RYAN K. ZINKE
MONTANA AT-LARGE

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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515–2600

March 4, 2015

The Honorable Gina McCarthy
Administrator
Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20460

Administrator McCarthy:

On February 17, 2015, Governor Bullock (MT) requested that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) list the Columbia Falls Aluminum Site on the National Priorities List (NPL). I, along with many other Montanans, disagree with this recommendation.

As you know, the next step will be a site assessment. Columbia Falls Aluminum Company (CFAC) has taken the initiative by hiring a competent contractor, Roux Associates, to develop a Remediation Investigation Work Plan. The company also contacted your offices to express interest in entering into an Administrative Order on Consent. EPA staff agreed this would be the appropriate next step. Therefore, I see no need then for EPA to expend valuable time and taxpayer resources to list the site on the NPL. CFAC stands ready, willing, and able to enter into a legally binding commitment to undertake the necessary actions towards revitalization.

As a Whitefish native, I grew up fifteen minutes from Columbia Falls. I fondly recall a time when CFAC employed hundreds of local workers who were active members of the community. The plant was an integral component of our very way of life. I would like to see this site restored and revitalized for the betterment of not only the Flathead valley, but all of Montana. CFAC is taking considerable steps toward restoring jobs and returning productivity to the site. Please do not derail the process by listing the site on the NPL.

I would request that you meet collectively with Governor Bullock and my fellow members of the Montana delegation before deciding whether to list the Columbia Falls Aluminum site on the NPL. I appreciate your assistance and look forward to work with you further on this issue. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Ryan Zinke

Ryan Zinke
Member of Congress

cc: Shaun L. McGrath, Administrator, Region 8
Mathy Stanislaus, Assistant Administrator, Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response

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