



September 24, 2020

Dear Interested Party:

The Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) has issued a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to analyze and disclose the potential environmental impacts of the proposed fifth amendment (AM5) to the operating permit (C1984003B) for Area B (Project) at the Rosebud Mine, an existing surface coal mine near Colstrip, Montana. The Rosebud Mine is operated by Westmoreland Rosebud Mining, LLC.

The Montana Environmental Policy Act (MEPA), Section 75-1-201, *et seq.*, Montana Code Annotated (MCA), requires the preparation of an EIS for state actions that may significantly affect the quality of the human environment. The EIS includes a detailed statement on the environmental impact of the proposed action and a no action alternative.

If the Proposed Action is approved, 9,108 acres would be added to the existing 6,045-acre permit area. Of the 9,108 acres proposed, 5,547 acres would be disturbed for mining and associated activities. In addition, the Area B operations plan and reclamation plan would be updated to include additional mine passes and reclamation in the existing permit area. This EIS also analyzes an application for a new Montana Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (MPDES) permit for 27 new outfalls in the Project area. The proposed Project would extend the life of the Rosebud Mine by 7 years.

DEQ is hosting a remote public meeting on Oct. 7, 2020 to provide the public with information on the proposed project and to give the public an opportunity to comment on the Draft EIS. The anticipated hour-long virtual meeting will be held via Zoom at 6 p.m., accessible both online and by telephone. DEQ will give a presentation on the EIS, permitting process, and description of the proposed Project beginning at 6 p.m., followed by the opportunity for the public to provide comments.

The public has the opportunity to provide comments on the proposed Project and the Draft EIS. DEQ is asking the public for substantive comments regarding the Draft EIS analyses. Written comments may be submitted by mail to: Jen Lane, MEPA Coordinator, Montana Department of Environmental Quality, and PO Box 200901, Helena, MT 59620-0901. To view the draft EIS and submit comments electronically visit: <http://deq.mt.gov/Public/publiccomment>. All comments must be received or postmarked by Oct. 24, 2020 to be considered.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Shaun McGrath", is written over a light blue circular stamp.

Shaun McGrath
Director, Montana Department of Environmental Quality