

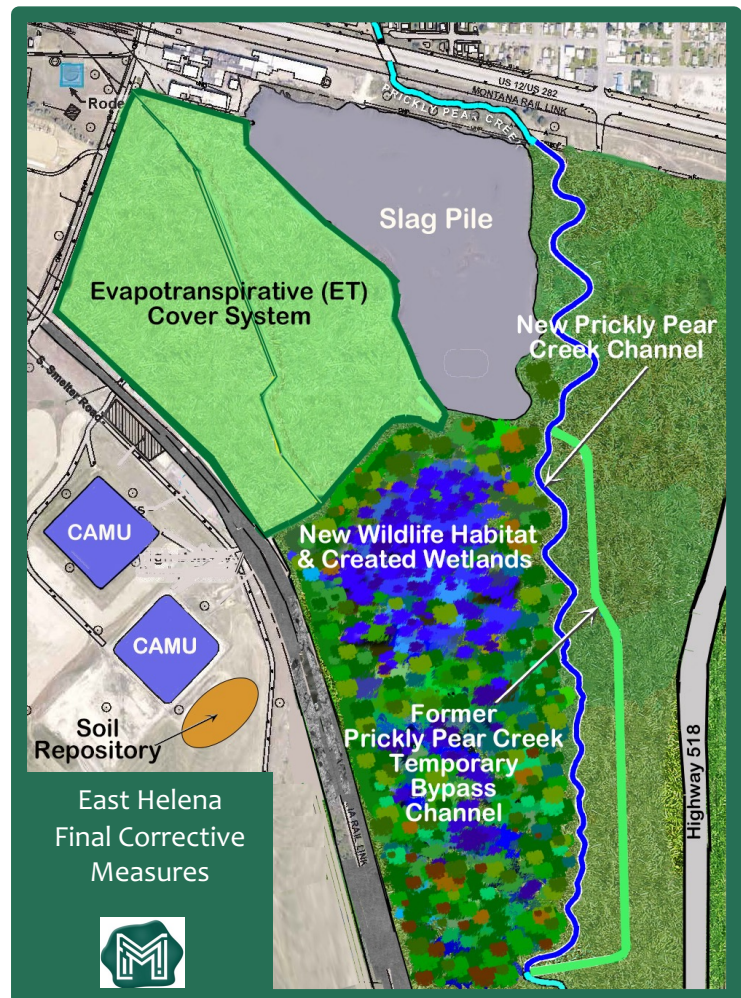
## 2024 Site Update

### Addressing Environmental Challenges

More than a century of lead smelting left extensive contamination in soil and groundwater at the former ASARCO Smelter in East Helena. Soils contaminated with lead, arsenic, and other metals posed a threat to people and wildlife. Precipitation leached contaminants into groundwater and mobilized surface soil contaminants into stormwater runoff. Surface waters from Prickly Pear Creek and manmade lakes raised groundwater levels under the former smelter and the slag pile, adding contaminants to groundwater and causing arsenic and selenium plumes to migrate off-site.

**Over the past 15 years, Montana Environmental Trust Group (METG) has substantially completed cleanup measures at the former smelter.**

- METG constructed a 62-acre evapotranspiration (ET) cover over the former smelter plant area – one of the nation’s largest ET covers – that prevents direct exposure to contaminated soils and contaminant leaching into groundwater. Stormwater is stored in or shed clean from the ET cover.
- METG moved Prickly Pear Creek away from the former smelter and slag pile and drained the manmade lakes, which lowered groundwater levels and reduced the transport of contaminated groundwater off-site. This award-winning project created 100 acres of new floodplain and 50 acres of new wetland and habitat. PPC now flows in a meandering 1.25-mile channel through a restored 242-acre area that supports diverse wildlife.
- Removing the failing smelter dam eliminated a major barrier to fish migration between PPC headwaters and Lake Helena.
- Groundwater contamination was further reduced by removing areas of highly contaminated soils that are now safely stored under the ET cover or in the corrective action management units (CAMUs).



Shown are the ET cover, two closed corrective action management units (CAMUs), the new Prickly Pear Creek (PPC) Channel, the former PPC Temporary Bypass Channel, and the new soil repository.

