

# Circle Speaker

JANUARY—MARCH, 2026

## Aaniih & Nakoda Environmental Newsletter

### FEATURED IN THIS ISSUE:

- Snake Butte Spring Water Quality Data ..... 1
- Montana Invasive Species Education, Learn more about invasive species before they destroy your favorite habitat! . 3
- Trump EPA Abandons Decades of Science, Walks Away from Climate Action..... 4
- EPA wants to eliminate one of the few ways tribes protect their water ..... 5
- 2026 Head Start Poster Coloring Contest Brings Community Together..... 7
- Harlem Wildcats Finish Strong as State Runner-Up..... 8
- Environmental Wins First Place for “Program Booth” Display at 2026 Mid Winter Fair..... 8
- Meet The Newest Addition to the Environmental Protection Department..... 9
- State and Nuclear Protections Rolled Back ..... 9
- Gut Bug News ..... 10
- Brownfields Compliance and Upcoming 2026 ..... 12
- History of Mining in the Little Rocky Mountains TIME LINE 1884-2002 ..... 14
- 2026 Earth Day Fair Flyer ...20
- 2026 Warriors Wrestling Season Comes To An End ..... 22
- Michael Black Wolf Officially Files for U.S. Senate at Montana State Capitol ..... 23



## Snake Butte Spring Water Quality Data

By James Swierc <jswierc@ancollege.edu>

The Nic?-Mni (Water) Center at Aaniiih Nakoda College collected water quality samples from the Snake Butte Spring as part of local water resource studies. Grab samples were collected from the spring discharge box, and samples were analyzed at Energy Laboratories in Helena. The following table summarizes data from 2022-2024. Sampling and data collection programs are ongoing. The data results show that the water quality is good for drinking water, and stays relatively consistent through the year.

The table includes all of the data collected, with some different analytes during different sampling events. If the analyte for a particular sampling event is not listed, then it was not included in the analyses for that sample.

For results that show a <0.00... result, or less than a certain level, it means that the

analyte was not detected and the listed number after the “<” sign is the detection limit for the chemical analysis from the laboratory. There are a few numbers that are listed which are below the detection limits, and these are estimated values when the analyte is present, but at a concentration below the detection limit.

The data in the attached table can be compared to primary and secondary MCLs. The term MCL means Maximum Contaminant Level, determined by EPA as health based standards for drinking water. The primary MCLs reflect concentrations that, when exceeded, can potentially result in health related issues when ingested over time. The secondary MCLs are based on aesthetics, and not considered to impact health over time. If there is no number listed for these, then there is no secondary or primary MCL.

(Continued on page 2)

# Snake Butte Spring Water Quality Data

(Continued from page 1)

Sample Date	Total Dissolved Solids (TDS)	Alkalinity	Hardness	Calcium Ca	Magnesium Mg	Sodium Na	Potassium K	
Primary MCL								
Secondary MCL	500							
March 22, 2022	387	170	116	21	16	84	15	
April 18, 2023	399	150	119	22	16	83	16	
January 19, 2024	373	160	120	22	16	82	16	
April 2, 2024	386	160	119	22	15	80	14	
June 20, 2024	396	170	120	22	15	80	16	
July 2, 2024	365	170	109	20	14	79	16	
August 20, 2024	363	160	117	22	15	81	15	
April 8, 2025	376	160	116	21	15	81	16	
	Bicarbonate HCO3	Chloride Cl	Sulfate SO4	Bromide Br	Fluoride F	Nitrate NO3	N Total N	P Total P
Primary MCL					4	10		
Secondary MCL		250	250		2			
March 22, 2022	200	2	139		0.2	0.64	0.74	0.01
April 18, 2023	190	2	155		0.3	0.86	0.9	0.01
January 19, 2024	200	2	132		0.2	1.01		
April 2, 2024	200	2	136	0.02	0.2	0.95	0.98	0.01
June 20, 2024	200	2	132	0.03	0.2	0.92	1.06	0.01
July 2, 2024	200	2	126	0.03	0.3	0.93	1.03	0.01
August 20, 2024	200	1	119	0.02	0.2	1.05	0.97	0.008
April 8, 2025	200	2	136	0.02	0.2	0.92	0.93	0.01
	Aluminum Al	Antimony Sb	Arsenic As	Cadmium Cd	Chromium Cr	Copper Cu	Iron Fe	Lead Pb
Primary MCL		0.006	0.01	0.005	0.1	1.3		0.01
Secondary MCL	0.05-0.2					1.0	0.3	
March 22, 2022			0.005				< 0.02	
April 18, 2023	< 0.009		0.004	< 0.00005	0.0005	0.001	< 0.02	< 0.0003
January 19, 2024	< 0.03	0.0002	0.005	< 0.001	0.0005	0.0007	0.008	< 0.001
April 2, 2024	< 0.03	0.0002	0.004	< 0.001	0.0005	0.001	< 0.02	< 0.001
June 20, 2024	< 0.03	0.0002	0.004	< 0.001	0.0006	0.002	< 0.02	< 0.001
July 2, 2024	< 0.03	0.0002	0.004	< 0.001	0.0005	0.001	< 0.02	< 0.001
August 20, 2024	< 0.009		0.004	< 0.00005	0.0005	0.001	< 0.02	< 0.0003
April 8, 2025	< 0.03	< 0.001	0.004	< 0.001	0.0005	0.001	< 0.02	< 0.001
	Manganese Mn	Mercury Hg	Nickel Ni	Selenium Se	Thallium Th	Uranium U	Zinc Zn	
Primary MCL		0.002		0.05	0.002	0.03		
Secondary MCL	0.05						5	
March 22, 2022				0.002		0.0044		
April 18, 2023	< 0.005	0.00007	0.0003	0.002	< 0.0002	0.0044	< 0.008	
January 19, 2024		< 0.0001		0.003		0.0041	0.001	
April 2, 2024	< 0.001	< 0.0001		0.002	0.00007	0.0044	< 0.01	
June 20, 2024	0.0003	< 0.0001		0.002	0.00004	0.0044	< 0.01	
July 2, 2024	< 0.001	< 0.0001		0.002	0.00004	0.0042	< 0.01	
August 20, 2024	0.0004	< 0.0001	0.0004	0.002	< 0.0002	0.0045	< 0.008	
April 8, 2025	< 0.001	< 0.0001	0.0003	0.002	< 0.0005	0.0046	< 0.01	

# Montana Invasive Species Education

## Learn more about invasive species before they destroy your favorite habitat!

Submitted by Megan Martin, Brownfields Environmental Technician

Non-native (invasive or alien) species in Montana interfere with and often destroy native plants, wildlife, livestock habitat, forests, waterways, and food crops. These species, which may not harm the environment in their native areas, can cause destruction and major problems when introduced to new environments. Invasive species are seeking hosts, like you, who will unknowingly pick them up while you travel and give them a free ride. Once they have landed in your area, they will start to multiply and will spread disease, eat with a vengeance, and begin a path of destruction.

Invasive species may be insects, nematodes, noxious weeds, amphibians, crustaceans, mollusks, mammals, and more! Over the past couple of hundred years, many plants, insects, and animals have been introduced into the U.S. Not all of them have become invasive and pushed aside native varieties, but when they do, it can be devastating for the environment and economy, and it can even affect human health.

Some have been spotted for sale online or brought in as pets. The first step is to learn about potential invasive species in your area.

- Invasive species can easily be transported on living plants or fresh produce such as fruit and plants.
- Many pests can be found in recently killed plant material such as firewood, lumber, and wood packing materials. Avoid long-range movement of these materials to help slow the spread of invasive species.
- Purchase only certified pest-free nursery stock (like trees and shrubs) whenever possible.
- Avoid bringing alien species into your area at all costs! Report any sightings of invasive species to your local Extension office: McKenzie McCaleb, phone: (406) 353-2656, email: mckenzie.mccaleb@montana.edu.

## How to Report Invasive Species in Montana

### Download the iNaturalist app



### Take a Photo or Record a Sound



### Next Steps

- App will suggest an identification
- Accept that or suggest your own identification
- Other iNaturalist users around the globe can confirm your identification or suggest another



### What Happens to Observations You Report?

- Observations will be identified by volunteer citizen scientists in the iNaturalist community and agency biologists
- Observations with confirmed species identifications are brought into statewide databases monthly
- Weed and aquatic invasive species managers and other natural resource managers are emailed reports of infestations.
- Control efforts are undertaken to prevent further spread

### How-To iNaturalist Resources



**More Ways to Report Invasives:**  
<https://invasivespecies.mt.gov/report>



## Trump EPA Abandons Decades of Science, Walks Away from Climate Action

CONTACT: Aaron Bharucha, Public Relations Associate | [epn-press@environmentalprotectionnetwork.org](mailto:epn-press@environmentalprotectionnetwork.org)  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE February 12, 2026  
[https://www.environmentalprotectionnetwork.org/20260212\\_endangermentfinding\\_release/](https://www.environmentalprotectionnetwork.org/20260212_endangermentfinding_release/)

*“By discarding the Endangerment Finding and slashing clean car emission standards, the Trump EPA is surrendering its responsibility, turning its back on families and communities already facing the highest pollution and health risks, and dismantling decades of science and progress.”*

WASHINGTON, D.C. – In an unprecedented and dangerous move, the Trump Administration will repeal the Endangerment Finding, abandoning decades of science and walking away from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s own authority to regulate climate pollution from greenhouse gases that endanger human health.

At the same time, EPA will propose to eliminate federal clean car standards for greenhouse gases, a rollback that would raise costs for drivers and worsen pollution – a direct consequence of abandoning the Endangerment Finding.

“Communities across the country will bear the brunt of this decision—through dirtier air, higher health costs, and increased climate harm,” said **Michelle Roos, Executive Director of the Environmental Protection Network**. “By discarding the Endangerment Find-

ing and slashing clean car emission standards, the Trump EPA is surrendering its responsibility, turning its back on families and communities already facing the highest pollution and health risks, and dismantling decades of science and progress.”

“This move is a fundamental betrayal of EPA’s responsibility to protect human health. It is legally indefensible, morally bankrupt, and completely untethered from the scientific record,” said **Joseph Goffman, former Assistant Administrator of EPA’s Office of Air and Radiation**. “The Endangerment Finding was built on decades of peer-reviewed science and a clear legal mandate under the Clean Air Act, and that foundation has only grown stronger. Abandoning it—along with clean car standards that reduce harmful pollution and save families money—doesn’t change the facts. It is abhorrent that the Trump EPA has de-

*(Continued on page 5)*

cided to shift the real and growing costs of climate pollution back onto the public.”

