

Greg Halisten

06461

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**ENVIRONMENTAL
QUALITY COUNCIL**

File 016.3

ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION CHECKLIST

DS-252

PROPOSED ACTION Removal and Crushing of Gravel and Sand for a Highway Road Maintenance Project

COUNTY Flathead TOWNSHIP 33N RANGE 24W SECTION 24

*(Yes) (No) (NA)

- | | | | |
|--------------|--------------|-------------|---|
| <u> </u> | <u> X </u> | <u> </u> | 1. Significant use of area by important wildlife and fish species. |
| <u> </u> | <u> X </u> | <u> </u> | 2. Important vegetation communities present which may influence or be influenced by proposed project. |
| <u> </u> | <u> X </u> | <u> </u> | 3. Significant historical, archaeological, or paleontological resource present. |
| <u> </u> | <u> X </u> | <u> </u> | 4. Significant topographic features, terrain or aesthetic values are present. |
| <u> </u> | <u> X </u> | <u> </u> | 5. Reconstruction of existing roads or trails or new road are proposed. |
| <u> </u> | <u> X </u> | <u> </u> | 6. Important surface or groundwater resources present. |
| <u> </u> | <u> X </u> | <u> </u> | 7. Fragile, compactible, or unstable soils present. |
| <u> X </u> | <u> </u> | <u> </u> | 8. Buildings, structures, pipelines, powerlines or other utilities located nearby. |
| <u> </u> | <u> X </u> | <u> </u> | 9. Land has been included as a part of a baseline study or other type of report, for any purpose. (e.g. Natural Area Program, Resource Development Bureau projects, rights-of-way, easements, or other leasing actions) |
| <u> </u> | <u> X </u> | <u> </u> | 10. Previously permitted or leased activities on this tract result in special protective stipulations. |
| <u> </u> | <u> X </u> | <u> </u> | 11. Present tract management is influenced significantly by adjacent state, federal or private land management practices. |
| <u> </u> | <u> X </u> | <u> </u> | 12. Tract is near designated Class I air area, or non-attainment area. |
| <u> </u> | <u> X </u> | <u> </u> | 13. Tract contains areas with unique or special reclamation considerations (past mining, erosion, saline seep, etc.). |
| <u> </u> | <u> X </u> | <u> </u> | 14. Public Interest. |

* Explain all "yes" answers in narrative form and attach to checklist.

X _____ 15. Additional Comments: (If so, explain in attached narrative)

Prepared by: H.T. Vars *HTV* Title Unit Manager

Based on my review of the above action I have included that a EA is is not required
(Circle appropriate response.)
because:

Area Manager/Bureau Chief *James H. Hoagg* Date 3/12/92
Route copies to: File (016.3)

Page 2 of 2

See Attachment for additional comments.

ATTACHMENT

Additional Comments:

1. The area has been used for removal of gravel since the mid-1950s and is immediately adjacent to U.S. Highway 93. Cover for wildlife use has been removed over the years.

The project area is within the boundary of the Stillwater Bear Management Unit of the Northern Continental Divide Ecosystem. Specifically, the action will take place in BMA 7. The gravel pit and crusher will be set up within three hundred feet of U.S. 93 and well within the half-mile corridor described in the Department's standards and guidelines. Within this half-mile corridor, there is allowance to conduct activities that discourages use of the area by bears. Gravel removal will take place during June, 1992. Within the immediate area there are no identified spring foraging sites. The Ewing Road is considered an open road and accesses the site. Reclamation of the area requires reseeding the disturbed and reclaimed ground. Reseeding will be done with nonpalatable species for wildlife. The short duration of activities and its location immediately adjacent to U.S. 93 and within an area where bear use is discouraged should result in no impacts to the bear.

2. The ^{entire} area was cleared for gravel use during and immediately after U.S. Highway 93 reconstruction in the mid-1950s. There are presently some native grasses, as well as seeded grasses from past reclamation projects. A high incidence of spotted knapweed from past disturbances is evident.
4. The area is a flat, bench terrace on gravel outwash plain.
5. The gravel pit is immediately adjacent to Ewing Road. The Ewing Road was constructed in the 30s to remove cedar poles. No new roads will be required to use the area.
- 6,7. The landtype is 28-7, gravel outwash soils at low elevation on level stream benches. These are permeable soils and well drained. The surface layer in this area has been disturbed and is quite thin. Subsurface is mostly gravels and sands.
8. An existing BPA high-voltage KV line is to the east of the proposed site. The proposed operation will have no effect on this utility corridor as all activities will be west of the line.
9. The current Ewing pit area is southeast of an older gravel pit used by the Federal Highway Administration during the 1955 reconstruction of U.S. Highway 93. This area has been depleted and abandoned as a gravel source.

12. Glacier National Park is approximately eighteen air miles over the Whitefish Range from the site. Glacier Park is considered a Class 1 airshed location. Crushing is planned at the site and will be an approximate eight- to ten-day operation. There would be some smoke or dust admissions during this time period and the crusher would need to comply with any air quality standards. The short duration of the crushing operation and the distance from Glacier National Park, as well as the localized wind current, would not create any impacts within Class 1 air sheds.
13. A separate reclamation plan has been completed on the site and contains steps necessary for reclamation. All reclamation activities would be considered normal for a disturbed site.
14. No public interest is known, although material produced by the project will be used for winter highway sanding and public safety.