

Black Butte Copper Project EIS

MEPA & Draft EIS Description

The Montana Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) requires a state agency to prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) before taking any state action that will significantly impact the human environment. The MEPA process facilitates public participation in the environmental review. In the scoping stage of the MEPA process, the public is invited to assist the state agency in identifying potential environmental impacts and alternatives to the proposed action that should be considered in the EIS.

An EIS is prepared in two stages:

- DEQ prepares a Draft EIS that describes the environmental impacts of the proposed action and analyzes alternatives to the proposed action. In the Draft EIS, DEQ may identify a preferred alternative and give the reasons for the preference. DEQ then publishes the Draft EIS and solicits public comment on the Draft EIS.
- DEQ prepares and publishes the Final EIS. In the Final EIS, DEQ responds to the public comments received on the Draft EIS, evaluating the comments and indicating the information in the Final EIS that was changed in response to public comment. The Final EIS must also include DEQ's proposed decision with an explanation of the reasons for the proposed decision.

DEQ's actual decision is set forth in a Record of Decision that is published shortly after the Final EIS is published. While MEPA provides a procedural framework that a state agency must follow in making a decision, it does not provide any additional regulatory authority to the state agency beyond that contained in the state law under which the decision is being made. In the case of the proposed Black Butte Copper Project, DEQ's decision will be made under the Metal Mine Reclamation Act. MEPA does not give DEQ any regulator authority beyond that contained in the Metal Mine Reclamation Act.

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Project Schedule

The Black Butte Copper Project EIS is currently in the Draft EIS phase (see Figure 1 below). After public comments are received on the Draft EIS, the DEQ will review and respond to them and issue a Final EIS.

