

How to Provide Scoping Comments

DEQ needs your input to identify issues or concerns that should be analyzed in the EIS for the proposed TR1 Revision of the Spring Creek Mine. You can provide comments in two ways:

1. Attend the scoping public meeting on April 18th and provide written comments to DEQ staff there.

2. Send written comments to:

Montana Department of Environmental Quality

Attn: Jen Lane, Director's Office
PO Box 200901
Helena, MT 59620-0901
Phone: 406-444-4956

3. Submit comments electronically at:

<http://svc.mt.gov/deq/publiccomment/>

Please include your address, phone number, email address, or other personal identifying information in your comment. You should be aware that your entire comment—including your personal identifying information—may be made publicly available at any time.

Please submit all comments by May 7, 2018

For questions regarding the EIS process, please contact Jen Lane at 406-444-4956 or by email at jlane2@mt.gov.

Public Meeting Schedule

DEQ has scheduled a public scoping public meeting. The meeting will start with an open house with DEQ specialist available to answer the public's questions.

Wednesday, April 18th

Open House: 5:00 pm - 6:00 pm
Public Meeting: 6:00 pm - 7:30 pm

Hardin High School
721 N Miles Ave.
Hardin, MT

Additional Information

Additional information regarding the proposed TR1 Revision of the Spring Creek Mine, including Spring Creek Coal Company's application, can be found on or requested through DEQ's Coal Program website.

<http://deq.mt.gov/Public/ea/coal>

A detailed analysis of currently approved mining can be found in the current permit documents for SMP C1979012, as well as in BLM's 2010 EA for Federal Coal Lease MTM-94378.

Spring Creek Mine TR1 Major Revision

Environmental Impact Statement



Scoping Newsletter April 2018

Dear Interested Citizen,

You are invited to participate in the Montana Department of Environmental Quality's (DEQ) environmental review process for a major revision to the Spring Creek Mine Permit C1979012, referred to as TR1. Approval of the proposed Major Revision would add approximately 68 million tons of recoverable coal reserves inside the current permit boundary at the Spring Creek Mine and extend mine life from 2022 to 2027. The Spring Creek Mine is owned by Spring Creek Coal, LLC and is located in the southeast corner on Bighorn County, Montana. The proposed revision adds 974 acres on disturbance with the current permit boundary. DEQ deemed Spring Creek's Major Revision application complete on December 6, 2013 and is now preparing an environmental impact statement (EIS).

The EIS is being prepared to meet the requirements of the Montana Environmental Policy Act and will analyze the potential impacts of the proposed project. DEQ is asking for comments from federal, tribal, state and local governments and interested persons and groups that help identify issues likely to involve significant impacts and possible alternatives to be considered in the EIS.

The first phase in preparing an EIS is to conduct "scoping" to determine the scope of the EIS. DEQ is asking the public for comments to help identify issues that are likely to involve significant impacts and possible alternatives to be considered in the

EIS. The scoping period will begin Friday, April 6, 2018 and end Monday, May 7, 2018.

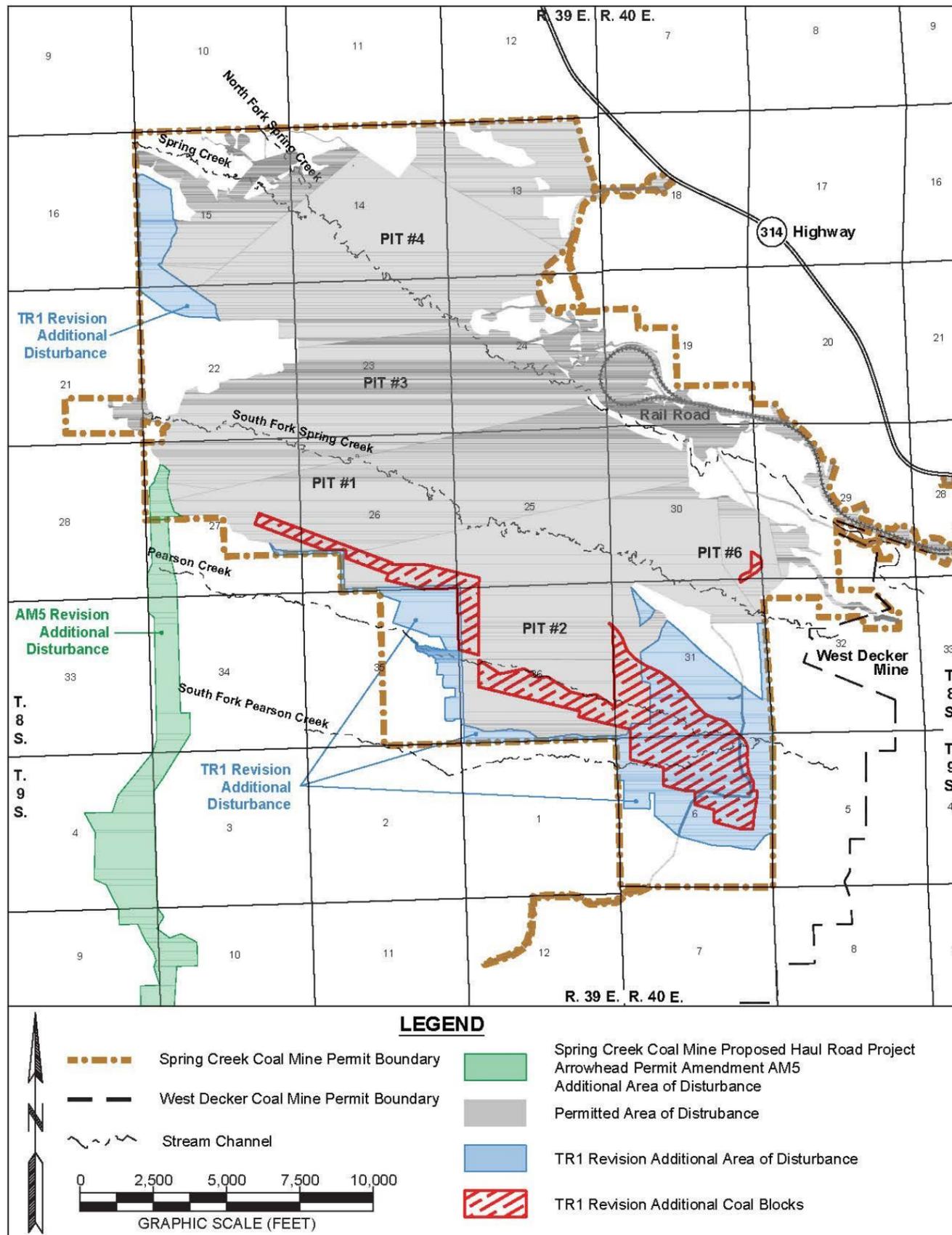
A public scoping meeting will take place on Wednesday, April 18, 2018 from 5:00-7:30 pm at the Hardin High School, 721 N Miles Ave, in Hardin. The meeting will provide the public with information on the proposed project and an opportunity to submit oral and written comments. The meeting will be conducted in an open house style format and will include informational displays and areas where attendees may record and submit written comments. There will also be time for attendees to submit oral comments between 6:00-7:30 pm; a transcriber will record the oral comments for the public record. If you require reasonable accommodation to attend the meeting, please contact Jen Lane at least one week before the meeting.

