work in the RDU 1 state section and RDU 15 Mt. Haggan Uplands was determined to have been completed as performance standards were met.

Next Steps—2024 and Beyond

- Complete cleanup in RDUs 2 and 3.
- Construct remaining sediment retention ponds in RDUs 1 and 2.



Photos of cleanup work on slag and slopes and of engineering controls (stormwater runoff controls).

Remedial Design Unit (yet to complete)	Acres		
	Total	Done	% Complete
1. Stucky Ridge Uplands	3,868	3,957	102
2. Lost Creek Uplands	1,468	1,109	76
3. Smelter Hill Uplands	3,354	2,945	88
6. S. Opportunity Uplands	1,250	1,250	100
9. Silver Bow Creek Fluvial Tailings	5,015	4,969	99
12. Slag	197	30	15
15. Mt Haggan Uplands	6,367	6,367	100
Total	21,519	20,627	96%

The excavated or treated soil from OU4 could fill a line of 10-yard dump trucks stretching from Anaconda to Washington, DC and back.



Community Soils Operable Unit (OU16)

Community Resources

Community Protective Measures Program (CPMP)

CPMP provides:

- Home inspections and information packets
- Renovation kits and loans of high-efficiency vacuums
- Clean soils for vegetable gardens and play areas

Blood Lead Testing

Free blood lead testing is available at the Community Hospital of Anaconda.

Attic Dust Sampling

Attic dust sampling is available at no cost for homes in the site built before 1980.

Test by Request

Property owners can have their yards tested for arsenic and lead at no cost.

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Property owners can have their yards tested for arsenic and lead at no cost.

Contacts

For more information on any of these resources, contact:

- **Carl Nyman**, 406-563-7019, cnyman@adlc.us
- **Linda Moodry**, 406-563-7476, lmoodry@waqterenvtech.com
- **Community Hospital of Anaconda, Laboratory Services**, 406-563-8575
- **Luke Pokorny** (test by request only), AR Liability Manager, 406-723-1832, luke.pokorny@bp.com

OU16 includes residential yards, commercial properties, and former railbeds in Anaconda, Opportunity, and rural areas.

Progress in 2023

Work conducted by Atlantic Richfield under EPA and DEQ oversight included:

- Completed soil sampling of 215 residential properties, 7 commercial properties, and 18 alleyways.
- Completed cleanup of 186 residential properties.

The county began its attic sampling and remediation program in June 2022. Out of 339 requests for sampling, 67 did not require cleanup, 146 were cleaned up or are in the process, and 114 are awaiting cleanup.

Next Steps and Beyond

- Continue soil sampling and cleanup for residential and commercial properties and unpaved alleys.
- Continue attic sampling and cleanup.
- The last call for residential and commercial/industrial soil sampling is August 1, 2024.
- Soil cleanups currently planned to be completed by December 31, 2025.



Year	Properties		
	Sampled	Qualifying for Cleanup	Cleaned Up
2012-2015	88	55	-
2016	498	480	40
2017	496	414	318
2018	312	251	325
2019	336	243	338
2020	220	152	207
2021	221	144	190
2022	222	93	186
2023	129	Awaiting data	82
Total	2,522	1,832+	1,686

Photos of typical large and small cleanups in OU 16, many of which required hand tools to navigate tight spaces around structures and mature vegetation.

Ready for Reuse

EPA's goals for Superfund Sites extend to post-cleanup use. Substantial areas of the Anaconda site have already been redeveloped, restored for resumption of historical use, or are ready for reuse.

In the East Anaconda Yards, post-cleanup sampling from 2019 to 2021 demonstrated that the air is clean, and the land is ready for development. EPA provides accurate, comprehensive information to help prospective purchasers make informed and timely decisions. The service is free of charge.

Notable new development in Anaconda since 2021 includes:

- 2021 – The Forge Hotel and Barclay II Supper Club
- 2023 – Murdoch's Ranch and Home Supply Store

At the Murdoch's property, the county segregated 2,700 cubic yards of contaminated material from the excavation for disposal at the Anaconda Smelter Development Repository.

Other development in the East Anaconda Yards has included: ADLC Search and Rescue, A&A Technical, AWARE Inc. Center for Excellence, Martelli Construction, Mungas Construction, Johnson storage units, State of Montana Smelter Part, and Thompson RV Storage Facility. A condominium development is planned south of the Old Works Golf Course.



Need More Information?

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

- **Bryan Lobar**, Remedial Project Manager, 406-444-6569, lobar.bryan@epa.gov
- **Dana Barnicoat**, Community Involvement Coordinator, 406-560-6261, barnicoat.dana@epa.gov

Montana Department of Environmental Quality

- **Amber Nichols**, Project Officer, 406-444-6569, amber.nichols@mt.gov
- **Nolan Lister**, Public Information Officer, 406-444-6469, cnyman@adlc.us

www.epa.gov/superfund/anaconda-co-smelter

Community Outreach

Completed

The latest [fact sheets](#) for the site are:

- *2022 Project Update*
- *A Closer Look at Smelter Slag (2021)*
- *2020 Project Update*
- *2020 Five-Year Review*

Ads were run in the *Anaconda Leader* and *Montana Standard* for the release of the prospective purchaser agreement, the updated community involvement plan, and the virtual public meeting and public comment period for the consent decree.

Upcoming

EPA and DEQ will continue to create fact sheets on topics of interest to the community and **we welcome your suggestions**.

Ads will be placed in the *Leader*, as needed, to announce milestones, significant documents, and upcoming public meetings. Public meetings will be held, as needed, based on public interest.

Updated Community Involvement Plan

EPA updated the [community involvement plan](#) in December 2023 to ensure that the list of contacts is up to date and to address changes to the Technical Assistance Group. The plan is a living document that guides how EPA will engage and inform the community on what is happening. It is available to the public on EPA's [website](#).