



Montana Department of
ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

"Healthy environment, healthy people"

Steve Bullock, Governor
Tracy Stone-Manning, Director

P. O. Box 200901 • Helena, MT 59620-0901 • (406) 444-2544 • Website: www.deq.mt.gov

May 3, 2013

Interested Party List

RE: Final Checklist EA for Holcim (US), Inc. Geyser Project for an Operating Permit

Dear Reader:

Holcim (US), Inc. (Holcim) located at Holcim Trident Plant, 40700 Trident Road, Three Forks, MT 59752 applied for an operating permit on December 7, 2012 from the Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), Environmental Management Bureau in Helena. The application was later revised on March 18, 2013.

The application would authorize Holcim to quarry gypsum on private land in Sections 3, 4, 9 and 10 in Township 16 North, Range 10 East. The site is approximately 6.5 miles southeast of Geyser, MT. Gypsum has historically been mined at the site.

The operating permit would cover a total of 48 acres. About 11 acres would be disturbed over the next five years, with about 29 acres being disturbed over the life of mine, which is estimated to be 18 years. Ground disturbance would range up to approximately 30 feet in depth. Holcim would use trucks and heavy equipment to remove the gypsum. Blasting would be required about once a year. The gypsum would be hauled to the Holcim plant located near Trident, MT. It is expected that there would be three to five truckloads per week day and occasional hauling on weekends for eight months of the year.

The DEQ issued a Draft Checklist Environmental Analysis (CEA) on April 5, 2013 evaluating the potential impacts from the quarrying operation and asking for comments on the proposed operation. The Draft CEA addressed issues and concerns raised during public involvement and from agency scoping. One comment email was received on the Draft CEA.

The issues raised included: 1) ensure the truck loads are legal weight, 2) ensure that truck loads are covered if not in a fully contained trailer, 3) ensure the trucks are free and clear of mud and debris before entering the highway.

These issues are outside of department jurisdiction as provided by the Montana Metal Mine Reclamation Act. The concerns have been forwarded to Holcim.

The comments received have not changed the conclusions in the Draft CEA. DEQ has decided to adopt the Draft CEA as the Final EA and has selected to Approve the Applicant's Proposed Action as the preferred alternative.

The operating permit will be issued contingent on Holcim posting the required reclamation bond and signature by the Director of DEQ.

Information on the Holcim operating permit application can be obtained by writing or calling the Montana Department of Environmental Quality, c/o Herb Rolfes, P. O. Box 200901, Helena, MT 59620, telephone (406) 444-3841; e-mail address hrolfes@mt.gov.

Warren D. McCullough
Warren D. McCullough, Chief
Environmental Management Bureau

5/3/13
Date

OP /OP_Applications/Holcim Geyser /Final EA Reader Cover Letter