

# COMMUNITY RELATIONS PLAN

## Musselshell County FEMA Buy-Out Project

October 2019



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## 1.1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Community Relations Plan describes Snowy Mountain Development Corporation’s (SMDC) strategy to address potential concerns of residents who may be affected by environmental remediation activities conducted at the Musselshell County FEMA Buy-Out properties located in the flood plain along the Musselshell River in Musselshell County, Montana. This CRP also summarizes public notifications and community involvement, which has occurred to date, for activities at the Site.

## 1.2 SITE DESCRIPTION & LOCATION

The project encompasses multiple sites in industrial or residential areas of Roundup, Montana. The following table summarizes Site IDs, addresses, and Montana Geocodes. The Sites are in Musselshell County, MT, USA. The Sites are referred to as “Site ‘Respective Number.’”

SITE ID	ADDRESS	MONTANA GEOCODE
7	Mine Avenue	23-1717-23-2-05-08-0000
30	Meathouse Road	23-1717-24-2-02-02-0000
31	Meathouse Road	23-1717-24-2-02-03-0000
<b>33</b>	218 1st Avenue West	23-1717-13-3-02-09-0000
36	224 1 <sup>st</sup> Avenue West	23-1717-13-3-01-13-0000
38	Railroad Avenue	23-1717-13-3-01-01-0000

## 1.3 SITE HISTORY

The Sites are located in industrial or residential areas of Roundup, Montana. The areas are referred to as the Mine Avenue, Meathouse Sites and Railroad Avenue (Weston 2019). Sites 7, 30, 31, 33, 36 and 38 are residences or small businesses operated from residences. Site 30 was a sawmill. Site 31 was a slaughterhouse. Site 36 consisted of 6 apartment type units. Construction dates of the buildings are unknown, but the majority of the buildings are assumed to have been constructed prior to 1980. Most of the sites are vacant. The Sites are located within the Musselshell River floodplain and have flooded many times since 1968. Given the rising costs to the County, State and Federal governments, Musselshell County considered the cost-benefit of purchasing and remediating the Sites. Through

FEMA's Buyout Program, Musselshell County purchased the Sites with the intention of demolishing the structures, removing an upstream dike, and returning the River to its natural flow regime (Weston 2019). Phase I and II Environmental Site Assessments (ESAs) were performed to acquire and evaluate sufficient information to determine the location and concentration of potential environmental contamination at the sites including asbestos-containing material (ACM), lead-based paint (LBP), polychlorinated biphenyl (PCB)-containing equipment, mercury-containing equipment, and mold.



The town of Roundup suffered the most damage of any in the 2011 flooding. Potable water, food, and medicine were major concerns. Flood waters along the Musselshell near Roundup were as much as 6 feet deep-cresting over the weekend. Flooding near Roundup was at least 2 feet above record flood level and forced the evacuation of dozens of homes. On Thursday, May 26 the flooding inundated portions of Roundup. At Highway 87 the floodwaters were flowing at over 3,670 cu ft/s more than 10 times the normal rate.

<http://www.roundupmontana.net/flood-2011.html>

## 1.4 COMMUNITY PROFILE

The Sites are located in the floodplain along the Musselshell River in Musselshell County, Montana.

According to U.S. Census data, Musselshell County's:

MUSSELSHELL COUNTY, MONTANA	MEASURE	SOURCE
Population		
Census 2010 Total Population	4,538	<a href="#">2010 Demographic Profile</a>
2018 Population Estimate (as of July 1, 2018)	4,651	<a href="#">2018 Population Estimates</a>
Median Age	49.1	<a href="#">2013-2017 ACS 5-Year Estimates</a>
Number of Companies	435	<a href="#">2012 Survey of Business Owners</a>
Educational Attainment: % high school graduate or higher	90.5%	<a href="#">2013-2017 ACS 5-Year Estimates</a>
Total housing units	2,744	<a href="#">2013-2017 ACS 5-Year Estimates</a>
Median Household Income	38,156	<a href="#">2013-2017 ACS 5-Year Estimates</a>
Individuals below poverty level	17.4%	<a href="#">2013-2017 ACS 5-Year Estimates</a>

