Date of Posting: December 15, 2025

Name of Permittee: Elevation NewCo, LLC.

Facility Name: Treasure Mine

Physical Site Location (Address): 8625 MT Hwy 91 South Dillon, MT 59725

Sent via email: Josh.regan@hdmin.com

RE: Department Decision on MAQP Application #2793-05

The Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) has issued a Decision, with conditions, on Montana Air Quality Permit (MAQP) application #2793-05 for the above-named permittee.

The Decision may be appealed to the Board of Environmental Review (Board). A request for a hearing must be filed by December 30, 2025. This permit shall become final on December 31, 2025, unless the Board orders a stay on the permit.

Procedures for Appeal: Any person who is directly and adversely affected by the Decision may request a hearing before the Board. The appeal must be filed before the final date stated above. The request for a hearing must contain an affidavit setting forth the grounds for the request. The hearing will be held under the provisions of the Montana Administrative Procedures Act. Submit requests for a hearing to: Chairman, Board of Environmental Review, P.O. Box 200901, Helena, Montana 59620 or the Board Secretary: DEQBERSecretary@mt.gov.

Conditions: See attached Decision on MAQP #2793-05.

For DEQ,

Eric Merchant, Supervisor
Air Quality Permitting Services Section
Air Quality Bureau
Air, Energy, and Mining Division
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MONTANA AIR QUALITY PERMIT

Issued To: Elevation NewCo, LLC. Treasure Mine 8625 MT Hwy 91 South Dillon, MT 59725	MAQP: #2793-05 Preliminary Determination: 11/24/2025 DEQ's Decision: 12/15/2025 Permit Final:

A Montana Air Quality Permit (MAQP), with conditions, is hereby granted to Elevation NewCo, LLC – Treasure Mine (Elevation), pursuant to Sections 75-2-204 and 211 of the Montana Code Annotated (MCA), as amended, and Administrative Rules of Montana (ARM) 17.8.740, *et seq*., as amended, for the following:

Section I: Permitted Facilities

A. Plant Location

Elevation operates the Treasure Mine, a talc mine located in the NW ¼ of Section 14, Township 7 South, Range 6 West in Madison County, MT. The latitude and longitude of the mine site centroid is 45.228811, -112.312088.

B. Current Permit Action

On September 27, 2025, the Montana Department of Environmental Quality – Air Quality Bureau (DEQ) received an application from Elevation for a MAQP modification to increase waste rock production from 3,500,000 tons during any twelve (12) month rolling period to 12,000,00 tons during any 12-month rolling period.

Section II: Conditions and Limitations

A. Emission Limitations

1. All visible emissions from any Standards of Performance for New Stationary Source (NSPS) – affected crusher shall not exhibit an opacity in excess of the following averaged over 6 consecutive minutes (ARM 17.8.340 and 40 CFR 60, Subpart OOO):

    a. For crushers that commence construction, modification, or reconstruction on or after April 22, 2008: 12% opacity

    b. For crushers that commence construction, modification, or reconstruction after August 31, 1983, but before April 22, 2008: 15% opacity

2. All visible emissions from any other NSPS-affected equipment (such as screens and conveyors) shall not exhibit an opacity in excess of the following

averaged over six consecutive minutes (ARM 17.8.340 and 40 CFR 60, Subpart OOO):

a. For equipment that commence construction, modification, or reconstruction on or after April 22, 2008: 7% opacity

b. For equipment that commence construction, modification, or reconstruction after August 31, 1983 but before April 22, 2008: 10% opacity

3. All visible emissions from any non-NSPS affected equipment shall not exhibit an opacity of 20% or greater averaged over 6 consecutive minutes (ARM 17.8.304 and ARM 17.8.752).

4. Water and spray bars shall be available on-site at all times and operated as necessary to maintain compliance with the opacity limitations in Sections II.A.1, II.A.2, and II.A.3 (ARM 17.8.749).

5. Maximum ore production shall be limited to 200,000 tons during any twelve (12) month rolling period (ARM 17.8.752).

6. Maximum waste production shall be limited to 12,000,000 tons during any 12-month rolling period (ARM 17.8.749 and ARM 17.8.752).

7. Elevation shall not cause or authorize the use of any street, road, or parking lot without taking reasonable precautions to control emissions of airborne particulate matter (ARM 17.8.308 and ARM 17.8.749).

8. Elevation shall treat all unpaved portions of the haul roads, access roads, parking lots, or the general plant area with water and/or chemical dust suppressant, as necessary, to maintain compliance with the reasonable precautions limitation in Section II.A.7 (ARM 17.8.749).

9. Operation of the diesel engine driving the generator shall not exceed 6200 hours during any rolling 12-month time period and the engine shall be compliant with the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) non-road compression-ignition engine Tier 2 or higher emission standards pursuant to 40 CFR Part 89.112 (ARM 17.8.749 and ARM 17.8.1204).

10. Elevation shall comply with all applicable standards and limitations, monitoring, reporting, recordkeeping, testing, and notification requirements contained in 40 CFR 60, Subpart OOO, *Standards of Performance for Nonmetallic Mineral Processing Plants* (ARM 17.8.340 and 40 CFR 60, Subpart OOO).

11. Elevation shall comply with all applicable standards and limitations, and the reporting, recordkeeping, and notification requirements contained in 40 CFR 60, Subpart IIII, *Standards of Performance for Stationary Compression Ignition Internal Combustion Engines* and 40 CFR 63, Subpart ZZZZ, *National Emissions Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants for Stationary Reciprocating Internal*

Combustion Engines, for any applicable diesel engine (ARM 17.8.340; 40 CFR 60, Subpart IIII; ARM 17.8.342 and 40 CFR 63, Subpart ZZZZ).

B. Testing Requirements

1. Within 60 days after achieving maximum production, but no later than 180 days after initial start-up, an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Method 9 opacity test and/or other methods and procedures as specified in 40 CFR 60.675 must be performed on all 40 CFR 60, Subpart OOO-affected equipment to demonstrate compliance with the emission limitations contained in Section II.A.1 and II.A.2. Additional testing may be required by 40 CFR 60, Subpart OOO (ARM 17.8.340 and 40 CFR 60, Subpart OOO).

2. All compliance source tests shall conform to the requirements of the Montana Source Test Protocol and Procedures Manual (ARM 17.8.106).

3. The Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) may require further testing (ARM 17.8.105).

C. Operational Reporting Requirements

1. Elevation shall supply DEQ with annual production information for all emission points, as required by DEQ in the annual emission inventory request. The request will include, but is not limited to, all sources of emissions identified in the emission inventory contained in the permit analysis.

   Production information shall be gathered on a calendar-year basis and submitted to DEQ by the date required in the emission inventory request. Information shall be in the units required by DEQ. This information may be used to calculate operating fees, based on actual emissions from the facility, and/or to verify compliance with permit limitations (ARM 17.8.505).

2. Elevation shall notify DEQ of any construction or improvement project conducted, pursuant to ARM 17.8.745, that would include ***the addition of a new emissions unit,*** change in control equipment, stack height, stack diameter, stack flow, stack gas temperature, source location, or fuel specifications, or would result in an increase in source capacity above its permitted operation. The notice must be submitted to DEQ, in writing, 10 days prior to startup or use of the proposed de minimis change, or as soon as reasonably practicable in the event of an unanticipated circumstance causing the de minimis change and must include the information requested in ARM 17.8.745(l)(d) (ARM 17.8.745).

3. Elevation shall maintain records showing daily hours of operation and daily production rates for the last 12 months. The records compiled in accordance with this permit shall be maintained by Elevation as a permanent business record for at least 5 years following the date of the measurement, must be available at the plant site for inspection by DEQ, and must be submitted to

DEQ upon request. These records may be stored at a location other than the plant site upon approval by DEQ (ARM 17.8.749).

4. Elevation shall document, by month, the hours of operation of the diesel engine/generator. By the 25th day of each month, Elevation shall total the hours of operation for the diesel generator engine for the previous month. The monthly information will be used to verify compliance with the rolling 12-month limitation in Section II.A.9. The information for each of the previous months shall be submitted along with the annual emission inventory (ARM 17.8.749).

5. Elevation shall annually certify that its emissions are less than those that would require the source to obtain an air quality operating permit as required by ARM 17.8.1204(3)(b). The annual certification shall comply with the certification requirements of ARM 17.8.1207. The annual certification shall be submitted along with the annual emissions inventory information (ARM 17.8.749 and ARM 17.8.1204).

D. Notification

Elevation shall provide DEQ with written notification of the actual start-up date of the crushing and screening set postmarked within 15 days after the actual start-up date (ARM 17.8.749).

Section III: General Conditions

A. Inspection – Elevation shall allow DEQ's representatives access to the source at all reasonable times for the purpose of making inspections or surveys, collecting samples, obtaining data, auditing any monitoring equipment such as Continuous Emission Monitoring Systems (CEMS) or Continuous Emission Rate Monitoring Systems (CERMS), or observing any monitoring or testing, and otherwise conducting all necessary functions related to this permit.

B. Waiver – The permit and the terms, conditions, and matters stated herein shall be deemed accepted if Elevation fails to appeal as indicated below.

C. Compliance with Statutes and Regulations – Nothing in this permit shall be construed as relieving Elevation of the responsibility for complying with any applicable federal or Montana statute, rule, or standard, except as specifically provided in ARM 17.8.740, *et seq.* (ARM 17.8.756).

D. Enforcement – Violations of limitations, conditions and requirements contained herein may constitute grounds for permit revocation, penalties, or other enforcement action as specified in Section 75-2-401, *et seq.*, MCA.

E. Appeals – Any person or persons jointly or severally adversely affected by DEQ's decision may request, within 15 days after DEQ renders its decision, upon affidavit setting forth the grounds therefor, a hearing before the Board of Environmental Review (Board). A hearing shall be held under the provisions of the Montana Administrative Procedures Act. The filing of a request for a hearing does not stay

DEQ's decision, unless the Board issues a stay upon receipt of a petition and a finding that a stay is appropriate under Section 75-2-211(11)(b), MCA. The issuance of a stay on a permit by the Board postpones the effective date of DEQ's decision until conclusion of the hearing and issuance of a final decision by the Board. If a stay is not issued by the Board, DEQ's decision on the application is final 16 days after DEQ's decision is made.

F. Permit Inspection – As required by ARM 17.8.755, Inspection of Permit, a copy of the air quality permit shall be made available for inspection by DEQ at the location of the source.

G. Permit Fee – Pursuant to Section 75-2-220, MCA, failure to pay the annual operation fee by Elevation may be grounds for revocation of this permit, as required by that section and rules adopted thereunder by the Board.

H. Duration of Permit – Construction or installation must begin, or contractual obligations entered into, that would constitute substantial loss within 3 years of permit issuance and proceed with due diligence until the project is complete or the permit shall expire (ARM 17.8.762).

Montana Air Quality Permit Analysis
Elevation NewCo, LLC – Treasure Mine
MAQP #2793-05

I. Introduction/Process Description

Elevation NewCo, LLC (Elevation) owns and operates a talc mine. The facility is in the NW ¼ of Section 14, Township 7 South, Range 6 West in Madison County, MT, and is known as the Treasure Mine.

A. Permitted Equipment

The permit covers the operations of the facility. Operations include blasting, drilling, crushing, screening, and conveying of material. Emissions are also generated from a diesel generator, bulk loading, stockpiles, diesel vehicle exhaust, and haul and access roads.

B. Source Description

The Treasure Mine, a talc mine constructed in 1955, has been in operation since 1960. The talc is drilled and blasted from the mine and hauled to the Mill Complex, roughly 8 miles south of Dillon, MT for processing.

C. Permit History

On August 11, 1993, MAQP **#2793-00** was issued to Barretts Minerals Inc. (BMI) from the Department of Environmental Quality – Air Quality Bureau (DEQ) for the operation of a portable crushing plant. The permit covered a 1955 Jaw crusher with a grizzly and associated equipment.

On April 30, 1999, BMI was issued MAQP **#2793-01**. The facility was originally issued a permit as a portable crushing plant. The facility was since determined to be a stationary talc mining operation. BMI also requested that the permit be written to allow the facility flexibility to make changes under ARM 17.8.743(1)(q). Also, the rule references were updated.

