UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 8
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Ref: 8MO

February 25, 2016

The Honorable Donald W. Barnhart, Mayor
The Honorable Darin Fisher
The Honorable Doug Karper
The Honorable Jenny Lovering
The Honorable John Piper
The Honorable David Petersen
The Honorable Michael Shepard
Columbia Falls City Council
130 6th Street West, Room A
Columbia Falls, Montana 59912

RE: Anaconda Aluminum Co Columbia Falls Reduction Plant Site
EPA Site ID: MTD057561763

Dear Mayor Barnhart and Council Members Fisher, Karper, Lovering, Piper, Peterson and Shepard:

Thank you for your letter dated February 8, 2016, regarding the Anaconda Aluminum Co Columbia Falls Reduction Plant Site. The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is currently considering listing the site on the National Priorities List. The EPA shares your goal of working cooperatively with the local community to move quickly through the investigation and evaluation phases, conduct cleanup, and return the property to beneficial use as soon as possible. The EPA has had a long history of working with local communities and stakeholders in Montana for efficient and effective cleanup and economic development.

You reiterate the Columbia Falls City Council's desire that the EPA list the site on the National Priorities List. The EPA shares your desire to see the site cleaned up and to prevent the migration of groundwater contamination from the site. We appreciate learning of the City Council's unanimous vote in support of listing the site on the National Priorities List at its February 1, 2016 meeting. The EPA shares your concern about protecting the City of Columbia Falls' drinking water sources, and the agency will work closely with the City to monitor the groundwater contamination situation at the site.

As you are aware, the EPA has entered into an administrative order on consent with Columbia Falls Aluminum Company (CFAC), the site's current owner and operator. CFAC's parent company, Glencore PLC, is not a party to the EPA-CFAC agreement and therefore is not bound by the terms and conditions of the agreement. The existing agreement only covers the remedial investigation/feasibility study, and does not address the cleanup of the site.

CFAC has requested that the EPA consider the Superfund alternative approach. The EPA is taking a hard look at the eligibility criteria for the Superfund alternative approach to determine whether the site meets the eligibility criteria. The EPA is also carefully considering the ramifications of utilizing this approach for ensuring that the site is cleaned up in a timely manner. The decision to adopt the Superfund alternative approach will be made by the EPA. Although there is no formal public comment period, the agency is always willing to hear from the community and other interested parties. In making this decision, the EPA will confer with the State of Montana and its Department of Environmental Quality.

Thank you again for sharing your interest and concerns with respect to the Anaconda Aluminum Co Columbia Falls Reduction Plant site. The EPA looks forward to working with the State of Montana, the Flathead County Board of Commissioners, the Columbia Falls City Council, and all stakeholders as it considers the site for potential inclusion on the National Priorities List and CFAC's request that EPA utilize the Superfund alternative approach.

If you have any questions, please contact me at (406) 293-6194.

Sincerely,

Mike Cirian, PE
Remedial Project Manager

cc: Cynthia Peterson, EPA
Joe Vranka, EPA-MO
Jenny Chambers, MDEQ