

Department of Environmental Quality
Permitting and Compliance Division
Air and Waste Management Bureau
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FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

ISSUED TO: Montana Power Company
Colstrip Project Division Units 1&2
P.O. Box 38
Colstrip, MT 59323

RECEIVED
JUN 05 1998
ENVIRONMENTAL
QUALITY COUNCIL

PERMIT NUMBER: 0513-01

PRELIMINARY DETERMINATION ON PERMIT ISSUED: 5/15/98
DEPARTMENT DECISION ISSUED: 6/01/98

MONTANA ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT (MEPA) COMPLIANCE: An environmental assessment required by the MEPA, was completed for this project as follows:

LEGAL DESCRIPTION OF SITE: Section 2 of Township 2 North, Range 41 East of Rosebud County, Montana.

DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT: MPC Colstrip 1&2 is proposing to install and operate a truck dump and a lime silo bin vent for the use of Syncoal at Unit 2.

BENEFITS AND PURPOSE OF PROPOSAL: The use of Syncoal enhances low-rank subbituminous and lignite coals by a combination of thermal processing and cleaning. The results are a reduction in moisture content in the feed and product and sulfur content, while concurrently increasing the heating value.

DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS OF REASONABLE ALTERNATIVES WHENEVER ALTERNATIVES ARE REASONABLY AVAILABLE AND PRUDENT TO CONSIDER: No reasonable alternatives are available.

A LISTING AND APPROPRIATE EVALUATION OF MITIGATION, STIPULATIONS AND OTHER CONTROLS ENFORCEABLE BY THE AGENCY OR ANOTHER GOVERNMENT AGENCY: A list of enforceable permit conditions and a Best Available Control Technology analysis are contained in Air Quality Permit #0513-01.

DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS OF REGULATORY IMPACTS ON PRIVATE PROPERTY RIGHTS: The department has considered alternatives to the conditions imposed in this permit as part of the permit development. The department has determined that the permit conditions are reasonably necessary to ensure compliance with applicable requirements and to demonstrate compliance with those requirements and do not unduly restrict private property rights.

Potential Impact on Physical Environment

		Major	Moderate	Minor	None	Unknown	Comments Attached
1	Terrestrial and Aquatic Life and Habitats				X		1
2	Water Quality, Quantity and Distribution				X		1
3	Geology and Soil Quality, Stability and Moisture				X		1
4	Vegetation Cover, Quantity and Quality				X		1
5	Aesthetics				X		1
6	Air Quality			X			2
7	Unique Endangered, Fragile or Limited Environmental Resource				X		1
8	Demands on Environmental Resource of Water, Air and Energy				X		1
9	Historical and Archaeological Sites				X		1
10	Cumulative and Secondary Impacts			X			2

1. **Terrestrial and Aquatic Life and Habitats**
Water Quality, Quantity and Distribution
Geology and Soil Quality, Stability and Moisture
Vegetation Cover, Quantity and Quality
Vegetation Cover, Quantity and Quality
Aesthetics
Unique Endangered, Fragile or Limited Environmental Resource
Demands on Environmental Resource of Water, Air and Energy
Historical and Archaeological Sites

The use of Syncoal at the MPC Colstrip 1&2 facility will only replace the current coal used. No other changes at the facility will be seen. The use of Syncoal enhances the system and will result in a reduction in moisture content and sulfur content and an increase in the heating value of the coal.

2. **Air Quality**
Cumulative and Secondary Impacts

MPC Colstrip 1&2 will be required to comply with all applicable requirements and permit #0513-01. Skirting, minimal loads, and small drop distances will be used to control emissions from the truck dump and the bin vent filter system will be used to control emissions from the lime silo bin vent, and the emissions will be limited by the limit on Syncoal fuel. The use of Syncoal will increase the facility's allowable particulate emissions by 1.12 tons/year.

Potential Impact on Human Environment

		Major	Moderate	Minor	None	Unknown	Comments Attached
1	Social Structures and Mores				X		1
2	Cultural Uniqueness and Diversity				X		1
3	Local and State Tax Base and Tax Revenue				X		1
4	Agricultural or Industrial Production				X		1
5	Human Health			X			2
6	Access to and Quality of Recreational and Wilderness Activities				X		1
7	Quantity and Distribution of Employment				X		1
8	Distribution of Population				X		1
9	Demands for Government Services				X		1
10	Industrial and Commercial Activity				X		1
11	Locally Adopted Environmental Plans and Goals				X		1
12	Cumulative and Secondary Impacts			X			2

1. **Social Structures and Mores**
Cultural Uniqueness and Diversity
Local and State Tax Base and Tax Revenue
Agricultural or Industrial Production
Access to and Quality of Recreational and Wilderness Activities
Quantity and Distribution of Employment
Distribution of Population
Demands for Government Services
Industrial and Commercial Activity
Locally Adopted Environmental Plans and Goals

MPC operates Unit 1&2 in Colstrip, Montana. The facility's operates two tangential coal-fired boilers and will not change this operation through the current permit action. The current permit action will allow Units 1&2 to use Syncoal to blend with the current coal being used.

2. **Human Health**
Cumulative and Secondary Impacts

MPC Colstrip 1&2 will be required to comply with all applicable requirements and permit #0513-01. Skirting, minimal loads and small drop distances will be used to control emissions from the truck dump and the bin vent filter system will be used to control emissions from the lime silo bin vent, and the emissions will be limited by the limit on Syncoal fuel. The facility will also be required to comply with the National Ambient Air Quality Standards which are set to protect human health. The use of Syncoal will increase the facility's allowable particulate emissions by 1.12 tons/year.

RECOMMENDATION: An EIS is not required.

IF AN EIS IS NOT REQUIRED, EXPLAIN WHY THE EA IS AN APPROPRIATE LEVEL OF ANALYSIS:
The permitting of this equipment, with requirements in permit #0513-01, will limit emissions from the truck dump and lime silo bin vent sources at the facility.

OTHER GROUPS OR AGENCIES CONTACTED OR WHICH MAY HAVE OVERLAPPING JURISDICTION: None.

INDIVIDUALS OR GROUPS CONTRIBUTING TO THIS EA: Department of Environmental Quality, Permitting and Compliance Division.

EA PREPARED BY: Vickie Walsh

DATE: May 12, 1998