On April 28, 1999, BMI requested a modification to MAQP #2793-01. MAQP #2793-01 was issued with an ore and waste production limitation that was incorrectly calculated. This modification corrected Section II.A.2 and 3 to reflect the correct ore and waste production limitations. The correct limitations did not affect the emission levels that were used in the analyzing of the mine. On May 19, 1999, **MAQP #2793-02** was issued and replaced MAQP #2793-01.

On August 16, 2019, DEQ received from BMI a complete application to modify MAQP #2793-02. The modification requests to operate a portable crusher and screening operation. The crusher, screens and generator set was approved as a pilot project under the May 10, 2019 de minimis action. BMI has determined that the equipment will remain onsite and therefore is seeking to modify their air permit to

include the equipment. MAQP #2793-03 makes the requested change and updates the permit to reflect current Department language, rule references, and federal emission standards for affected equipment. **MAQP #2793-03** replaced MAQP #2793-02.

On June 28, 2024, DEQ received a request from BMI for an Administrative Amendment to their MAQP to change the name of the company to Elevation NewCo, LLC. MAQP #2793-04 makes the requested change and updates the permit to reflect current DEQ language and rule references. **MAQP #2793-04** replaced MAQP #2793-03.

D. Current Permit Action

On September 27, 2025, DEQ received an application from Elevation for a MAQP modification to increase waste rock production from 3,500,000 tons during any twelve (12) month rolling period to 12,000,00 tons during any 12-month rolling period. **MAQP #2793-05** replaces MAQP #2793-04.

E. Response to Public Comments

Person/Group Commenting	Permit Reference	Comment	DEQ Response
No Comments Received			

F. Additional Information

Additional information, such as applicable rules and regulations, Best Available Control Technology (BACT)/Reasonably Available Control Technology (RACT) determinations, air quality impacts, and environmental assessments, is included in the analysis associated with each change to the permit.

II. Applicable Rules and Regulations

The following are partial explanations of some applicable rules and regulations that apply to the facility. The complete rules are stated in the Administrative Rules of Montana (ARM) and are available, upon request, from the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). Upon request, DEQ will provide references for the location of complete copies of all applicable rules and regulations or copies where appropriate.

A. ARM 17.8, Subchapter 1 – General Provisions, including but not limited to:

1. ARM 17.8.101 Definitions. This rule includes a list of applicable definitions used in this chapter, unless indicated otherwise in a specific subchapter.

2. ARM 17.8.105 Testing Requirements. Any person or persons responsible for the emission of any air contaminant into the outdoor atmosphere shall, upon written request of DEQ, provide the facilities and necessary equipment (including instruments and sensing devices) and shall conduct tests, emission or ambient, for such periods of time as may be necessary using methods approved by DEQ.

3. ARM 17.8.106 Source Testing Protocol. The requirements of this rule apply to any emission source testing conducted by DEQ, any source or other entity as required by any rule in this chapter, or any permit or order issued pursuant to this chapter, or the provisions of the Clean Air Act of Montana, 75-2-101, *et seq*., Montana Code Annotated (MCA).

   Elevation shall comply with the requirements contained in the Montana Source Test Protocol and Procedures Manual, including, but not limited to, using the proper test methods and supplying the required reports. A copy of the Montana Source Test Protocol and Procedures Manual is available from DEQ upon request.

4. ARM 17.8.110 Malfunctions. (2) DEQ must be notified promptly by telephone whenever a malfunction occurs that can be expected to create emissions in excess of any applicable emission limitation or to continue for a period greater than 4 hours.

5. ARM 17.8.111 Circumvention. (1) No person shall cause or permit the installation or use of any device or any means that, without resulting in reduction of the total amount of air contaminant emitted, conceals or dilutes an emission of air contaminant that would otherwise violate an air pollution control regulation. (2) No equipment that may produce emissions shall be operated or maintained in such a manner as to create a public nuisance.

B. ARM 17.8, Subchapter 2 – Ambient Air Quality, including, but not limited to the following:

1. ARM 17.8.204 Ambient Air Monitoring
2. ARM 17.8.210 Ambient Air Quality Standards for Sulfur Dioxide
3. ARM 17.8.211 Ambient Air Quality Standards for Nitrogen Dioxide
4. ARM 17.8.212 Ambient Air Quality Standards for Carbon Monoxide
5. ARM 17.8.213 Ambient Air Quality Standard for Ozone
6. ARM 17.8.214 Ambient Air Quality Standard for Hydrogen Sulfide
7. ARM 17.8.220 Ambient Air Quality Standard for Settled Particulate Matter
8. ARM 17.8.221 Ambient Air Quality Standard for Visibility
9. ARM 17.8.222 Ambient Air Quality Standard for Lead
10. ARM 17.8.223 Ambient Air Quality Standard for PM_{10}
11. ARM 17.8.230 Fluoride in Forage

Elevation must maintain compliance with the applicable ambient air quality standards.

C. ARM 17.8, Subchapter 3 – Emission Standards, including, but not limited to:

1. ARM 17.8.304 Visible Air Contaminants. This rule requires that no person may cause or authorize emissions to be discharged into the outdoor atmosphere from any source installed after November 23, 1968, that exhibit an opacity of 20% or greater averaged over 6 consecutive minutes.

2. ARM 17.8.308 Particulate Matter, Airborne. (1) This rule requires an opacity limitation of less than 20% for all fugitive emission sources and that reasonable precautions be taken to control emissions of airborne particulate matter. (2) Under this rule, Elevation shall not cause or authorize the use of any street, road, or parking lot without taking reasonable precautions to control emissions of airborne particulate matter.

3. ARM 17.8.309 Particulate Matter, Fuel Burning Equipment. This rule requires that no person shall cause, allow, or permit to be discharged into the atmosphere particulate matter caused by the combustion of fuel in excess of the amount determined by this rule.

4. ARM 17.8.310 Particulate Matter, Industrial Process. This rule requires that no person shall cause, allow, or permit to be discharged into the atmosphere particulate matter in excess of the amount set forth in this rule.

5. ARM 17.8.322 Sulfur Oxide Emissions--Sulfur in Fuel. This rule requires that no person shall burn liquid, solid, or gaseous fuel in excess of the amount set forth in this rule.
6. ARM 17.8.324 Hydrocarbon Emissions--Petroleum Products. (3) No person shall load or permit the loading of gasoline into any stationary tank with a capacity of 250 gallons or more from any tank truck or trailer, except through a permanent submerged fill pipe, unless such tank is equipped with a vapor loss control device as described in (1) of this rule.

7. ARM 17.8.340 Standard of Performance for New Stationary Sources and Emission Guidelines for Existing Sources. This rule incorporates, by reference, 40 CFR Part 60, Standards of Performance for New Stationary Sources (NSPS). Elevation is considered an NSPS affected facility under 40 CFR Part 60 and is subject to the requirements of the following subparts.

    a. 40 CFR 60, Subpart A – General Provisions apply to all equipment or facilities subject to an NSPS Subpart as listed below:

    b. 40 CFR 60, Subpart OOO – Standard of Performance for Nonmetallic Mineral Processing Plants. For a crushing plant to be subject to this subpart, the facility must meet the definition of an affected facility and, the affected equipment must have been constructed, reconstructed, or modified after August 31, 1983. Based on the information submitted by Elevation, the portable crushing equipment to be used under MAQP #2793-05 is subject to this subpart because it has the capacity to process more than 150 tons per hour of nonmetallic minerals.

    c. 40 CFR 60, Subpart IIII – Standards of Performance for Stationary Compression Ignition Internal Combustion Engines (CI ICE). Owners and operators for stationary CI ICE that commence construction after July 11, 2005, where the stationary CI ICE are manufactured after April 1, 2006, and are not fire pump engines, and owners and operators of stationary CI ICE

that modify or reconstruct their stationary CI ICE after July 11, 2005, are subject to this subpart. Based on the information submitted by Elevation, the CI ICE to be used under MAQP #2793-03 is a non-road CI ICE associated with a portable crushing and screening operation and therefore may not be subject to this regulation for stationary CI ICE. However, a non-road engine would become regulated as a stationary engine if it remains or will remain at a location for more than 12 consecutive months or a shorter period of time for an engine located at a seasonal source. Therefore, this subpart would become applicable if Elevation operated the CI ICE at a single location for more than 12 months or a shorter period for an engine located at a seasonal source.

8. ARM 17.8.342 Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants for Source Categories. The source, as defined and applied in 40 CFR Part 63, shall comply with the requirements of 40 CFR Part 63, as listed below:

   a. 40 CFR 63, Subpart A – General Provisions apply to all equipment or facilities subject to a NESHAP Subpart as listed below:

   b. 40 CFR 63, Subpart ZZZZ – National Emissions Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants (HAPs) for Stationary Reciprocating Internal Combustion Engines (RICE). An owner or operator of a stationary RICE at a major area source of HAP emissions is subject to this rule except if the stationary RICE is being tested at a stationary RICE test cell/stand. An area source of HAP emissions is a source that is not a major source. Based on the information submitted by Elevation, the RICE to be used under MAQP #2793-05 is a non-road RICE associated with a portable facility and therefore may not be subject to this regulation for stationary RICE. However, a non-road engine would become regulated as a stationary engine if it remains or will remain at a location for more than 12 consecutive months or a shorter period of time for an engine located at a seasonal source. Therefore, this subpart would become applicable if Sierra operated the RICE at a single location for more than 12 months or a shorter period for an engine located at a seasonal source.

D. ARM 17.8, Subchapter 5 – Air Quality Permit Application, Operation, and Open Burning Fees, including, but not limited to:

1. ARM 17.8.504 Air Quality Permit Application Fees. This rule requires that an applicant submit an air quality permit application fee concurrent with the submittal of an air quality permit application. A permit application is incomplete until the proper application fee is paid to DEQ. BMI was not required to submit a fee as this is an Administrative Amendment and does not require a fee for the current permit action.

2. ARM 17.8.505 Air Quality Operation Fees. An annual air quality operation fee must, as a condition of continued operation, be submitted to DEQ by each source of air contaminants holding an air quality permit (excluding an open burning permit) issued by DEQ. The air quality operation fee is based on the

actual or estimated actual amount of air pollutants emitted during the previous calendar year.

An air quality operation fee is separate and distinct from an air quality permit application fee. The annual assessment and collection of the air quality operation fee, described above, shall take place on a calendar-year basis. DEQ may insert into any final permit issued after the effective date of these rules, such conditions as may be necessary to require the payment of an air quality operation fee on a calendar-year basis, including provisions that prorate the required fee amount.

E. ARM 17.8, Subchapter 7 – Permit, Construction, and Operation of Air Contaminant Sources, including, but not limited to:

1. ARM 17.8.740 Definitions. This rule is a list of applicable definitions used in this chapter, unless indicated otherwise in a specific subchapter.

2. ARM 17.8.743 Montana Air Quality Permits--When Required. This rule requires a person to obtain an air quality permit or permit modification to construct, modify, or use any air contaminant sources that have the potential to emit (PTE) greater than 25 tons per year of any pollutant. Elevation has a PTE greater than 25 tons per year of particulate matter with an aerodynamic diameter of 10 microns or less (PM10), oxides of nitrogen (NOx), and carbon monoxide (CO); therefore, an air quality permit is required.

3. ARM 17.8.744 Montana Air Quality Permits--General Exclusions. This rule identifies the activities that are not subject to the Montana Air Quality Permit program.

4. ARM 17.8.745 Montana Air Quality Permits--Exclusion for De Minimis Changes. This rule identifies the de minimis changes at permitted facilities that do not require a permit under the Montana Air Quality Permit Program.

5. ARM 17.8.748 New or Modified Emitting Units--Permit Application Requirements. (1) This rule requires that a permit application be submitted prior to installation, modification, or use of a source. Elevation submitted the required permit application for the current permit action. (7) This rule requires that the applicant notify the public by means of legal publication in a newspaper of general circulation in the area affected by the application for a permit. However, Elevation is not required to submit an affidavit of publication of public notice since this is an Administrative Amendment to the MAQP.

6. ARM 17.8.749 Conditions for Issuance or Denial of Permit. This rule requires that the permits issued by DEQ must authorize the construction and operation of the facility or emitting unit subject to the conditions in the permit and the requirements of this subchapter. This rule also requires that the permit must contain any conditions necessary to assure compliance with the Federal Clean Air Act (FCAA), the Clean Air Act of Montana, and rules adopted under those acts.

7. ARM 17.8.752 Emission Control Requirements. This rule requires a source to install the maximum air pollution control capability that is technically practicable and economically feasible, except that BACT shall be utilized. The required BACT analysis is included in Section III of this permit analysis.

