

February 1, 2021

Blue Arc LLC.  
C/O Owen Voigt  
2400 Bowhunter Dr.  
Helena, MT 59602  
Sent via e-mail to: [tricord1-1@hotmail.com](mailto:tricord1-1@hotmail.com)

Mr. Voigt,

On March 6, 2020, the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) received an application for an exploration license. The application was revised several times by Blue Arc LLC through electronic and verbal communications, with the latest application information submitted to DEQ on September 21, 2020. The project, as proposed, would be located within the boundary of the former Zortman Mine Site.

DEQ published a Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) for the project on October 28, 2020, analyzing, in detail, the possible environmental impacts of two alternatives: the No Action Alternative and the Proposed Action Alternative. Comments on the Draft EA were accepted through November 30, 2020. DEQ received 30 comments during the public comment period on the Draft EA. Three additional comments were received just after the comment deadline.

On February 1, 2021, DEQ issued a Final EA, responding to the substantive comments received and modifying or adding to the EA based on those comments. The decisions contained in this decision document are based on the analysis set forth in the Final EA.

### **DEQ's Decisions**

DEQ has applied the significance criteria set forth in the Administrative Rules of Montana (ARM) 17.4.608 in determining the significance of impacts on the human environment. Applying those criteria, DEQ has determined that preparation of an EA is the appropriate level of review under the Montana Environmental Policy Act (MEPA). DEQ's application of the significance criteria is set forth in the Final EA.

DEQ has decided to approve Blue Arc's application for an exploration license, selecting the Proposed Action Alternative as set forth in the Final EA.

Pursuant to Section 82-4-332(3), Montana Code Annotated (MCA), Blue Arc is required to file with DEQ a reclamation and revegetation bond in a form and amount as determined by DEQ in accordance with Section 82-4-338, MCA. DEQ is in the process of calculating the bond in accordance with Section 82-4-338, MCA, and is anticipating providing Blue Arc with the required bond amount within 40 days of the date of this decision document. Blue

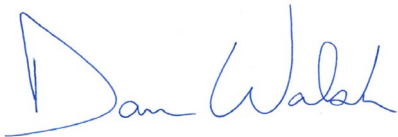
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Arc is not authorized to conduct any exploration activity, or to conduct any action in anticipation of conducting exploration activity (such as mobilization of equipment) that is subject to DEQ's approval, until Blue Arc submits the required bond to DEQ and DEQ has notified Blue Arc of its acceptance of the submitted bond.

### **Appeal of DEQ's Decisions**

Legal actions seeking review of DEQ's approval of Blue Arc's exploration license must be filed within 90 days after the date of this decision under Section 82-4-349(1), MCA. Any action or proceeding alleging a failure by DEQ to comply with MEPA, or inadequate compliance with a MEPA requirement, must be brought within 60 days after issuance of this decision pursuant to Section 75-1-201(5)(a)(ii), MCA.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dan Walsh". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "D" and "W".

Dan Walsh  
Chief, Hard Rock Mining Bureau  
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