## 1.5 IMPACT TO PUBLIC HEALTH & THE ENVIRONMENT

A Phase II Environmental Site Assessment conducted of the Sites shows impacts from asbestos (ACM), lead-based paint (LBP), PCBs and mold. Without remediation, current site conditions pose a threat to both human health and the environment. When a property experiences repeated flooding, costs for the property owner, the community and the State escalate rapidly. Flooding threatens the stability of the structures, damages personal property, undermines property values and can lead to injury or loss of life. Emergency responders risk their own lives to help residents escape rising waters. And while the waters eventually recede, the damage caused by floods is long lasting. The impact of a storm surge weakens formerly sturdy structures. Water-laden walls and floors are overcome by mold that presents health risks for vulnerable residents, particularly those with compromised immune systems, children and the elderly. Repeated flooding leaves homes uninhabitable and unlikely to attract a buyer. For all of these reasons, County, State and Federal governments act to intervene in this cycle of decline by offering voluntary buyout programs to the homeowners and business owners that have been subject to repeated flooding.



The Musselshell River's watershed covers approximately 9,500 square miles and is home to roughly 9,325 residents, providing water for farms, ranches, and municipalities.

In light of the findings of contaminants of concern, the failure to remediate and demolish the structures could pose significant threat to public health and the environment by way of the Musselshell River. Left to decay, and with repeated flooding, contaminated materials would be carried away in the River, potentially threatening roughly 9,325 residents in the 9,500 square-mile watershed, including the ranches, farms and municipalities who draw water from it.

To satisfy EPA requirements, the effectiveness, implementability, and cost of each alternative must be considered prior to selecting a recommended cleanup alternative.

### Alternatives

- Alternative #1: No Action is not effective in preventing the release or decay of COCs and hazardous building materials at the sites. The sites are in industrial or residential areas near a floodplain and existing residential areas. No Action may result in the COCs releasing from the site during flood events and being spread down stream. The hazardous building materials need to be remediated.
- Alternative #2: Abatement and Open Burning of Buildings would remove the COCs from the buildings through abatement and proper disposal of hazardous building materials such as ACM, LBP, PCB-containing devices, and mercury-containing devices. Following removal of the hazardous building materials, buildings would be burned for firefighter training purposes. Due to proximity to other buildings, some of the sites cannot be open burned.
- Alternative #3: Abatement and Conventional Demolition of All Buildings would be as effective as Alternative #2 but would have increased costs for conventional demolition of all structures.

## **1.6 PROPERTY REDEVELOPMENT PLANS**

Musselshell County intends to remediate the contaminants of concern, demolish the structures and remove an upstream dike to allow the Musselshell River to return to its natural flow regime (Weston 2019). Musselshell County will work with Snowy Mountain Development Corporation to guide community dialogue on floodplain-friendly development, among which may include higher quality recreational opportunities for a “river walk,” fishing or bird watching. Among Snowy Mountain Development’s recommended best practices for redevelopment are to:

- Build a robust public engagement process that incorporates early and ongoing feedback from the community;

- Design proactive, collaborative written management plans that use the best available data about the watershed's ecology and water quality and that apply best management practices in the design and maintenance of recreation infrastructure;
- Develop strong partnerships with land management agencies and nonprofit partners that build on existing expertise to inform management practices;
- Integrate public education into watershed management; and
- Gather and monitor baseline data to measure changes in water quality over time. Providing recreation on municipal watershed lands is important for many communities economically and socially, helping to protect quality of life and a sense of community. Communities find added value in the public education, stewardship, and support that result from giving citizens recreational access to watershed lands.

## 1.7 BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY

Beyond the reduction and elimination of public safety and environmental impacts Outdoor recreation directly benefits a community's economic growth. As western communities compete for new businesses, try to attract new residents, and draw in visitors, many cities and towns increasingly recognize the value of outdoor recreation for economies, health, and quality of life. The economy of a region is boosted by outdoor by: bringing in revenue through tourism; fostering growth in outdoor recreation industries; and helping to attract and retain businesses and workers. Community characteristics that improve quality of life such as scenic beauty, low crime, and recreation opportunities are particularly important for recruiting businesses and entrepreneurs to rural places and allowing them to capitalize on natural assets.