The Endangerment Finding process began under the Bush Administrations, when EPA Administrator Steven Johnson, a scientist, told President Bush that the finding was necessary because greenhouse gas pollution endangers public health. In the decades since, EPA has never formally moved to reverse the Endangerment Finding, nor is there any scientific basis for doing so now. Repealing it undermines EPA’s Clean Air Act responsibilities for controlling greenhouse gas emissions from vehicles, power plants, and other major sources, reversing decades of progress on clean air and climate protections.

The rollback of the Endangerment Finding – and the associated removal of the greenhouse gas vehicle emissions standards – will result in thousands of additional premature deaths, millions of asthma attacks, billions of dollars in lost health benefits, higher gasoline prices, and lost jobs in the automotive industry over the coming decades.

EPN first pushed back against the repeals when they were proposed in July as a willful abandonment of the scientific, legal, and moral foundations of environmental protection, and led efforts to provide public testimony and submit formal comments alongside scientists, health experts, and community advocates.



A Native American views their tribal waterways. (Photo by Ross D. Franklin /AP.)

## EPA wants to eliminate one of the few ways tribes protect their water

By Miacel Spotted Elk/Grist | catwhipple | February 10, 2026

<https://thecirclenews.org/news/epa-wants-to-eliminate-one-of-the-few-ways-tribes-protect-their-water/>

In January, the Environmental Protection Agency announced a proposal to revise the Clean Water Act, specifically a section of the law that regulates water quality and limits states’ and tribes’ authority over

federal projects, as well as how tribes can gain the authority to conduct those reviews. Experts say the move would dissolve one of the few tools tribes have

(Continued on page 6)

to enforce treaty rights and hamper their ability to protect tribal citizens.

“What the Trump administration is proposing to modify here is a really important tool for states and tribes, because it gets at their ability to put conditions on or, in extreme cases, block projects that are either proposed by the federal government or under the jurisdiction of the federal government,” said Miles Johnson, legal director at Columbia Riverkeeper, an organization that works on issues affecting the Columbia River.

Developers seeking to build dams, mines, data centers, or pipelines must navigate a permitting process to do so. One requirement in the process is obtaining certification from a tribe or state confirming that the project meets federal water quality standards. Currently, tribes and states conduct holistic reviews of projects, known as “activity as a whole”, evaluating all potential impacts on water quality, including spill risks, threats to cultural resources, and impacts on wildlife. This approach was established under the Biden administration in 2023.

However, the newly proposed rule would limit reviews to “discharge only,” where both states and tribes are able to review projects solely based on how much pollution they would release, narrowing the scope of oversight.

The proposed rule also changes how tribes can gain regulatory authority to assess water quality under the Treatment in a Similar Manner as a State program, or TAS. Under that program, tribes are able to act as regulators, one of the few tools available to them, and directly set conditions to limit factors that would pollute waters near tribal lands. To date, only 84 tribal nations have received TAS status, allowing them to review federal projects. Currently, Section 401 of the Clean Water Act allows tribes that can demonstrate the capacity and resources the ability to review water quality standards, expanding regulatory powers beyond tribes with larger resources. The proposed change would shrink those powers, allowing only TAS tribes to perform evaluations through a separate, more rigorous authorization program.

“Treaty rights are one of the strongest mechanisms to enforce against the federal government, against

the state, against third-party actors, and in litigation,” said Heather Tanana, a law professor at the University of Denver. “It takes years, it takes money, it’s complicated to do, and so you want these other mechanisms.”

A reversion to pre-2023 rules, Tanana said, would put higher demands on tribes to show larger-scale capacity, often in the form of dedicated water departments.

“There’s such a wide variance in tribes of what resources are available to them. Do they have other sources of revenue, right? How many staff do they have? Do they have their own environmental departments? Is it one person, or is it 10?” said Tanana.

During the Biden administration, tribes advocated for a baseline rule allowing all tribes some input in federal projects while seeking TAS status, but industry pushback during the comment period and a Trump win during the general election in 2024 led to its withdrawal from the EPA in December.

Patrick Hunter, a senior attorney at the Southern Environmental Law Center, noted that of 7,500 projects submitted during the Biden administration, fewer than 1 percent were denied. Most were approved with conditions such as mitigation measures and sediment traps to prevent water pollution during construction. Tanana said tribal review outcomes were similar.

The EPA’s 2025 report on tribal consultations highlighted widespread opposition to changes. “The clear feedback from the tribes was, ‘Don’t change it,’” said Tanana. “‘You’re going to make it harder for us to exercise our sovereignty to protect our waters and protect our community.’”

A 30-day public comment period on the proposed rule is currently underway. The rule is expected to face litigation after finalization.

“Tribes have an obligation to care for the rivers and waterways that have sustained their communities since before the existence of the United States and are weighing every option to protect their way of life,” said Gussie Lord, head of tribal partnerships at Earthjustice.



Fort Belknap Environmental Protection Department

# 2026 Head Start Poster Coloring Contest Brings Community Together

Submitted by Lonette Blackcrow, FBEPD Administrative Assistant

The Fort Belknap Environmental Protection Department proudly hosted its annual Head Start Poster Coloring Contest, celebrating creativity, community engagement, and the talents of our youngest artists.

The deadline for poster submissions was January 29, 2026. All entries were displayed during the Fort Belknap Mid Winter Fair, held February 4–6, 2026, at the Fort Belknap Agency Bingo Hall. Community members of all ages attended the event and enjoyed viewing the colorful artwork created by local Head Start students. The contest provided a wonderful opportunity for families and community members to come together while celebrating the creativity and individuality of our children.

This year’s contest featured approximately 60 student participants from three Head Start centers:

- Gilbert Horn, Sr. Early Childhood Center – Fort Belknap Agency
- Ramona King Center – Hays, MT
- Three Strikes Center – Lodge Pole, MT

Each young artist showcased their unique personality through their work, making the display both inspiring and enjoyable for everyone who attended. Posters were judged by community members during the Mid Winter Fair, highlighting the importance of community involvement in recognizing and encouraging youth creativity.

The Environmental Protection Department would also like to extend sincere appreciation to the teachers and staff from each center who supported the students and helped make participation possible. Their dedication played a vital role in the success of this event.

Certificates and prizes were awarded to the top three students from each center, recognizing 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place achievements. Prize packages were delivered to the centers on February 11, 2026. While winners were selected, every participant contributed outstanding artwork and enthusiasm, making this year’s contest a meaningful and memorable experience for all.

Congratulations to the winners of the 2026 Head Start Poster Coloring Contest, and thank you to all students, teachers, families, and community members who helped make this event a success.



### Gilbert Horn Early Sr Childhood Center

- 1st Place—Normani Hammett (#43)
- 2nd Place—Jaycee Morgan (#16)
- 3rd Place—Normani Hammett (#15)



### Ramona King Center

- 1st Place—Mackenzie McCabe (#35)
- 2nd Place—Ava Parker (#37)
- 3rd Place—Oaklynn Webb (#36)



### Three Strikes Center

- 1st Place—Terry Cliff III (#62)
- 2nd Place—Mazikeen Healy (#63)
- 3rd Place—Shayden Ball (#64)



Photo Cred: KMRR

# Harlem Wildcats Finish Strong as State Runner-Up

By Lonette Blackcrow, Environmental Administrative Assistant

The Harlem Wildcats delivered an unforgettable performance at the 2026 State Class B Boy’s Basketball Tournament, battling their way to the championship game and finishing the season as state runner-up. The tournament was held March 12–14, 2026, at the Brick Breeden Fieldhouse in Bozeman, Montana, where teams from across the state gathered to compete for the title.

In the championship matchup, the Wildcats faced a tough Lodge Grass Indians team. Despite their determination and relentless effort, Harlem fell short in the final game with a score of 69–48. The Lodge Grass Indians ultimately secured the state championship, but the Wildcats’ journey to the title game remains an incredible achievement for the team and their community.

Throughout the tournament—and the entire season—

the Harlem Wildcats demonstrated heart, resilience, and teamwork. Their run to the championship game was fueled by hard work, strong leadership, and the unwavering support of coaches, families, and fans.

Although the final score did not go in their favor, the Wildcats never stopped fighting. They played with pride, determination, and the spirit that defines Harlem athletics. Their effort on the court showed the strength and character of the team, and their accomplishment of finishing second in the state is something the entire community can celebrate.

Congratulations to the Harlem Wildcats on an outstanding season. Your dedication, perseverance, and passion for the game have made your school and community incredibly proud. You fought to the very end and never gave in—an achievement that will be remembered and celebrated for years to come.

# Environmental Wins First Place for “Program Booth” Display at 2026 Mid Winter Fair

By Breanne Main, FBIC Public Relations Officer

The Fort Belknap Environmental Protection Program proudly took first place in this year’s “program booth” display, captivating visitors with a thoughtful display titled “Remembering the Past... Moving Forward.” The booth artfully showcased the history of the program by featuring photos and stories of both past and present employees, highlighting their contributions over the years. This engaging presentation not only celebrated the dedicated team behind the program’s success but also connected the legacy of environmental with current and future initiatives. Visitors enjoyed seeing the evolution of the program and its commitment to progress while honoring those who helped shape it.



# Meet The Newest Addition to the Environmental Protection Department

By Terron Gray, GIS Technician



Hello, my name is Terron Gray. I am the new GIS Technician for the Fort Belknap Environmental Department. I am eager and excited to be starting my new career here at the Fort Belknap Environmental Department. I have lived in the Fort Belknap Agency my whole life

with my loving partner, Denise and my two amazing kids, Jalen, and Hayden. I graduated from Harlem High School in 2018 and went to college at Aaniiih Nakoda College where I received four associate degrees and currently in my final year in the four-year Ecology program with hopes of graduating in Spring 2026. My interest outside of work and school are playing golf, reading, games, and spending time with my family.

## State and Nuclear Protections Rolled Back



By Shannon James

Over the past year, the U.S. federal government has doubled down on nuclear energy, launching policies meant to fast-track so-called “advanced” reactor proposals and prop up the nation’s nuclear industry. Supporters call it a “nuclear renaissance,” but let’s be clear.

Nuclear energy has long been riddled with false promises, and removing public health protections is a high risk, high-cost gamble.

Projects can take decades to build — if they’re completed at all — and they routinely come in far over budget. When reactors finally come online, it is ratepayers who foot the bill through higher electricity costs. Meanwhile, uranium extraction continues to devastate lands and water; it’s estimated that more than 70% of known uranium deposits are on Indigenous land, but Indigenous Peoples are rarely involved in planning or profiting from mines and instead suffer ongoing contamination. On top of everything, the industry still has no viable long-term solution for the radioactive waste it produces.

