

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Project Name: Hathaway Gravel Site Proposed Implementation Date: 10/96  
 Proponent: Bill Dengel Construction, Rt 2 Box 2116, Lewistown MT 59457

Type and Purpose of Action: The operator has applied for an 10 acre gravel site where they propose to salvage all available soil material, remove 300,000 cubic yards of gravel, and reclaim the site to hayland. The estimated date for final reclamation is unknown.

Location and County: Four miles north of Big Timber in the SESW27, 2N, 14E, Sweetgrass County

N = Not present or insignificant impact.  
 Y = An impact may occur (explain).

IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT	
RESOURCE	POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES
1. LOCATION, TOPOGRAPHY, AND GEOLOGIC AND EDAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS, SUITABILITY, AND STABILITY: Are there unusual geologic features? Are fragile, compactible, or unstable soils present? Is the proposed soil material handling adequate? Are there special mining and reclamation considerations?	N - The site is located about a quarter mile west of Big Timber Creek on the edge of a relatively flat bench overlooking the creek valley. The site is in the sedimentary plains portion of the state and no unusual geologic features were apparent during a site visit. According to the operator, there are 6 to 12 inches of soil and no overburden. The operator is committed to salvaging and replacing all soil material. There are no special mining and reclamation considerations.
2. WATER RESOURCE LOCATION, QUANTITY, QUALITY, AND PROTECTION: Are surface or ground water resources present? Is there the potential for degradation of water quality or quantity? Could water wells be affected? Are there special mining and reclamation considerations?	N - It does not appear that there are groundwater resources or wells in the immediate area that could be affected by this operation. One of the landowner's irrigation ditches runs along the northeast side of the site. The plan is to make the pit floor level with this ditch so that the reclaimed area may be irrigated. There are no special mining and reclamation considerations.
3. AIR QUALITY: Will pollutants or particulate be produced? Do air quality regulations apply?	N - Pollutants and particulates will be produced on a temporary basis by mining and reclamation operations. Operators are required to comply with state air quality regulations.

<p>4. PRESENT LAND USE, VEGETATIVE COMPOSITION AND COVER, AND PROPOSED POSTMINING LAND USE: Will vegetative communities be permanently altered? Are any rare plants or vegetative communities present? Are there special mining and reclamation considerations?</p>	<p>N - The present land use is rangeland. The vegetation consists of native range and introduced grasses. The proposed postmining land use is native and introduced grass hayland.</p> <p>The Montana Natural Heritage Program reports no element occurrences in the area.</p> <p>The Department will notify the county weed control board about the operation. The operator has committed to controlling any on-site noxious weeds.</p> <p>There are no special mining and reclamation considerations.</p>
<p>5. TERRESTRIAL, AVIAN, AND AQUATIC LIFE AND HABITATS: Is there substantial use of the area by common or rare mammals, birds, fish, or other animal species?</p>	<p>N - No common animals or fish or evidence of their use of the area were observed during a site visit.</p> <p>No rare animals or fish or evidence of their use of the area were observed during the same visit.</p> <p>The Montana Natural Heritage Program reports the occurrence of bald eagles in the area. bald eagles were not observed in the project area, nor is the reported element occurrence location near the site.</p>
<p>6. UNIQUE, ENDANGERED, FRAGILE, OR LIMITED ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES: Are any federally listed threatened or endangered species or identified habitat present? Species of special concern? Wetlands?</p>	<p>N - The author is not aware of any unique, endangered, fragile, or limited environmental resources in or around the site.</p>
<p>7. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES: Has the site been surveyed by a cultural resource professional or paraprofessional? Are any historical or archaeological resources present?</p>	<p>N - The site is to be surveyed by a professional cultural resources specialist. If such resources are found, the operator has committed to routing the operation around the site of discovery for a reasonable time until salvage can be made, and to promptly notifying the State Historic Preservation Office.</p>
<p>8. AESTHETICS: Is the project on a prominent topographic feature? Will it be visible from populated or scenic areas? What facilities will be on site? Will there be excessive noise or light?</p>	<p>N - No cultural resources were observed while on site. The site next to but not visible from the interstate, next to but offset from the frontage road, and next to but above and back from a golf course. It is not readily visible from populated or scenic areas. Noise or light should not be a problem.</p>

<p>9. DEMANDS ON ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES OF LAND, WATER, AIR, OR ENERGY: Will the project use resources that are limited in the area? Are there other activities nearby that will affect or be affected by the project?</p>	<p>N - There will not be a significant demand or impact on environmental resources or other projects as a result of this operation.</p>
<p>10. OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL ASPECTS OR IMPACTS: Are there other studies, plans, or projects on this tract? Will waste disposal be properly handled? Is reclamation guaranteed by a bond?</p>	<p>N - The author is not aware of any other environmental aspects or impacts. The operator has committed to proper waste disposal. The operator has posted sufficient bond to guarantee reclamation.</p>

IMPACTS ON THE HUMAN POPULATION

RESOURCE	[Y/N] POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES
<p>11. HUMAN HEALTH AND SAFETY: Will this project add to health and safety risks in the area?</p>	<p>N - The site is fairly isolated. The project should not add to the health and safety risks in the area if the operator and landowner manage the site in a responsible manner. The operator is required to comply with OSHA and MSHA regulations.</p>
<p>12. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL, AND AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION: Will the project add to or alter these activities?</p>	<p>N - Industrial, commercial, or agricultural activities in the area will not be significantly affected by the project.</p>
<p>13. QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT: Will the project create, move, or eliminate jobs?</p>	<p>N - The quantity or distribution of employment in the project area will not be significantly affected by the project.</p>
<p>14. LOCAL AND STATE TAX BASE AND TAX REVENUES: Will the project create or eliminate tax revenue?</p>	<p>N - Local and state tax revenues have not been significantly affected by similar operations in the state.</p>
<p>15. DEMAND FOR GOVERNMENT SERVICES: Will substantial changes in road use occur? Will other facilities and services (e.g., fire protection, police, schools) be affected or needed?</p>	<p>N - Trucks will use a short stretch of county road to haul mineral to the project area. No other government services should be affected or needed.</p>
<p>16. LOCALLY ADOPTED ENVIRONMENTAL PLANS AND GOALS: Are there federal, state, county, city, tribal, and/or private zoning or management plans in effect?</p>	<p>N - The author is not aware of any other environmental plans or goals. The local zoning authority has been contacted and clearance obtained.</p>
<p>17. ACCESS TO AND QUALITY OF RECREATIONAL AND WILDERNESS ACTIVITIES: Are recreational or wilderness areas nearby or accessed through this tract? Is there recreational potential within the tract?</p>	<p>N - Access to or the quality of recreational lands and activities on site and in the area will not be affected by the project.</p>
<p>18. DENSITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION AND HOUSING: Will the project add to the area's population and require additional housing?</p>	<p>N - Population or housing density and distribution will not be significantly affected by the project.</p>