8. ARM 17.8.755 Inspection of Permit. This rule requires that air quality permits shall be made available for inspection by DEQ at the location of the source.

9. ARM 17.8.756 Compliance with Other Requirements. This rule states that nothing in the permit shall be construed as relieving Elevation of the responsibility for complying with any applicable federal or Montana statute, rule, or standard, except as specifically provided in ARM 17.8.740, *et seq*.

10. ARM 17.8.759 Review of Permit Applications. This rule describes DEQ's responsibilities for processing permit applications and making permit decisions on those permit applications that do not require the preparation of an environmental impact statement.

11. ARM 17.8.762 Duration of Permit. An air quality permit shall be valid until revoked or modified, as provided in this subchapter, except that a permit issued prior to construction of a new or modified source may contain a condition providing that the permit will expire unless construction is commenced within the time specified in the permit, which in no event may be less than 1 year after the permit is issued.

12. ARM 17.8.763 Revocation of Permit. An air quality permit may be revoked upon written request of the permittee, or for violations of any requirement of the Clean Air Act of Montana, rules adopted under the Clean Air Act of Montana, the FCAA, rules adopted under the FCAA, or any applicable requirement contained in the Montana State Implementation Plan (SIP).

13. ARM 17.8.764 Administrative Amendment to Permit. An air quality permit may be amended for changes in any applicable rules and standards adopted by the Board of Environmental Review (Board) or changed conditions of operation at a source or stack that do not result in an increase of emissions as a result of those changed conditions. The owner or operator of a facility may not increase the facility's emissions beyond permit limits unless the increase meets the criteria in ARM 17.8.745 for a de minimis change not requiring a permit, or unless the owner or operator applies for and receives another permit in accordance with ARM 17.8.748, ARM 17.8.749, ARM 17.8.752, ARM 17.8.755, and ARM 17.8.756, and with all applicable requirements in ARM Title 17, Chapter 8, Subchapters 8, 9, and 10.

14. ARM 17.8.765 Transfer of Permit. This rule states that an air quality permit may be transferred from one person to another if written notice of intent to transfer, including the names of the transferor and the transferee, is sent to DEQ.

F. ARM 17.8, Subchapter 8 – Prevention of Significant Deterioration of Air Quality, including, but not limited to:

1. ARM 17.8.801 Definitions. This rule is a list of applicable definitions used in this subchapter.

2. ARM 17.8.818 Review of Major Stationary Sources and Major Modifications--Source Applicability and Exemptions. The requirements contained in ARM 17.8.819 through ARM 17.8.827 shall apply to any major stationary source and any major modification, with respect to each pollutant subject to regulation under the FCAA that it would emit, except as this subchapter would otherwise allow.

This facility is not a major stationary source because this facility is not a listed source and the facility's PTE is below 250 tons per year of any pollutant (excluding fugitive emissions).

G. ARM 17.8, Subchapter 12 – Operating Permit Program Applicability, including, but not limited to:

1. ARM 17.8.1201 Definitions. (23) Major Source under Section 7412 of the FCAA is defined as any source having:

   a. PTE > 100 tons/year of any pollutant;

   b. PTE > 10 tons/year of any one hazardous air pollutant (HAP), PTE > 25 tons/year of a combination of all HAPs, or lesser quantity as DEQ may establish by rule; or

   c. PTE > 70 tons/year of particulate matter with an aerodynamic diameter of 10 microns or less (PM_{10}) in a serious PM_{10} nonattainment area.

2. ARM 17.8.1204 Air Quality Operating Permit Program. (1) Title V of the FCAA amendments of 1990 requires that all sources, as defined in ARM 17.8.1204(1), obtain a Title V Operating Permit. In reviewing and issuing MAQP #2793-05 for Elevation, the following conclusions were made:

   a. The facility's PTE is less than 100 tons/year for any pollutant.

   b. The facility's PTE is less than 10 tons/year for any one HAP and less than 25 tons/year for all HAPs.

   c. This source is not located in a serious PM_{10} nonattainment area.

   d. This facility is currently subject to NSPS (40 CFR 60, Subpart A – General Provisions and Subpart OOO – Non-Metallic Mineral Processing Plants, and potentially Subpart IIII – Standards of Performance for Stationary Compression Ignition Internal Combustion Engines).

e. This facility is potentially subject to a current NESHAP (40 CFR 63, Subpart ZZZZ – National Emissions Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants for Stationary Reciprocating Internal Combustion Engines).

f. This source is not a Title IV affected source, nor a solid waste combustion unit.

g. This source is not an EPA designated Title V source.

Elevation had requested federally enforceable permit limitations to remain a minor source of emissions with respect to Title V. Based on these limitations, DEQ determined that this facility is not subject to the Title V Operating Permit Program. These limitations remain in effect for the current permit. However, if the EPA makes minor sources that are subject to NSPS obtain a Title V Operating Permit, this source will be subject to the Title V Operating Permit Program.

a. ARM 17.8.1204(3). DEQ may exempt a source from the requirement to obtain an air quality operating permit by establishing federally enforceable limitations which limit that source's PTE.

i. In applying for an exemption under this section the owner or operator of the facility shall certify to DEQ that the source's PTE does not require the source to obtain an air quality operating permit.

ii. Any source that obtains a federally enforceable limit on PTE shall annually certify that its actual emissions are less than those that would require the source to obtain an air quality operating permit.

3. ARM 17.8.1207 Certification of Truth, Accuracy, and Completeness. The compliance certification submittal required by ARM 17.8.1204(3)(a) shall contain certification by a responsible official of truth, accuracy, and completeness. This certification and any other certification required under this subchapter shall state that, based on information and belief formed after reasonable inquiry, the statements and information in the document are true, accurate, and complete.

III. BACT Determination

A BACT determination is required for each new or modified source. Elevation shall install on the new or modified source the maximum air pollution control capability, which is technically practicable and economically feasible, except that BACT shall be utilized.

A BACT analysis was submitted by Elevation in permit application #2793-05, addressing some available methods of controlling particulate matter emissions from the increased waste rock production. DEQ reviewed these methods, as well as previous BACT determinations. The BACT analysis follows a process like the traditional five-step BACT methodology published in the 1990 Draft New Source Review (NSR) Workshop Manual. The analysis will be presented using the following steps for each pollutant and emitting unit.

Step 1: Identify All Available Control Technologies
Step 2: Eliminate Technically Infeasible Control Options
Step 3: Rank Remaining Control Technologies by Control Effectiveness
Step 4: Evaluate Most Effective Controls and Document Results
Step 5: Select BACT

PM/PM_{10} Analysis

Step 1: Identify available control technologies.

Technology	Description
No Add-on Control	This is the base case for proposed new sources.
Enclosure	Enclosure technology employs structures or underground placement to shelter material from wind entrainment. Enclosures can either fully or partially surround the source.
Wet Dust Suppression Including Retained or Inherent Moisture	Fogging water spray adds water, with or without surfactant, to material. Emissions are reduced through agglomerate formation by combining small dust particles with larger aggregate or with liquid droplets. Moisture retained from water sprays upstream in the process or moisture inherent in the material provides a similar emission reducing effect.
Electrostatic Precipitator (ESP)	An ESP uses electrical forces to move entrained particles onto a collection surface. To remove dust cake from the collection surface, the collection surface is periodically "rapped" by a variety of means to dislocate the particulate, which drops down into a hopper. Particulate- laden air must be able to be collected and ducted to the ESP.
Wet Particulate Scrubber	Wet scrubbers typically use water to impact, intercept, or diffuse a particulate in a waste gas stream. Particulate matter is accelerated and impacted onto a solid surface or into a liquid droplet through devices such as a venturi and spray chamber. Wet slurry material is typically stored in an on-site waste impoundment.
Fabric Filter Dust Collector (Baghouse)	Baghouses direct particulate-laden exhaust through tightly woven or felted fabric that traps particulate by sieving and other mechanisms. Collection efficiency and pressure drop simultaneously increase as a particulate layer collects on the filter. Filters are intermittently cleaned by shaking the bag, pulsing air through the bag, or temporarily reversing the airflow direction.

Step 2 - Eliminate Technically Infeasible Control Options

Enclosure

Enclosing the mine area is not feasible for a large-scale mining operation. The proposed modifications are all portable and intended to move around the mine site. Enclosing a portable unit is not technically feasible.

Electrostatic Precipitators

Although ESP units are very capable of controlling particulate emissions, they are not

feasible for large-scale mining operations. The proposed operational changes are portable and intended to move around the Mine site. ESP units are large stationary units and not designed to be portable units. The EPA Air Pollution Cost Manual states that, "ESPs are not typically viewed as cost effective control devices for smaller sources" (U.S. EPA, 2002, pp. 4-15). Further, EPA states in another technical report that, "Electrostatic precipitators are usually not suited for use on processes which are highly variable, since frequent changes in operating conditions are likely to degrade ESP performance" (U.S. EPA, 1998). Finally, Elevation is unaware of any application of an ESP to control particulate generated from a mining operation. For these reasons, ESP technology is technically infeasible and not available to control particulate emissions from the mining operation.

Wet Particulate Scrubber

Wet particulate scrubbers on a mining operation are not feasible for the proposed application. The proposed operational modifications are all portable and intended to move around the Mine site. Wet scrubbing systems are typically large units producing large amounts of slurry. Wet slurry material is typically stored in an on-site waste impoundment. The Treasure Mine site is an open pit mine located in a narrow valley and is not equipped to handle the large quantities of wastewater produced by a wet scrubbing system. This technology is not feasible for this project.

Fabric Filter Dust Collector (Baghouse)

Baghouses on mining operation are not feasible for the proposed application. The proposed operational modifications are all portable and intended to move around the Mine site. To be effective, baghouses need to be able to collect the dust from the various pickup points via a negative pressure collection system. These systems need enclosures or hoods over the dust generation points. For similar reasons that enclosing is infeasible, a baghouse is also technically infeasible. This technology is not feasible for this project.

Step 3 - Rank Remaining Control Technologies by Control Effectiveness

The Table below lists the PM/PM_{10} control technologies and the ranking of PM/PM_{10} control options.

Ranked PM/PM_{10} Control Technology Effectiveness

Control Technology	PM/PM_{10} Reduction (% control)	Ranking
Wet Dust Suppression	≤50	1
No Add-on Control	0	2

Step 4 – Evaluate Most Effective Controls

Wet Dust Suppression

Wet dust suppression is achieved by fogging water sprays and/or wetting of the raw material as needed to reduce emissions. When necessary, wetting of the raw material reduces emissions through agglomerate formation by combining small dust particles with larger

aggregate or with liquid droplets. Wet dust suppression control efficiency typically ranges between 50-90%. 50% control efficiency is a common conservative estimate of the effectiveness of wet dust suppression.

No Add-on Controls/Inherent Moisture

No add-on control has been considered because the talc ore contains a significant amount of inherent moisture (15-20%) which will act as a natural dust suppressant. The inherent moisture in the material is adequate to meet limits and maintain compliance with standards in all but the driest of times.

Step 5 – Select BACT

Based upon the preceding analysis, Elevation proposes to utilize the Wet Dust Suppression and/or the inherent moisture in the feed product to maintain compliance. No measurement methodology exists to directly measure particulate emission coming for the open pit mining operations which do not utilize a capture and control system. In accord with ARM 17.8.740(2), a visible emissions standard (opacity) may serve as a surrogate in defining the maximum degree of reduction required by BACT.

The control options selected have controls and control costs comparable to other recently permitted similar sources and can achieve the appropriate emission standards.