Despite these risks, many Montana elected officials are ready to welcome this dangerous industry into our state. During the 2025 legislative session, Rep. Gary Parry (R-Colstrip) sponsored two bills to pave the way for nuclear development in Montana: one authorizing the siting of nuclear waste storage facilities (HB 623) and another allowing uranium conversion and enrichment facilities (HB 696). MEIC worked closely with members of the Montana American Indian Caucus to amend both bills to require approval votes from residents of the county where a facility would be located and from nearby Tribes. Unfortunately, despite bi-partisan support, those amendments failed, and both bills were ultimately signed into law by the governor.

This is only the first step. NorthWestern Energy has already set its sights on Colstrip as a potential site for small modular reactors (SMR). Despite the hype, not a single SMR is

currently operating in the United States, and only three exist worldwide. The Trump Administration is moving aggressively to change that. In May, the president signed four executive orders aimed at quadrupling U.S. nuclear capacity by 2050, adding 300 gigawatts of new nuclear power. The common theme is clear: accelerate nuclear development at the expense of public safety, environmental review, and regulatory integrity.

One of the orders directs the U.S. Department of Energy to approve three new reactor designs by July 2026. That 13-month timeline defies decades of nuclear development experience. To make the impossible appear achievable, the administration is attempting to strip away safeguards, sidestep public oversight, and rush high-risk technologies to market.

While the Montana Governor’s Energy Task Force and NorthWestern Energy explore pathways for nuclear development in our state, several groups are working to educate Montana communities about the risks this industry poses. Recently, MEIC hosted a panel in Billings to discuss the realities of nuclear energy, which included discussions of cost, feasibility, social impacts, environmental risks, and justice issues. Krystal Two Bulls, executive director of Honor the Earth, and Clint McRae, a fourth-generation rancher, spoke about the long history of broken industry promises and the risks to the land and water that the Colstrip community depends on.

With these changes at the state and federal levels, communities across Montana may find themselves in fights against unwanted and unneeded nuclear energy projects that can result in water loss and contamination, long-term waste issues, and public health impacts, all in exchange for relatively few permanent jobs. Before moving forward, we need a transparent public conversation about whether this trade-off truly serves everyone’s long-term interests.



# Gut Bug News

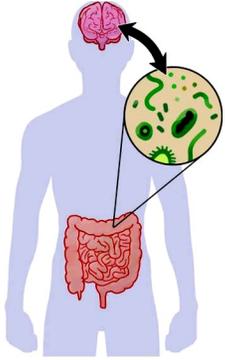
By Valerie Ricker RDN, LN, CDCES | 406-353-3130



## What is the Gastrointestinal (GI) Microbiome?

The GI microbiome is a busy community with trillions of bacteria, fungi, viruses, and other microbes that live throughout the digestive system, with the majority living in the large intestine. This microbiome helps with many different body functions, including digestion, immune function, and protection from pathogens.

## GI Microbiome Influence on Human Health



- **Mental Health:** Communication between the GI tract and the brain is called the Gut-Brain Axis. A healthy microbiome helps to promote positive mood and cognitive function.
- **Digestive Health:** Microbes break down complex carbohydrates, dietary fiber, proteins, and fats and help to make vitamins.
- **Metabolism:** A healthy microbiome promotes improved blood glucose and reduced metabolic inflammation.
- **Gut Barrier:** Healthy microbes maintain a thin mucus layer that protects the intestinal barrier and keeps toxic materials from leaking into the bloodstream.
- **Immune System:** Approximately 70-80% of immune cells live in the gut. The microbiome helps to support and regulate the immune system.

## Chronic Conditions Affected by the GI Microbiome:



- **Obesity:** Overweight and obese individuals have less diversity and lower numbers of healthy bacteria in the GI microbiome.



- **Type 2 Diabetes:** A poor-quality microbiome can lead to insulin resistance, decreased insulin sensitivity, and type 2 diabetes.



- **Cardiovascular Disease (CVD):** Healthy gut bacteria can protect against chronic inflammation and plaque formation, reducing CVD risk.



- **Mental Health:** Gut microbiota changes can lead to mental health disorders, including depression and anxiety.



- **Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD):** When the good and harmful bacteria become unbalanced, the immune system reacts, causing intestinal inflammation, and IBD can occur.

## TIPS FOR A HEALTHIER MICROBIOME

### Food First

High fiber, probiotic, and prebiotic foods help to feed healthy bacteria.

- **High Fiber:** Fruits, Vegetables, Beans and Lentils
- **Probiotics:** Yogurt, Kefir, Fermented Vegetables
- **Prebiotics:** Onion, Garlic, Nuts, and Berries



### Stress Reduction

Stress can decrease the number and variety of healthy microbes, leading to increased inflammation in the body and brain.

**Ways to Reduce Stress:** Meditation, Prayer, Tapping, Yoga, Behavioral Health Therapy.



(Continued on page 11)

## Gut Bug News

(Continued from page 10)

### Food Elimination and Sensitivity Testing

Food intolerances can disrupt a healthy microbiome and cause inflammation in the gut and throughout the body. If you suspect a food sensitivity or intolerance, consult a nutrition specialist or provider who can recommend an elimination diet or lab testing to determine what foods could be an issue.



**Common intolerances include:** Wheat, Gluten, Dairy, Lactose, Corn, Soy, and Yeast.

### Other Factors to Consider



- **Environmental Factors:** Exposure to mold, pollution, or other household toxins can affect the number and diversity of the microbiome. Consider contacting an environmental specialist who can assess your home and work environments.



- **Tobacco Use:** Using cigarettes, e-cigarettes, and chewing tobacco can change gut microbiota, leading to chronic inflammation and disease. If you are ready to decrease or quit using tobacco, reach out to your provider for assistance.



- **Physical Activity:** People who consistently exercise have a more robust microbiome. Regular activity can also help with weight control and improve insulin sensitivity.

## ANTI-INFLAMMATORY LIFESTYLE

- ◆ BE ACTIVE EVERY DAY
- ◆ EAT A COLORFUL AND WELL-BALANCED DIET
- ◆ FOOD FIRST, SUPPLEMENTS SECOND
- ◆ MANAGE STRESS
- ◆ GET 7-9 HOURS OF QUALITY SLEEP PER NIGHT
- ◆ GET TO A HEALTHIER WEIGHT
- ◆ DO THINGS YOU LOVE WITH PEOPLE YOU LOVE



### Increase

**Fruits and Vegetables:** Aim for 1/2- 1 cup of fruit per day; Aim for 3+ cups of vegetables per day; Fresh, frozen or canned all count!

**Omega-3's:** Aim for 2-3 servings per week; Salmon, tuna, sardines, fish oil capsules, flax seed, chia seeds, nuts, whole grains.

**Monounsaturated Fats:** Olive oil, avocado oil, avocados, nuts.

**Fiber:** Beans, peas, lentils, brown rice, oatmeal, oat bran, nuts, popcorn, fruits and veggies.

**Protein:** Wild game, poultry, fish, lean beef, lean pork, beans, peas, lentils, nuts and seeds.

**Herbs & Spices:** Turmeric, ginger, sage, cumin, rosemary, paprika, rosemary, thyme, cloves, cinnamon, black and green tea

**Desserts/Snacks:** Limit sweets. Dark chocolate (70% cocoa or more)



### Decrease

**Trans-fats:** Partially hydrogenated oils, cakes, cookies, pie crusts, frozen pizza, warm-up or deli food, fast food, sweet rolls, creamer.

**Refined Vegetable Oils:** Soybean, corn, sunflower, safflower, grapeseed, cottonseed, canola (?).

**Eat Less Sugars and Simple Carbs:** White bread, bagels, instant rice, instant potatoes, sweetened cereals, candy, baked goods, Jello, fruit juice, pop, sweet tea, sweet coffee beverages, juice cocktail.

**Processed Meats/Saturated Fats:** Lunch/deli meats, hot dogs, bacon, breakfast sausage, Polish dogs, meat sticks, fatty cuts of meat (T-bone, ribs).



# Brownfields Compliance and Upcoming 2026

Kermit Snow Jr, BTRP Compliance Officer

Wahey Neetine. Hello my relatives, the start of 2026 is well on its way, we've put 2025 behind us with some cleanups done and more to look forward to, as we make our way in this new year. One of our big cleanups, was on the Old Lodge Pole Elementary School, we can now put that one in the books. This cleanup will be very beneficial, not only to the Tribe, but also for the Lodge Pole Community, as this will give them another building they can use. As with all cleanups done by our Program, once we are done and signed off on, we turn it back over to the Tribe. It is now up to the Tribe on what to do with the building, hopefully with input from the community. In the past public meetings, we let the community know what we were doing with the building and then after cleanup, what are some ideas they would like to see done with the building when it is cleaned up. We let them and the Tribe know, that once we were done, we are no longer obligated to put in any funds to fix it up. One of their options are to go after a Grant or spend their own money, these are just a couple of many options they face. Our other cleanup, was for the Old Water Treatment Plant, which for a small building was in pretty bad shape. The damaged roof, broken windows and doors, left this building wide open to not only the elements, but also various species of birds, animals, and the community. The cleanup and removal of water tanks was done and the building was ready to go. With the damaged roof, broken windows and doors, I believe the funds needed to fix this building was not worth the money, the cost would be more than the building was worth. After getting quotes from various Contractors and the prices they each gave, the Tribe decided it was too much and therefore would have the building demolished instead. We had also been working

with the Fort Belknap Tribal Housing Authority (FBTHA) and helping them get some homes abated and cleaned. This sort of collaboration is good for both FBTHA and the Brownfields Program on getting things done for the Tribe & Community. We ended up cleaning up five burned homes and abating four homes of asbestos & lead. This type of work also helps FBTHA with HUD requirements and keeps the homes and their tenants healthy. We have some old projects and a new one in the works this upcoming year. We had originally had the Pink Church in our plans, but because of inflation since our Contracts were awarded, the bids came in way over budget. We will now try and tackle the Pink Church and the Old Agency Landfill this year. We have already had Public meetings regarding these two projects and have started the ball rolling to get these projects underway.



