

MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND CONSERVATION  
WATER RESOURCES DIVISION  
WATER RIGHTS BUREAU

**ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

**PART I. PROPOSED ACTION DESCRIPTION**

1. **Type of action:** Water use permit application no. 76G-109099-00
2. **Applicant/Contact name and address:** MT Department of Environmental Quality  
Brad Smith  
PO Box 200901  
Helena, MT 59620-0901
3. **Water source name:** Silver Bow Creek
4. **Location affected by action:** NWNESW Sec 23 Twp 03N Rge 08W Silver Bow County  
SESESE Sec 02 Twp 04N Rge 10W Deer Lodge County  
Point of diversion is transitory between the above legal land descriptions.
5. **Narrative summary of the proposed project and action to be taken:** This project is part of the Streamside Tailings Operable Unit of the Silver Bow Creek/Butte NPL site which is a Superfund clean-up site. The water will be used for dust control during reclamation construction activities. The applicant proposes to pump 300 gpm from Silver Bow Creek to a 5,000 gallon water truck with a portable pump and suction hose. The water truck would be filled four times per day for an estimated 200 days. A total of 12 acre-feet per year of water will be used. Construction is expected to continue for approximately 15 years.  
The DNRC shall issue a temporary water use permit if applicant proves the criteria in 85-2-311, MCA are met.
6. **Agencies consulted during preparation of the environmental assessment:**  
None

**PART II. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

1. Environmental Impact Checklist:

**PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT**

**Soils/Geologic Features:**

Degradation of soil quality or alteration of soil stability, moisture content, geologic substructure, unique geologic features, archeological sites?

No

**Erosion:**

Alteration of erosion or siltation patterns which modify stream beds or lake shores?

No

**Vegetation/Noxious weeds:**

Change in or adverse affect on diversity and production of local plant species including any unique or endangered species (including trees, shrubs, grass, and aquatic plants)? Establishment or spread of noxious weeds?

No

**Air:**

Deterioration of air quality, or adverse effects on vegetation due to increased air pollutants.

No

**Water:**

Alteration of surface water or groundwater quality including but not limited to temperature, dissolved oxygen or turbidity or quantity or distribution?

No

**Floodplain:**

Changes in drainage patterns, course or magnitude of flood flows, or exposure of people/property to hazards (flood)?

No

**Wildlife Habitat/Migration:**

Deterioration of critical fish or wildlife habitat? Creation of a barrier to the migration or movement of fish or wildlife?

No

**Endangered Species:**

Adverse effects on any unique or endangered species?

No

**HUMAN ENVIRONMENT**

**Existing Land Use:**

Alteration of or interference with the productivity or profitability of the existing land use of an area?

No

**Historical Significance:**

Destruction or alteration of a natural area of scientific or educational value or prehistoric or paleontological importance?

No

**Populace:**

Alteration of the location, distribution, density, or growth rate of the human population of an area? Alteration of social structure of community?

No

**Transportation:**

Increased traffic hazards or effects on existing transportation facilities or patterns of movement of people and goods?

No

**Safety:**

Creation of any health hazard or affect on existing emergency response or evacuation plans?

No

**Public Services:**

Have an effect upon or result in a need for new or altered governmental services in any of the following areas: fire or police protection, schools, parks/recreational facilities, roads or other public maintenance, water supply, sewer or septic systems, solid waste disposal, health, or other governmental services? Have an effect upon local or state tax base?

No

**Utilities:**

Creates need for new or altered facilities for any of the following utilities: electric power, natural gas, other fuel supply or distribution systems, or communications?

No

**Aesthetics:**

Alteration of any scenic vista or recreation opportunity or creation of an aesthetically offensive site to the public?

No

**Other:**

No

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**2. Secondary and cumulative impacts:**

None

**3. Reasonable alternatives to the proposed action, including the no action alternative:**

It appears there are no other alternatives. Dust control during the removal and treatment of the mine tailings is necessary to reduce the health hazards to the construction personnel and the surrounding areas. No action would result in no clean-up of a designated Superfund site.

**PART III. CONCLUSION**

Based on the significance criteria evaluated in this EA, is an EIS required? No

If an EIS is not required, explain why the EA is the appropriate level of analysis for this proposed action:

An EA is the appropriate level of analysis since this is an on-going Superfund remediation project pursuant to the federal Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) of 1980. The Streamside Tailings site cleanup requires a combination of removal and on-site treatment of tailings. No significant impacts have been identified.

PREPARED BY:

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TITLE: Water Resources Specialist

DATE: [Automatic date code removed]