

I am writing today in support of Black Butte Copper project near White Sulphur Springs. The Black Butte Copper Project will be mining done right; the Montana way. It will create jobs and economic opportunity while protecting people's health, safety, and our environment.

The Black Butte Copper project was designed with input from local ranchers and farmers, environmental organizations, and scientists in order to protect traditional uses of the land. As you well know, the project is undergoing a rigorous permitting process, including an environmental impact study and multiple public input periods. We appreciate all the hard work your Department of Environmental Quality has done and will do before they are able to issue a mine operating permit.

Black Butte Copper will be an underground mine, refilling each tunnel with cemented tailings (leftover ground up rock) as they go along. This means that after the reclamation is completed, there will be no open pit, no tailings left on surface and no need to treat water in perpetuity. The area will essentially look like it does now.

The project will also be an economic benefit to Meagher County and the surrounding area of Central Montana. It will bring more than two hundred new construction jobs and 240 good-paying, long-term jobs to Montana, offering family wage jobs for local workers.

The project will generate millions of dollars per year in economic activity in Montana and for small businesses locally and across the state. Annual retail sales of local goods and services will increase by an average of \$3.4 million dollars a year as well as pay approximately \$15 million a year in taxes (county/state/federal), money which the community can invest in schools, roads, and other key priorities.

We hear a lot from opponents of mining that there needs to be a trade-off, you can have either jobs or protect the environment. We believe you can have both. New mining technology means that we can create good paying jobs for Montana families through mining while also ensuring that our environment is protected. That is why I strongly support the Black Butte Copper project. I know we can represent our Montana values while providing good paying jobs and protecting our natural environment.

Thank you for all your work on behalf of the people of Montana.