(Continued on page 13)

# Brownfields Compliance and Upcoming 2026

(Continued from page 12)

There is one new project we are looking at now, the John Capture Center, formerly the Hays-Lodge Pole High School. I was in the second to last class to graduate from that school, that was a few years ago. We will be setting up a Public meeting for that project soon. As we wait for these projects to get started, I am keeping up with my monthly Transfer Site Inspections in all three communities of Fort Belknap Agency, Lodge Pole, and Hays. I have to commend the Prairie Mountain Utilities staff on trying to keep these sites in compliance, they do a great job of cleaning up after the communities at each of these sites, and we will continue to try and work with them to stay in compliance. I am working with the Little River Trading

Post (LRTP) staff on keeping up with the 30-Day Walkthrough Inspection each month and providing them with information on training for their staff and keeping them up to date with any new information pertain-

ing to UST Regulations. The LRTP station looks really great and have been going strong since the new makeover, new tanks, dispensers, canopy, ATG, and Deli. It was good to get a text and pic from my good friend Ben Thomas (UST Training) of him and the girls from LRTP at the Western Petroleum Marketers Association Expo 2026 in Las Vegas. They got the chance to see vendors from all over and see some of the products and services they could use at their store. I'm hoping the new hire will also go to the UST Boot Camp in Texas, put on by my good friends from Oneida Nation (Vicki & Mike) and Jeff D (NA Source), as any type of training in the UST arena will help them in their store. We have some good events coming up for our staff, the big one comes in August, the Tribal Lands and Environment Forum, which will be in Oklahoma City, OK. this year. We have a SafetyFest Training in Helena, the All Grantee meeting in Denver, the Tribal Knowledge Circle/Cherokee Nation Brownfields Workshop in Tulsa to name a few gatherings of Tribal Brownfields Tribal members. We are also involved, with Montana Tribes & EPA, in a Tire Shredder Collaborative. The Blackfoot Tribe is purchasing a Tire Shredder with the SWIFR Grant they received and are putting together a User Agreement for all Montana Tribes to share in this endeavor. That is some of what is going on with the Brownfields Program, there is usually more that unexpectedly comes up, but we always find a way to deal with it. We also ask that the Community feel free to contact us with any sites they see that might be contaminated, an open dump, or any site they feel could be hazardous to the surrounding community. They can contact our office at (406) 353-8411/8368/8431 or can go to the Fort Belknap website and fill out the necessary paperwork. Until next time my friends, have a great Spring. AHO!



# HISTORY OF MINING IN THE LITTLE ROCKY MOUNTAINS

## TIME LINE 1884-2002

Researched and compiled by the Fort Belknap Environmental Protection Department Staff | Created 2011

- ⇒ **1884** - Gold illegally discovered on Fort Belknap Indian Reservation in the Little Rocky Mountains.
- ⇒ **1895** - Gros Ventre and Assiniboine of Fort Belknap Reservation, under duress, unwillingly sign "GRINNELL AGREEMENT" giving up a portion of our reservation containing gold to the U.S. Federal Government.
- ⇒ **Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century** - Mining companies tunnel into the Little Rockies for gold while tribal members use the mountains for fasting, vision quests and hunting. Underground mining continues until the 1950's
- ⇒ **1977** - Zortman-Landusky Gold Mines operated under the Small Miners Exclusion, 5 acres or less.
- ⇒ **1979** - The first operating permit for the Zortman-Landusky Gold mines, was issued under a draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), completed by the Department of State Lands and the U.S. Bureau of Land Management. Pegasus Gold Corp. and its subsidiary, Zortman Mining Inc. (ZMI) built two connected cyanide heap-leach mines. The companies promise not to mine sulfide ore, which creates lethal brew called acid mine drainage when exposed to air and water.
- ⇒ **1979, April 3** - Fort Belknap Indian Community Council (FBICC) go on record opposing the Zortman-Landusky mines, citing the 1908 Winters -vs- United States Supreme Court Decision. There is no proof that the area can in fact be reclaimed, and concrete evidence should be required before allowing the mines to reopen, the heavy metals and cyanide salts from old mine tailings and heap areas have failed to hold vegetative cover after thirty years.
- ⇒ **1981** - The BLM 3809 regulations went into effect, the Zortman-Landusky mines expand ten-times without any additional EIS's.
- ⇒ **1990** - The Native American group Red Thunder joins with environmental groups to appeal federal for Zortman-Landusky's 10<sup>th</sup> expansion, warning that it will cause acid mine drainage. The appeal is denied.
- ⇒ **1991** - Pegasus offers scholarships and environmental monitoring to the Fort Belknap Community Council if tribal members stop opposing the mine. The Council refuses.
- ⇒ **1992** - Zortman-Landusky mines submit application to expand the twin mines to 1,200 acres (11<sup>th</sup> expansion). Acid Mine Drainage (AMD) identified as a problem with current and future mine operations.
- ⇒ **1993** - Island Mountain Protectors (IMP) and Red Thunder, grassroots environmental groups file "Citizen Notice of Intent to Sue" Zortman-Landusky mines under the Clean Water Act. FBICC also take legal action.
- ⇒ **1993** - IMP, Red Thunder and FBICC actions result in a lawsuit against Pegasus Gold Corporation for violations of the Clean Water Act.
- ⇒ **1993, July** - EPA issued a Notice of Violation (NOV) to the State of Montana and ZMI/Pegasus Gold for discharging without permit from (3) sources at the Zortman mine and from (4) sources at the Landusky mine.
- ⇒ **1994** - Montana Department of Environmental Quality (formerly Montana Department of State Lands) and BLM approve a proposal, through an EIS to double the mine size. FBICC, IMP and environmental organizations challenged the decision by filing lawsuits.
- ⇒ **1994, November** - Gros Ventre and Assiniboine Tribes send notice of intent to file citizen suit against ZMI/Pegasus Gold under Federal Clean Water Act (CWA) to EPA.
- ⇒ **1995, June** - The Department of Justice filed a complaint in Montana District Court in Billings, MT on behalf of EPA against ZMI/Pegasus Gold for violations of the Federal CWA. The State filed a supplemental complaint for violations of the Montana Water Quality Act. The FBCC, on behalf of the Gros Ventre and Assiniboine Tribes, and the IMP, also filed a complaint in Montana District Court for violations of the Federal CWA.
- ⇒ **1996, July** - An historic \$37 million Consent Decree settlement was agreed to by Pegasus Gold Corporation over violations of the Clean Water Act (CWA). It imposes the highest penalties and strictest compliance requirements ever on a mining operation under the CWA. It is the first successful prosecution by a Tribal government of an off-reservation polluter under the CWA and first decree in which a Tribal government joined the federal and state governments in imposing penalties and compliance requirements on a polluter. Consent Decree negotiated by FBICC, Montana DEQ, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Pegasus Gold Corporation to resolve CWA violations and provided compensation to FBICC and increased the Tribes involvement in future actions.
- ⇒ **1996, October** - BLM and DEQ issue Record of Decision (ROD) on expanding the Zortman-Landusky mines with additional mining and new reclamation plans.
- ⇒ **1996** - FBICC, IMP and National Wildlife Federation file appeal against BLM's and DEQ's Record of Decision and requests stay of mine expansion.
- ⇒ **1997, January** - The Tribes, jointly with National Wildlife Federation and Montana Environmental Information Center, subsequently filed a major lawsuit against Montana State DEQ to halt mining operations. The lawsuit alleges that DEQ's decision to allow the largest expansion to date of operations at the mines violates state law.
- ⇒ **1997, June** - The Interior Board of Land Appeals (IBLA) grants stay on the expansion, prohibiting mine expansion until the lawsuit resolved.

(Continued on page 15)

## HISTORY OF MINING IN THE LITTLE ROCKY MOUNTAINS TIME LINE

(Continued from page 14)

- ⇒ **1997, September** - Federal and state environmental agencies fine Pegasus and ZMI \$25,000 for violating the clean water settlement by polluting a stream in the Little Rockies.
- ⇒ **1998, January** - Pegasus Gold Corporation files for Chapter 11 Bankruptcy protection in Reno Nevada. Mining in the Little Rocky Mountains ceased.
- ⇒ **1998, May** - IBLA directed BLM to consult with FBICC to protect the Tribes Trust Resources in the Little Rocky Mountains.
- ⇒ **1998, June 1** - BLM and DEQ issue Record of Decision selecting reclamation under Alternative 3 of the 1996 Final EIS, *Zortman-Landusky Mines Reclamation Plan Modifications and Mine Life Extensions*.
- ⇒ **1998, November 20** - The IBLA issues an Order that sets aside the BLM Record of Decision of June 1, 1998 and directs that "... BLM must separately analyze, and consult with the Tribes about, potential effects on Tribal water resources and report on its action in its decision.
- ⇒ **1999, February 1** - BLM Field Manager Rick Hotaling sends a letter to Joseph McConnell, President, Fort Belknap Indian Community Council, requesting initiation of consultation discussions in reference to the IBLA Order.
- ⇒ **1999, February 5** - A meeting was held in Billings with BLM, DEQ, EPA, U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs, FBICC and the Center for Science in Public Participation (CSP<sup>2</sup>) to discuss adequacy of the Groundwater Investigation conducted under the Consent Decree and its applicability to final reclamation.
- ⇒ **1999, March 9** - FBICC responds to Mr. Hotaling's letter of February 1, 1999. FBICC requests consultation to begin immediately, and provides FBICC Alternative reclamation plan prepared by Jim Kuipers. Mining Engineer with CSP<sup>2</sup>, for the BLM to consider.
- ⇒ **1999, March 17** - BLM provides all parties a draft report prepared by BLM consulting hydrogeologist Kathy Gallagher that compares and evaluates the groundwater information from the Final Zortman-Landusky EIS, the Groundwater Investigation, and the Public Health Assessment.
- ⇒ **1999, March 24** - A meeting was held in Helena, attendance includes FBICC, BLM, DEQ, and EPA technical staff, management and legal counsel. Concludes to arrange for meeting of the technical staffs at the mine site to develop reclamation issues.
- ⇒ **1999, April 14** - A meeting of the various Agencies technical specialists is held at the mine site from 4/14 to 4/16. Issues covered range from water monitoring to Agencies support for supplemental funding from Congress. The group agrees to continue discussions on possible immediate reclamation needs.
- ⇒ **1999, May 11** - BLM provides a technical completeness review of FBICC Alternative reclamation plan and requests additional information on a variety of components.
- ⇒ **1999, May 22** - Interior Secretary Babbitt and BLM State Director Larry Hamilton visit Fort Belknap and hear concerns regarding the mines and reclamation.
- ⇒ **1999, May 24** - EPA Regional 8 Administrator, Bill Yellowtail, meets with FBICC to discuss the situation with the mines.
- ⇒ **1999, June 2** - BLM management and staff plus DEQ staff, meet with FBICC on reclamation options and how to best achieve consultation. FBICC, President Joseph McConnell asks that the technical people be allowed to develop this as much as possible.
- ⇒ **1999, June 23** - The technical working group holds a brief meeting at the mine site. Spectrum Engineering personnel, hired by the DEQ and BLM to develop reclamation plans, is introduced to the working group members.
- ⇒ **1999, July 20** - A technical working group meeting is held at the mine site from 7/20 to 7/21. The group discusses use of the Multiple Accounts Analysis (MAA) and various processes for getting some reclamation work done this year.
- ⇒ **1999, August 24** - A technical working group meeting is held at the mine site from 8/24 to 8/25. The group discuss with EPA, the King Creek tailings removal project and integration with Landusky mine reclamation. A tour of the mines and, specifically, the 1999 reclamation work areas, is held for FBICC members and staff.
- ⇒ **1999, September 1** - A letter is sent from BLM Field Manager Rick Hotaling to FBICC requesting concurrence on phase-1 interim reclamation.
- ⇒ **1999, September 14** - FBICC in general agreement with phase-1 interim reclamation efforts for 1999.
- ⇒ **1999, September 20** - The technical working group holds a conference call. The group discusses the Montana Consensus Council contract, work plan, and conduct of the MAA.
- ⇒ **1999, October 1** - Dean Stiffarm hired by FBICC to serve as the Environmental Liaison on the Zortman-Landusky mining issues.
- ⇒ **1999, October 18** - The technical working group meets at the mine site from 10/18 to 10/19. The Montana Consensus Council provides facilitation. The group discusses MAA development.
- ⇒ **1999, December 8** - The technical working group meets in Billings from 12/8 to 12/10. The group discusses the mass balance reports and MAA format, and overall schedule for 2000 reclamation work. The Montana Consensus Council facilitates the meeting on 12/10.
- ⇒ **2000, January 6** - A conference call is held among the