### Montana Environmental Trust Group (METG)

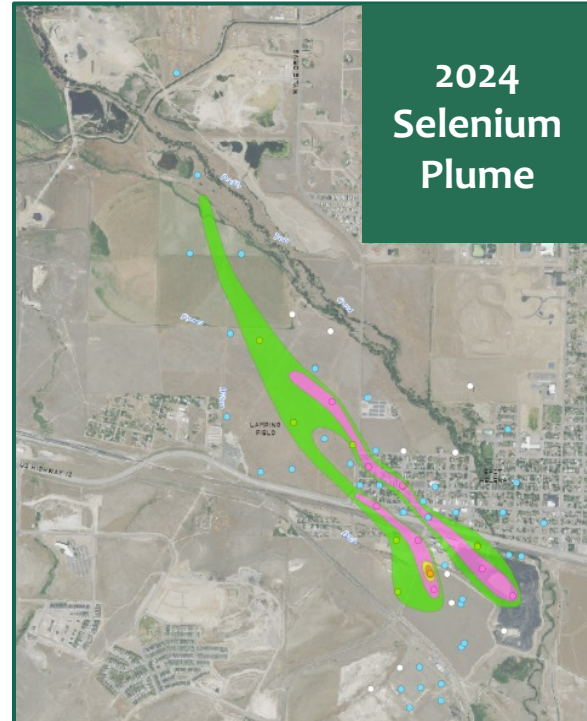
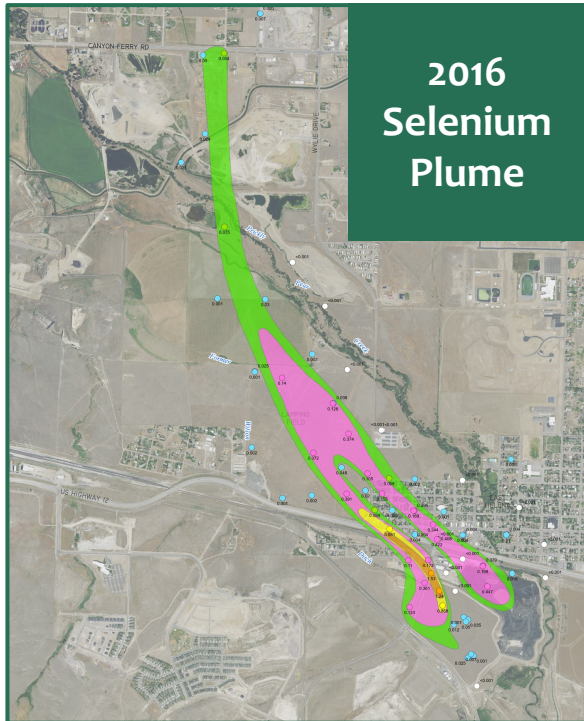
METG is the court-appointed Trustee of the Montana Environmental Custodial Trust. METG is responsible for remediating and facilitating beneficial, community-supported reuse of former ASARCO lands, under EPA oversight and for the benefit of the United States and the State of Montana.



# 2024 Cleanup and Redevelopment Updates and Results

Cleanup activities have led to arsenic and selenium concentrations dropping by more than 50% on the Smelter site since 2016. The off-site selenium plume has receded by  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile.

METG began final PPC realignment project permitting in 2024. METG also operated the Smelter Road Soil Repository and stockpiled soil from the new rodeo grounds for future use in capping the slag pile. The last remaining cleanup measure entails grading and capping the 16-million-ton slag pile, pending any further unfumed slag removal.



*The selenium plume has receded 4,000 feet since 2016—and 2,300 feet since 2022 alone.*

METG has sold, donated, or transferred 1,663 acres of the  $\pm 2,000$  acres it acquired from ASARCO in 2009. Of the 372 acres still owned by METG, only 20 acres are available for sale. The other remaining land is: under contract for sale to Helena Area Habitat for Humanity; slated for donation to the City of East Helena (City); or will be held in perpetuity for long-term stewardship.

Lands sold in 2023 and currently under contract for sale are expected to be developed for  $\pm 5,000$  homes, schools, a rail-serviced light industrial center, a new office building and warehouse, a 70-acre commercial center, and parks and open space. METG facilitated the donation of 45 acres to the City for future City services and a new rodeo arena. Implementing these reuses will require private sector investment of more than \$2 billion over the next 15 years.



