



# Mike Horse Messenger

Site Update

June 2016

## 2016 Construction Season

The contract for the next phase of cleanup was awarded to Missouri River Contractors (MRC) in June. While you may not recognize the company name (it is new), you will recognize a lot of the



faces, and they come with a lot of experience on these types of remediation/restoration projects. Members of the MRC team have already been involved as contractors and engineering oversight on the UBMC, Silver Bow Creek, and Clark Fork projects. Eddie Roatch will be the superintendent (he was Helena Sand & Gravel's superintendent on the last contract at the UBMC), and many of the drivers and operators from the last two years will be returning to work at the Mike Horse for MRC.

They will come with an understanding of the site and its many challenges which will help the project be successful again this year.

While there will be fewer trucks on the road than last year, we still anticipate hauling about 180,000 cubic yards of tailings out of Mike Horse and Beartrap Creeks. We will also upgrade and install infrastructure for the water treatment plant. Between the remediation work and the water treatment plant work, the amount of water treated at the WTP should decrease and the WTP will be more efficient. The goal is lower annual costs at the WTP.

## Road Closure

Beginning the week of June 20, there will be detours above the water treatment plant. Mike Horse and Meadow Creek Roads will be closed to public traffic starting June 27 when the haul is scheduled to begin. The closure will continue through the season, and will lift as soon as it is safe for the public. Just like the last two years, people can walk in to hike or hunt, as long as they avoid the roadways. Please help keep the crew and yourselves safe by adhering to the closure and being cautious on the highway.

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**Tours**

The Blackfoot Challenge is organizing tours again this year and everyone is welcome! You can reserve a spot by emailing [outreach@blackfootchallenge.org](mailto:outreach@blackfootchallenge.org) or calling (406) 529-2822. Tour dates are July 23, August 20, September 24, and October 22 from 10 AM to 1PM. We meet in Lincoln at Hooper Park then travel to the Mike Horse mining area and the UBMC repository before returning to town.

**Schedule Change**

As with all projects of this magnitude, issues come up that change the best-laid plans. In this case, an undocumented pipe discharging contaminated water into the creek was discovered during excavation in the Mike Horse Valley. This discovery significantly changed the scope of the work. The source of this mystery pipe's water must be unearthed, properly dealt with, and the WTP infrastructure must be replaced in the process. The good news is that the Mike Horse Valley will be restored and much of the infrastructure limiting its function will be removed. This creates a better long-term solution for the environment, reduces the amount of water treated at the WTP, and simplifies its long-term maintenance. This unforeseen work adds a year to the haul schedule. Rather than finishing in 2017, it will be 2018 before the haul is complete. Assuming no additional issues, including those weather-related, we should still meet the overall schedule, completing the work by 2019.

**Thank You**

George Kornec has been a fixture in the Mike Horse for decades. His insight has been invaluable to the project and I appreciate all the time he has spent with me, sharing his vast knowledge of the area.

–Shellie

