

# THE ROCK CREEK PROJECT

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## *TIMELINE*

- 1,450 – 850 million B.C.** The geologic formation that now hosts the Rock Creek deposit begins to form as beaches and tidal flats. Over millions of years, these sands are buried under thousands of feet of additional sediment. Prior to solidifying into rock, some of the porous sandy beds within this formation are infused by metal-rich ground water, and copper and silver bearing minerals form between the grains of sand. Today, this formation, known as the Revett Formation, forms part of the underlying rocks of the Cabinet Mountains.
- 1963** Deposit discovered by Bear Creek Mining Co., a subsidiary of Kennecott
- 1964** U.S. Congress passes Wilderness Act, designates Cabinet Mountains Wilderness Area; surface exploration allowed through 1983
- 1969** U.S. Congress passes National Environmental Policy Act (“NEPA”); NEPA sets the framework for project consideration on Federal lands and outlines the Environmental Impact Statement (“EIS”) process
- 1973** U.S. Congress passes the Endangered Species Act (“ESA”); protection of endangered species becomes a mandatory consideration during the EIS and permitting process
- 1963-1983** Explored from the surface by Kennecott and ASARCO
- 1987** ASARCO submits a Plan of Operation to the Montana Department of Environmental Quality and the U.S. Forest Service, effectively initiating the permitting process.
- 1989** ASARCO granted Patented Mining Claims and initiates the EIS process
- 1995** Draft EIS released
- 1998** Supplemental Draft EIS released
- 1999** Rock Creek Project acquired by Sterling Mining Co.; later renamed Revett Silver to avoid confusion with Sterling Mining in Idaho
- 2000** Biological Opinion issued by U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service as called for by the ESA
- 2001** Final EIS released and Record of Decision issued by U.S. Forest Service and Montana Department of Environmental Quality
- 2002** Initial Biological Opinion withdrawn following court challenge for further study; original Record of Decision also withdrawn
- May 2003** Revised Biological Opinion issued
- June 2003** Final Record of Decision issued
- March 2005** Portion of Revised Biological Opinion remanded for further review