IV. Emission Inventory

Waste Rock Production		
Permitted Waste Rock Production = 12,000,000 Tons/Rolling 12 Months	12,000,000	ton/yr
PM Emissions:		
AP-42 Table 11.24-2		
Emissions Factor = 0.01000 PM	0.01000	lb/ton
Calculation = (1-0.50 control efficiency)*(0.01000 lb/ton)*(12,000,000 tons/yr)*(1/2000 tons/lb) = 30.00 ton/yr	30.00	tons/yr
PM10 Emissions:		
AP-42 Table 11.24-2		
Emissions Factor = 0.00400 PM10	0.00400	lb/ton
Calculation = (1-0.50 control efficiency)*(0.00400 lb/ton)*(12,000,000 tons/yr)*(1/2000 tons/lb) = 12.00 ton/yr	12.00	tons/yr

Cold Aggregate Storage Piles		
Maximum Process Rate = 525 ton/hr (Maximum plant process rate)	525	ton/hr
Maximum Hours of Operation = 8,760 hrs/yr	8760	hrs/yr
Number of Piles = 1 pile	1	pile
PM Emissions:		
Predictive equation for emission factor provided per AP 42, Sec. 13.2.4.3, 11/06.		
Emission Factor = k (0.0032) * (U/5)^1.3 * (M / 2)^-1.4 = 0.00388 lb/ton	0.0039	lb/ton

Where: k = particle size multiplier = 0.74 (Value for PM < 30 microns per AP 42, Sec. 13.2.4.3, 11/06)	0.74	
U = mean wind speed = 9.3 mph (Average from values provided in AP 42, Sec. 13.2.4.3, 11/06)	9.3	mph
M = material moisture content = 2.5% (Average from values provided in AP 42, Sec. 13.2.4.3, 11/06)	2.5	%
Calculation: (525 ton/hr) * (8760 hrs/yr) * (1 pile) * (ton/2000 lb) * (0.00388216962566822 lb/ton) = 8.93 ton/yr	8.93	ton/yr

PM10 Emissions:

Predictive equation for emission factor provided per AP 42, Sec. 13.2.4.3, 11/06.

Emission Factor = k (0.0032) * (U/5)^1.3 * (M / 2)^-1.4 = 0.00184 lb/ton	0.00184	lb/ton
Where: k = particle size multiplier = 0.35 (Value for PM < 10 microns per AP 42, Sec. 13.2.4.3, 11/06)	0.35	
U = mean wind speed = 9.3 mph (Average from values provided in AP 42, Sec. 13.2.4.3, 11/06)	9.3	mph
M = material moisture content = 2.5% (Average from values provided in AP 42, Sec. 13.2.4.3, 11/06)	2.5	**%**
Calculation: (525 ton/hr) * (8760 hrs/yr) * (1 pile) * (ton/2000 lb) * (0.00183616130943767 lb/ton) = 4.22 ton/yr	4.22	ton/yr

PM2.5 Emissions:

Predictive equation for emission factor provided per AP 42, Sec. 13.2.4.3, 11/06.

Emission Factor = k (0.0032) * (U/5)^1.3 * (M / 2)^-1.4 = 0.00028 lb/ton	0.000278	lb/ton
Where: k = particle size multiplier = 0.053 (Value for PM < 2.5 microns per AP 42, Sec. 13.2.4.3, 11/06)	0.053	
U = mean wind speed = 9.3 mph (Average from values provided in AP 42, Sec. 13.2.4.3, 11/06)	9.3	mph
M = material moisture content = 2.5% (Average from values provided in AP 42, Sec. 13.2.4.3, 11/06)	2.5	%
Calculation: (525 ton/hr) * (8760 hrs/yr) * (1 pile) * (ton/2000 lb) * (0.000278047284000562 lb/ton) = 0.64 ton/yr	0.64	ton/yr

Conveyor Transfer Point (SCC 3-05-020-06)

Maximum Process Rate = 525 ton/hr (Maximum plant process rate)	525	ton/hr
Maximum Hours of Operation = 8,760 hrs/yr	8760	hrs/yr
Number of Transfers = 4 transfers (Company Information)	4	transfers

Total PM Emissions:

Emission Factor = 0.00014 lb/ton (0.00014 controlled, AP 42, Table 11.19.2-2, 8/04)	0.00014	lb/ton
Calculation: (525 ton/hr) * (8760 hrs/yr) * (4 transfers) * (ton/2000 lb) * (0.00014 lb/ton) = 1.29 ton/yr	1.29	ton/yr

Total PM10 Emissions:

Emission Factor = 0.000046 lb/ton (0.000046 controlled, AP 42, Table 11.19.2-2, 8/04)	0.000046	lb/ton
Calculation: (525 ton/hr) * (8760 hrs/yr) * (4 transfers) * (ton/2000 lb) * (0.00014 lb/ton) = 0.42 ton/yr	0.42	ton/yr

Total PM2.5 Emissions

Emission Factor = 0.000013 lb/ton (0.000013 controlled, AP 42, Table 11.19.2-2, 8/04)	0.000013	lb/ton
Calculation: (525 ton/hr) * (8760 hrs/yr) * (4 transfers) * (ton/2000 lb) * (0.00014 lb/ton) = 0.12 ton/yr	0.12	ton/yr

Screening (SCC 3-05-020-02, 03)

Maximum Process Rate = 525 ton/hr (Maximum plant process rate)	525	ton/hr

Maximum Hours of Operation = 8,760 hrs/yr 4599000 tons/year	8760		hrs/yr
Number of Screens = 1 screen (Company Information)	1		screen
Total PM Emissions:			
Emission Factor = 0.0022 lb/ton (0.0022 controlled, AP 42, Table 11.19.2-2, 8/04)	0.0022		lb/ton
Calculation: (525 ton/hr) * (8760 hrs/yr) * (1 screen) * (ton/2000 lb) * (0.0022 lb/ton) = 5.06 ton/yr	5.06		ton/yr
Total PM10 Emissions:			
Emission Factor = 0.00074 lb/ton (0.00074 controlled, AP 42, Table 11.19.2-2, 8/04)		0.00074	lb/ton
Calculation: (525 ton/hr) * (8760 hrs/yr) * (1 screen) * (ton/2000 lb) * (0.0022 lb/ton) = 1.70 ton/yr		1.70	ton/yr
Total PM2.5 Emissions			
Emission Factor = 0.00005 lb/ton (0.000050 controlled, AP 42, Table 11.19.2-2, 8/04)		0.00005	lb/ton
Calculation: (525 ton/hr) * (8760 hrs/yr) * (1 screen) * (ton/2000 lb) * (0.0022 lb/ton) = 0.11 ton/yr		0.11	ton/yr

Crushing Circuit (SCC 3-05-020-05)

Maximum Process Rate = 525 ton/hr (Application information)		525	ton/hr
Maximum Hours of Operation = 8,760 hrs/yr	8760		hrs/yr
PM Emissions:			
Based on AP-42			
Emission Factor = 0.0012 lb/ton (crushing, AP 42, Table 11.19.2-2, 8/04)		0.0012	lb/ton
Calculation: (525 ton/hr) * (8760 ton/hr) * (0.0012 lb/ton) * (ton/2000 lb) = 2.76 ton/yr	2.76		ton/yr
PM10 Emissions:			
Based on AP-42			
Emission Factor = 0.00054 lb/ton (crushing, AP 42, Table 11.19.2-2, 8/04)		0.00054	lb/ton
Calculation: (525 ton/hr) * (8760 ton/hr) * (0.00054 lb/ton) * (ton/2000 lb) = 1.24 ton/yr	1.24		ton/yr
PM2.5 Emissions			
Emission Factor = 0.0001 lb/ton (crushing, AP 42, Table 11.19.2-2, 8/04)		0.0001	lb/ton
Calculation: (525 ton/hr) * (8760 ton/hr) * (0.0001 lb/ton) * (ton/2000 lb) = 0.23 ton/yr	0.23		ton/yr

Haul Roads

Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) per Day = 205 VMT/day (Estimate)		205	VMT/day
VMT per hour = (205 VMT/day) * (day/24 hrs) = 8.54 VMT/hr	8.54		VMT/hr
Hours of Operation = 8,760 hrs/yr	8760		hrs/yr
PM Emissions:			
Predictive equation for emission factor for unpaved roads at industrial sites provided per AP 42, Ch. 13.2.2, 11/06.			
Emission Factor = k * (s / 12)^a * (W / 3)^b = 12.46 lb/VMT	12.46		lb/VMT
Where: k = constant = 4.9 lbs/VMT (Value for PM30/TSP, AP 42, Table 13.2.2-2, 11/06)	4.9		lbs/VMT
s = surface silt content = 7.1 % (Mean value, sand/gravel processing, material storage area, AP 42, Table 13.2.2-1, 11/06)		7.1	%
W = mean vehicle weight = 54 tons (1994 average loaded/unloaded or a 40-ton truck)		54	tons
a = constant = 0.7 (Value for PM30/TSP, AP 42, Table 13.2.2-2, 11/06)		0.7	
b = constant = 0.45 (Value for PM30/TSP, AP 42, Table 13.2.2-2, 11/06)	0.45		
Calculation: (8760 hrs/yr) * (8.54 VMT/hr) * (12.46 lb/VMT) * (ton/2000 lb) = 466.07 tons/yr (Uncontrolled Emissions)	466.07		tons/yr

PM10 Emissions:
Predictive equation for emission factor for unpaved roads at industrial sites provided per AP 42, Ch. 13.2.2, 11/06.

Emission Factor = k * (s / 12)^a * (W / 3)^b = 3.43 lb/VMT		3.43	lb/VMT
Where: k = constant = 1.5 lbs/VMT (Value for PM10, AP 42, Table 13.2.2-2, 11/06)		1.5	lbs/VMT
s = surface silt content = 7.1 % (Mean value, sand/gravel processing, material storage area, AP 42, Table 13.2.2-1, 11/06)		7.1	%
W = mean vehicle weight = 54 tons (1994 average loaded/unloaded or a 40-ton truck)		54	tons
a = constant = 0.9 (Value for PM10, AP 42, Table 13.2.2-2, 11/06)		0.9	
b = constant = 0.45 (Value for PM10, AP 42, Table 13.2.2-2, 11/06)	0.45		
Calculation: (8760 hrs/yr) * (8.54 VMT/hr) * (3.43 lb/VMT) * (ton/2000 lb) = 128.30 tons/yr (Uncontrolled Emissions)	128.30		tons/yr

PM2.5 Emissions
Predictive equation for emission factor for unpaved roads at industrial sites provided per AP 42, Ch. 13.2.2, 11/06.

Emission Factor = k * (s / 12)^a * (W / 3)^b = 0.34 lb/VMT		0.34	lb/VMT
Where: k = constant = 0.15 lbs/VMT (Value for PM2.5, AP 42, Table 13.2.2-2, 11/06)		0.15	lbs/VMT
s = surface silt content = 7.1 % (Mean value, sand/gravel processing, material storage area, AP 42, Table 13.2.2-1, 11/06)		7.1	%
W = mean vehicle weight = 54 tons (1994 average loaded/unloaded or a 40-ton truck)		54	tons
a = constant = 0.9 (Value for PM2.5, AP 42, Table 13.2.2-2, 11/06)		0.9	
b = constant = 0.45 (Value for PM2.5, AP 42, Table 13.2.2-2, 11/06)	0.45		
Calculation: (8760 hrs/yr) * (8.54 VMT/hr) * (0.34 lb/VMT) * (ton/2000 lb) = 12.72 tons/yr (Uncontrolled Emissions)	12.72		tons/yr

Diesel Generator

Note: Emissions are based on the power output of the engine (1214 hp).

Operational Capacity of Engine = 1,214 hp		1214	hp
Hours of Operation = 6,200.00 hours [a., b.]	6,200 [a., b.]		hours

PM Emissions:

PM Emissions = 1.24 ton/yr (Assume all PM < 1.0 um)	1.24		ton/yr

PM-10 Emissions:

Emission Factor = 0.00033 lbs/hp-hr (EPA Tier 2 emission standards)	0.00033		lbs/hp-hr
Calculation: (1,214 hp) * (6,200 hours) * (0.00033 lbs/hp-hr) * (ton/2000 lb) = 1.24 ton/yr		1.24	ton/yr

PM2.5 Emissions

Emission Factor = 0.00033 lbs/hp-hr (Assume all PM < 1.0 um)	0.00033		lbs/hp-hr
Calculation: (1,214 hp) * (6,200 hours) * (0.00033 lbs/hp-hr) * (ton/2000 lb) = 1.24 ton/yr (Assume all PM < 1.0 um)		1.24	ton/yr

NOx Emissions:

Emission Factor = 0.01058 lbs/hp-hr (EPA Tier 2 emission standards)		0.01058	lbs/hp-hr
Calculation: (1,214 hp) * (6,200 hours) * (0.01058 lbs/hp-hr) * (ton/2000 lb) = 39.83 ton/yr		39.83	ton/yr

CO Emissions:

Emission Factor = 0.00573 lbs/hp-hr (EPA Tier 2 emission standards)		0.00573	lbs/hp-hr
Calculation: (1,214 hp) * (6,200 hours) * (0.00573 lbs/hp-hr) * (ton/2000 lb) = 21.57 ton/yr		21.57	ton/yr

VOC Emissions:

Emission Factor = 0.0025141 lbs/hp-hr (AP-42, Sec. 3.3, Table 3.3-1, TOC, Exhaust & Crankcase, 10/96)	0.002514	lbs/hp-hr
Calculation: (1,214 hp) * (6,200 hours) * (0.0025141 lbs/hp-hr) * (ton/2000 lb) = 10.07 ton/yr	10.07	ton/yr

SOx Emissions:

Emission Factor = 0.00205 lbs/hp-hr (AP-42, Sec. 3.3, Table 3.3-1, 10/96)	0.00205	lbs/hp-hr
Calculation: (1,214 hp) * (6,200 hours) * (0.00205 lbs/hp-hr) * (ton/2000 lb) = 8.21 ton/yr	8.21	ton/yr

a. Inventory reflects enforceable limits on hours of operation to keep emissions below the to keep emissions at or below the attainment area modeling threshold of 40 tpy for NOx.

b. Inventory reflects enforceable limits on hours of operation to keep emissions below the Title V threshold and 80 tpy.

