

YES on HB 626



Perpetual pollution is a BAD idea for our wallets, our water quality, and Montana's economy.



What it says:

- Mining companies must submit the procedures and design elements they will use to **prevent the need for perpetual treatment of pollution** on land or in water.
- An operating permit may not be issued if the reclamation plan submitted for a mine shows that it will require treatment to meet water quality standards **after** reclamation by the mining company has concluded.

What it means:

- Mining companies have to clean up after themselves.
- Montana taxpayers should not foot the bill (forever!) for treating pollution caused by a private company.
- Our rivers, lands, streams, and drinking water supplies will be protected from the threat of pollution that could affect our grandchildren (and their grandchildren, too).

Why it's important:

- Taxpayers have repeatedly been left to cover the cost of clean up at modern Montana mines once the company closes up shop: *\$12.8 million of state and federal funds have already been spent reclaiming the Beal Mountain Mine near Anaconda, with an additional \$39 million needed for full clean up.*
- This bill is especially important for mines with sulfide mineralization—like the mine proposed in the Smith River drainage—because they can result in acid mine drainage that continues for hundreds of years, requiring costly water treatment long after the mining has ended.
- Acid mine drainage can harm fish, water supplies, and potentially public health.
- Montana has already been saddled with enormous water treatment costs as a result of acid mine drainage that lasts **long** after the mine has washed its hands of reclamation: *at the Zortman Landusky mine near the Fort Belnap Reservation, \$69.3 million have already been spent on reclamation and water treatment with no end in sight.*

The (Common-Sense) Bottom Line:

If a mine can't clean up after itself, it shouldn't be permitted.



Questions? Call Montana Trout Unlimited's Conservation Director, Mark Agenes, at 406-544-9265