(Continued on page 16)

## HISTORY OF MINING IN THE LITTLE ROCKY MOUNTAINS TIME LINE

(Continued from page 15)

- Senior Management and staff. Included in the call is Joseph McConnell, FBICC, Larry Hamilton, BLM State Director, Bill Yellowtail, EPA Administrator and Mark Simonich, DEQ Director. The main issue discussed is FBICC's demand that BLM and DEQ prepare a Supplemental EIS on reclamation of the mines.
- ⇒ **2000, January 21** - Bill Yellowtail meets with FBICC to discuss mine reclamation and the possible need for a Supplemental EIS.
  - ⇒ **2000, January 24** - A subgroup of the technical working group, which includes DEQ, BLM, EPA and FBICC representatives, meet at Zortman to discuss the regulatory triggers that might require preparation of a Supplemental EIS.
  - ⇒ **2000, January 25** - The technical working group meets in Zortman. Development starts on the MAA for the Zortman Mine reclamation.
  - ⇒ **2000, February 9** - A meeting of the technical working group was held in Billings from 2/9 to 2/11 to score the MAA on the Zortman Mine reclamation alternatives. The Senior Management also hold a meeting on 2/9 that includes Bill Yellowtail, EPA Administrator, Larry Hamilton, BLM State Director, Joseph McConnell, FBICC President and Mark Simonich, DEQ Director. EPA announces it is stepping back from the consultation process and only responding to specific requests for technical assistance. The technical working group holds a meeting on 2/11 that includes individuals and traditionalists from Fort Belknap to provide input for the MAA on cultural and social issues and their relative importance.
  - ⇒ **2000, February 25** - FBICC and Legal Counsel meet with Interior Secretary Babbitt in Washington D.C. and visit Congressional Offices. The Interior Secretary discusses trust issues and the Grinnell lands issues with FBICC.
  - ⇒ **2000, March 8** - FBICC holds public meeting at Hays to explain the MAA process to residents and receive their input.
  - ⇒ **2000, March 9** - FBICC holds a public meeting at Lodge Pole to explain the MAA process to residents and receive their input.
  - ⇒ **2000, March 10** - Stanley Jaynes, Acting BLM Field Manager, Scott Haight, BLM and Wayne Jepson, DEQ meet with FBICC to discuss the MAA results and the success of the technical working group. They confirm with the Council an agenda for the 3/24 Senior Management meeting.
  - ⇒ **2000, March 23** - The technical working group meets in Zortman to discuss MAA development, monitoring, and land application disposal issues.
  - ⇒ **2000, March 24** - Larry Hamilton, BLM State Director, and Mark Simonich, DEQ Director, plus staffs meet with the FBICC. A review of the MAA progress is presented. The BLM and DEQ announce they have decided to prepare SEIS on the final reclamation plan. The agencies ask FBICC if they want to be a cooperating agency on the SEIS. The FBICC government endorses the agency decision to prepare the SEIS and expresses the desire to continue working with the agencies, even during the lawsuit they intend to file in Federal Court on trust issues. The technical working group presents a plan for interim reclamation in 2000 and 2001.
  - ⇒ **2000, March 28** - The FBICC requests EPA to provide technical assistance on both MAA and the SEIS process.
  - ⇒ **2000, April 12** - The FBICC makes a public announcement that they are suing the BLM, BIA, and IHS over trust responsibility issues associated with the mines.
  - ⇒ **2000, April 17** - The BLM and DEQ receive written concurrence from the FBICC on interim reclamation plans for the years 2000 and 2001.
  - ⇒ **2000, April 18** - The technical working group meets in Polson, on 4/18 and 4/19. The meeting focuses on the development of the Landusky Mine reclamation MAA and revegetation study needs.
  - ⇒ **2000, April 25** - The FBICC files a complaint against the United States in Federal District Court alleging that the BLM, BIA and IHS have violated trust responsibilities by allowing operation of the Zortman and Landusky Mines. The Complaint seeks, among other things, a writ of mandamus compelling the BLM to reclaim the mining sites in compliance with the Montana Constitution and the United States' procedural and substantive trust obligations regarding Tribal interests and resources.
  - ⇒ **2000, July 25** - The technical working group meets in Zortman from 7/25 to 7/26. The group works on a consensus scoring for the Landusky Mine MAA and on other items. A tour of the mine site is provided for several FBICC members.
  - ⇒ **2000, August 2** - A Senior Management meeting is held in Billings. Participants include, Tom Lonnie, BLM Deputy State Director, Mark Simonich, DEQ Director, Rebecca Hamner, EPA Acting Regional Administrator and Joseph McConnell, President FBICC, and respective staffs. The main topic of discussion is funding sources and status of the SEIS.
  - ⇒ **2000, August 3** - The EPA Acting Regional Administrator Rebecca Hamner tours the Zortman-Landusky mines with FBICC members.
  - ⇒ **2000, August 28** - The technical working group meets in Bozeman. The meeting includes staff and legal counsel. Two simultaneous group meetings are held, one to discuss SEIS preparation and one to discuss MPDES permit development and the water resources monitoring program.
  - ⇒ **2000, September 7** - A Senior Management meeting is held in Fort Belknap. Tom Lonnie, BLM Deputy State Director, Mark Simonich, DEQ Director, John Wardell, EPA Director and FBICC members present for meeting. The agenda covers the MAA process, interim reclamation and concur-

(Continued on page 17)

## HISTORY OF MINING IN THE LITTLE ROCKY MOUNTAINS TIME LINE

(Continued from page 16)

- rence on its continuance, funding sources, job training and development of an interagency Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on preparation of the SEIS.
- ⇒ **2000, September 19** - The technical working group meets in Zortman from 9/19 to 9/20. The group reviews the MAA scores on both the Zortman and Landusky mines. A SEIS team meeting is held on 9/21 with all parties in attendance to discuss SEIS preparation and assignments.
  - ⇒ **2000, October 17** - A SEIS team meeting is held in Billings. Attendance at the meeting includes members of the technical working group from BLM, DEQ, EPA and FBICC.
  - ⇒ **2000, November 2** - The technical working group meets in Billings to discuss finalizing the MAA and the continued role of the working group in the SEIS preparation.
  - ⇒ **2000, November 3** - A Senior Management meeting is held in Billings. Tom Lonnie, BLM Deputy State Director, John Wardell, EPA Director, Mark Simonich, DEQ Director, and Joseph McConnell, President FBICC in attendance. The group discusses the status and schedule of the SEIS, funding, function of the technical working group, and the preferred alternative identification process.
  - ⇒ **2000, November 7** - All parties sign the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between BLM, DEQ, EPA, and FBICC on preparation of the SEIS.
  - ⇒ **2000, November 27** - The technical working group meets in Billings to make final revisions to the MAA. The group reviews the loading calculations prepared by Robertson GeoConsultants and discusses the need to provide for upgrade of water capture facilities across all alternatives.
  - ⇒ **2000, November 30** - Working drafts of the SEIS text are provided to FBICC for their review and comments.
  - ⇒ **2000, December 14** - A SEIS team meeting is held in Billings. Attendance includes Legal Counsel and technical representatives from FBICC. FBICC comments on the working drafts of the SEIS are discussed. A revision and review schedule for completion of the draft SEIS is established.
  - ⇒ **2001, January 4** - A Senior Management meeting is held in Helena to discuss the preferred alternative identification. FBICC President Joseph McConnell unable to attend, so the preferred alternative discussion is postponed. Remaining Managers, staff, and Legal Counsel discuss the range of alternatives in the SEIS. The range is considered adequate, but development by the technical working group of a mid-range reclamation alternative for the Zortman mine is recommended.
  - ⇒ **2001, January 10** - The technical working group meets in Bozeman. Alternative Z-6 is developed and scored using the MAA process. The group also discusses the SEIS analysis, scheduling and funding.
  - ⇒ **2001, January 22** - A Senior Management meeting is held in Helena to discuss the preferred alternative identification. The technical working group presents the results of the MAA, including new Zortman mine Alternative Z-6. The Agencies identify Alternative Z-6 as their preferred alternative for the draft SEIS. FBICC says they can concur with the identification of Z-6. The group then discusses the Landusky mine reclamation alternatives. The Agencies identify L-4 as their preferred alternative. FBICC express interest in Alternative L-5. The technical working group is directed to look at possible changes to Alternative L-4 and L-5, which might either improve L-4 performance or address concerns with L-5 impacts.
  - ⇒ **2001, January 22** - FBICC meets with Judy Martz, Governor of Montana discussing the Zortman-Landusky mining issues.
  - ⇒ **2001, January 25** - A meeting of the technical working group is held in Helena to discuss Landusky mine alternative adjustments. No major changes are identified for Alternatives L-4 or L-5.
  - ⇒ **2001, January 30** - A meeting of the technical working group was held in Billings to hear the results of the pilot test on biological treatment of nitrates and selenium in the leach pad waters.
  - ⇒ **2001, February 6** - The technical working group meets in Bozeman to discuss some changes to Alternative L-4, rescore the Landusky mine MAA, and discuss additional interim reclamation measures.
  - ⇒ **2001, February 12** - A Senior Management meeting is held in Helena to discuss the preferred alternative identification, additional interim reclamation, and comments on the SEIS working drafts. It is agreed that the preferred alternatives identified in the Draft SEIS will be Alternative Z-6 and L-4.
  - ⇒ **2001, February 22** - The second round of the working draft SEIS chapters is provided to FBICC for their review and comments.
  - ⇒ **2001, March 12** - A Senior Management meeting is held in Helena to discuss final concerns prior to publication of the Draft SEIS.
  - ⇒ **2001, March 12** - FBICC meets with Judy Martz, Governor of Montana requesting her support in obtaining the shortfall of money to reclaim the Zortman-Landusky mines.
  - ⇒ **2001, March 16** - A meeting is held in Billings between Joseph McConnell, President FBICC and Matt Millenbach, BLM State Director to discuss the reclamation status, Grinnell Lands transfer, and contacts in the Washington D.C. offices of the Department of the Interior and BLM.
  - ⇒ **2001, March 28** - FBICC President, Joseph McConnell; Art Warrior, Gene Helgeson, Members; Dean Stiffarm, Environmental Liaison and Jim Kuipers, Tribal Consultant in Washington D.C. Held meetings with Senators Burns, Baucus and Rehberg office to discuss the Zortman-Landusky