**CO = carbon monoxide
fil) = filterable
HAPs = hazardous air pollutants
hp = horsepower
lb = pound
NOX = oxides of nitrogen
PM = particulate matter
PM10 = particulate matter with an aerodynamic diameter of 10 microns or less
PM2.5 = particulate matter with an aerodynamic diameter of 2.5 microns or less
SO2 = sulfur dioxide
TPY = tons per year
VOC = volatile organic compounds
yr = year

V. Existing Air Quality

Elevation Treasure Mine is in the NW ¼ of Section 14, Township 7 South, Range 6 West in Madison County, MT. The air quality of this area is classified as better than National Standards or unclassifiable/attainment for the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for criteria pollutants.

VI. Ambient Air Impact Analysis

DEQ determined, based on the amount of allowable emissions and associated emissions controls, that the impacts from this permitting action will be minor. DEQ believes it will not cause or contribute to a violation of any ambient air quality standard.

VII. Taking or Damaging Implication Analysis

As required by 2-10-105, MCA, DEQ conducted the following private property taking and damaging assessment.

YES	NO	
X		1. Does the action pertain to land or water management or environmental regulation affecting private real property or water rights?
	X	2. Does the action result in either a permanent or indefinite physical occupation of private property?
	X	3. Does the action deny a fundamental attribute of ownership? (ex.: right to exclude others, disposal of property)
	X	4. Does the action deprive the owner of all economically viable uses of the property?
	X	5. Does the action require a property owner to dedicate a portion of property or to grant an easement? [If no, go to (6)].
		5a. Is there a reasonable, specific connection between the government requirement and legitimate state interests?
		5b. Is the government requirement roughly proportional to the impact of the proposed use of the property?
	X	6. Does the action have a severe impact on the value of the property? (consider economic impact, investment-backed expectations, character of government action)

YES	NO	
	X	7. Does the action damage the property by causing some physical disturbance with respect to the property in excess of that sustained by the public generally?
	X	7a. Is the impact of government action direct, peculiar, and significant?
	X	7b. Has government action resulted in the property becoming practically inaccessible, waterlogged or flooded?
	X	7c. Has government action lowered property values by more than 30% and necessitated the physical taking of adjacent property or property across a public way from the property in question?
	X	Takings or damaging implications? (Taking or damaging implications exist if YES is checked in response to question 1 and also to any one or more of the following questions: 2, 3, 4, 6, 7a, 7b, 7c; or if NO is checked in response to questions 5a or 5b; the shaded areas)

The proposed project would take place on private land. DEQ has determined that the permit conditions are reasonably necessary to ensure compliance with applicable requirements under the Montana Clean Air Act. Therefore, DEQ's approval of MAQP #2793-05 would not have private property-taking or damaging implications.

VIII. Environmental Assessment

An environmental assessment (EA), prepared pursuant to the applicable requirements of Title 75, Chapter 1, Parts 1-3, was completed for the proposed project. A copy of the EA is attached.

FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

December 15, 2025

Air Quality Permitting Services Section
Air Quality Bureau
Air, Energy and Mining Division
Montana Department of Environmental Quality

PROJECT/SITE NAME: Treasure Mine

APPLICANT/COMPANY NAME: Elevation NewCo, LLC.

PROPOSED PERMIT NUMBER: Montana Air Quality Permit #2795-05

LOCATION: NW ¼ of Section 14, Township 7 South, Range 6

COUNTY: Madison

PROPERTY OWNERSHIP: FEDERAL STATE PRIVATE X

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OVERVIEW OF PROPOSED ACTION

Authorizing Action

Pursuant to the Montana Environmental Policy Act (MEPA), Montana agencies are required to prepare an environmental review for state actions that may have an impact on the Montana environment. The Proposed Action is a state action that may have an impact on the Montana environment; therefore, the Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) must prepare an environmental review. This EA will examine the proposed action and alternatives to the proposed action and disclose potential and proximate impacts that may result from the proposed and alternative actions. DEQ will determine the need for additional environmental review based on consideration of the criteria set forth in Administrative Rules of Montana (ARM) 17.4.608.

Description of DEQ Regulatory Oversight

DEQ implements the Clean Air Act of Montana, overseeing the development of sources of regulated pollutants and associated facilities. DEQ has authority to analyze proposed emitting units subject to rule established in ARM 17.8.743.

Proposed Action

Elevation NewCo, LLC. (Elevation) has applied for a Montana Air Quality Permit (MAQP) under the Clean Air Act of Montana, § 75-2-101, et. seq. The MAQP regulates a talc mine, and this action would increase the waste rock production from 3,500,000 tons during any twelve (12) month rolling period to 12,000,000 tons during any 12-month rolling period. DEQ may not approve a proposed project contained in an application for an air quality permit unless the project complies with the requirements set forth in the CAA of Montana and the administrative rules adopted thereunder, ARMs 17.8.101 et. seq. The proposed action would be located on privately owned land, in Madison County, Montana. All information included in this EA is derived from the permit application, discussions with the applicant, analysis of aerial photography, topographic maps, and other research tools.

Table 1. Summary of Proposed Action

General Overview	This permitting action would increase allowable waste rock production from 3,500,000 tons during any twelve (12) month rolling period to 12,000,000 tons during any 12-month rolling period.
Duration & Hours of Operation	***Construction:*** No new construction ***Operation:*** Continuous operation depending upon operations schedule.
Estimated Disturbance	No new ground disturbance associated with the project.
Construction Equipment	No new construction
Personnel Onsite	***Construction:*** No new construction ***Operation:*** Two (2) normal staff onsite currently, with the expansion Elevation will staff 5-10 employees

Location and Analysis Area	***Location:*** 45.228811, -112.312088 ***Analysis Area:*** The area being analyzed as part of this environmental review includes the immediate project area (Figure 1), as well as neighboring lands surrounding the analysis area, as reasonably appropriate for the impacts being considered.

Table 2. The applicant is required to comply with all applicable local, county, state, and federal requirements pertaining to the following resource areas.

Air Quality	The applicant proposes to increase waste rock production from 3,500,000 tons during any twelve (12) month rolling period to 12,000,000 tons during any 12-month rolling period, which will increase fugitive dust generated at the site.
Water Quality	This permitting action would not affect water quality. Elevation is required to comply with the applicable local, county, state and federal requirements pertaining to water quality.
Erosion Control and Sediment Transport	This permitting action would not affect erosion control and sediment transport once construction on has been completed. Elevation is required to comply with the applicable local, county, state and federal requirements pertaining to erosion control and sediment transport during and after construction.
Solid Waste	This permitting action proposes to increase waste rock production from 3,500,000 tons per year to 12,000,000 tons per year. The increase in waste rock production is subject to a regulatory review, including a Best Available Control Technology (BACT) analysis and determination. Elevation is required to comply with the applicable local, county, state and federal requirements pertaining to solid waste.
Cultural Resources	This permitting action would not affect cultural resources. Elevation is required to comply with the applicable local, county, state and federal requirements pertaining to cultural resources.
Hazardous Substances	This permitting action would not contribute to the need to manage any hazardous substances. Elevation is required to comply with the applicable local, county, state and federal requirements pertaining to hazardous substances.
Reclamation	This permitting action would not require any reclamation.

Table 3. Cumulative Impacts

Past Actions	There are no recent similar permitting actions at this site. The last air quality permitting action changed the name of the company to Elevation NewCo, LLC.
Present Actions	This permitting action proposes to increase waste rock production from 3,500,000 tons during any twelve (12) month rolling period to 12,000,000 tons during any 12-month rolling period. The increase in

	waste rock production is subject to a regulatory review, including a Best Available Control Technology (BACT) analysis and determination.
Related Future Actions	DEQ is not aware of any future related projects for this facility. Any future projects would be subject to a new permit application.

Purpose, Need, and Benefits

DEQ's purpose in conducting this environmental review is to act upon Elevation's application for modification of an MAQP to mine talc ore for further processing. DEQ's action on the permit application is governed by § 75-2-201, et seq., Montana Code Annotated (MCA) and the Administrative Rules of Montana (ARM) 17.8.740, et seq.

Figure 1. General Location of the Proposed Project

Other Governmental Agencies and Programs with Jurisdiction

The proposed action would be located on private. All applicable local, state, and federal rules must be adhered to, which may also include other local, state, federal, or tribal agency jurisdiction. Other governmental agencies which may have overlapped, or additional jurisdiction include but may not be limited to: Montana Department of Natural Resources and Bureau of Land Management.

EVALUATION OF AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT AND IMPACT BY RESOURCE

The impact analysis will identify and evaluate the proximate direct and secondary impacts TO THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT AND POPULATION IN THE AREA TO BE AFFECTED BY THE PROPOSED PROJECT. *Direct impacts* occur at the same time and place as the action that causes the impact. *Secondary impacts* are a further impact to Montana's environment that may be stimulated, induced by, or otherwise result from a direct impact of the action (ARM 17.4.603(18)). Where impacts would occur, the impacts will be described in this analysis. When the analysis discloses environmental impacts, these are proximate impacts pursuant to 75-1-201(1)(b)(iv)(A), MCA.

Cumulative impacts are the collective impacts on Montana's environment within the borders of Montana of the Proposed Action when considered in conjunction with other past and present actions related to the Proposed Action by location and generic type. Related future actions must also be considered when these actions are under concurrent consideration by any state agency through pre-impact statement studies, separate impact statement evaluation, or permit processing procedures (ARM 17.4.603(7)). The project identified in Table 1 was analyzed as part of the cumulative impacts assessment for each resource subject to review, pursuant to MEPA (75-1-101, et. *seq*).

The duration of the proposed action is quantified as follows:

- **Construction Impacts (short-term):** These are impacts to the environment that would occur during the construction period, including the specific range of time.

- **Operation Impacts (long-term)**: These are impacts to the environment during the operational period of the proposed action, including the anticipated range of operational time.

The intensity of the impacts is measured using the following:

- **No impact**: There would be no change from current conditions.

- **Negligible**: An adverse or beneficial effect would occur but would be at the lowest levels of detection.

- **Minor**: The effect would be noticeable but would be relatively small and would not affect the function or integrity of the resource.

- **Moderate**: The effect would be easily identifiable and would change the function or integrity of the resource.

- **Major**: The effect would alter the resource.

1. Geology and Soil Quality, Stability and Moisture

This section includes the following resource areas, as required in ARM 17.4.609: Geology; Soil Quality, Stability, and Moisture

Affected Environment

Madison County's geology is characterized by Laramide orogeny structures, including thrust faults, and more recent extensional faulting in the Madison Valley. The soil quality is influenced by this bedrock, with different soil types found across the county, including well-drained, cobbly loamy sands on steeper slopes and deeper, less cobbly soils in other areas, with regional variations in pH influencing agricultural potential.

The proposed action takes place in an existing talc mine.

Direct Impacts

No direct impacts from construction would be expected because of the proposed project because no construction activities would be necessary to accommodate the proposed action. The proposed action will increase the amount of waste rock production allowed. All impacts would occur within an existing talc mine. Therefore, any operational impacts to geology soil quality, stability, or moisture as a result of the proposed action would be short- and long-term, minor, and consistent with existing impacts.

Secondary Impacts

The proposed action will increase the amount of waste rock production allowed. All impacts would occur within an existing talc mine. Therefore, any operational secondary impacts to geology soil quality, stability, or moisture as a result of the proposed action would be long-term, minor, and consistent with existing impacts.