## 1.8 COMMUNICATION – MEETINGS

The primary stakeholder and property owner of all of the Sites is Musselshell County. The County Commission has had the FEMA Buy-Out on multiple Meeting Agendas over the last year. All meetings are publically noticed and open to the public. Musselshell County posts project updates to its Facebook page at: <https://www.facebook.com/musselshellcountydcs/>, the fairgrounds page: <https://www.facebook.com/MusselshellCountyFairgrounds/> and the City of Roundup posts updates as well: <http://www.roundupmontana.net/>. SMDC updates Site and project status information on its

organizational website: [www.snowymountaindevelopment.com](http://www.snowymountaindevelopment.com). In addition, Brownfields projects are summarized in SMDC’s Executive Director’s Reports, which are discussed at SMDC’s Board Meetings, and uploaded to its electronic publishing platform on ISSUU: <https://issuu.com/snowymountaindevelopment>. SMDC staff upload photos and project information on its Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/snowymountaindevelopment](http://www.facebook.com/snowymountaindevelopment) and LinkedIn page: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/snowy-mountain-development-corporation>. SMDC staff provide Media Releases to local newspapers and radio stations informing them of newsworthy project updates.

## 1.9 COMMUNICATION – CONTACTS

Entity	Name	Title	Address	Phone	Email Address
Radio Contact	KLMB 99.9 FM An Edwards Broadcasting	Bill Edwards, General Manager Mike Morgan, Community Talk	706 Main Street Roundup, MT 59072	(406) 323-8830	<a href="mailto:LuLunmike@midrivers.com">LuLunmike@midrivers.com</a> <a href="http://klmb99fm.com/">http://klmb99fm.com/</a> <a href="http://www.radiolineup.com/locate/Roundup-MT">www.radiolineup.com/locate/Roundup-MT</a>
Newspaper Contact	Roundup Tribune		24 Main Street Roundup, MT 59072	(406) 323-1105	<a href="mailto:rtrnews@midrivers.com">rtrnews@midrivers.com</a> <a href="http://rrd.stparchive.com/">http://rrd.stparchive.com/</a>
Newspaper Contact	Kenny Davis Roundup Herald	Kenny Davis Roundup Herald		(406) 323-4414	<a href="mailto:roundupherald@gmail.com">roundupherald@gmail.com</a> <a href="https://www.facebook.com/roundup.herald">https://www.facebook.com/roundup.herald</a>
Internet Contact	Mid Rivers Communications	Barb Wacker, District 2 Trustee Roundup Service Center	408 1 <sup>st</sup> Street West Roundup, MT 59072	(800) 452-2288 (406) 323-3317 (406) 323-1111	<a href="mailto:customerservice@midrivers.coop">customerservice@midrivers.coop</a>
U.S. EPA	Greg Davis	Brownfields Project Manager	U.S. EPA Region 8 1595 Wynkoop Denver, CO 80202- 1129	(303) 312-6314	<a href="mailto:Davis.Gregory@epa.gov">Davis.Gregory@epa.gov</a>
Musselshell County	Nicole Borner	Musselshell County Commission Chair	506 Main Street Roundup, MT 59072	(406) 323-1104	<a href="mailto:nborner@co.musselshell.mt.us">nborner@co.musselshell.mt.us</a>
Snowy Mountain Development Corporation	Kathie Bailey	Executive Director	613 NE Main Lewistown, MT 59457	(406) 535-2591	<a href="mailto:bailey@snowymountaindevelopment.com">bailey@snowymountaindevelopment.com</a>
Snowy Mountain Development Corporation	Cathy Barta	Redevelopment Director	613 NE Main Lewistown, MT 59457	(406) 535-2591	<a href="mailto:barta@snowymountaindevelopment.com">barta@snowymountaindevelopment.com</a>
Snowy Mountain Development Corporation	Sara Hudson	Regional Director	613 NE Main Lewistown, MT 59457	(406) 535-2591	<a href="mailto:Info@snowymountaindevelopment.com">Info@snowymountaindevelopment.com</a>



