

Upper Blackfoot Mining Complex



Fact Sheet

October 2018

The Mike Horse Mine

The Mike Horse Mine was established in 1898 and expanded into a larger operation in 1919. In 1938, the Mike Horse Mining and Milling Company leased the mine and built a 150-ton per-day flotation mill.

Early 1940s: The Mike Horse Dam was built across Beartrap Creek to contain flotation mill tailings.

1975: Heavy rains caused a partial failure of the dam and high creek waters eroded contaminated tailings into Beartrap Creek and the Upper Blackfoot.

2005: A U.S. Forest Service (USFS) Dam Safety Report found the dam unsafe, and recommended it be removed from service.

July 2007: USFS released an action memorandum calling for the removal and disposal of the dam, mine tailings and wastes.

April 2008: State and federal officials announced \$39 million in funding from the ASARCO LLC bankruptcy settlement to remove the aging Mike Horse Dam and the contaminated tailings behind it, and to clean up and restore portions of the Upper Blackfoot Mining Complex. An agreement with DEQ, the Natural Resource Damage Program (NRDP), and the USFS was soon reached to coordinate cleanup at the site, with DEQ serving as lead agency.

Acid mine drainage flows from the main adit of the Mike Horse Mine in the 1980s.



Mike Horse Creek flows over metal-coated rocks in the 1990s.



UBMC Fast Facts

Cleanup Timeline: 2014 — 2019

Contamination removed to date: 800,000 cubic yards (c/y)

Estimated total contamination to be removed: 1 million c/y

Creek rebuilt:

— Mike Horse Creek: 3,000 feet

— Beartrap Creek: 3,000 feet

For comprehensive project information, visit:

bit.ly/dojupperblackfoot