Cumulative Impacts

The proposed action will increase the amount of waste rock production allowed. All impacts would occur within an existing talc mine. Therefore, any operational cumulative impacts to geology soil quality, stability, or moisture as a result of the proposed action would be long-term, minor, and consistent with existing impacts.

2. Water Quality, Quantity, And Distribution

This section includes the following resource areas, as required in ARM 17.4.609: Water Quality, Quantity and Distribution

Affected Environment

Madison County has water sources from both surface water and a significant groundwater aquifer, but challenges exist in both quality and quantity. Water quality is impacted by both "hard" groundwater rich in minerals and potential contamination in surface waters like the Jefferson River. Quantity is sufficient in some large aquifers but is a concern for some communities, leading to both local infrastructure improvements and regional water projects. Distribution systems are managed at the local level, with both public and private systems existing, and development projects require compliance with state and county regulations.

The proposed action takes place in an existing talc mine that have two Montana Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (MPDES) permit to protect discharges from the mine. MPDES

permits MTR000510, MT0029891.

Direct Impacts

No direct impacts from construction would be expected because of the proposed project because no construction activities would be necessary to accommodate the proposed action. The proposed action is located in an existing talc mine that has procedures and permits to protect water quality, quantity, and distribution.

Secondary Impacts

Any secondary impacts to water quality, quantity, and distribution associated with the proposed action would be long-term, minor, and consistent with existing impacts at the mine. Elevation would be required to use reasonable precautions, including water, to control fugitive dust emissions from the proposed increase in waste rock production. No water resources are located directly on the affected site; therefore, Elevation would source water from an off-site resource. The proposed action is located in an existing talc mine that has procedures and permits to protect water quality, quantity, and distribution.

Cumulative Impacts

Any cumulative impacts to water quality, quantity, and distribution associated with the proposed action would be long-term, minor, and consistent with existing impacts at the mine. Elevation would be required to use reasonable precautions, including water, to control fugitive dust emissions from the proposed increase in waste rock production. No water resources are located directly on the affected site; therefore, Elevation would source water from an off-site resource. The proposed action is located in an existing talc mine that has procedures and permits to protect water quality, quantity, and distribution.

3. Air Quality

This section includes the following resource areas, as required in ARM 17.4.609: Air Quality

Affected Environment

The proposed project is located in NW ¼ of Section 14, Township 7 South, Range 6 West, in Madison County, Montana. The immediate area in which the facility is designated attainment/unclassified.

Applicants are required to comply with all laws relating to air, such as the Federal Clean Air Act, NAAQS set by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and the Clean Air Act of Montana.

In addition, MAQP# 2793-05 provides legally enforceable conditions regarding the emitting units themselves, pollution controls, and requires the applicant to take reasonable precautions to limit fugitive dust from this location.

Direct Impacts

No direct construction impacts are expected because there is no new construction associated with the proposed action. Direct operational impacts are expected to be minor and long term based on the allowable increase in the facilities' potential to emit. See permit analysis for more information regarding air quality impacts. The majority of emission from the proposed project would be related to the fugitive particulate matter emission associated with the increase in waste rock production and transportation.

Secondary Impacts

Secondary construction and operational impacts from the proposed project are expected to be negligible and short-term. Emissions would not be expected to cause or contribute to a violation of health and welfare-based primary and secondary NAAQS. Secondary NAAQS provide public welfare protection, including protection against decreased visibility and damage to animals, crops, vegetation, and buildings. See permit analysis for more detailed information regarding air quality impacts. Any adverse impacts would be long term and minor. No beneficial secondary impacts would be expected because of the proposed project.

Cumulative Impacts

Enforceable conditions and limits contained in the MAQP would limit emissions; therefore, any expected cumulative air quality impacts from the expansion project would be minor and short-term. Madison County and the surrounding area has other minor stationary sources that contribute to the overall air quality in Madison County, Montana. The cumulative impacts of these other emitters and the proposed action would not be expected to have an adverse impact to air quality.

4. Vegetation Cover, Quantity, and Quality

This section includes the following resource areas, as required in ARM 17.4.609: Vegetation Cover, Quantity and Quality

Affected Environment

The affected area is an existing talc mine. Satellite imagery shows there is no vegetative cover within the project area. The proposed project will be confined within the existing property boundary.

Direct Impacts

No direct construction or operation impact to vegetative cover, quantity, or quality would be expected as a result of the proposed project. The affected area is an existing industrial site and there is little to no vegetative cover within the project boundary. No new ground disturbance would occur because of the proposed action.

Secondary Impacts

No secondary construction or operational impacts to vegetative cover, quantity, or quality will occur as a result of the proposed project because it is an existing industrial site with limited vegetative cover within the property boundary.

Cumulative Impacts

No cumulative impacts to vegetative cover, quantity, or quality will occur as a result of the current proposed project because it is an existing industrial site with limited vegetative cover within the property boundary.

5. Terrestrial, Avian, and Aquatic Life and Habitats

This section includes the following resource areas, as required in ARM 17.4.609: Terrestrial and Aquatic Life and Habitats; Unique, Endangered, Fragile, or Limited Environmental Resources

Affected Environment

As required under the Sage Grouse Executive Order, the proposed project information was reviewed and deemed not required to submit this application to the Sage Grouse Program. The mine is located in the general habitat for the greater sage grouse and there is no new ground disturbance associated with the proposed action.

Direct Impacts

No direct impacts from construction or operation are expected as a result of the proposed project. The affected area is an already developed mine site with no unique or important terrestrial, avian, or aquatic life or habitats located directly within the property boundary where the project would occur. There may be terrestrial, avian, or aquatic life and habitats present on the property; however, because the proposed action would occur within an existing industrial site, any impacts would be short- and long-term, negligible, and consistent with existing impacts. No construction activities would occur because of the proposed action. Any species identified in the MTNHP reports, as discussed in Section 6, are unlikely to be displaced by the proposed action, as any impacts from operation would be consistent with existing impacts at the site.

Secondary Impacts

Short- and long-term, negligible, impacts from construction or operations are expected as a result of the proposed project. The affected area is an already existing mine site; therefore, any impacts to terrestrial, avian, or aquatic life or habitats located within the property boundary would be consistent with existing impacts at the site.

Cumulative Impacts

Because the affected area is an existing industrial site, any cumulative impacts to terrestrial, avian and aquatic life would be short- and long-term, negligible, and consistent with existing impacts.

6. Unique, Endangered, Fragile, or Limited Environmental Resources

This section includes the following resource areas, as required in ARM 17.4.609: Unique, Endangered, Fragile, or Limited Environmental Resources.

Affected Environment

In an effort to identify any unique endangered, fragile, or limited environmental resources in the area, the Department completed a species of concern report through the environmental summary function shared by the Montana Natural Heritage Program, Natural Resource Information System (NRIS). The area was defined by the section, township, and range of the proposed location with an additional 1-mile buffer zone. Search results identified a number of species within the search radius. Species of concern include the Greater Sage Grouse, Hoary Bat, Brewer's Sparrow, Westslope Cutthroat Trout and Low Beardtounge. The affected area is an already developed talc mine with no unique or important terrestrial, or aquatic life and habitats located within the existing talc mine.

As required under the Sage Grouse Executive Order, the proposed project information was reviewed and deemed not required to submit this application to the Sage Grouse Program. The

mine is located in the general habitat for the greater sage grouse and there is no new ground disturbance associated with the proposed action.

Direct Impacts

No direct construction or operational impacts to unique, endangered, and fragile species or limited environmental resources are expected because of the proposed project. The affected area is an existing talc mine. Therefore, it is unlikely any of the identified species or habitats would be located within the property boundary. If such species are located within or nearby the affected area, any impacts would be short- and long-term, negligible, and consistent with existing impacts.

Secondary Impacts

No secondary impacts from construction or operations are expected as a result of the proposed project. The affected area is an existing talc mine. Therefore, it is unlikely any of the identified species or habitats would be located within the property boundary. If such species are located within or nearby the affected area, any impacts would be short- and long-term, negligible, and consistent with existing impacts.

Cumulative Impacts

No cumulative impacts would be expected to any unique, endangered, fragile, or limited environmental resources. The affected area is an existing talc mine. Therefore, it is unlikely any of the identified species or habitats would be located within the property boundary. If such species are located within or nearby the affected area, any impacts would be short- and long-term, negligible, and consistent with existing impacts.

7. Historical and Archaeological Sites

This section includes the following resource areas, as required in ARM 17.4.609: Historical and Archaeological Sites

Affected Environment

According to the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), there has been two previously recorded site within the designated search locale (NW ¼ of Section 14, Township 7 South, Range 6 West in Madison County, Montana). It is SHPO's position that any structure over fifty years of age is considered historic and is potentially eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. If any structures are to be altered and are over fifty years old, SHPO recommends that they be recorded, and a determination of their eligibility be made. As long as there will be no disturbance or alteration to structures over fifty years of age, there is a low likelihood that cultural properties would be impacted.

Direct Impacts

No direct construction or operational impacts to historical, or archaeological sites are expected because of the proposed action. According to SHPO, there are two previously recorded historical or archaeological sites identified within the search area. However, the identified sites are not located within the existing Elevation property boundary. Therefore, no direct impacts would be expected because of the proposed project.

Secondary Impacts

No secondary construction or operational impacts to historical, or archaeological sites are expected because of the proposed project. According to SHPO, there are two previously recorded historical or archaeological sites identified within the search area. However, the identified sites are not located within the existing Elevation property boundary. Therefore, no secondary impacts would be expected because of the proposed project.

Cumulative Impacts

No cumulative impacts are expected as a result of the proposed project. According to SHPO, there are two previously recorded historical or archaeological sites identified within the search area. However, the identified sites are not located within the existing Elevation property boundary. Therefore, while on-site ground disturbance would increase because of the proposed action no cumulative impacts would be expected because of the proposed project.

8. Aesthetics

This section includes the following resource areas, as required in ARM 17.4.609: Aesthetics

Affected Environment

The area is characterized by mountainous terrain which generally runs from north to south. The distance to the closest structure, including residential homes, is approximately 1.9 miles straight over the mountain ridge from the mine site. Approximately 8 miles of driving. The proposed action would occur on private land.

Direct Impacts

The affected area consists of primarily mountainous terrain. Being an active mine site with existing heavy equipment and truck traffic, the proposed action increases allowable waste rock production from the mine pit but does not change the aesthetic nature of the affected area in any way. Therefore, no direct impacts would be expected because of the proposed action.

Secondary Impacts

The proposed action increases allowable waste rock production from the existing mine pit but does not change the aesthetic nature of the affected area in any way. Therefore, no secondary impacts would be expected because of the proposed action.

Cumulative Impacts

The proposed action increases allowable waste rock production from the existing mine pit but does not change the aesthetic nature of the affected area in any way. Therefore, no cumulative impacts would be expected because of the proposed action.

9. Demands on Environmental Resources of Land, Water, Air, or Energy

This section includes the following resource areas, as required in ARM 17.4.609: Demands on Environmental Resources of Land, Water, Air, or Energy

Affected Environment

The site is located on private land. See Sections 2, 3, and 4 of this EA for details regarding land, water, and air impacts.

Direct Impacts

There would be a minor increase in demand for the environmental resources of land, air, and energy for these actions. As discussed previously, any direct impacts to air quality from the proposed project would be minor and would not be expected to cause or contribute to a violation of the primary or secondary NAAQS. There would be minor impacts on energy as the heavy equipment necessary to mining would consume diesel fuel to accommodate increased waste rock production activities.

The proposed action would occur within an existing industrial site; therefore, any expected impacts would be long-term, consistent with existing impacts, and minor. Water is required for the control of fugitive dust emission reductions. Therefore, any direct impacts would be long-term and minor.

Secondary Impacts

Any secondary impacts to air quality from the proposed project would be minor and would not be expected to cause or contribute to a violation of the primary or secondary NAAQS. There would be long-term, minor impacts on energy, as the proposed project would increase the use of heavy equipment and truck traffic to accommodate the increased allowable waste rock production and the increased use of such equipment would require additional fuel. However, the proposed action would occur within an existing industrial site, thus any impacts would be long-term, consistent with existing impacts, and minor. Water would continue to be used for fugitive dust emissions control and the amount of water used for such purposes may increase because of the proposed action. Therefore, any secondary impacts would be long-term and minor.