(Continued on page 18)

## HISTORY OF MINING IN THE LITTLE ROCKY MOUNTAINS TIME LINE

(Continued from page 17)

- mining issues. Also meet with BLM and BIA staff to discuss Zortman-Landusky mining issues.
- ⇒ **2001, May 3** - A Senior Management meeting was held in the Tribal Chambers on release of draft SEIS and funding of the preferred alternatives.
  - ⇒ **2001, May 7** - FBICC held a meeting with Commissioners of Blaine and Phillips counties and the Little Rockies Development to discuss Zortman-Landusky mining issues.
  - ⇒ **2001, May 16** - A letter is sent to Joseph McConnell, President FBICC, from Matt Millenbach, BLM State Director, expressing support for the Agencies preferred alternatives.
  - ⇒ **2001, June 27** - FBICC received letter from Judy Martz, Governor of Montana supporting the Tribes effort on obtaining Congressional Appropriations for the shortfall of money identified during the SEIS process.
  - ⇒ **2001, August 2** - Submitted letter on the Draft SEIS to Matt Millenbach, BLM State Director and Jan Sensibaugh, DEQ Director requesting a 30-day extension.
  - ⇒ **2001, August 9** - Submitted comments for Joseph McConnell, President FBICC on the Draft SEIS to Matt Millenbach, BLM State Director and Jan Sensibaugh, DEQ Director.
  - ⇒ **2001, September 25** - A technical working group meeting is held in Zortman from 9/25 to 9/26 to discuss Alternative L-4 versus L-5, MAA scoring, biological treatment system, and land application.
  - ⇒ **2001, September 27** - Wayne Jepson, DEQ, Scott Haight, BLM, and Bill Maehl, Spectrum Engineering meet with Tribal Councilmen Gene Helgeson, Joe Fox, and Curtis Horn on the interim reclamation proposal. FBICC after reviewing interim proposal rejects proposal.
  - ⇒ **2001, October 11** - A Federal Lawsuit Negotiations meeting was held in Billings between BLM, BIA, IHS, EPA, DEQ and FBICC. The main topic of the meeting was BLM transferring the Grinnell Lands back to FBICC.
  - ⇒ **2001, November 20** - A meeting was held for the new Tribal Council members with Tim Coulter and Andy Huff from the Indian Law Resource Center, up-dating everyone on the Federal Lawsuit against BLM, BIA and IHS over Trust Obligations.
  - ⇒ **2001, December 17** - A mine tour of the Zortman-Landusky mines is conducted for the newly elected Tribal Council members. Viewed the interim reclamation that has been completed to date.
  - ⇒ **2002, January 9** - A Federal Lawsuit Negotiations meeting is held in the Tribal Council Chambers with BLM, EPA, BIA, IHS and FBICC in attendance. The main topic of the meeting was the Grinnell Lands being transferred back to the Fort Belknap Reservation.
  - ⇒ **2002, January 9** - FBICC received copy of the Final SEIS on the reclamation alternatives for the Zortman-Landusky mines.
  - ⇒ **2002, January 22** - Ben Speakthunder, President FBICC in Washington D.C. meeting with the Montana Congressional Offices, on the Zortman-Landusky mining issues.
  - ⇒ **2002, February 22** - Bruce Reed, BLM Field Manager sent a copy of the Draft Record of Decision (ROD) for review along with a request to meet and discuss any comments the Tribal Council may have on the Draft ROD.
  - ⇒ **2002, March 6** - FBICC hires Van Ness Feldman Lobbying Firm to represent the Tribes on Lobbying efforts in Washington D.C.
  - ⇒ **2002, March 13** - Bruce Reed, BLM Field Manager and Jan Sensibaugh, DEQ Director and staff meet with FBICC to discuss the Draft ROD. The Tribal Council passes a resolution objecting to the ROD. FBICC expresses concern with reclamation management, transfer of the Grinnell Lands to Tribal control and need for additional funding for reclamation.
  - ⇒ **2002, March 15** - Bruce Reed, BLM Field Manager sent letter to FBICC to verify that the Tribal Council will not be providing any written comments on the Draft ROD, but offers to accept such comments until March 22<sup>nd</sup>.
  - ⇒ **2002, March 29** - Bruce Reed, BLM Field Manager and Jan Sensibaugh, DEQ Director send FBICC joint letter to FBICC offering the Tribal Council a final opportunity to provide written comments on what would constitute a preferred reclamation decision from FBICC perspective. Requests response by April 12<sup>th</sup>.
  - ⇒ **2002, April 4** - Curt Rich, Van Ness Feldman-Washington D.C. meets with FBICC to develop strategies on Congressional appropriations requests to reclaim the Zortman-Landusky mines. Also were discussed the process of starting a land transfer on the 40,000 acres of the 1895 Grinnell Agreement.
  - ⇒ **2002, April 5** - Ben Speakthunder, President FBICC; John Allen, Will Crasco, Members; Dean Stiffarm, Environmental Liaison; tour Curt Rich, Van Ness Feldman on the Zortman-Landusky mines and provide Curt with an understanding why FBICC would like to see the BLM controlled lands return to the Tribes.
  - ⇒ **2002, April 12** - FBICC President, Ben Speakthunder responds to BLM and DEQ letter of March 29, 2002, stating that the Tribes support a reclamation decision that includes Alternative Z-6 and L-4 along with six environmental projects.
  - ⇒ **2002, April 26** - Bruce Reed, BLM Field Manager and Jan Sensibaugh, DEQ Director send joint letter to FBICC advising President Ben Speakthunder that the Agencies will be signing the Record of Decision shortly and selecting Alternatives Z-6 and L-4. The letter also notes that the six environmental projects listed by FBICC may have potential merit, but

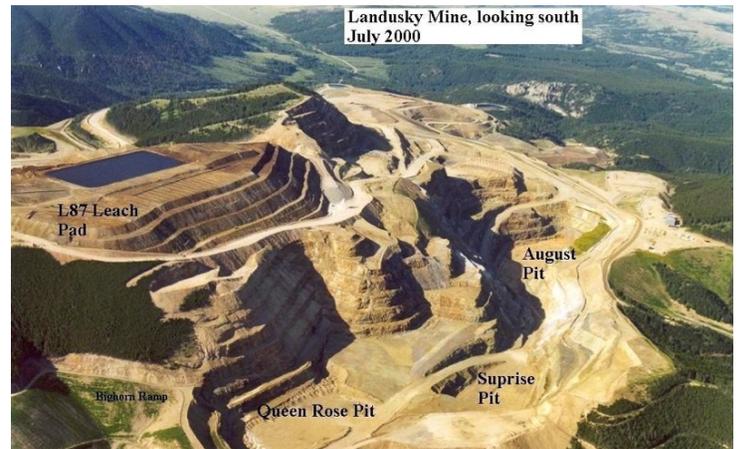
(Continued on page 19)

## HISTORY OF MINING IN THE LITTLE ROCKY MOUNTAINS TIME LINE

(Continued from page 18)

are outside the scope of the reclamation decisions before the Agencies and offers to discuss these projects as part of the settlement discussions with BLM.

- ⇒ **2002, May 2** - BLM and DEQ release the Record of Decision for the Zortman-Landusky mines selecting Alternatives Z-6 and L-4 for reclaiming the bankrupt mines.
- ⇒ **2002, May 13** - FBICC and staff holds conference with Mike Axline/Heather Brinton, Western Environmental Law Center, Tim Coulter/Andy Huff, Indian Law Resource Center, and Curt Rich, Van Ness Feldman Lobbying Firm to discuss strategies on the recently release Record of Decision issued by BLM and DEQ.
- ⇒ **2002, May 28** - Tim Coulter and Andy Huff, Indian Law Resource Center meet with FBICC to discuss filing an Affidavit with Jan Sensibaugh, DEQ Director, stating that FBICC oppose the ROD, and cite the Montana Constitution, Montana Water Quality Act, and the Montana Metal Mines Reclamation Act.
- ⇒ **2002, May 29** - Andy Huff, Indian Law Resource Center hand delivers the Affidavit signed by President Ben Speakthunder to Jan Sensibaugh, DEQ Director opposing the ROD.
- ⇒ **2002, May 21** - Jerome Main, Will Crasco, Julie Kulbeck, FBICC and Dean Stiffarm, Environmental Protection Office meet with Brett French, Billings Gazette to discuss issues concerning the Little Rocky Mountains.
- ⇒ **2002, May 30** - Mike Axline, Western Environmental Law Center, sends Bruce Reed, BLM Field Manager an appeal on behalf of FBICC opposing the ROD.
- ⇒ **2002, May 30** - President Ben Speakthunder and Dean Stiffarm, Environmental Liaison fly to Great Falls to meet with Andy Huff and Denise McVea, Indian Law Resource Center. A meeting was held with the Great Falls Tribune Editorial Board to discuss Zortman-Landusky mining issues from the Tribes perspective.
- ⇒ **2002, June 10** - FBICC held conference call with Curt Rich, Van Ness Feldman Lobbying Firm in Washington D.C. to discuss upcoming Senate hearing which Gail Norton, Secretary of the Interior will be attending on Thursday, June 13<sup>th</sup>.
- ⇒ **2002, June 12** - Billings Gazette news article regarding FBICC efforts on reclaiming the Zortman-Landusky mines and the eventual return of the Grinnell Lands back to Tribal ownership.
- ⇒ **2002, June 27** - FBICC meets with Governor Judy Martz over the Zortman- Landusky Mining issues and the short fall of \$33.5 million needed for full reclamation of mine sites, plus the additional \$14 million the Tribes identified for environmental projects. In attendance for the meeting were FBICC President, Ben Speakthunder; Council Members Raymond Chandler and Ethel Bear; Secretary/Treasurer Julie Kulbeck; Tim Coulter and Andy Huff, Indian Law Resource Center; Dean Stiffarm, Environmental Liaison; Jan Sensibaugh, DEQ Director; Lori Ryan, Indian Affairs Office and Governor Judy Martz.



