



March 13, 2020

RE: Notice of publication for the Final Environmental Impact Statement for Tintina Montana's Proposed Black Butte Copper Mine Project

Dear Interested Party:

The Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) has completed the Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Black Butte Copper Mine Project proposed by Tintina Montana Inc. (Tintina). The proposed underground mine would be located in west-central Montana, approximately 15 miles north of White Sulphur Springs in Meagher County.

Tintina applied to DEQ for an operating permit under the Metal Mine Reclamation Act, a Montana Air Quality Permit, a Montana Pollutant Discharge Elimination System and a construction storm water permit under the Montana Water Quality Act. Electronic copies of the applications may be viewed by visiting the website (<http://deq.mt.gov/Land/hardrock/tintinamines>).

The Montana Environmental Policy Act (MEPA), Section 75-1-201, *et seq.*, Montana Code Annotated (MCA), requires the preparation of an EIS for state actions that may significantly affect the quality of the human environment. The EIS must include a detailed statement on the environmental impact of the proposed action, alternatives to the proposed action, and a no action alternative. DEQ issued a Draft EIS on March 11, 2019. In the Draft EIS, DEQ analyzed several alternatives: a No Action Alternative, a Proposed Action based on Tintina's applications submitted to DEQ, and an Agency Modified Alternative.

The Final EIS addresses issues and concerns raised at public meetings and during the public comment period. All new information and analyses supplied during the comment period and developed in response to comments received were used to prepare the Final EIS. DEQ appreciates the public's participation in the Tintina Montana Black Butte Copper Mine Project.

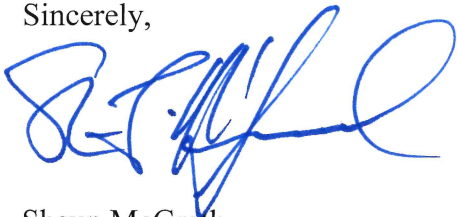
DEQ has identified the Agency Modified Alternative as the agency's preferred alternative in the Final EIS. The Agency Modified Alternative would modify the Proposed Action by requiring Tintina to completely backfill the Upper and Lower Sulfide Zones with cemented paste tailings as part of mine closure. Complete backfill would return hydraulic parameters within these bedrock zones to conditions similar to the pre-mining state, eliminating the potential for development of new groundwater flow paths through these areas. The Agency Modified Alternative would minimize exposed reactive surfaces and potential water quality impacts within the mine workings at closure.

The Final EIS is not a decision document but will help DEQ make an informed decision with respect to the permit applications for the project. DEQ will set forth its final decision and rationale in its Record of Decision (ROD). The ROD is a public notice identifying what the

decision is, the reasons for the decision, and any special conditions surrounding the decision or its implementation. Pursuant to the Administrative Rules of Montana (ARM) 17.4.620, DEQ may issue its ROD no sooner than 15 days from the transmittal of the Final EIS to the public, the Environmental Quality Council, and the office of the Governor.

The Final EIS has been posted on DEQ's website at (<http://deq.mt.gov/Public/eis>). Digital copies of the Final EIS may be requested by contacting Craig Jones at (406) 444-0514. Everyone who receives notification of the Final EIS, will also receive notification of DEQ's ROD when it is available.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'S. McGrath', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Shaun McGrath
Director
Department of Environmental Quality