



**Montana Department of  
ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY**

Brian Schweitzer, Governor

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July 21, 2008

Dear Reader:

The Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) has completed a Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) for a Revised Evaluation Adit Plan requested by RC Resources, Inc (RCR) for the Rock Creek Project.

ASARCO proposed an evaluation adit for the Rock Creek orebody in the Cabinet Mountains in July 1992. The Montana Department of State Lands (DSL) and Kootenai National Forest (KNF) reviewed the plan and ASARCO made revisions in October 1992 and February 1993 in response to agency review and comments on the Plan. The Evaluation Adit Plan was analyzed in an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) by DSL's successor, the Department of Environmental Quality and the KNF in 2001. The Evaluation Adit Plan was approved as part of Alternative V in the Record of Decision (ROD). The KNF subsequently re-issued their ROD in 2003.

Since 2001, the approved Evaluation Adit Plan has been modified by ASARCO's successor, RCR to address final design changes, provide an alternate water disposal method, lessen environmental impacts, and to satisfy stipulations in the ROD.

The DEQ must decide whether to approve the modified Evaluation Adit Plan as proposed, deny the request for a modified Evaluation Adit Plan, or approve the Evaluation Adit Plan with modifications. The DEQ has decided to approve the Evaluation Adit Plan as proposed as the preliminary preferred alternative. This is not a final decision. This conclusion may change based on comments received from the public on the Draft EA, new information, or new analysis that may be needed in preparing the Final EA.

The Draft EA is tiered to the 2001 EIS and evaluates impacts of the modifications to the approved Evaluation Adit Plan. The EA is available on the DEQ website at <http://deq.mt.gov/ea/hardrock.asp>. Public comments concerning the adequacy and accuracy of the Draft EA will be accepted until August 20, 2008. Please send comments on the EA to [deqrockcreekea@mt.gov](mailto:deqrockcreekea@mt.gov).

Copies of the Draft EA can be obtained by writing DEQ, Environmental Management Bureau, P.O. Box 200901, Helena, MT 59620, c/o Herb Rolfes, or calling (406) 444-3841; or sending email addressed to [hrolfes@mt.gov](mailto:hrolfes@mt.gov).

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Warren D. McCullough, Chief  
Environmental Management Bureau

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Date