



United States Department of Interior
111 Garryowen Road

Bureau of Land Management

Miles City Field Office
Miles City, Montana 59301

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Comment Sought for Bentonite Mine Environmental Assessment

ALZADA – The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Miles City Field Office and the Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) are seeking public review and comment on an Environmental Assessment (EA) and a Finding of No Significant Impact, for a proposed bentonite mine plan amendment.

The BLM and DEQ will accept comments on the jointly prepared document for a thirty-day period ending on October 13, 2004.

American Colloid Company submitted a proposal to amend its bentonite mining plan located near Alzada, in Carter County.

The amendment proposes adding 1,487 acres to the permit of which 584 acres are BLM managed and 903 acres are private. According to the proposal, 686 acres would be disturbed by mining, of which 205 acres are BLM managed.

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The company has about 3,600 acres under permit with the State of Montana. Of this, about 2,070 total acres have been disturbed by mining, 1,640 acres have been reclaimed through the seeding stage and about 1,443 acres of mixed mined and unmined lands have been released from bond and are no longer in the permit. Approximately 821 acres in the current permit are administered by the BLM.

The American Colloid Company is headquartered in Belle Fourche, S.D. and has been mining bentonite in the Alzada area since 1977.

To obtain a copy of the EA or to submit comments, contact BLM Solid Minerals Geologist Dan Benoit, BLM Miles City Field Office, 111 Garryowen Road, Miles City, MT 59301. Or by email at: dbenoit@mt.blm.gov.

Copies of the EA are also available online at: <http://www.mt.blm.gov/mcfo/index.html>.

For further information, contact Dan Benoit at the BLM Miles City Field Office; (406) 233-3646, or Jo Stephen at the Montana DEQ Billings office; (406)247-4435.

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