

# **MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY**

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

## **Montana Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Fact Sheet**

### Permit Denial/Termination

Permittee: Columbia Falls Aluminum Company, LLC

Permit Number: MT0030066

Receiving Water: Flathead River

Facility Name: Columbia Falls Aluminum Company

County: Flathead

Facility Contact: Steve Wright, Environmental Manager  
2000 Aluminum Drive  
Columbia Falls, MT 59912

Facility Type: Privately-Owned Treatment Works, Major

### **I. Permit Status**

The initial Montana Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (MPDES) permit for wastewater discharged from Columbia Falls Aluminum Company (CFAC, also referred to as 'the facility') was issued in May 1994. The permit was subsequently renewed February 1999 and again in September 2014. On August 22, 2014, CFAC filed a Notice of Appeal and Request for Hearing to the Montana Board of Environmental Review challenging specific conditions of the permit.

During the permit appeal process, CFAC permanently closed its plant. The site was added to the National Priorities List September 9, 2016. The Remedial Investigation and Feasibility Study (RI/FS) is underway and is overseen by the EPA, in consultation with the State. The objectives of the RI/FS are to assess site conditions, determine the nature and extent of contamination, and evaluate remedial action alternatives to protect human health and the environment. The RI/FS will expand on the site investigation previously conducted at the site.

On October 23, 2018, Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) Water Protection Bureau staff toured the site and viewed the permitted outfalls with CFAC representatives. DEQ found the plant demolished and the previously regulated activities under the permit could no longer take place at CFAC.

## II. Permit Denial/Termination

**Table 1: List of Outfalls to Flathead River**

Outfall	Receiving Water	Source Description	Outfall status	
<b>006</b>	<b>Flathead River via Groundwater Seep</b>		<b>48°23'22"N / 114°8'29"W</b>	
	Seep where discharges from other outfalls to groundwater enter the Flathead River.		Regulated industrial activities that discharged to groundwater were permanently eliminated when the plant was permanently closed and the regulated activities ceased.	
<b>007</b>	<b>Flathead River via Groundwater from North Ponds</b>		<b>48°23'47.0"N / 114°8'14.1"W</b>	
002 (internal)	ELG: Anode Paste Plant Briquette Cooling Water		All sources of the wastewater to north ponds were eliminated when the plant was permanently closed and the regulated activities ceased.	
	Noncontact Cooling Water (NCCW)			
	Non-process wastewater (Masonry Shop)			
	Boiler blowdown (lab)			
<b>008</b>	<b>Flathead River via Groundwater from North Ponds</b>		<b>48°23'46.8"N / 114°8'4.5"W</b>	
	NCCW		All sources of the wastewater and industrial storm water to north ponds were eliminated when the plant was closed and the regulated activities ceased.	
	Non-Process wastewater (battery shop, garage, garage steam clean, and pin crane steam clean)			
	Unregulated (air conditioner condensate)			
	Industrial storm water			
<b>009</b>	<b>Flathead River via Ground Water from South Ponds</b>		<b>48°23'20.3"N / 114°8'19.3"W</b>	
004 (internal)	ELG: Aluminum Casting Contact Chilling Water		All sources of the wastewater and industrial storm water to south ponds were eliminated when the plant was closed and the regulated activities ceased.	
005 (internal)	TBEL: Sewage Treatment Plant			
	NCCW (rectifier and other equipment)			
	Process wastewater (Casting Mold Cleaning & Steam Cleaning)			
	Non-process wastewater (Fabrication Shop Steam Cleaning)			
	Industrial storm water			
<b>010</b>	<b>Flathead River via Groundwater from West Pond</b>		<b>48°23'38.0"N / 114°8'26.0"W</b>	
	Boiler blowdown (Fabrication Shop, Warehouse, and Changehouse)		All sources of the wastewater to west ponds were eliminated when the plant was closed, and the regulated activities ceased. Because there is no regulated industrial activity, storm water from the remaining parking lots is no longer a point source.	
	Storm water – parking lot			
<b>011</b>	<b>Flathead River via Groundwater from Dry Wells</b>		<b>48°23'43.7"N / 114°8'6.0"W</b>	
	Boiler blowdown (Paste Plant)		All sources of the wastewater to boiler dry wells were eliminated when the plant was closed, and the regulated activities ceased.	
<b>012</b>	<b>Flathead River via Groundwater from Dry Well</b>		<b>48°23'34.2"N / 114°8'16.6"W</b>	
	NCCW (Electromelt Furnace)		All sources of the wastewater to electromelt furnace dry wells were eliminated when the plant was closed, and the regulated activities ceased.	

<b>013</b>	<b>Flathead River via Groundwater</b>	<b>48°23'28.9"N / 114°7'37.6"W</b>
	Non-process waste water (Head Tank Cleaning – Chlorinated Water)	All sources of the wastewater from head tank cleaning were eliminated when the plant was closed, and the regulated activities ceased.

Because of the permanent plant closure of CFAC, DEQ finds there has been a permanent elimination in the discharges controlled by the permit and intends to terminate the permit pursuant to ARM 17.30.1363(1)(d). This action applies to the 2014-issued MPDES Permit as well as any portion of the 1999-issued MPDES Permit still in effect as a result of CFAC's 2014 appeal.