## IN ADDITION TO THIS TIME LINE

By Mitchell Healy, Acting Environmental Manager

Reclamation at both mines sites has been completed by 2005. The major work included filling in pits, lining leach pads, constructing water treatment plants and settling ponds, removing the waste rock sites, and revegetation. Although the reclamation has been completed and somewhat satisfied the original tribal lawsuit, the primary issue is a perpetual issue, meaning the mine pollution impacts to the streams, springs, and groundwater are in need of perpetual treatment. This applies to all the waters coming from both mines that remain on non-tribal lands and that flow onto the Fort Belknap Indian Reservation. So, the next issue is obtaining funding that allows for the mines water treatment plants to continue operation. There is funding coming from several sources, but it would be more ideal if there were indefinite funding to ensure Fort Belknap Tribes that treatment measures will remain intact for as long as needed, which in this case, in perpetuity.

The concern for Fort Belknap has always been the water pollution transporting downstream onto the Reservation. The visual impacts of the water pollution, coming from the Landusky mine, into Mission Canyon have been quite noticed by tribal members. There is a major concern of the potential health risks associated with the heavy metals coming from the mines. Tribal Leadership would like an epidemiology study done primarily in the southern portion of the Reservation, but this is out of my professional knowledge to say what it would take to get something like this done.

Since the reclamation, there have been a number of improvements to the water treatment systems to treat more water, reduce heavy metals, discharge cleaner water, etc. Although the improvements are definitely appreciated by all the downstream communities, the ultimate priority is for the water to be safe to use now and in the future.

(Continued on page 20)

## HISTORY OF MINING IN THE LITTLE ROCKY MOUNTAINS TIME LINE

(Continued from page 19)

The Aaniiih and Nakoda Tribes have a cultural connection with water, land, wildlife, and the natural environment. Many tribal members continue to practice cultural activities that depend on clean water. With the polluted water coming from the mines and flowing through one of the primary cultural areas of Fort Belknap Reservation, this has been detrimental to tribal members and has raised a significant concern that future generations may not be able to enjoy the waters as our ancestors once did. It's a sad, but a real situation to be in.

In closing, now that we all know the situation with the mines, it would be ideal for all involved parties to remain cooperative and objective, and really work together to develop solutions and ideas that may help improve the water quality for all the downstream communities affected by the water pollution. Fort Belknap was always in opposition to the mines, before and after the Grinnell Agreement of

1895, and today, the bitter taste is still present in many tribal members and for good reason. We all agree that this should not have ever happened, but it did, and now we are faced with a perpetual issue and it's going to require a stable and effective working relationship between Fort Belknap Leadership and State Agencies such as the Department of Environmental Quality and Bureau of Land Management, to be on the same side and figure out the best efforts and solutions to address this terrible situation.

Hope this information was meaningful, and for the next issue, I will provide a detailed summary of the water treatment measures and projects at the mine sites. In the meantime, I will continue to do my best as the Tribal Representative on the Zortman and Landusky Mines Technical Working Group.



INVITING STUDENT'S IN GRADES 4TH - 6TH FROM HAYS/LODGEPOLE ELEMENTARY, DODSON SCHOOL, HARLEM ELEMENTARY AND THE WHITE CLAY LANGUAGE IMMERSION SCHOOL

Fort Belknap Environmental Protection Department Presents

# Earth Day Fair

Wednesday – April 22nd, 2026  
10:00am to 2:30pm | Snake Butte Spring | Fort Belknap Agency, MT

*Mother Earth Takes Care of Us...  
Let's Take Care of Her!*

- Schools are encouraged to provide each student with a sack lunch.
- A potluck for the Presenters will be held during the lunch hour.
- **WE INVITE ALL PROGRAMS AND/OR DEPARTMENTS TO SET UP BOOTHS OR ACTIVITIES TO DO WITH THE YOUTH.**
- If Snake Butte is inaccessible, the Fort Belknap Bingo Hall will be an alternate site.

The Fort Belknap Environmental Protection Department is also collecting incentives to use as door prizes for the students. If you would like to donate any prizes, please contact Kermit Snow, Jr. at (406) 353-8368 or [ksnow@ftbelknap.org](mailto:ksnow@ftbelknap.org); or Megan Martin at (406) 353-8431 or [megan.martin@ftbelknap.org](mailto:megan.martin@ftbelknap.org).

For more information, contact the Fort Belknap Environmental Protection Department  
Phone (406) 353-8384 or email [lonettebc@ftbelknap.org](mailto:lonettebc@ftbelknap.org)

# 7<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL NIC?-MNI (WATER) FORUM

## WHEN

**FRIDAY, APRIL 24, 2026 9 AM - 4:00 PM**  
Coffee Bar/Breakfast/Lunch served  
Registration will begin at 9:00 AM

## Where

**Returning Buffalo Building  
Room 213  
Aaniiih Nakoda College  
Fort Belknap, MT**  
Zoom link will be made available

QUESTIONS? PLEASE CONTACT  
**DAN KINSEY**  
WATER PROJECT MANAGER  
Aaniiih Nakoda College

406-353-3915/  
dkinsey@ancollege.edu  
or Rebecca Bishop  
406-353-3921



## TOPICS:

**WATER IS LIFE !**

**NIC?MNI (CENTER)  
UPDATES**

**GROUND WATER  
PRESENTATION**

**HOW WELL IS YOUR  
WATER? PERSONAL  
WELL TESTING**

**WATER  
SETTLEMENT**

**"THE WATER  
KEEPERS" SKC  
DOCUMENTARY**

**UPCOMING EVENTS  
AND ISSUES ABOUT  
WATER AND  
ENVIRONMENT.**

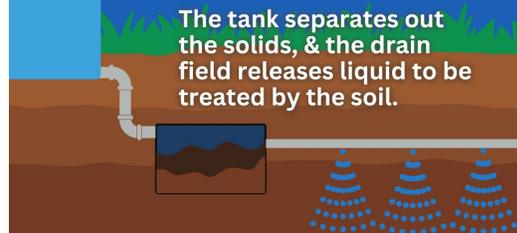
Schedule Subject To  
Change

# Got a Septic System?

**DO YOUR PART TO KEEP OUR  
WATERS CLEAN!**

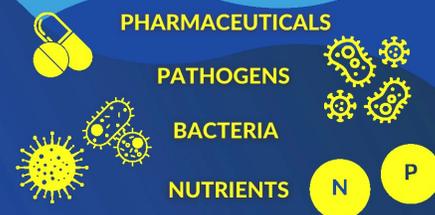
Septic systems are underground wastewater treatment structures with two parts.

The tank separates out the solids, & the drain field releases liquid to be treated by the soil.



If septic systems are not working correctly, the liquid they release can contribute harmful amounts of contaminants to surface & groundwater.

Contaminants from septic systems can include:



In waterbodies, these contaminants can be dangerous to wildlife & human health.

**YOU CAN BE A SEPTIC STEWARD BY  
PLEDGING TO TAKE THESE ACTIONS:**

**1** Avoid flushing harsh chemicals that can kill the beneficial organisms in your tank

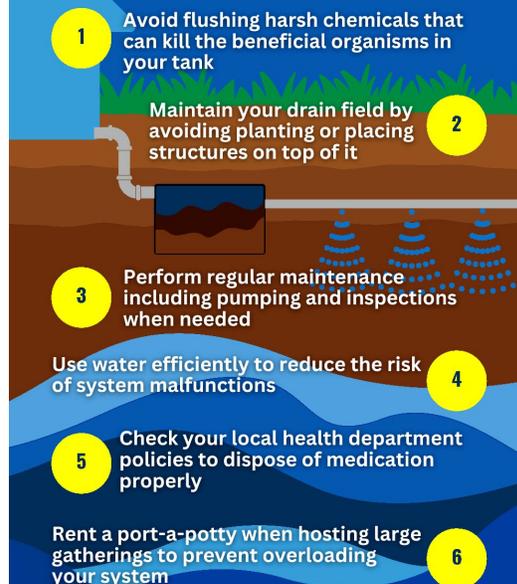
**2** Maintain your drain field by avoiding planting or placing structures on top of it

**3** Perform regular maintenance including pumping and inspections when needed

**4** Use water efficiently to reduce the risk of system malfunctions

**5** Check your local health department policies to dispose of medication properly

**6** Rent a port-a-potty when hosting large gatherings to prevent overloading your system



## How well is your water?



The Aaniiih Nakoda College NIC?-MNI (Water) Center offers personal well testing in the Fort Belknap and surrounding community.

How does this work?

Please contact Truan Yellow-Stone at 406-353-3957. Your information will be placed on the list.

A date and time will be set for the team to take a sample of your well water.

The well water sample will be sent to a lab in Helena to be tested for different major ions, nutrients, nitrates, and trace metals.

