

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

PERMITTING AND COMPLIANCE DIVISION

Air and Waste Management Bureau



MARC RACICOT, GOVERNOR

(406) 444-3490
FAX (406) 444-1499

STATE OF MONTANA

OFFICE: METCALF BUILDING
ADDRESS: 1520 E 6TH AVENUE

PO BOX 200901
HELENA, MONTANA 59620-0901

June 17, 1998

RECEIVED

JUN 17 1998

**ENVIRONMENTAL
QUALITY COUNCIL**

John Knerr
Thompson Falls Sand and Gravel
P.O. Box 1143
Thompson Falls, Montana 59873

Dear Mr. Knerr:

Air Quality Permit #3010-00 is deemed final as of June 17, 1998, by the Department of Environmental Quality. This permit is for a portable crusher and associated equipment. All conditions of the department's decision remain the same. Enclosed is a copy of your permit with the final date indicated.

For the department,

Richard Knatterud
Air Permitting Section Supervisor

RK:bjd

Enclosure

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
Permitting and Compliance Division
Air and Waste Management Bureau
P.O. Box 200901, Helena, Montana 59620
(406) 444-3490

FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (EA)

Issued For: Thompson Falls Sand and Gravel
P.O. Box 1143
Thompson Falls, MT 59873

Air Quality Permit Number: 3010-00

Preliminary Determination Issued: 5/14/98
Department Decision Issued: 6/01/98
Final Permit Issued: 6/17/98

Montana Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) Compliance: An environmental assessment required by the MEPA, was completed for this project as follows. This Environmental Assessment is applicable to the portable crushers and associated equipment. This assessment also addresses site-specific impacts at the original location.

Legal Description of Site: Any location in, or within 10 kilometers of any PM-10 nonattainment area until September 30, 1998.

Description of Project: This permit is for the operation of a portable 1957 Kue-Ken Jaw crusher (150 TPH), a 1961 Allis Chalmers Cone crusher (150 TPH), a 350 KW Diesel generator and associated equipment.

Benefits and Purpose of Proposal: This Addendum contains more stringent operational limits that allow the facility to operate at the above-listed locations without adversely impacting the PM-10 nonattainment areas.

Description and analysis of reasonable alternatives whenever alternatives are reasonably available and prudent to consider: No reasonable alternatives available.

A listing and appropriate evaluation of mitigation, stipulations and other controls enforceable by the agency or another government agency: A list of enforceable conditions are contained in permit #3010-00 and Addendum 1.

Description and analysis of regulatory impacts on private property rights: The department has considered alternatives to the conditions imposed in this permit as part of the permit development. The department has determined that the permit conditions are reasonably necessary to ensure compliance with applicable requirements and demonstrate compliance with those requirements and do not unduly restrict private property rights.

Potential Impact on Physical Environment

		Major	Moderate	Minor	None	Unknown	Comments Attached
1	Terrestrial and Aquatic Life and Habitats			X			X
2	Water Quality, Quantity and Distribution			X			X
3	Geology and Soil Quality, Stability and Moisture			X			X
4	Vegetation Cover, Quantity and Quality			X			X
5	Aesthetics			X			X
6	Air Quality			X			X
7	Unique Endangered, Fragile or Limited Environmental Resource			X			X
8	Demands on Environmental Resource of Water, Air and Energy			X			X
9	Historical and Archaeological Sites			X			X
10	Cumulative and Secondary Impacts			X			X

Potential Impact on Human Environment

		Major	Moderate	Minor	None	Unknown	Comments Attached
1	Social Structures and Mores				X		X
2	Cultural Uniqueness and Diversity				X		X
3	Local and State Tax Base and Tax Revenue			X			X
4	Agricultural or Industrial Production			X			X
5	Human Health			X			X
6	Access to and Quality of Recreational and Wilderness Activities			X			X
7	Quantity and Distribution of Employment			X			X
8	Distribution of Population			X			X
9	Demands for Government Services			X			X
10	Industrial and Commercial Activity			X			X
11	Locally Adopted Environmental Plans and Goals			X			X
12	Cumulative and Secondary Impacts			X			X

