

## ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

**Project Name:** Cameron

**Proposed Implementation Date:** Late fall 1997

**Proponent:** Leland Denboer

**Type and Purpose of Action:** The proponent proposes to mine, crush, sort, stockpile, and transport 10,000 cubic yards of sand and gravel from a 4.0 acre site for use on roads. The proposed operation would expand an existing pond to the west. The site would be recontoured creating an irregular shaped pond, respreading the topsoil down to the high water mark of the pond, and reseeding the site with grasses. The reclaimed use would be pasture and pond for wildlife habitat. Final reclamation would be completed by October 1, 1998.

**Location:** NE¼, Sec. 28, T14N, R9W **County:** Lewis & Clark

**N = Not present or No Impact will occur.**

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

<b>IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT</b>	
<b>RESOURCE</b>	<b>[Y/N] POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES</b>
<p><b>1. GEOLOGY AND SOIL QUALITY, STABILITY AND MOISTURE:</b> Are fragile, compactible or unstable soils present? Are there unusual geologic features? Are there special reclamation considerations?</p>	<p>[N] The proposed operation is located approximately three miles south of Lincoln in the alluvial valley created by the Blackfoot River And Willow Creek. Mining the site would expand an existing pond to the west. The topsoil is a sandy silty loam, up to six inches deep. There is no overburden. The topsoil would be stripped and stockpiled and after regrading would be evenly replaced down to the high water mark. Microorganisms should reinvade the soil.</p>

<p><b>2. WATER QUALITY, QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION:</b> 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>[N] The proposed operation would expand an existing pond fed by a ditch from Willow Creek, which is 50 feet to the north. An outlet is used to regulate the pond depth. The landowner has water rights filed for the pond and the water from Willow Creek. Areas for storing fuel storage tanks would be lined and bermed and be of sufficient size to contain any leaks or spills.</p> <p>Backhoe trenches were dug to a depth of 12 feet and no ground water was encountered. The site will be mined to a maximum depth of 12 feet.</p> <p>Prior to mining the inlet to the existing pond will be shut off to prevent water from being encountered in the expansion area. The last step, will be to remove the area between the existing pond and the expansion thus joining the two areas. There are some trees along the bank between the pond and the pit area and they will be left as an island. All slopes would be 3:1 or flatter and the pond would be irregular in shape. After the pond is regraded and shaped the inlet would be unplugged to allow water back in. The proponent is obtaining a Stormwater Permit from the Department. There should not be any impact to any ground or surface water.</p>
<p><b>3. AIR QUALITY:</b> Will pollutants or particulate be produced? Is the project influenced by air quality regulations or zones (Class I airshed)?</p>	<p>[Y] Air quality would be degraded. The proponent must comply with air quality standards and an Air Quality Permit obtained from the Montana Dept. of Environmental Quality for the crusher.</p>
<p><b>4. VEGETATION COVERS, QUANTITY AND QUALITY:</b> Will vegetative communities be permanently altered? Are any rare plants or cover types present?</p>	<p>[N] The entire site has been modified by either mining to create the existing pond or agricultural activities. The vegetation consists mainly of introduced grass species. Native species of grasses will be seeded onto the site upon recontouring and retopsoiling. A literature search was done by the Montana National Heritage Program and no rare plants or cover types were identified and none were identified during a ground search.</p>
<p><b>5. TERRESTRIAL, AVIAN AND AQUATIC LIFE AND HABITATS:</b> Is there substantial use of the area by important wildlife, birds or fish?</p>	<p>[N]</p>
<p><b>6. UNIQUE, ENDANGERED, FRAGILE OR LIMITED ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES:</b> Are any federally listed threatened or endangered species or identified habitat present? Any wetlands? Species of special concern?</p>	<p>[N] Ground and literature searches were conducted and no threatened or endangered a species or identified habitats were found on the site.</p>