Cumulative Impacts

Minor cumulative impacts to demands on land, water, air, and energy are anticipated as a result of this permitting action. Long-term, minor, and consistent cumulative impacts are anticipated with the increase in waste rock production in terms of land, air, water, and energy because the proposed action would increase demand.

10.Impacts on Other Environmental Resources

This section includes the following resource areas, as required in ARM 17.4.609: Impacts on Other Environmental Resources

Affected Environment

As described in Section 8. – Aesthetics, of this EA, there will not be any increase in noise associated with the proposed action. Increases in fugitive dust may be a result of increase vehicle mile traveled per day. As this is an already developed site, the need for exterior lighting is unnecessary.

Direct Impacts

There would be a minor increase in demand for the other environmental resources. As discussed previously, any direct impacts to air quality from the proposed project would be minor and would not be expected to cause or contribute to a violation of the primary or secondary NAAQS. There would be minor impacts on energy as the heavy equipment necessary to mining would consume diesel fuel.

The proposed action would occur within an existing industrial site, any impacts would be long-term, consistent with existing impacts, and minor.

Secondary Impacts

Fugitive dust emissions resulting from the proposed action may adversely impact air quality in the affected area. However, Elevation must use reasonable precautions to limit fugitive dust generated from the increased production of waste rock; therefore, the proposed project would not be expected to cause or contribute to a violation of the applicable NAAQS for particulate matter (fugitive dust). See permit analysis for more detailed information regarding air quality impacts. Secondary, NAAQS provide public welfare protection, including protection against decreased visibility and damage to animals, crops, vegetation, and buildings. Therefore, any adverse secondary impacts to other environmental resources would be short-term and minor. No beneficial secondary impacts would be expected because of the proposed project.

Cumulative Impacts

DEQ is not aware of any other environmental resources, beyond the resource areas already covered within this EA, that would be cumulatively impacted by the proposed action.

11.Human Health and Safety

This section includes the following resource areas, as required in ARM 17.4.609: Impacts on Human Health and Safety

Affected Environment

The applicant would be required to adhere to all applicable state and federal safety laws. The Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) has developed rules and guidelines to reduce the risks associated with this type of labor. Few, if any, members of the public would be in immediate proximity to the project during construction or operations.

Direct Impacts

No Construction is anticipated in the proposed project. However, staff would be expected to use safe working practices subject to oversight by the Mine Safety and Health Administration or MSHA. Therefore, any direct impacts to human health and safety would be long-term, consistent with existing potential impacts from operations at the industrial site, and negligible to minor.

Secondary Impacts

Any secondary impacts to human health and safety would be long-term, consistent with existing impacts, and negligible. Operation of the permitted equipment would result in the emission of regulated airborne pollutants including NOX, CO, SO2, VOCs, PM, and HAPs. As permitted, the proposed project would not be expected to cause or contribute to a violation of the applicable primary or secondary NAAQS. See permit analysis for more detailed information regarding air quality impacts. Primary NAAQS provide public health protection, including protecting the health of "sensitive" populations such as asthmatics, children, and the elderly.

Cumulative Impacts

Any cumulative impacts to human health and safety because of the proposed action would

be long-term, consistent with existing impacts, and minor due to the existing industrial nature of the facility and the inherent risks associated with industrial operations.

12.Industrial, Commercial, and Agricultural Activities and Production

This section includes the following resource areas, as required in ARM 17.4.609: Impacts on Human Health and Safety

Affected Environment

The area surrounding the existing mine site is characterized by mountainous terrain which generally runs from north to south. No industrial, commercial or agricultural lands are located within or near the existing mine. The proposed action will increase a waste rock production to 12,000,000 tons during any 12-month rolling period.

Direct Impacts

The proposed action would occur within the footprint of an existing mine. No direct impacts to commercial or agricultural activities and production are expected because the site is an industrial site with no commercial, agricultural, or production activities occurring within or near the existing mine. Therefore, no direct impacts to industrial production would be expected because of the proposed project.

Secondary Impacts

Industrial activities and production in the affected area would increase because of the proposed action at the existing mine site. Therefore, any secondary impacts to industrial activities and production would be long-term, minor, and beneficial. No industrial, commercial or agricultural lands are located within or near the existing mine; therefore, no adverse secondary impacts would be expected because of the proposed project

Cumulative Impacts

Cumulatively, increased industrial operations provide an important industrial base to the area. These cumulative impacts would be long term and beneficial. No Cumulative impacts on agricultural and commercial activities and production would be expected because of the proposed action, as no such operations currently occur in the affected area.

13.Quantity and Distribution of Employment

This section includes the following resource areas, as required in ARM 17.4.609: Impacts on Quantity and Distribution of Employment

Affected Environment

Elevation currently employees two staff onsite and the proposed action will increase the employees between 5-10 onsite staff.

Direct Impacts

Elevation would use existing employees to accommodate the proposed action. Therefore, any direct impacts to the quantity and distribution of employment in the affected area during operation would be long-term, minor and beneficial.

Secondary Impacts

Elevation would use existing staff to accommodate the proposed action. Therefore, any

secondary impacts to the quantity and distribution of employment in the affected area would be long-term, negligible and beneficial. No adverse secondary impact would be expected because of the proposed action.

Cumulative Impacts

No cumulative impact are expected on long-term employment as a result of the proposed action because the propose action does not increase the number of full-time employees at Elevation.

14.Local and State Tax Base and Tax Revenue

This section includes the following resource areas, as required in ARM 17.4.609: Impacts on Local and State Tax Base and Tax Revenue

Affected Environment

The proposed action would be small by industrial standards and the amount of time and resources necessary to accommodate the increase waste rock production would be relatively limited.

Direct Impacts

No direct construction or operational impact to local, or State tax base and tax revenues would be expected with the proposed project because the facility does not offer any services or goods to the local community and will not employ any new employees.

Secondary Impacts

Local, state and federal governments would be responsible for appraising the property, setting tax rates, collecting taxes, from the companies, employees, or landowners benefiting from the proposed operation. Elevation would be responsible to accommodate any increased taxes associated with operation of the modified facility. Therefore, any secondary impacts would be negligible to minor, consistent with existing impacted in the affected area, and beneficial. No adverse secondary impacts would be expected because of the proposed project.

Cumulative Impacts

Short-term, beneficial, negligible to minor impacts to local and state tax base and tax revenues are anticipated from this permitting action because the proposed action would increase industrial production at the existing mine.

15.Demand for Government Services

This section includes the following resource areas, as required in ARM 17.4.609: Impacts on Demands for Government Services

Affected Environment

The proposed action would take place on an already existing talc mine. The county road that leads to the mine is maintained by the county and Elevation.

Direct Impacts

State environmental permits have been prepared by state government employees as part of their day-to-day, regular responsibilities. The county already maintains the road to access the mine site and would continue to do so following the proposed action. Therefore, any adverse

direct impacts to demand for government serves would be short-term, consistent with existing impacts and negligible. No beneficial direct impact would be expected because of the proposed action.

Secondary Impacts

After permit issuance, initial and ongoing compliance inspections of facility operations would be accomplished by state government employees as part of their typical, regular duties and required to ensure the facility is operating within the limits and conditions listed in the air quality permit. Therefore, any adverse secondary impacts to demands for government services would be long-term, consistent with existing impacts and negligible. No beneficial secondary impacts would be expected because of the proposed project.

Cumulative Impacts

Minor cumulative impacts are anticipated on government services with the proposed action and a minimal increase in impact would occur, but regulators would likely combine visits to cover regulatory oversight needs.

16.Locally Adopted Environmental Plans and Goals

This section includes the following resource areas, as required in ARM 17.4.609: Impacts on Locally Adopted Environmental Plans and Goals

Affected Environment

DEQ has reviewed the Madison County website and found no locally adopted environmental plans and goals for the area. Elevation has indicated in application number 2793-05_2025_09_27_APP2 that no known state, county, city, USFS, BLM, or tribal zoning or management plans and goals are known to potentially affect the site.

Direct Impacts

No locally adopted environmental plans and goals were identified. Therefore, no direct impacts would be expected because of the proposed project.

Secondary Impacts

No locally adopted environmental plans and goals were identified.; therefore, no secondary impacts to locally adopted environmental plans and goals would be expected because of the proposed project.

Cumulative Impacts

No cumulative impacts to the locally adopted environmental plans and goals are anticipated since no direct impacts or secondary impacts were identified.

17.Access to and Quality of Recreational and Wilderness Activities

This section includes the following resource areas, as required in ARM 17.4.609: Impacts on Access to and Quality of Recreation and Wilderness Activities

Affected Environment

The Treasure Mine is located 16 miles East of Dillion, Montana. The area surrounding the facility is mountainous land with a county road to access the site.

Direct Impacts

No direct impacts to access to and quality of recreational and wilderness actives are expected with the proposed action because the affected area is an existing, private industrial site and does not offer wilderness or recreational opportunities.

Secondary Impacts

No secondary or long-term construction and operational impacts are expected because the affected area is an existing, private industrial site and does not offer wilderness or recreational opportunities.

Cumulative Impacts

No cumulative impacts are expected with the proposed action because the affected area is an existing, private industrial site and does not offer wilderness or recreational opportunities.

18.Density and Distribution of Population and Housing

This section includes the following resource areas, as required in ARM 17.4.609: Impacts on Density and Distribution of Population and Housing

Affected Environment

The affected area is largely mountainous and industrial in nature.

Direct Impacts

No direct impacts from construction or operation are expected because of the proposed action. Elevation would employ existing staff and the proposed action would not be expected to otherwise result in an increase or decrease in local population and associated need for additional housing resources.

Secondary Impacts

Elevation would employ existing staff to operate the facility, and the proposed action would not be expected to otherwise result in an increase or decrease in the local population. Therefore, no secondary impacts to density and distribution of population and housing would be expected because of the proposed project.

Cumulative Impacts

Elevation would employ existing staff to operate the facility, and the proposed action would not be expected to otherwise result in an increase or decrease in the local population. Therefore, no cumulative impacts on the density and distribution of population and housing would be expected because of the proposed action.

19.Social Structures and Mores

This section includes the following resource areas, as required in ARM 17.4.609: Impacts on Social Structures and Mores

Affected Environment

DEQ is not aware of any Native American cultural concerns that would be affected by the proposed activity. Based on the information provided by the State Historical Preservation Office, it is not anticipated that this project would disrupt traditional lifestyles or communities. A State Historical Preservation Office cultural inventory is noted in Section 7 of the EA.

Direct Impacts

No direct impacts to the existing social structures and mores of the affected population would be expected because of the proposed project. The nature of the affected area is largely mountainous and industrial and this would not change because of the proposed action. Therefore, ongoing operation of the facility would not be expected to affect the existing customs and values of the affected population.

Secondary Impacts

No secondary impacts to the existing social structures and mores of the affected population would be expected because of the proposed project. The existing nature of the area affected by the proposed project is industrial (talc mine), which would not change because of the proposed action. Therefore, ongoing operation of the facility would not be expected to affect the existing customs and values of the affected population.

Cumulative Impacts

The existing nature of the area affected by the proposed project is industrial (talc mine), which would not change because of the proposed action Therefore, it is not anticipated that this project would impact the existing social structures and mores of the local population in the area.

20.Cultural Uniqueness and Diversity

This section includes the following resource areas, as required in ARM 17.4.609: Impacts to Cultural Uniqueness and Diversity

Affected Environment

It is not anticipated that this project would cause a shift in any unique quality of the area. As discussed in Section 7. – Historical and Archaeological Sites, there are no unique resource present in the proposed project area.

Direct Impacts

No direct impacts to existing cultural uniqueness and diversity of the affected area would be expected because of the proposed project. Any activities associated with the proposed action would be consistent with existing activities and would take place within the existing Elevation property boundary.

Secondary Impacts

No secondary impacts to existing cultural uniqueness and diversity of the affected area would be expected because of the proposed project. Any activities associated with the proposed action would be consistent with existing activities and would take place within the existing Elevation property boundary.

Cumulative Impacts

No direct impacts to existing cultural uniqueness and diversity of the affected area would be expected because of the proposed project. Any activities associated with the proposed action would be consistent with existing activities and would take place within the existing Elevation property boundary.