Potential Impacts on Physical Environment

1. Terrestrial and Aquatic Life and Habitats

Common terrestrial species, including deer, rodents, birds, coyotes, and foxes, occupy the same areas as the crushing plant and associated equipment. The proposed operation is relatively small, and will not significantly affect wildlife populations. In addition there is no evidence that any unique, threatened, rare, or endangered species will be directly affected by this action. Bald eagles are known to range all along the Clark Fork River valley, but no nesting sites are known on or near the proposed permit area. No adverse affects are anticipated on the eagles as a result of this permit. There are also no known wetlands or riparian areas. If the Montana Natural Heritage Program (MNHP) reports an element of occurrence, the department will conduct the appropriate follow-up analysis. Aquatic life will not be affected by this permitting action.

2. Water Quality, Quantity and Distribution

The nearest pre-mining surface water is the Clark Fork River located ½ mile to the south, which will not be impacted by this action. In addition, the site will be mined to a depth of 35 feet, which is well above the groundwater in the area. Although water will be used as a means of pollution control at this facility, it will cause only minor disturbances to the area. Any spills, or leaks, from this operation will be properly handled by the operator as required by the open cut mining contract.

3. Geology and Soil Quality, Stability and Moisture

This site is located 1 ½ miles east of the town of Thompson Falls, Montana. The deposit consists of stratified layers of alluvium and glacial outwash sand, gravel and cobbles that cover the deep Precambrian rocks. Up to 12" of fairly well drained, dark clay loam topsoil overlays the glacial sands and gravels. All of the soil material will be salvaged and stockpiled away from the affected land. Following mining, grading and ripping, the overburden (if any) and soils will be replaced, disked and seeded to stabilize the soil and prevent erosion.

4. Vegetation Cover, Quantity and Quality

Currently, 100% of the ground is overrun with fescue, wheatgrass, and spotted knapweed. There is no evidence that any rare plants or vegetative communities exist in the area. If the MNHP reports an element occurrence, the department will conduct the appropriate follow-up analysis. Any vegetation that is disturbed as a result of this proposed permitting action will be removed and planted with species compatible with the proposed reclaimed use. Air emissions from the facility will result in only minor impacts on vegetation.

5. Aesthetics

There will be a temporary deterioration of aesthetics while the operation is underway. However, reclamation will return the area to a visually acceptable landscape. Noise levels from this facility will range from 60 decibels to 90 decibels. As a comparison, 60 decibels is equivalent to close conversation and music from a radio is about 70 decibels.

Exposure to noise levels greater than 90 decibels for extended periods of time can lead to hearing loss. Because the facility will be located in the bottom of a 35 foot deep pit, effects from noise and light will be reduced. There will also be noise from haul trucks entering and exiting the area, but these impacts will be temporary and intermittent.

6. Air Quality

The Thompson Falls area has been designated by the DEQ as a PM-10 nonattainment area. Therefore, any air quality permits issued for operation in this area must require more stringent operating conditions. As a result, permit #3010-00 will be issued with an Addendum #1 that governs operation in or within 10 kilometers of any PM-10 nonattainment area during the summer months (April 1 through September 30). Permit #3010-00 and Addendum #1 to the permit include conditions that will limit particulate and PM-10 emissions to below 547 lbs/day. In addition, the permit and addendum will limit particulate emissions through opacity limitations and requirements that the facility operate pollution control devices (water spray bars/dust suppressant) at all times at this location. In addition, this facility will only operate at this location on a temporary basis, thus minimizing any affects it might have on air quality in the area.

7. Unique Endangered, Fragile, or Limited Environmental Resources

The affects on unique, endangered, fragile, or limited environmental resources will be minor since the facility is using a relatively small portion of land in relation to the surrounding area.

8. Demands on Environmental Resources of Water, Air, and Energy

No significant demands will be placed on environmental resources. In order for the facility to operate, minor demands will be placed on local air, water, and energy resources.

9. Historical and Archaeological Sites

Although there are important cultural values in the general area, this site has been previously disturbed, thus destroying the integrity of resources that may have existed. A surface exam of the area did not discover any historical or archaeological resources. If any are found during the course of operation of this facility, the operator has committed to routing the operation around the site for a reasonable time until salvage can be made, and to promptly notify the State Historical Preservation office. The crushing facility may move into other established sites that have been investigated during the issuance of the open cut mining contract.