## **1.10 REFERENCES**

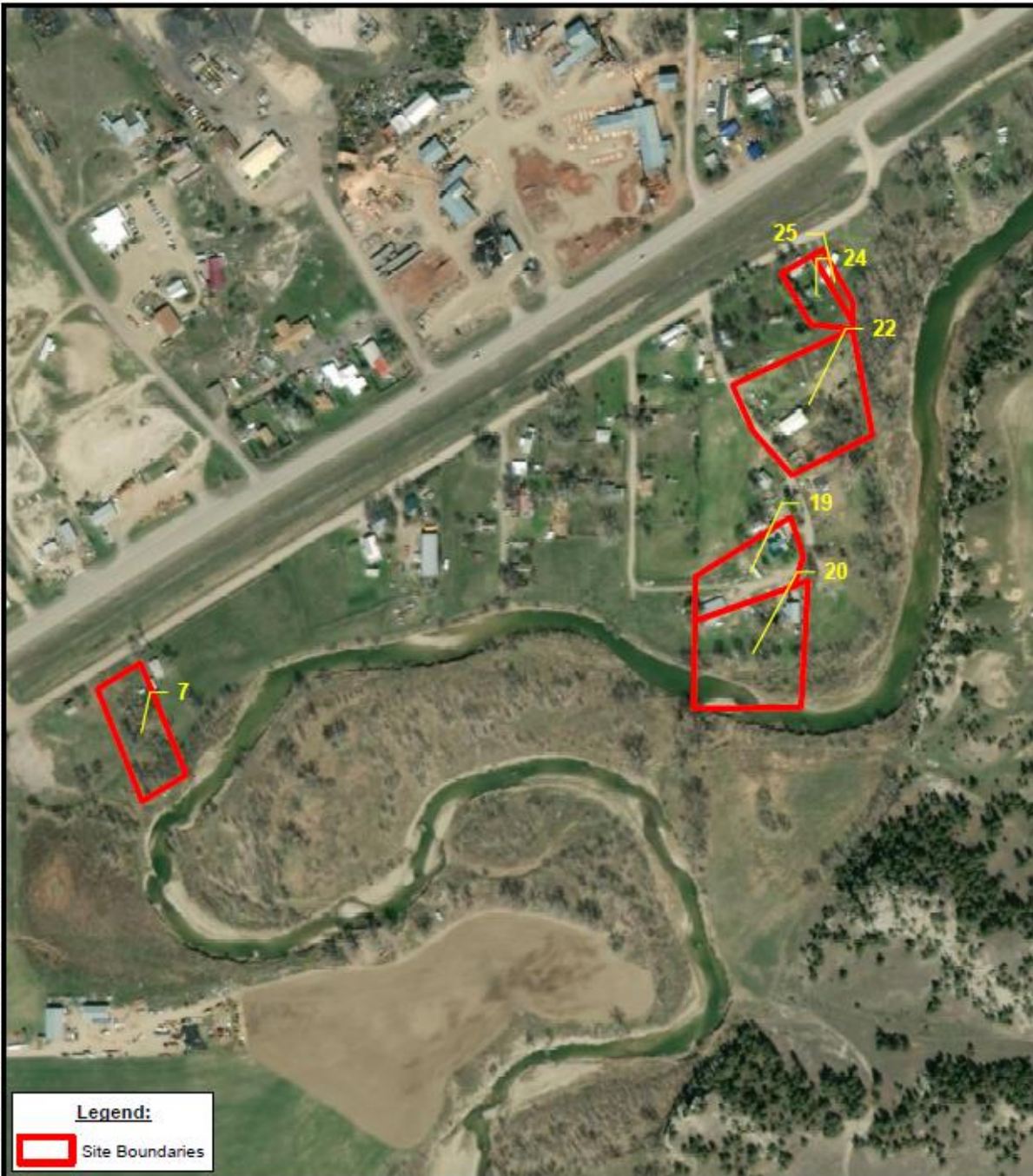
**Weston Solutions, Inc.** *Phase II Environmental Site Assessment for Musselshell County, Musselshell County, Montana, April 2019.*

**Weston Solutions, Inc.** *Cost Estimate for Cleanup Report for for Musselshell County, Musselshell County, Montana, October 29, 2018.*

**WWC Engineering.** *Analysis of Brownfields Cleanup Alternatives, October 2019.*

**U.S. Census Bureau:** *2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates), Musselshell County, Montana.*

## **1.11 SITE LOCATION MAPS**



<p><b>Legend:</b></p> <p> Site Boundaries</p>	<p>Coordinate System: WGS 1984 Web Mercator Auxiliary Sphere Projection: Mercator Auxiliary Sphere Datum: WGS 1984</p> <p>Source: Site Boundary: Montana Cadastral Framework (2018) Background: ESRI World Imagery (2017)</p> <p>0 275 550 1,100 Feet </p>	<p>Prepared for: U.S. EPA - Region 8 </p> <p>Contract: EP-S8-13-01 TO/TDD: 0003/1810-01</p> <p>Prepared By: Weston Solutions, Inc. START IV  Suite 100 1435 Garrison St. Lakewood, CO</p>	<p><b>FIGURE 4</b> <b>MINE AVENUE SITES MAP</b> <b>ROUNDUP MUSSELSHEL PROPERTIES</b> <b>MUSSELSHELL COUNTY, MONTANA</b></p> <p>Date: 2/13/2019</p>
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