



In Reply Refer To:

## United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
Miles City Field Office  
111 Garryowen Road  
Miles City, Montana 59301-7000  
[www.blm.gov/mt](http://www.blm.gov/mt)



3809 (MTC020)  
MTM 77811

February 4, 2011

Dear Reader:

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Miles City Field Office and the Montana Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) have jointly prepared a detailed Environmental Assessment (EA) to analyze the potential impacts from American Colloid Company's (ACC) proposal for future bentonite mining activities.

ACC submitted a proposal (Amendment No.12) to the BLM Miles City Field Office and the Montana DEQ to amend its existing Plan of Operations for bentonite mining near Alzada in Carter County, Montana. Approval of Amendment No.12 would provide for the continued orderly and efficient mining of bentonite by ACC within its permit area. The amendment area includes 1,327.4 acres, of which 819.5 acres are federal (BLM) surface and 507.9 acres are private surface and is located within ACC's permit area. The proposed area of disturbance associated with Amendment No.12 would total approximately 617.5 acres, of which 331.6 acres are BLM surface and 285.9 acres are private surface.

We are seeking public review and comment on the EA and proposed Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI). The BLM and DEQ will accept comments on the EA during a 30 day time period ending on March 10, 2011. You may view and download an electronic version at our BLM Miles City Field Office website at [www.blm.gov/mt](http://www.blm.gov/mt). Written comments must be postmarked by March 10, 2011 to be considered. Comments may be submitted using one of the following methods:

Email: [jdavid@blm.gov](mailto:jdavid@blm.gov)

Mail: Bureau of Land Management  
Miles City Field Office  
Attn: Jon David  
111 Garryowen Road  
Miles City, Montana 59301-7000

Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment – including your

personal identifying information – will be available for public review. If you wish to withhold personal identifying information from public review or disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), you must clearly state, in the first line of your written comment, “CONFIDENTIALITY REQUESTED.” While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so. All submissions from organizations, from businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives of organizations or businesses, will be available for public review.

Upon review and consideration of public comments, the EA will be updated as needed. Following the 30 day comment period, BLM and MDEQ will make separate decisions whether or not to approve the proposed actions and mitigation measures identified in the EA.

If you have any questions or would like more information about the bentonite mine plan amendment, please contact Jon David, Natural Resource Specialist, at the BLM Miles City Field Office (406) 233-3665, Dan Benoit, Supervisory Natural Resource Specialist, at the BLM Miles City Field Office (406) 233-3646, or Jo Stephen at the Montana DEQ Billings office at (406) 247-4435.

Sincerely,



Deborah K. Johnson  
Field Manager