We encourage you to attend the public meeting and to share your scoping comments with DEQ.

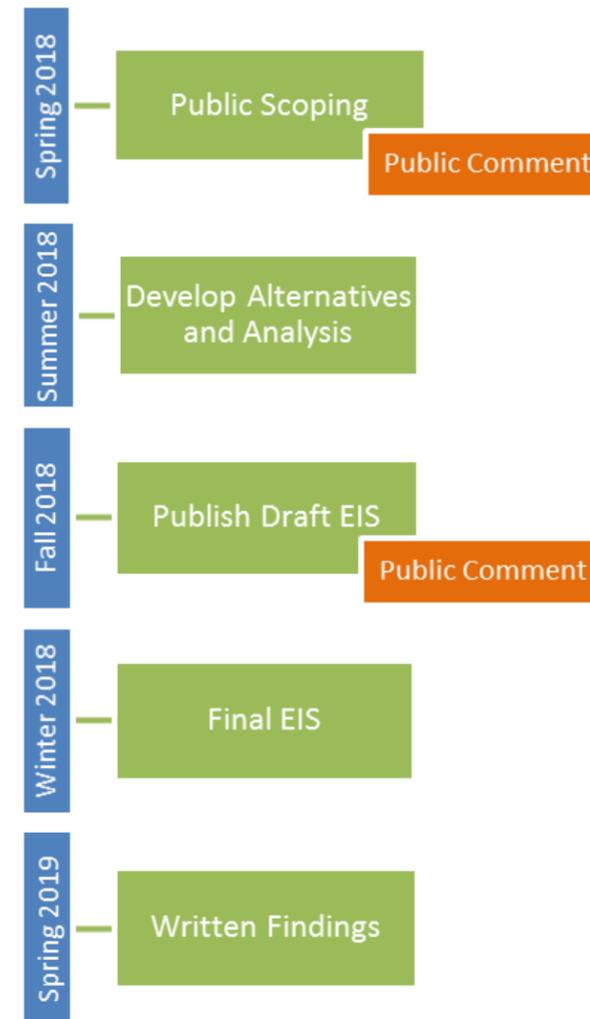
Sincerely,

Jen Lane, MEPA Coordinator
Montana Department of Environmental Quality

Spring Creek Mine TR1 Project Map



Project Timeline



Project Location

The Spring Creek Mine is in the southeast corner of Big Horn County, Montana, about sixteen miles north of the Montana-Wyoming State line and about 32 miles northeast of Sheridan, Wyoming. The Spring Creek Mine lies west of the Tongue River Reservoir. The Spring Creek mine area currently spans approximately 10.8 square miles.

Project Description

Spring Creek Coal, LLC. is proposing to add 974 acres of additional disturbance within the current permit boundary. The proposed action (TR1) would extend the life of the mine from 2022 to 2027 and disturbed acreage would increase from 6,085 to 7,062 acres. TR1 will add approximately 68 million tons of recoverable coal reserves inside the current permit boundary.

Spring Creek Coal, LLC. uses an area surface mining method at the Spring Creek Mine to extract coal. In advance of each mining pass, soil would be removed from the area and used in future reclamation. Next, the overburden (sedimentary rock material covering the coal seams) would be drilled and blasted. After leveling the blasted material a dragline would be used to strip the overburden from the mine pass.

After the dragline exposes the coal seam in each pass, the coal would be drilled and blasted and loaded into coal haulers. The coal would then be transported to the processing facilities.

If TR1 is approved, Spring Creek will continue mining at the current rate (approximately 13.5 million tons per year) for an additional five years. If TR1 is not approved, Spring Creek will continue to operate the permitted Spring Creek Mine.