The Bureau of Land Management is responsible for the stewardship of our public lands. It is committed to manage, protect, and improve these lands in a manner to serve the needs of the American people for all times. Management is based upon the principles of multiple use and sustained yield of our nation's resources within a framework of environmental responsibility and scientific technology. These resources include recreation; rangelands; timber; minerals; watershed; fish and wildlife; wilderness; air; and scenic, scientific, and cultural values.

The Department of Environmental Quality's mission is to protect, sustain, and improve a clean and healthful environment to benefit present and future generations.

Cover Photos: Top left photo shows the L87/91 leach pads at the Landusky Mine as of July 2000. Top right photo shows interim reclamation grading along the east edge of the L91 leach pad as of October 2001. Bottom photos show the lower leach pads (L79-L84) at the Landusky Mine in the fall of 1999 (left); and after interim reclamation in the summer of 2001 (right). The view is toward the northwest with Mission Peak appearing in the background of the bottom photos. Photos courtesy of Tom Weitz.

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December 2001

Dear Reader,

Enclosed is the Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) on reclamation of the Zortman and Landusky Mines in northcentral Montana. This EIS is a final supplement to the March 1996 Final EIS, *Zortman and Landusky Mines Reclamation Plan Modifications and Mine Life Extensions.* With the bankruptcy of the mines' operator, Zortman Mining, Inc., the Department of Environmental Quality and the Bureau of Land Management are overseeing reclamation at the mines. The Final SEIS has been prepared to analyze additional reclamation alternatives developed by the agencies that may constitute a substantial change from those presented in the 1996 Final EIS.

About 150 copies of the Draft SEIS were distributed to the public and other state and federal agencies in May for a 90-day comment period. During the public comment period the agencies held three public meetings in communities near the mines to collect comments. In addition to oral comments, 53 written comments were received on the Draft SEIS and Montana Pollution Discharge Elimination System (MPDES) permits. All comments, written and oral, were reviewed and considered in preparation of the Final SEIS. Comments that presented new data, questioned facts or analyses, or raised questions or issues bearing upon the analysis are responded to in Chapter 6 of this Final SEIS.

The Final SEIS presents 12 reclamation plans, six for reclamation of the Zortman Mine and six for reclamation of the Landusky Mine. The reclamation plans were developed based upon public scoping comments and through consultation with the Fort Belknap government and the Environmental Protection Agency. The alternatives and associated environmental analyses have been modified slightly based upon public comment received on the Draft SEIS. Alternative Z6 is the DEQ and BLM preferred reclamation alternative for the Zortman Mine, and Alternative L4 is the preferred reclamation alternative for the Landusky Mine. These alternatives are estimated to cost approximately $52.1 million, which is $22.5 million more than is available under the reclamation bonds. Other alternatives that could be implemented within the available reclamation bond are also identified as "preferred," in the event funding to implement Alternatives Z6 and L4 is not forthcoming. Also, an additional $11 million is needed to fund long-term water treatment needs regardless of which reclamation alternative is selected.

The identification of the preferred alternatives does not constitute an agency decision but is intended to help the public focus on the alternatives likely to be selected. A Record of Decision that selects the alternatives for implementation will be prepared no sooner than 30 days after the availability of the Final SEIS is published in the Federal Register. A copy of the Record of Decision will be provided to everyone on the Final SEIS mailing list.

The agencies wish to thank all those who provided suggestions and comments on the Draft SEIS. Additional copies of the Final SEIS are available upon request from the Department of Environmental Quality or the Bureau of Land Management. The Final SEIS will be available on the agencies' website at: www.mt.blm.gov.

_/s/ Jan Sensibaugh_____
Jan Sensibaugh, Director
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Department of Environmental Quality

__/s/ Bruce W. Reed_____
Bruce W. Reed, Field Manager
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Final Supplemental
Environmental Impact Statement

Reclamation of the Zortman and Landusky Mines
Phillips County, Montana

December 2001

Lead Agencies: United States Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, Malta Field Office and State of Montana, Department of Environmental Quality, Environmental Management Bureau.

Cooperating Agencies: None.

Participating Agencies/Governments: United States Environmental Protection Agency and the Fort Belknap Indian Community Council.

Contacts for Further Information: Scott Haight, Bureau of Land Management, Lewistown Field Office, P.O. Box 1160, Lewistown, MT 59457 (406/538-1930) and Wayne Jepson, Montana Department of Environmental Quality, Environmental Management Bureau, P.O. Box 200901, Helena, MT 59620 (406/444-0529).

Abstract: This Final Supplemental EIS is a supplement to the 1996 Final EIS on Reclamation Plan Modifications and Mine Life Extensions at the Zortman and Landusky Mines. Since 1996, the mines' operator has declared bankruptcy and the regulatory agencies (DEQ and BLM) are overseeing reclamation using the reclamation bonds. Reclamation issues include the amount of pit backfilling, the type of reclamation covers to place over acid generating materials, protection of water quality, disposal of heap effluent, and long-term water treatment. The Fort Belknap Indian Reservation is adjacent the mining area and reclamation plans include measures to protect trust resources. The Final SEIS evaluates 12 reclamation alternatives, six for the Zortman Mine and six for the Landusky Mine. These include alternatives that could be implemented using the available reclamation bond and those that would require a considerable amount of additional funding. The alternatives were developed because they are either more cost effective, better address some environmental concerns, or both, than those presented in the 1996 FEIS. The preferred reclamation alternatives in the Final SEIS (Alternatives Z6 and L4) are estimated to cost $52.1 million, which is approximately $22.5 million more than is available under the reclamation bonds.

Other Environmental Review: This Final Supplemental EIS also serves as the environmental review document for the Montana Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (MPDES) permits to be issued by the Montana DEQ. The MPDES permits are in Appendix C.

Decision: A Record of Decision (ROD) that selects the alternatives for implementation will be issued no sooner than 30 days from the date the Notice of Availability for this Final EIS is published by EPA in the Federal Register. The ROD will include an explanation of the reasons for the decision and will be sent to everyone on the mailing list.

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