

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Project Name: McNulty Gravel Mine **Proposed Implementation Date:** November, 1996

Proponent: Blahnik Construction, Inc.

Type and Purpose of Action: Blahnik is proposing to salvage soils over an 8 acre area, mine and process 100,000 tons of gravel into various sizes, and batch asphalt for an adjacent FHA road project. Following mining, the affected area would be recontoured, regraded, ripped, soiled, and revegetated to a cover compatible with the postmine land use of potential residential areas.

Location: SWSE1/4 Sec 27,T2S, R22W

County: Ravalli

N = Not present or No Impact will occur.

Y = Impacts may occur (explain under Potential Impacts).

IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT	
RESOURCE	[Y/N] POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES
<p>1. GEOLOGY AND SOIL QUALITY, STABILITY AND MOISTURE: Are fragile, compactible or unstable soils present? Are there unusual geologic features? Are there special reclamation considerations?</p>	<p>[N] The area to be mined is located in a glacially carved valley of the Bitterroot Mountains. The glacial deposit has been cut by the West Fork of the Bitterroot river, and the bench remaining in this area will be mined to the road level. Soils are shallow with a maximum of 8" of rocky clay loam that will be salvaged and replaced after mining. Microbes will reinvade.</p>
<p>2. WATER QUALITY, QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION: Are important surface or groundwater resources present? Is there potential for violation of ambient water quality standards, drinking water maximum contaminant levels, or degradation of water quality?</p>	<p>[Y] The west fork of the bitterroot river is approx. 450 feet to the west of the proposed mined site, but is separated by the existing roadway. Runoff from the mined area cannot enter the river. Groundwater would vary from approx. 65 - 10 feet. Fuel storage sites would be lined and bermed to prevent contamination of the resource.</p>
<p>3. AIR QUALITY: Will pollutants or particulate be produced? Is the project influenced by air quality regulations or zones (Class I airshed)?</p>	<p>[Y] Air quality will be degraded as a result of the mining, crushing, and asphalt production however, all particulates must remain within allowable limits set by state Air Quality regulations.</p>
<p>4. VEGETATION COVER, QUANTITY AND QUALITY: Will vegetative communities be permanently altered? Are any rare plants or cover types present?</p>	<p>[Y] Ponderosa pine and Douglas Fir remain from previous logging operations. They overstory Agropyron spp, Festuca spp, Poa spp and numerous forbs and shrubs. Logging activities on that small bench area would have destroyed indigenous rare or threatened species. The area will be reseeded to a mix that will create a grassland environment capable of regenerating and retarding erosion.</p>

<p>5. TERRESTRIAL, AVIAN AND AQUATIC LIFE AND HABITATS: Is there substantial use of the area by important wildlife, birds or fish?</p>	<p>[N] This small, logged over bench did not exhibit the substantial use by any wildlife species.</p>
<p>6. UNIQUE, ENDANGERED, FRAGILE OR LIMITED ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES: Are any federally listed threatened or endangered species or identified habitat present? Any wetlands? Species of special concern?</p>	<p>[N] No threatened or endangered species or habitat was identified on this site. If further research identifies such, proper steps would be taken to mitigate impacts.</p>
<p>7. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES: Are any historical, archaeological or paleontological resources present?</p>	<p>[N] Previous surveys did not discover any of these resources. Further, an additional survey for this evaluation did not result in identification of the aforementioned.</p>
<p>8. AESTHETICS: Is the project on a prominent topographic feature? Will it be visible from populated or scenic areas? Will there be excessive noise or light?</p>	<p>[N] The site is not on a prominent feature, but it is adjacent to a rural roadway that is the cause of the mining project. One shift is proposed, so there will not be a need for lighted, nighttime activities. Noise levels will be elevated.</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 the project?</p>	<p>[N]</p>
<p>10. IMPACTS ON OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES: Are there other studies, plans or projects on this tract?</p>	<p>[N] Not to the knowledge of this document author.</p>

<p style="text-align: center;">IMPACTS ON THE HUMAN POPULATION</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">RESOURCE</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES</p>
<p>11. HUMAN HEALTH AND SAFETY: Will this project add to health and safety risks in the area?</p>	<p>[Y] The adjacent, and linear road project will probably cause a greater potential for accidents than the actual mining and processing operation. However, the company must comply with all MSHA and OSHA standards, so hazards should be minimized.</p>

<p>12. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION: Will the project add to or alter these activities?</p>	<p>[Y] Only temporary.</p>
<p>13. QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT: Will the project create, move or eliminate jobs? If so, estimated number.</p>	<p>[N]</p>
<p>14. LOCAL AND STATE TAX BASE AND TAX REVENUES: Will the project create or eliminate tax revenue?</p>	<p>[N]</p>
<p>15. DEMAND FOR GOVERNMENT SERVICES: Will substantial traffic be added to existing roads? Will other services (fire protection, police, schools, etc) be needed?</p>	<p>[N] The project will create traffic on the road reconstruction, but will then return to premine conditions unless upgrade makes it more attractive to drive upon for visits to the hinterland</p>
<p>16. LOCALLY ADOPTED ENVIRONMENTAL PLANS AND GOALS: Are there State, County, City, USFS, BLM, Tribal, etc. zoning or management plans in effect?</p>	<p>[N] Unzoned</p>
<p>17. ACCESS TO AND QUALITY OF RECREATIONAL AND WILDERNESS ACTIVITIES: Are wilderness or recreational areas nearby or accessed through this tract? Is there recreational potential within the tract?</p>	<p>[N] There is no recreational potential on the tract or accessed through it, however, the roadway passing by it does access recreational and wilderness lands.</p>
<p>18. DENSITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION AND HOUSING: Will the project add to the population and require additional housing?</p>	<p>[N] ^</p>
<p>19. SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND MORES: Is some disruption of native or traditional lifestyles or communities possible?</p>	<p>[N] ^</p>
<p>20. CULTURAL UNIQUENESS AND DIVERSITY: Will the action cause a shift in some unique quality of the area?</p>	<p>[N] ^</p>

21. OTHER APPROPRIATE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES:	[N] ^
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22. Alternatives Considered: Denial. The owner of the resource may be denied full use of his property at this time.

23. Public Involvement, Agencies, Groups or Individuals contacted: Montana Natural Heritage Program, State Historic Preservation Office, County Commissioners, County Weed Board, Department of Transportation, and Federal Highways Administration.

24. Other Governmental Agencies with Jurisdiction, List of Permits Needed: Department of Environmental Quality for an Air Quality Permit and Stormwater Permit, OSHA and MSHA for safety permits.

25. Magnitude and Significance of Potential Impacts: Insignificant at this level of disturbance.

26. Regulatory Impact on Private Property: The analysis conducted in response to the Private Property Assessment Act indicates no impact as there would be no need to place special restrictions upon the Reclamation Contract.

Recommendation for Further Environmental Analysis:

EIS More Detailed EA No Further Analysis

EA Checklist Prepared By: Steve Welch Title: Chief, Opencut Mining Bureau

Signature Date