<p><b>7. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES:</b> Are any historical, archaeological or paleontological resources present?</p>	<p>[N] A cultural survey was conducted on the site and no cultural resources were found. If the operator of the proposed operation discovers any cultural resources the operation must be routed around the site of discovery for a reasonable amount of time until salvage can be made. The State Historical Preservation Office must be promptly notified.</p>
<p><b>8. AESTHETICS:</b> 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 will be visible from vehicles using the gravel county road and from nearby homes. The proposed operation will be mined and material crushed during daylight hours. Depending on breakdowns and weather mining and crushing should last no longer than 10 days. The residents of the nearby homes are aware of the proposed operation and have signed Resident Notification forms as not being opposed to the proposed operation. The operation, as proposed, is temporary and will be reclaimed by October 1, 1998.</p>
<p><b>9. DEMANDS ON ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES OF LAND, WATER, AIR OR ENERGY:</b> 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><b>10. IMPACTS ON OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES:</b> Are there other studies, plans or projects on this tract?</p>	<p>[N]</p>
<p><b>IMPACTS ON THE HUMAN POPULATION</b></p>	
<p><b>RESOURCE</b></p>	<p><b>POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES</b></p>
<p><b>11. HUMAN HEALTH AND SAFETY:</b> Will this project add to health and safety risks in the area?</p>	<p>[Y] There will be increased hazards because of equipment activity and hauling of the sand and gravel. The applicant must comply with OSHA and MSHA regulations however, proper precautions will be taken to avoid accidents.</p>
<p><b>12. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION:</b> Will the project add to or alter these activities?</p>	<p>[Y] 1.4 acres of land would be permanently taken out of pasture in the creation of the pond.</p>
<p><b>13. QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT:</b> Will the project create, move or eliminate jobs? If so, estimated number.</p>	<p>[N]</p>

<p><b>14. LOCAL AND STATE TAX BASE AND TAX REVENUES:</b> Will the project create or eliminate tax revenue?</p>	<p>[N]</p>
<p><b>15. DEMAND FOR GOVERNMENT SERVICES:</b> Will substantial traffic be added to existing roads? Will other services (fire protection, police, schools, etc) be needed?</p>	<p>[N] The site will require periodic site evaluations, but these will be done in conjunction with other operations in the area.</p>
<p><b>16. LOCALLY ADOPTED ENVIRONMENTAL PLANS AND GOALS:</b> Are there State, County, City, USFS, BLM, Tribal, etc. zoning or management plans in effect?</p>	<p>[N] County Zoning clearance has been obtained.</p>
<p><b>17. ACCESS TO AND QUALITY OF RECREATIONAL AND WILDERNESS ACTIVITIES:</b> Are wilderness or recreational areas nearby or accessed through this tract? Is there recreational potential within the tract?</p>	<p>[N]</p>
<p><b>18. DENSITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION AND HOUSING:</b> Will the project add to the population and require additional housing?</p>	<p>[N]</p>
<p><b>19. SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND MORES:</b> Is some disruption of native or traditional lifestyles or communities possible?</p>	<p>[N]</p>
<p><b>20. CULTURAL UNIQUENESS AND DIVERSITY:</b> Will the action cause a shift in some unique quality of the area?</p>	<p>[N]</p>
<p><b>21. OTHER APPROPRIATE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES:</b></p>	<p>[N]</p>

**22. Alternatives Considered:**

Alternative # 1: Denial. The owner of the gravel resource would be denied full utilization of his property at this time.

**23. Public Involvement, Agencies, Groups or Individuals contacted:** Montana Natural Heritage Program, State Historic Preservation Office, & Lewis and Clarks County Commissioners & Weed Control District

**24. Other Governmental Agencies with Jurisdiction, List of Permits Needed:** Mine Safety & Health Administration for safety permit; Montana Department of Labor & Industry, Bureau of Safety for safety permit; Permitting and Compliance Division for crusher permit and stormwater permit.

**25. Magnitude and Significance of Potential Impacts:** Impacts are unlikely to be significant on the general environment because of the small amount of disturbance and short duration of the project.

**26. Regulatory Impact on Private Property:** The analysis conducted in response to the Private Property Assessment Act indicates no impact.

**Recommendation for Further Environmental Analysis:**

EIS       More Detailed EA       No Further Analysis

EA Checklist Prepared By: Jerry Burke

Title: Program Coordinator

Approved By: Steve Welch

Title: Industrial and Energy Minerals Bureau Chief

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Signature

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Date