



July 2, 2018

RE: Notice of release, public comment period, and public meeting for the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Proposed Spring Creek Coal Amendment

Dear Interested Party:

The Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) has released a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for an amendment application to the Surface Mining Permit C1979012 submitted by Spring Creek Coal LLC. The amendment application called AM5 (Arrowhead Amendment), requests adding approximately 4,334 acres to the current permit area for the establishment of a haul road. The haul road would connect the Spring Creek Mine, located near Decker, MT, with the Youngs Creek Mine in Wyoming.

This proposed amendment by Spring Creek Coal does not expand mining in additional areas or add additional tons of coal reserves to the mine plan. Spring Creek Coal is proposing construction and operation of a haul road and associated supporting facilities, as well as an above-ground powerline within the transportation corridor. The proposed haul road extends for approximately nine miles in Montana and is located on surface owned by Cloud Peak Energy, except for the crossing of one parcel of State of Montana School Trust land.

The EIS evaluates the environmental impacts resulting from the project, pursuant to the requirements of the Montana Environmental Policy Act (MEPA). The EIS analyzes in detail the No Action Alternative, and the Agency Modified Alternative. The Draft EIS analyzed potential impacts of the proposed amendment in Montana as required by MEPA.

The Draft EIS is available for public comment from July 2, 2018 – August 1, 2018. All comments become part of the public record for this project and are available for public review, along with the name(s) of the commenter(s). The Draft EIS has been posted on DEQ's website at (<http://deq.mt.gov/Public/eis>). An electronic version is available at the Big Horn County Public Library, 419 N. Custer Ave, Hardin, MT.

A public meeting will be held on Tuesday, July 17, 2018, to allow for stakeholders to submit oral comments on the Draft EIS. The meeting will be held from 6:00 to 8:00 pm at the Big Horn County Extension Office in the LBH Center, 317 N. Custer Ave, Hardin, Montana.

The proposed amendment application is available for the public to view at the Department of Environmental Quality offices in Helena (2001 11th Avenue, Building B) and at the Spring Creek Mine, Decker, MT. Electronic copies of the application may be viewed by visiting the website (<http://deq.mt.gov/Public/ea/coal>).

Comments on the Draft EIS must be received by Wednesday, August 1, 2018. Comments may be submitted at the public meeting or electronically using the DEQ Public Comment Portal at

<http://svc.mt.gov/deq/publiccomment/CommentPeriod/Inactive?Key=YYENX>

Written comments may also be submitted to the following address:

Craig Jones
Department of Environmental Quality
P.O. Box 200901
Helena, MT 59601

The DEQ will make reasonable accommodations for those with disabilities who wish to participate in the meeting. If you require an accommodation, please contact Craig Jones at 406-444-0514 or crajones@mt.gov.

Sincerely,



Tom Livers
Director
Department of Environmental Quality

Enclosed: CD of the Draft EIS