21.Private Property Impacts

The proposed action would take place on privately-owned land. The analysis below in response to the Private Property Assessment Act indicates no impact. DEQ does not plan to deny the application or impose conditions that would restrict the regulated person's use of private property so as to constitute a taking. Further, because the application was deemed complete, DEQ must take action on the permit pursuant to § 75-2-218(2), MCA. Therefore, DEQ does not have discretion to take the action in another way that would have less impact on private property—its action is bound by a statute. There are private residences in the nearby area of the proposed action. The closest occupied residence is located many miles from the project site.

22.Other Appropriate Social and Economic Circumstances

This section includes the following resource areas, as required in ARM 17.4.609: Impacts to Other Appropriate Social and Economic Circumstances

Affected Environment

The proposed action would increase the production of waste rock to 12,000,000 tons during any 12-month rolling period. No physical changes to the facility are expected due to this action.

Direct Impacts

DEQ is unaware of any other appropriate short-term social and economic circumstances in the affected area that may be directly impacted by the proposed project. Due to the nature of the proposed action, no further direct impact would be expected because of the proposed project.

Secondary Impacts

The proposed project would increase allowable waste rock production at the existing talc mine. Any impact to social and economic circumstances in the affected area would be long-term, minor, and consistent with existing circumstances. DEQ is unaware of any other appropriate long-term social and economic circumstances in the affected area that may be impacted by the proposed project. No further secondary impacts would be expected because of the proposed project.

Cumulative Impacts

No cumulative impacts to any other appropriate social and economic circumstances are anticipated. DEQ is unaware of any other appropriate long-term social and economic circumstances in the affected area that may be impacted by the proposed project.

23.Greenhouse Gas Assessment

Issuance of this permit would authorize Elevation to increase the production of waste rock to 12,000,000 tons during any 12-month rolling period. This would entail an increase in vehicle mile traveled by heavy equipment on-site.

The analysis area for this resource is limited to the activities regulated by the issuance of MAQP #2793-05, which increases allowable waste rock production. The amount of diesel-fuel utilized at this site may be impacted by a number of factors including seasonal weather impediments and equipment

malfunctions. To account for these factors DEQ has calculated the maximum amount of emissions using 205 vehicle miles traveled per day.

For the purpose of this analysis, DEQ has defined greenhouse gas emissions as the following gas species: carbon dioxide (CO2), methane (CH4), nitrous oxide (N2O), and many species of fluorinated compounds. The range of fluorinated compounds includes numerous chemicals which are used in many household and industrial products. Other pollutants can have some properties that also are similar to those mentioned above, but the EPA has clearly identified the species above as the primary GHGs. Water vapor is also technically a greenhouse gas, but its properties are controlled by the temperature and pressure within the atmosphere, and it is not considered an anthropogenic species.

The increased combustion of diesel fuel at the site would release GHGs primarily being carbon dioxide (CO2), nitrous oxide (N2O) and much smaller concentrations of uncombusted fuel components including methane (CH4) and other volatile organic compounds (VOCs).

DEQ has calculated GHG emissions using the EPA Simplified GHG Calculator version May 2023, for the purpose of totaling GHG emissions. This tool totals carbon dioxide (CO2), nitrous oxide (N2O), and methane (CH4) and reports the total as CO2 equivalent (CO2e) in metric tons CO2e. The calculations in this tool are widely accepted to represent reliable calculation approaches for developing a GHG inventory. DEQ has determined EPA's Scope 1 GHG impacts as defined in the Inventory Guidance for Greenhouse Gas Emissions are appropriate under MEPA for this Proposed Action. Scope 1 emissions are defined as direct GHG emissions that occur from sources that are controlled or owned by the organization (EPA Center for Corporate Climate Leadership). DEQ's review of Scope 1 emissions is consistent with the agency not evaluating downstream effects of other types of impacts.

This review does not include an assessment of GHG impacts in quantitative economic terms, otherwise known as evaluating the social cost of carbon. DEQ instead calculates potential GHG emissions and provides a narrative description of GHG impacts. This approach is consistent with Montana Supreme Court caselaw and the agency's discussion of other impacts in this EA. See Belk v. Mont. DEQ, 2022 MT 38, ¶ 29.

Direct Impacts

Operation of diesel-fueled vehicles throughout the life of the proposed project would produce exhaust fumes containing GHGs.

The applicant estimates that approximately 73,000 gallons of diesel-fuel would be utilized per year. To account for variability due to the factors described above, DEQ has calculated the range of emissions using a factor of +/- 10% of the Elevation's estimate. Using the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) simplified GHG Emissions Calculator for mobile sources, approximately 760 metric tons of CO2e would be produced per year.

Secondary Impacts

GHG emissions contribute to changes in atmospheric radiative forcing, resulting in climate change impacts. GHGs act to contain solar energy loss by trapping longer wave radiation emitted from the Earth's surface and act as a positive radiative forcing component (BLM 2021).

Per EPA's website "Climate Change Indicators", the lifetime of carbon dioxide cannot be represented with a single value because the gas is not destroyed over time. The gas instead moves between air,

ocean, and land mediums with atmospheric carbon dioxide remaining in the atmosphere for thousands of years, due in part to the very slow process by which carbon is transferred to ocean sediments. Methane remains in the atmosphere for approximately 12 years. Nitrous oxide has the potential to remain in the atmosphere for about 109 years (EPA, Climate Change Indictors). The impacts of climate change throughout the (specified region of state) of Montana include changes in flooding and drought, rising temperatures, and the spread of invasive species (BLM 2021).

Cumulative Impacts

Montana recently used the EPA State Inventory Tool (SIT) to develop a greenhouse gas inventory in conjunction with preparation of a possible grant application for the Community Planning Reduction Grant (CPRG) program. This tool was developed by EPA to help states develop their own greenhouse gas inventories, and this relies upon data already collected by the federal government through various agencies. The inventory specifically deals with carbon dioxide, methane, and nitrous oxide and reports the total as CO2e. The SIT consists of eleven Excel based modules with pre-populated data that can be used with default settings or in some cases, allows states to input their own data when the state believes their own data provides a higher level of quality and accuracy. Once each of the eleven modules is filled out, the data from each module is exported into a final "synthesis" module which summarizes all of the data into a single file. Within the synthesis file, several worksheets display the output data in a number of formats such as GHG emissions by sector and GHG emissions by type of greenhouse gas.

DEQ has determined the use of the default data provides a reasonable representation of the greenhouse gas inventory for the various sectors of the state, and the estimated total annual greenhouse gas inventory by year. The SIT data from EPA is currently only updated through the year 2021, as it takes several years to validate and make new data available within revised modules. DEQ maintains a copy of the output results of the SIT.

DEQ has determined that the use of the default data provides a reasonable representation of the GHG inventory for all of the state sectors, and an estimated total annual GHG inventory by year. At present, Montana accounts for 50.4 million metric tons of CO2e based on the EPA SIT for the year 2022. This project may contribute up to 760 metric tons per year of CO2e. The estimated emission of 760 metric tons of CO2e from this project would contribute 0.0015% of Montana's annual CO2e emissions.

GHG emissions that would be emitted as a result of the proposed activities would add to GHG emissions from other sources. The No Action Alternative would contribute less than the Proposed Action Alternative of GHG emissions. The current land use of the area is existing talc mine.

Description of Alternatives

No Action Alternative: In addition to the proposed action, DEQ must also considered a "no action" alternative. The "no action" alternative would deny the approval of the proposed permitting action. The applicant would lack the authority to conduct the proposed activity. Any potential impacts that would result from the proposed action would not occur. The no action alternative forms the baseline from which the impacts of the proposed action can be measured.

If the applicant demonstrates compliance with all applicable rules and regulations required for approval, the "no action" alternative would not be appropriate.

Other Reasonable Alternative(s): If the applicant demonstrates compliance with all applicable rules and

regulations as required for approval, the “no action” alternative would not be appropriate. Pursuant to, § 75-1-201(4)(a), (MCA) DEQ “may not withhold, deny, or impose conditions on any permit or other authority to act based on” an environmental assessment.

Consultation

DEQ engaged in internal and external efforts to identify substantive issues and/or concerns related to the proposed project. Internal scoping consisted of internal review of the environmental assessment document by DEQ staff. External scoping efforts also included queries to the following websites/databases/personnel: Application for MAQP # 2793-05, EPA State Inventory Tool, the EPA GHG Calculator Tool, the Montana Natural Heritage Program Website, the State of Montana GIS Mapping Program, the Madison County website, and the State Historical Preservation office.

Public Involvement

The public comment period for this permit action will occur from November 24, 2025, through December 9, 2025.

Significance of Potential Impacts and Need for Further Analysis

When determining whether the preparation of an environmental impact statement is needed, DEQ is required to consider the seven significance criteria set forth in ARM 17.4.608, which are as follows:

- The severity, duration, geographic extent, and frequency of the occurrence of the impact;
- The probability that the impact will occur if the proposed action occurs; or conversely, reasonable assurance in keeping with the potential severity of an impact that the impact will not occur;
- Growth-inducing or growth-inhibiting aspects of the impact, including the relationship or contribution of the impact to cumulative impacts;
- The quantity and quality of each environmental resource or value that would be affected, including the uniqueness and fragility of those resources and values;
- The importance to the state and to society of each environmental resource or value that would be affected;
- Any precedent that would be set as a result of an impact of the proposed action that would commit the department to future actions with significant impacts or a decision in principle about such future actions; and
- Potential conflict with local, state, or federal laws, requirements, or formal plans.

Conclusions and Findings

DEQ finds that this action results in minor impacts to air quality and GHG emissions in Madison County, Montana.

The severity, duration, geographic extent and frequency of the occurrence of the impacts associated with the proposed air quality project would be limited. The proposed action would not result in first time disturbance at the Treasure Mine.

As discussed in this EA, DEQ has not identified any significant impacts associated with the proposed actions for any environmental resource. DEQ does not believe that the proposed activities by the Applicant would have any growth-inducing or growth-inhibiting aspects, or contribution to cumulative impacts. The proposed site does not appear to contain known unique or fragile resources.

There would be negligible to minor impacts to view-shed aesthetics as the site is currently operating as a mine site. Any impacts would be consistent with existing impacts.

Demands on the environmental resources of land, water, air, or energy would not be significant. Impacts to human health and safety would not be significant as access roads would be closed to the public and because the site is on Privately Owned Land. The public would not be allowed on the Treasure Mine.

As discussed in this EA, DEQ has not identified any significant adverse impacts on any environmental resource associated with the proposed activities.

Issuance of a Montana Air Quality Permit to the Applicant does not set any precedent that commits DEQ to future actions with significant impacts or a decision in principle about such future actions If the Applicant submits another modification or amendment, DEQ is not committed to issuing those revisions. DEQ would conduct an environmental review for any subsequent permit modifications sought by the Applicant that require environmental review. DEQ would make permitting decisions based on the criteria set forth in the Clean Air Act of Montana.

Issuance of the Permit to the Applicant does not set a precedent for DEQ's review of other applications for Permits, including the level of environmental review. The level of environmental review decision is made based on case-specific consideration of the criteria set forth in ARM 17.4.608.

Finally, DEQ does not believe that the proposed air quality permitting action would have any growth-inducing or growth inhibiting impacts that would conflict with any local, state, or federal laws, requirements, or formal plans.

Based on a consideration of the criteria set forth in ARM 17.4.608, the proposed project is not predicted to significantly impact the quality of the human environment. Therefore, preparation of an EA is the appropriate level of environmental review pursuant to MEPA.

PREPARATION

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November 20, 2025
Date

REFERENCES

1. Elevation NewCo, LLC. application for permit modification MAQP#2793-05 received September 27, 2025.

2. EPA GHG Calculator Tool https://www.epa.gov/statelocalenergy/state-inventory-and-projection-tool

3. EPA State Inventory Tool, https://www.epa.gov/statelocalenergy/state-inventory-and-projection-tool

4. 2021 BLM Specialist Report on Annual Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Climate Trends, https://www.blm.gov/

5. Bureau of Land Management (BLM) 2021. Specialist Report on Annual Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Climate Trends from Coal, Oil, and Gas Exploration and Development on the Federal Mineral Estate. Available at: https://www.blm.gov/content/ghg/2021/.

6. 2022 BLM https://www.blm.gov/content/ghg/?year=2022

7. SHPO – State Historical Preservation Office Investigation

8. Resource Information System Endangered Species Investigation, https://mtnhp.org

9. Madison County Website, https://madisoncountymt.gov/

10. MT Sage Grouse Habitat Conservation Program, https://sagegrouse.mt.gov/