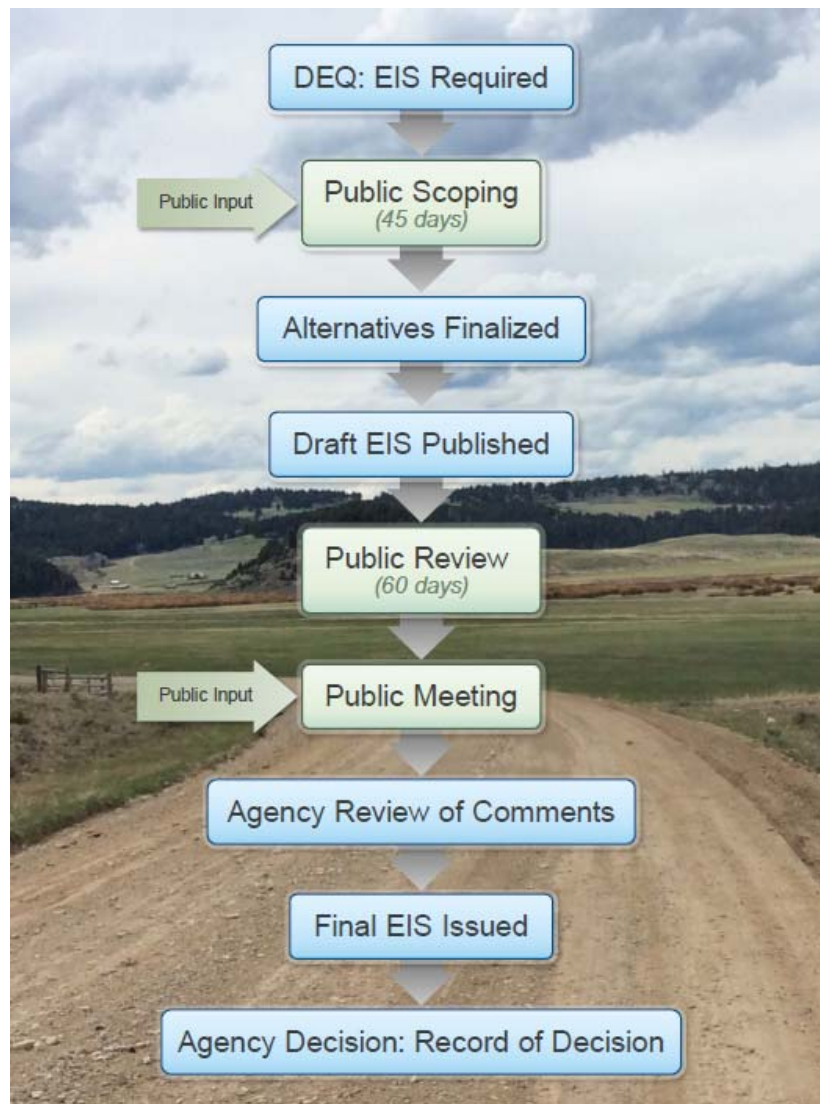


Figure 1: MEPA Process

Black Butte Copper Project EIS

Brief Description of Proposed Project

The Black Butte Copper Project (Project) site is located about 15 miles north of White Sulphur Springs in Meagher County, Montana. The site has a history of mineral exploration activities since the 1800s. Tintina applied to DEQ for an operating permit for the Project on December 15, 2015 under the Metal Mine Reclamation Act, Section 82-4-301, et seq., MCA. Pursuant to Section 82-4-337, MCA, DEQ determined that Tintina's application was complete and compliant and, on September 18, 2017, issued Tintina a draft operating permit for the Project. The proposed mine permit boundary encompasses 1,887.7 acres of privately-owned ranch land, which would include all proposed facilities and surface disturbances.

The proposed Project is an underground copper mine. Multiple surface facilities, haul roads, access roads, and stockpiles would be constructed in addition to the underground mine portal. Ore mined from underground would undergo crushing and grinding on-site. Copper concentrate would be separated from a tailings waste stream via a flotation process. The tailings would be managed on-site by storing a portion underground as cemented backfill and storing the rest as cemented paste tailings in a tailings storage facility on the surface. The copper concentrate would be transported off-site for further processing.

Reclamation conducted contemporaneous to construction would stabilize disturbed areas throughout the life of mine. Monitoring programs would continue during construction, operations, temporary closure, and in permanent closure until closure objectives are met. Upon final closure, surface facilities would be removed and surfaces would be recontoured and revegetated with pre-mining seed mixes adapted to the area.

As an alternative to the Proposed Action, the Agency Modified Alternative (AMA) would involve a higher percentage of tailings mixed with cement to be backfilled

underground. A comparison of the Proposed Action and AMA is included in the table below.

Proposed Action	Agency Modified Alternative
Underground mine	No change
45 percent of tailings mixed with cement and placed underground – 55 percent of tailings mixed with cement and placed in lined impoundment on surface	46 percent of tailings mixed with cement and placed underground – 54 percent of tailings mixed with cement and placed in lined impoundment on surface
Water to be discharged is treated to be protective of human and aquatic health.	No change
Mine life is 19 years: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction Years 1-3 • Operations Years 4-14 • Reclamation Years 15-18 	No change
The Proponent expects to hire up to 200 contractors during construction and employ an operating workforce of 235 employees.	No change

Air Quality Permit

Tintina has held Montana Air Quality Permit #4978-00 since December 25, 2013, to support exploratory operations. A draft Montana Air Quality Permit was issued June 5, 2018, for full mine operations. On March 11, 2019, a revised preliminary determination was issued in the draft EIS package including comments received from the comment period ending on July 5, 2018. The Air Quality Bureau would issue a final decision within 30 days of the Final EIS and Record of Decision date, and the Final Air Quality Permit would be issued following a 15-day appeal period.

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Project Site Plan



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How to Submit Comments to DEQ

Please provide your EIS comments using one of the following methods:

- Oral comments at one of the public meetings recorded by the court reporter
- Written comment form at one of the public meetings
- Oral or written comment on one of the public meeting webinars
- Email comments to: TintinaDraftEIS@mt.gov
- Postal mail to the following address:

Craig Jones

Department of Environmental Quality

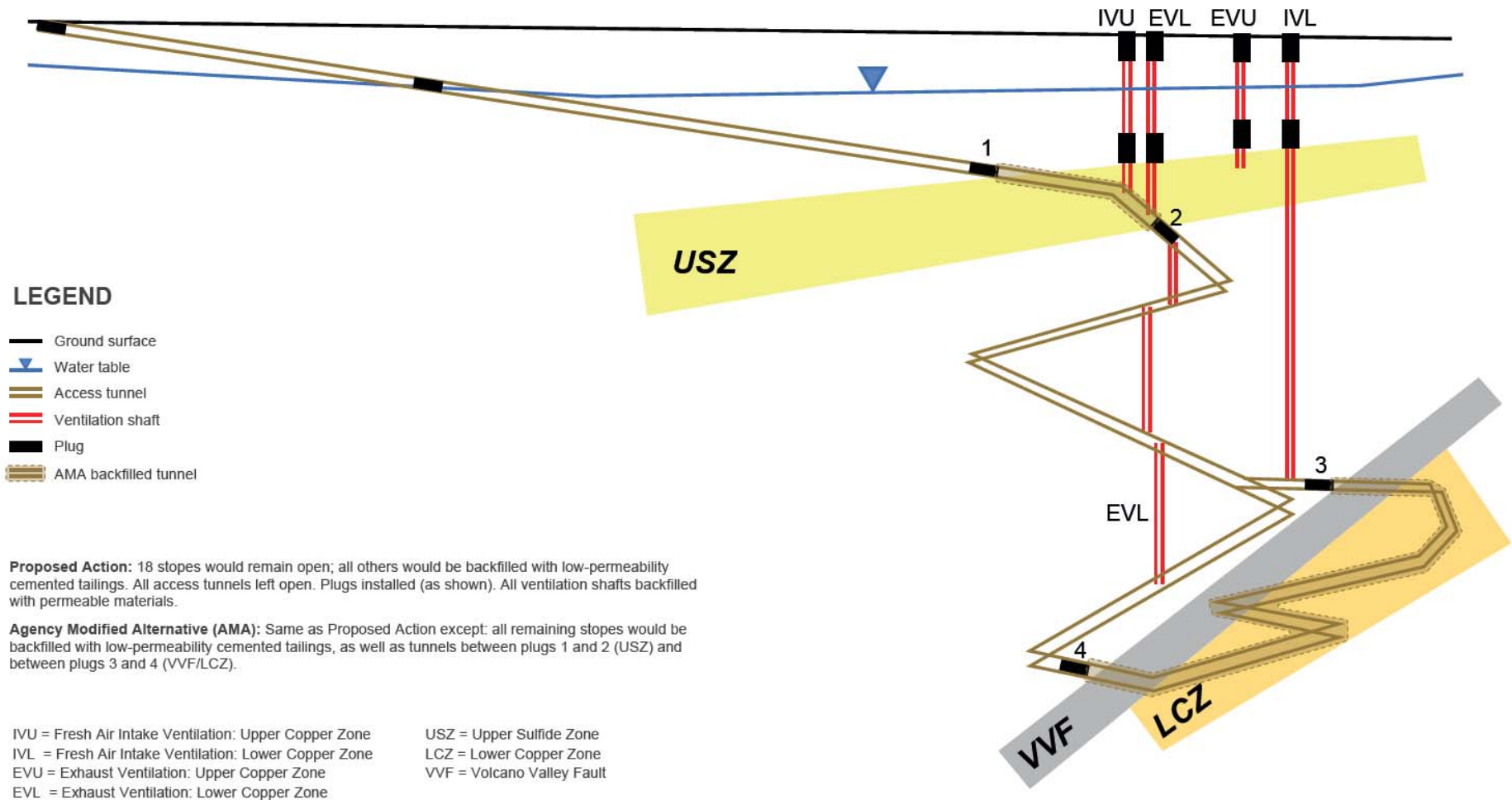
P.O. Box 200901

Helena, MT 59620-0901

Comments must be submitted to DEQ no later than May 10, 2019.

DEQ will not accept comments that are threatening, defamatory, libelous, slanderous, or discriminatory in nature.

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Montana Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (MPDES)

PERMIT NUMBER: MT0031909

RECEIVING WATER: Alluvial Ground Water, Sheep Creek, Coon Creek, Brush Creek, Little Sheep Creek, and an unnamed ephemeral tributary to Little Sheep Creek

In the draft MPDES permit, DEQ proposes effluent limits, monitoring requirements, and special conditions developed specifically for the proposed copper mine to protect the beneficial uses of the receiving water bodies. Outfall 001 proposes to discharge mine drainage and process wastewater. Outfalls 002 through 014 propose to discharge storm water.

Permit and Application Information

DEQ received the initial application on December 11, 2017, and issued a notice of deficiency (NOD) on January 10, 2018. The Permittee responded to the NOD on February 15, 2018. DEQ issued a second NOD on March 16, 2018. The Permittee responded to the second NOD on April 25, 2018. DEQ determined the application was complete on May 25, 2018.

- Copies of the draft MPDES permit and fact sheet are on the DEQ website: <http://deq.mt.gov/Public/notices/wqnotices>

How to Submit Comments to DEQ on the MPDES Permit

Please provide your comments about the Draft MPDES Permit using one of the following methods:

- Oral comments at one of the public meetings recorded by the court reporter
- Written comment form at one of the public meetings
- Oral or written comment on one of the public meeting webinars
- Email comments to: DEQWPBPublicComments@mt.gov
- Postal mail to the following address:

DEQ Water Quality Division
Water Protection Bureau
P.O. Box 200901
Helena, MT 59620-0901

Comment letters must be postmarked no later than May 28, 2019.