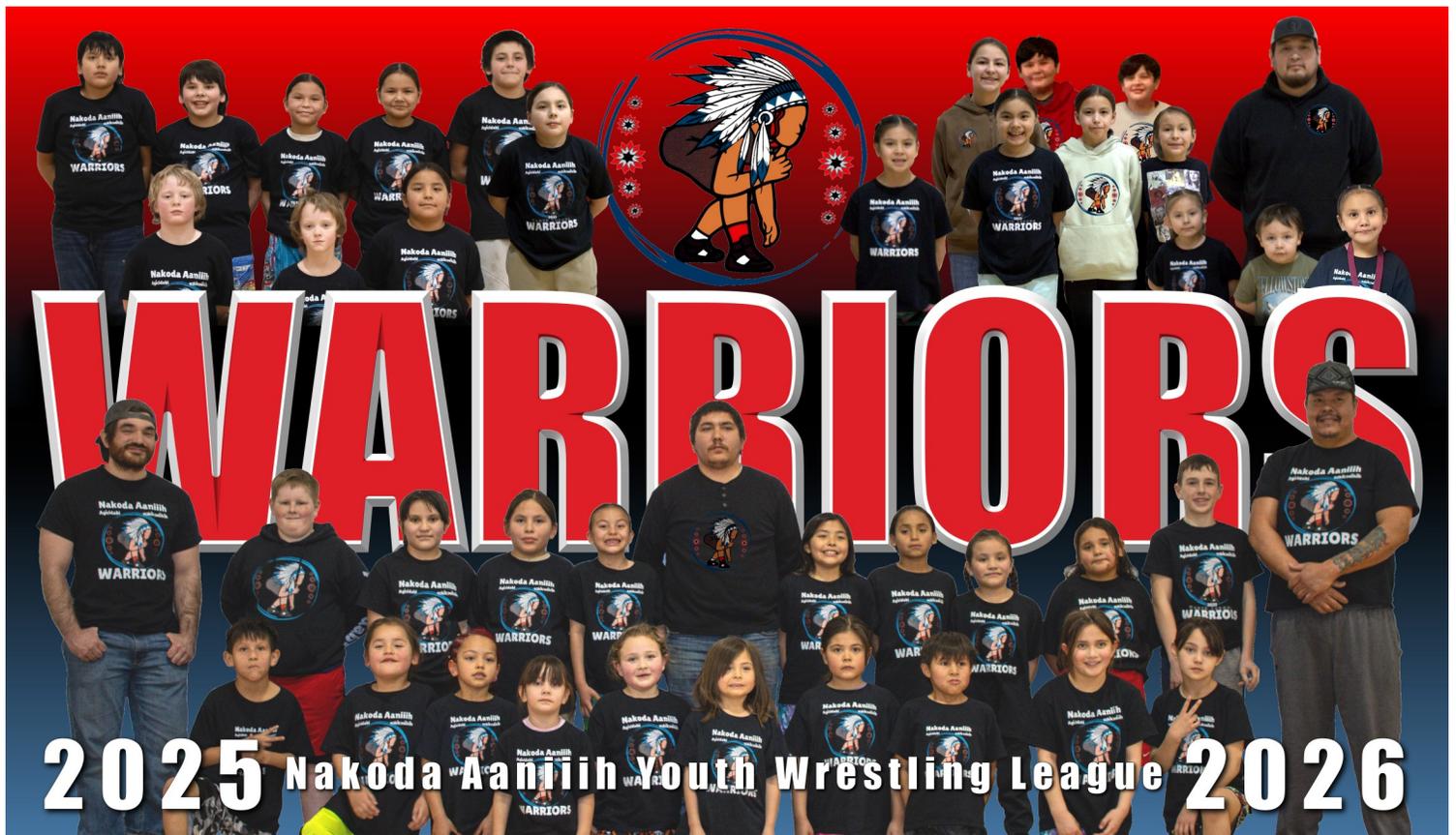
The lab will mail the results back to ANC and the team will deliver the results to the homeowner and discuss the results.

# 50<sup>th</sup> Annual FB Agency TRIBAL EMPLOYEE CLEAN-UP DAY FRIDAY, APRIL 24, 2026

8:15 am : SIGN-IN at the Bingo Hall/ Pick up gloves & bags  
8:30 am : Begin cleaning in ALL AREAS indicated below.  
12 NOON : POT-LUCK LUNCH - Bingo Hall  
1:00 pm : SIGN-IN / Continue Cleaning in ALL AREAS  
4:00 pm : End of cleaning for all employees.

## AREAS TO CLEAN:

- From the Milk River Bridge to Tribal Courts (Highway 2)
- Along Highway 66 to the Snake Butte turn-off
- Tourism Park area and the Don Addy Park
- Fort Belknap Industrial Building (Bingo Hall) Area
- Any other areas that are visibly in need of attention.



## 2026 Warriors Wrestling Season Comes To An End

By Lonette Blackcrow, Environmental Administrative Assistant and wrestling Grandma

The season may be over, but the pride and gratitude we feel for our young wrestlers and the community that supported them will last far beyond the mat.

I would like to extend my heartfelt appreciation to the Nakoda Aaniiih Youth Athletic League for helping ignite a passion for sports among our youth. Programs like this create opportunities for young people to grow, challenge themselves, and build confidence while representing their community with pride.

A huge thank you to everyone who contributed to making this season unforgettable for our young Warriors. We are deeply grateful to our dedicated coaches—John Hughes, Brandon Beck, Bill Main, Eli Lewis, Trevor Boushie, Cody Blackcrow, Amelia Blackcrow, Lance Blackcrow, and William Blackcrow—who worked tirelessly to foster a culture of excellence while providing encouragement, mentorship, and unwavering support.

Special acknowledgement also goes to Leslie Horn, Aspen Baker, Janeese Brisbo, Valerie Blackcrow, and the many parents, grandparents, and family mem-

bers who gave their time and energy to support this remarkable team throughout the season. Your dedication behind the scenes made a meaningful difference for every athlete.

And to our talented young wrestlers—each of you showed incredible determination, heart, and commitment. You represented your community with pride and demonstrated the true spirit of teamwork and sportsmanship every time you stepped onto the mat.

It has been an honor to witness your growth this season. The skills, friendships, and confidence you have built will carry forward into many future successes. We are proud of each and every one of you. Keep working hard, supporting one another, and chasing your goals. The future is bright for our young Warriors.



# Michael Black Wolf Officially Files for U.S. Senate at Montana State Capitol

By Michael Black Wolf



HELENA, MT — On March 3, 2026, Michael Black Wolf, a preservation officer and community leader from the Fort Belknap Indian Community, officially filed his candidacy for the United States Senate at the Montana State Capitol. Black Wolf is running as a Democrat to challenge incumbent Republican Senator Steve Daines in the 2026 election.

"I am running because every day, hardworking Montanans are being left behind by a political system that prioritizes the top 1%," said Black Wolf. "From my roots in Hays to my work protecting our heritage, I have seen the resilience of our people. Washington needs a voice that understands the struggle of rural families, respects tribal sovereignty, and is committed to restoring the American dream for all Montanans."

Black Wolf's campaign, themed "Putting Montana First," is built on a foundation of service, respect, and stewardship. His platform focuses on several critical pillars:

- Good-Paying Jobs & Small Business Growth: Investing in rural infrastructure, expanding broadband access, and creating incentives to keep young talent in Montana.
- Improving Rural Healthcare: Increasing funding for rural hospitals, expanding telehealth services, and protecting affordable prescription drug programs.
- Protecting Tribal Sovereignty: Honoring treaty obligations and ensuring tribal nations are equal partners in federal decision-making.
- Land, Water, and Heritage: Safeguarding Montana's public lands for outdoor recreation while promoting responsible resource development.

As the Tribal Historic Preservation Officer for the Fort Belknap Indian Community, Black Wolf has dedicated his career to protecting Montana's history. He brings a working-class perspective to the race, having previously worked as a tutor, school bus driver, and security guard.

The Michael Black Wolf for Montana campaign is powered by grassroots support and a commitment to practical, community-grounded action.

Contact: Michael Black Wolf for U.S. Senate  
PO Box 210  
Hays, MT 59527  
info@blackwolfformontana.com  
(406) 301-0528

Campaign Links:

- <https://www.blackwolfformontana.com>
- <https://secure.actblue.com/donate/michael-blackwolf>
- <https://www.facebook.com/share/1ELxct5L82>
- <https://www.youtube.com/@BlackWolfForMontana>



## STORMWATER

What you leave on the landscape can pollute our waters

### What is it?



Stormwater is runoff that flows across the landscape when it rains. Storm drains are designed to catch larger debris and stop it from entering the stormwater system.

### DID YOU KNOW?



In Montana, almost all stormwater flows directly into streams, rivers, and lakes without treatment. That means anything stormwater picks up on the landscape can end up in our waterbodies.

### Why does it matter?

Pollutants on the landscape can threaten aquatic ecosystems and human health when they get in our waterbodies.

Common pollutants include:

- Oil and grease from cars
- Nutrients from yard waste
- Chemicals from herbicides
- Bacteria from pet waste
- Sediment from construction



### What can you do?

Protecting our Montana waters requires us all to act! You can be a Stormwater Steward by pledging to take these actions every day.



Pick up and dispose of pet waste promptly

Repair leaky vehicles quickly and take precautions when conducting maintenance to avoid spills



Avoid using landscaping chemicals when possible

Bag and compost leaves and grass clippings



Build a rain garden to collect runoff from rooftops and pavement

Fort Belknap Indian Community  
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION  
DEPARTMENT  
Fort Belknap Agency  
656 Agency Main Street  
Harlem, Montana 59526

### FBEPD Directory:

#### Mitchell Healy

*Acting Environmental Manager/  
Water Quality Coordinator*  
mitchell.healy@ftbelknap.org  
(406) 353-8433/8421

#### Lonette BlackCrow

*Administrative Assistant*  
lonettebc@ftbelknap.org  
(406) 353-8384

#### Jeremy Walker

*Environmental Specialist*  
jeremy.walker@ftbelknap.org  
(406) 353-8465

#### Terron Gray

*GIS Technician*  
terron.gray@ftbelknap.org  
(406) 353-8412

#### Shelby Main

*Nonpoint Source Coordinator*  
shelby.main@ftbelknap.org  
(406) 353-8416

#### Adrian Kulbeck

*Brownfields Coordinator*  
adrian.kulbeck@ftbelknap.org  
(406) 353-8411

#### Kermit Snow, Jr.

*Environmental Compliance  
Officer*  
ksnow@ftbelknap.org  
(406) 353-8368

#### Megan Martin

*Brownfields Environmental  
Technician*  
megan.martin@ftbelknap.org  
(406) 353-8431



Find our newsletters on <https://ftbelknap.org/forms%2Fdocuments> (EPA)



Fort Belknap Environmental Protection Department

Circle Speaker Newsletter Volume 30, Issue 3 (April–June, 2026)

**Deadline for Articles:  
Friday, June 5th, 2026 @ 5:00 p.m.**

Articles can be emailed to: [lonettebc@ftbelknap.org](mailto:lonettebc@ftbelknap.org)

To allow time for editing and layout of the newsletter, articles must be submitted on time in order to be considered for publication. Articles received after this deadline will be considered for the following issue. All articles submitted are subject to review and approval.

# Mother Earth Takes Care of Us... Let's Take Care of Her!

## Inviting All Departments & Programs!

The Fort Belknap Environmental Protection Department will be hosting its Annual Earth Day Fair on Wednesday, April 22, 2026 with area students in grades 4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> at the Snake Butte Spring on the Fort Belknap Agency, MT this year. If your Program is interested in setting up a Learning Station or donate incentives, call (406) 353-8384, or for more information, please refer to flier on page 20.



**Disclaimer:** Articles and newsletter content in the Fort Belknap Environmental Protection Department Circle Speaker Aaniih & Nakoda Environmental Newsletter are not the official views or opinions of the Fort Belknap Indian Community or the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and are not endorsed by either entity.

