



July 11, 2025

Cameron Dexter
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Shirley Folkwein, Board Chair
Coalition for a Clean CFAC
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Sent via email

Re: Anaconda Aluminum Co Columbia Falls Reduction Plant, Request for Extension of Time
for the Public Comment Period

Dear Ms. Dexter and Ms. Folkwein:

Thank you for your letters to the Montana Natural Resource Damage Program (NRDP), requesting an extension to the public comment period for the Draft Natural Resource Damage Assessment Plan until September 23, 2025. We provided your request to the other natural resource trustees, the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes (CSKT), U.S. Department of Interior, acting through the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and U.S. Department of Agriculture, acting through the U.S. Forest Service (collectively, the Trustees) and consulted with them on this response. We also appreciated our call with you both, Mayre Flowers, and the NRDP, USFWS, and CSKT on July 2, 2025. As we discussed in that call, we provided the questions about remedy (cleanup) we received on June 10, 2025, to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). We asked the EPA if they would be willing to have a joint meeting with us and if they were planning to respond to the questions. They declined a joint meeting and said they would not be preparing specific responses to the questions raised in the June 10 meeting. The EPA referred us to their website to find fact sheets that were developed in response to frequently asked questions, like the questions we referred to them. The Response to Comments on the Proposed Plan is also available on their website:
<https://cumulis.epa.gov/supercpad/cursites/csinfo.cfm?id=0800392> [cumulis.epa.gov].

As we discussed in our call on July 2, we are not granting the request for an extension, but we will continue to accept, consider, and evaluate information we receive from the public regarding

the Anaconda Aluminum Co. Columbia Falls Reduction Plant. The document out for public comment is the Assessment Plan, which lays out the Trustees' proposed plan for evaluating injury to natural resources and determining associated damages. In order to begin the natural resource damage assessment, we must finalize the Assessment Plan. However, we can continue to incorporate new information as we conduct the assessment, and we encourage the public to share their knowledge of the site and related contamination with us as we move through this process. We are particularly interested in:

- Historic information such as reports or other documents we may not have,
- Historic information about amounts and types of contaminants released, and
- Information on exposure pathways and where contamination has come to be located.

We will gladly accept qualitative information in addition to quantitative information.

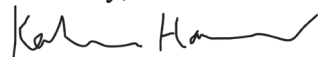
To ensure that we are able to evaluate and use relevant information in the assessment, as appropriate, **we recommend that members of the public provide us any information by December 31, 2025.** The trustees will review all information we receive and incorporate the relevant information, if possible. We may be able to consider additional information in the assessment after that date, however it will be more difficult to use the information if the assessment is already well underway. As we noted in our call, we would like to move forward with the assessment process as quickly as possible.

As discussed on our call, we will be placing this letter on our website and distributing it to our mailing list, which includes members of the press. Please feel free to share this with whomever you believe is appropriate.

In our meeting, you requested that the Trustees update the public within the next year. We will plan to schedule a public meeting to update the public sometime after we review and respond to public comments and finalize the Assessment Plan.

Thank you for your engagement on the Site and don't hesitate to reach out if you have any other questions. You may contact Sydney Stewart at sydney.stewart@mt.gov or (406) 465-6638 or Katherine Hausrath at khausrath@mt.gov or (406) 475-2812.

Sincerely,



Katherine Hausrath
Chief Legal Counsel
Montana Natural Resource Damage Program

cc:

NRDP Records
NRDP CFAC Mailing List