

**DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY (DEQ)
Environmental Assessment**

**Water Quality Division
Water Protection Bureau**

Name of Project: Columbia Falls Aluminum Company

Location of Project: 2000 Aluminum Drive

City/Town: Columbia Falls, MT

County: Flathead

Description of Project:

This is a termination of a Montana Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (MPDES) permit MT0030066 for Columbia Falls Aluminum Company, LLC.

Agency Action and Applicable Regulations:

The proposed action of DEQ is to terminate the MPDES permit.

Administrative Rules of Montana (ARM Title 17 Chapter 30):

Subchapter 2 – Water Quality Permit Application and Annual Fees.

Subchapter 5 – Mixing Zones in Surface and Ground Water.

Subchapter 6 – Surface Water Quality Standards.

Subchapter 7 – Nondegradation of Water Quality.

Subchapter 11 – Storm Water Discharges

Subchapter 12 and 13 – Montana Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Standards.

Montana Water Quality Act, MCA 75-5-101 et. seq.

Summary of Issues:

Because of the permanent plant closure of CFAC and the related elimination of point source discharges controlled by the permit, DEQ intends to terminate the permit pursuant to ARM 17.30.1363(1)(d).

Affected Environment & Impacts of the Proposed Project:

Y = Impacts may occur (explain under Potential Impacts).

N = Not present or No Impact will likely occur

IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT	
RESOURCE	[Y/N] POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES
1. GEOLOGY AND SOIL QUALITY, STABILITY AND MOISTURE: Are soils present which are fragile, erosive, susceptible to compaction, or unstable? Are there unusual or unstable geologic features? Are there special reclamation considerations?	(N) The discharge has ceased.
2. WATER QUALITY, QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION: Are important surface or groundwater resources present? Is there potential for violation of ambient water quality standards, drinking water maximum contaminant levels, or degradation of water quality?	(N) The discharge has ceased.
3. AIR QUALITY: Will pollutants or particulate be produced? Is the project influenced by air quality regulations or zones (Class I airshed)?	(N) The discharge has ceased.
4. VEGETATION COVER, QUANTITY AND QUALITY: Will vegetative communities be significantly impacted? Are any rare plants or cover types present?	(N) The discharge has ceased.
5. TERRESTRIAL, AVIAN AND AQUATIC LIFE AND HABITATS: Is there substantial use of the area by important wildlife, birds or fish?	(N) The discharge has ceased.
6. UNIQUE, ENDANGERED, FRAGILE OR LIMITED ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES: Are any federally listed threatened or endangered species or identified habitat present? Any wetlands? Species of special concern?	(N) The discharge has ceased.
7. SAGE GROUSE EXECUTIVE ORDER: Is the project proposed in core, general or connectivity sage grouse habitat, as designated by the Sage Grouse Habitat Conservation Program (Program) at: https://sagegrouse.mt.gov/ ? If yes, did the applicant attach documentation from the Program showing compliance with Executive Order 12-2015 and the Program's recommendations? If so, attach the documentation to the EA and address the Program's recommendations in the permit. If project is in core, general or connectivity habitat and the applicant did not document consultation with the Program, refer the applicant to the Sage Grouse Habitat Conservation Program.	[N] DEQ has verified the facility is not within core, general, or connectivity sage grouse habitat.
8. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES: Are any historical, archaeological or paleontological resources present?	(N) The discharge has ceased.
9. AESTHETICS: Is the project on a prominent topographic feature? Will it be visible from populated or scenic areas? Will there be excessive noise or light?	(N) The discharge has ceased.
10. DEMANDS ON ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES OF LAND, WATER, AIR OR ENERGY: Will the project use resources that are limited in the area? Are there other activities nearby that will affect the project? Will new or upgraded powerline or other energy source be needed?	(N) The discharge has ceased.
11. IMPACTS ON OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES: Are there other activities nearby that will affect the project?	(N) The discharge has ceased.

IMPACTS ON THE HUMAN ENVIRONMENT	
RESOURCE	[Y/N] POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES
12. HUMAN HEALTH AND SAFETY: Will this project add to health and safety risks in the area?	(N) The discharge has ceased.
13. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION: Will the project add to or alter these activities?	(N) The discharge has ceased.
14. QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT: Will the project create, move or eliminate jobs? If so, estimated number.	(N) The discharge has ceased.
15. LOCAL AND STATE TAX BASE AND TAX REVENUES: Will the project create or eliminate tax revenue?	(N) The discharge has ceased.
16. DEMAND FOR GOVERNMENT SERVICES: Will substantial traffic be added to existing roads? Will other services (fire protection, police, schools, etc.) be needed?	(N) The discharge has ceased.
17. LOCALLY ADOPTED ENVIRONMENTAL PLANS AND GOALS: Are there State, County, City, USFS, BLM, Tribal, etc. zoning or management plans in effect?	(N) The discharge has ceased.
18. ACCESS TO AND QUALITY OF RECREATIONAL AND WILDERNESS ACTIVITIES: Are wilderness or recreational areas nearby or accessed through this tract? Is there recreational potential within the tract?	(N) The discharge has ceased.
19. DENSITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION AND HOUSING: Will the project add to the population and require additional housing?	(N) The discharge has ceased.
20. SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND MORES: Is some disruption of native or traditional lifestyles or communities possible?	(N) The discharge has ceased.
21. CULTURAL UNIQUENESS AND DIVERSITY: Will the action cause a shift in some unique quality of the area?	(N) The discharge has ceased.
22. OTHER APPROPRIATE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES:	(N) The discharge has ceased.
23(a). PRIVATE PROPERTY IMPACTS: Are we regulating the use of private property under a regulatory statute adopted pursuant to the police power of the state? (Property management, grants of financial assistance, and the exercise of the power of eminent domain are not within this category.) If not, no further analysis is required.	No
23(b). PRIVATE PROPERTY IMPACTS: Is the agency proposing to deny the application or condition the approval in a way that restricts the use of the regulated person's private property? If not, no further analysis is required.	[]
23(c). PRIVATE PROPERTY IMPACTS: If the answer to 23 (b) is affirmative, does the agency have legal discretion to impose or not impose the proposed restriction or discretion as to how the restriction will be imposed? If not, no further analysis is required. If so, the agency must determine if there are alternatives that would reduce, minimize or eliminate the restriction on the use of private property, and analyze such alternatives. The agency must disclose the potential costs of identified restrictions.	[]

24. Description of and Impacts of other Alternatives Considered: None
25. Summary of Magnitude and Significance of Potential Impacts: None
26. Cumulative Effects: None
27. Preferred Action Alternative and Rationale: The preferred action is to terminate the MPDES permit. DEQ finds there has been a permanent elimination in the point source discharges controlled by the permit and intends to terminate the permit pursuant to ARM 17.30.1363(1)(d).
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Recommendation for Further Environmental Analysis:

EIS More Detailed EA No Further Analysis

Rationale for Recommendation:

28. Public Involvement: A 30-day public comment period will be held.
29. Persons and agencies consulted in the preparation of this analysis: None.

Date: January 2019

Approved By:

DRAFT

Jon Kenning, Chief
Water Protection Bureau

Date