

VIII. Exploration & Mining on State-Owned (School Trust) Lands

Prior to accessing Montana's state-owned (school trust) lands for the purposes of mineral reconnaissance, prospecting, exploration or mining, the operator must first secure a mineral lease and approval from the **Montana Department of Natural Resources & Conservation (DNRC) - Trust Land Management Division**. This requirement is in addition to specific exploration and mining permits that also must be obtained from the Montana DEQ. Think of DNRC as the agency charged (by the Montana Constitution) to manage the state's surface and mineral resources for the School Trust Fund, to ensure a maximum return to the fund from these lands within legislative operational and environmental sideboards. The Montana DEQ issues permits under statutes related to mine reclamation, water quality, air quality, and other environmental resources; much of DEQ's authority in these areas encompasses all types of land (state, federal & private). When exploration or mining-related activities are proposed on state land, DEQ works closely with DNRC during the permit process.

For more information regarding mineral activities on state-owned lands, please contact:

Montana Department of Natural Resources & Conservation (DNRC)
Trust Land Management Division
Minerals Management Bureau
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