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<https://montanafreepress.org/2021/10/13/betting-on-biochar-in-missoula-county/>

Betting on biochar in Bonner

by Amanda Eggert 10.13.2021

Beyond its potential to sequester carbon, biochar can [improve poor farm soils](#) and help rehabilitate sites where mineral or fossil fuel extraction has occurred. Adding biochar to a hard rock mining site can reduce the acidity and heavy metal pollution associated with mine drainage. Applied to drilling pads, it can expedite revegetation efforts.

Much of what makes it work for these applications is its structure. Biochar is porous, with a honeycomb-like configuration. Its abundant surface area creates a kind of scaffolding for poor soils, particularly those that have a hard time holding onto water or nutrients. When it’s applied thoughtfully — often mixed with an organic soil amendment like livestock manure or compost — it can also improve nutrient uptake in plants. In an orchard or an arboretum, biochar buried at the right depth during planting can stimulate root development, decrease water requirements and [help trees withstand drought](#).

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