10. Cumulative and Secondary Impacts

There is the potential for other operations, such as crushing plants and screening plants, to operate at this site. However, other facilities that want to locate at this site will be required to apply for, and receive, the appropriate permits from the department prior to operation. These permits will address any environmental impacts related to any future facilities. Overall, the facility will have minor impacts on the area due to the conditions and limitations contained in permit #3010-00, and Addendum #1 to the permit. Other environmental regulations would apply if there are discharges into state

waters, or if there are spills of regulated substances. In addition, the operators of this facility are required to reclaim the site in accordance with the open cut mining permit.

Potential Impacts on Human Environment

1. Social Structures

There will be no significant impact on social structures as a result of this permitting action.

2. Cultural Uniqueness and Diversity

The proposed facility will not cause a change in the cultural uniqueness and/or diversity of the area.

3. Local and State Tax Base and Tax Revenue

The facility is expected to have a minimal affect on the local and state tax base and tax revenue because other similar sources in the state have had little impact. In addition, the facility will serve a need and will generate local revenue in the process.

4. Agricultural of Industrial Production

The area listed in the type and purpose of action will be taken out of agricultural/grazing and put into industrial/commercial use. Once the mining is completed, the land will be returned to its previous use.

5. Human Health

Permit #3010-00 and Addendum #1 to the permit contain conditions that ensure the facility operates in compliance with all applicable standards. In addition, Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and Mining Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) have regulations that regulate worker safety protocols and require the facility be operated in a responsible manner.

6. Access to and Quality of Recreational and Wilderness Activities

The proposed facility may cause minor impacts to the quality of recreational and wilderness areas nearby as a result of air emissions and noise. However, the facility might, indirectly, improve the pathways to these recreational and wilderness areas by providing the materials to repair and maintain roadways.

7. Quantity and Distribution of Employment

The proposed facility will not greatly affect the quantity and distribution of employment in the area. The facility will most likely employ personnel already working for Thompson Falls Sand and Gravel.

8. Distribution of Population

The proposed facility will not require any additional, or less, housing in the area. Since this is a relatively small operation, and the facility is a temporary, seasonal source, any

increase in population will be minor, and temporary.

9. Demands of Government Services

This operation will require periodic inspections by Department of State Lands staff until such time as the site is successfully reclaimed to the required post-mining use. In addition, this is a relatively small operation with only minor increases in traffic on existing roads in the area while the facility is in operation. The only other government services required by this project are the agencies involved in issuing permits to the facility.

10. Industrial and Commercial Activity

This facility will represent a minor increase in the industrial activity in the area. However, the resulting road improvement projects from this operation may make it easier for other industrial, and commercial, activities to operate.

11. Locally Adopted Environmental Plans and Goals

The local zoning authority has been notified, and granted clearance for this project. There are no other local authorities that require approval/notification.

12. Cumulative and Secondary Impacts

Overall, the facility will have only minor impacts on the human environment. The limitations and conditions contained in permit #3010-00 and Addendum #1 to the permit will limit the impacts the facility has on the surrounding area. There is potential for other similar operations to locate at this site. However, any future plans to operate at this location will require appropriate analysis by the department. This analysis will address any potential impacts associated with additional sources operating at this location. Other environmental regulations may apply if there are discharges into state waters, or spills of regulated substances. As required by the open cut mining contract, this site will be reclaimed.

Recommendation: No EIS is required.

If an EIS is not required, explain why the EA is an appropriate level of analysis: Potential emissions from this facility are at a level where ambient standards will not be exceeded. Therefore, the department believes this source will have minimal impacts on the Thompson Falls PM-10 nonattainment area when it is operated at the previously-mentioned location. Also, since this plant is a portable source, any impacts will be minimal. The controls contained in permit #3010-00 and Addendum 1 will further limit the emissions.

Other groups or agencies contacted or which may have overlapping jurisdiction: Department of Environmental Quality.

Individuals or groups contributing to this EA: Department of Environmental Quality, Permitting and Compliance Division.

EA prepared by: Jeff Bellino

Date: April 30, 1998