UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
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MAR 04 2015

Ref: 8EPR-AR

The Honorable Steve Bullock
Governor of Montana
State Capitol
P.O. Box 200801
Helena, Montana 59620-0801

Dear Governor Bullock:

Thank you for your February 17, 2015 letter supporting placement of the Anaconda Aluminum Company's Columbia Falls Reduction Plant, also known as the Columbia Falls Aluminum Plant (Site), on the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Superfund National Priorities List (NPL) for investigation and cleanup. I am pleased to report that we expect to propose the Site for listing when the next NPL update is published in the *Federal Register*, currently scheduled for March 2015. After the close of a 60-day comment period, the EPA will make a final listing decision after considering all comments received.

The EPA shares the interests outlined in your letter. The EPA intends to maintain the close working relationship that has already been established with the Montana Department of Environmental Quality for this Site. The community's interest in the Site is evident from the public meetings held in 2014, thus encouraging community involvement throughout the process will be crucial to achieve success. As the investigation continues, domestic wells will be sampled to better understand the potential risk to nearby residents in order to remedy any immediate concerns as well as to ensure the long-term cleanup will be protective. The EPA is committed to working cooperatively with the community, including the City of Columbia Falls, Flathead County and the Site owners, to ensure the cleanup will address the human health and environmental concerns while considering the Site owner's and the community's redevelopment goals. Here, and in other communities, the EPA has been committed to alerting the community about upcoming contract opportunities and hiring local labor whenever possible.

Again, thank you for your letter. If you or your staff have questions regarding the EPA's activities at this Site, please contact me, or your staff may wish to contact Rebecca Russo, Regional Congressional Liaison, at (303) 312-6757 or russo.rebecca@epa.gov.

Sincerely,

Shaun L. McGrath
Regional Administrator

cc: Senator Steve Daines
Senator Jon Tester
Representative Ryan Zinke
Tom Livers, Director, Montana DEQ
Donald Barnhart, Mayor, City of Columbia Falls
Flathead County Commissioners
Joe Russell, Flathead County Health Department