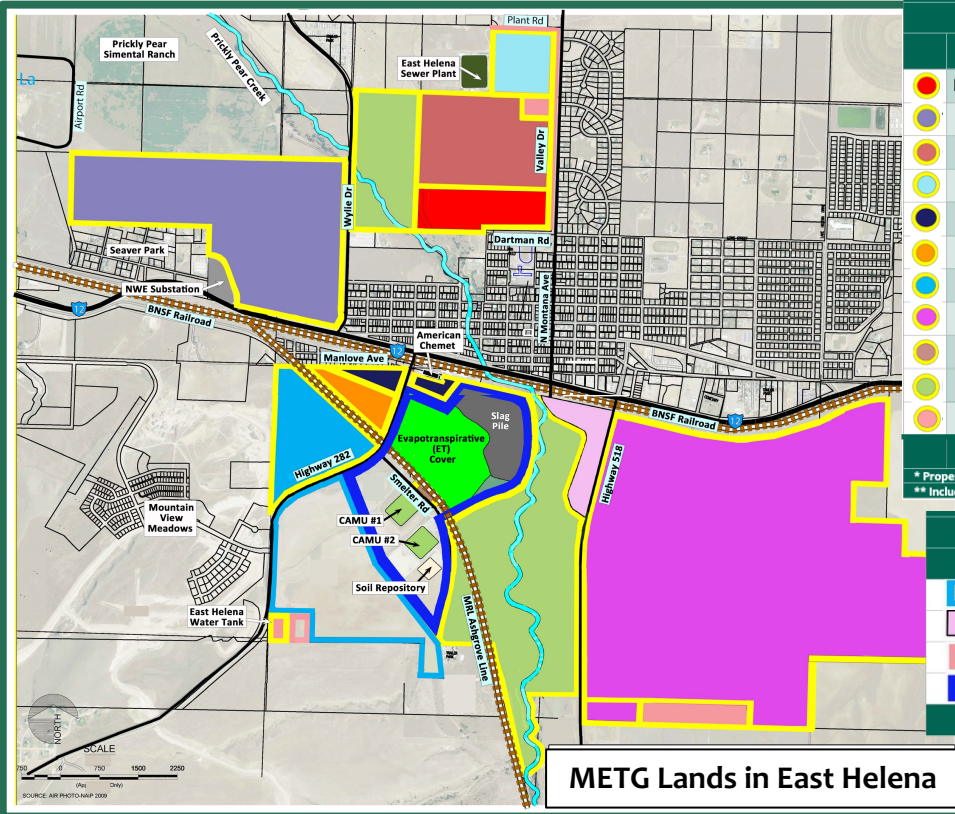
East Helena High School



Highland Meadows Residential Subdivision



# East Helena Redevelopment Progress and Plans



METG East Helena Land Sales and Donations		
Purchaser or Grantee*	New Use	Acres
East Helena Public Schools	Prickly Pear Elementary School	50*
Town Pump	Mixed Use/Commercial Development	254
Oakland Companies	319-Home Highland Meadows Subdivision	100
East Helena Public Schools	East Helena High School	35
American Chemet	Expanded Manufacturing Plant and Office	13
Power Townsend	Light Manufacturing Center	26
Habitat for Humanity	257-Home Residential Subdivision	72
Oakland Companies	Commercial and 1000+ Residential Homes	731
Montana Propane	Intermodal Distribution Center	3
Prickly Pear Land Trust	Greenway Trail	322*
City of East Helena**	Roads, Utilities, City Services, and Rodeo Arena	57*
<b>Total East Helena Land Sales and Donations As Of 11/9/2023:</b>		<b>1,663</b>

\* Property Donated to Grantee  
\*\* Includes Search and Rescue Parcel Donated to County

Remaining METG Property in East Helena		
Plans for Remaining Property	Acres	
Property Under Contract for Sale to Habitat for Humanity	136	
Property Remaining/Available for Sale and Redevelopment	20	
Property Proposed for Donation to City of East Helena	5	
Undevelopable/Unsalable Land	211	
<b>Total Remaining METG East Helena Land:</b>	<b>372</b>	

## Public and private redevelopments completed:

- Prickly Pear Elementary School and East Helena High School
- Community health center
- 26,000-square-foot Town Pump store
- Significant portions of the 319-home Highland Meadows subdivision
- The 8-mile-long Greenway Trail, a 322-acre wildlife habitat and recreational area along the restored Prickly Pear Creek
- Intermodal transportation center
- Expanded manufacturing center
- New East Helena rodeo arena
- Improved City infrastructure

## If you have questions, please contact:

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Visit: [mtenvironmentaltrust.org](http://mtenvironmentaltrust.org)



LEARN MORE



The Grove (Greenway)



2024 East Helena Rodeo



Town Pump