



Montana Department of Environmental Quality

**PO Box 200901
Helena, MT 59620-0901**

Date: December 18, 2014

Dear Interested Party:

Enclosed is the Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Proposed Butte Highlands Joint Venture (BHJV) Mine, located approximately 14 miles south of Butte, Montana. You can obtain an electronic version of the Final EIS on DEQ's web site: <http://deq.mt.gov/eis.mcp>.

BHJV submitted an application for an operating permit to DEQ in May 2010. The operating permit application underwent deficiency reviews and was revised prior to BHJV receiving a Letter of Completeness and Compliance and a Draft Operating Permit in December, 2012. Issuance of the Draft Operating Permit as a Final Operating Permit is the state action requiring DEQ to conduct an environmental review under MEPA. The project proposed in BHJV's operating permit application is referred to as the Proposed Action.

DEQ issued a Draft EIS on October 8, 2013. The Draft EIS and this Final EIS include a detailed statement on the environmental impacts of a No Action Alternative, the Proposed Action, Haul Route Alternatives, and the Agency-Mitigated Alternative.

The DEQ Director will use the EIS process to develop the information necessary to determine whether the Draft Operating Permit should be issued as a Final Operating Permit. Issues that are analyzed include, but are not limited to:

- Treatment of water discharged from mine dewatering;
- The removal of buildings and other structures at closure consistent with the post-mine land uses;
- Post-closure environmental monitoring programs and contingency plans; and
- Compliance with state air and water quality standards.

The DEQ Director will issue a Record of Decision (ROD) documenting the decision on the operating permit application. 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.

DEQ appreciates the public's involvement in preparing the Final EIS. Additional copies are available from DEQ (contact Kristi Ponzoso, 406-444-2813), or on the DEQ web site. A copy of the ROD will be sent to everyone who receives the Final EIS.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Tom Livers".

Tom Livers, Director
Montana Department of Environmental Quality