DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
Permitting and Compliance Division
Air and Waste Management Bureau
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FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (EA)

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ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY COUNCIL

Issued For: John Schlecht Excavating
1400 Summerdale Road
Corvallis, MT 59828

Air Quality Permit Number: 3015-00

Preliminary Determination on Permit Issued: 07/17/98
Department Decision Issued: 08/03/98

Montana Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) Compliance: An environmental assessment required by MEPA, was completed for this project as follows.

Legal Description of Original Location: (portable source) Section 19, Township 7 North, Range 20 West, in Ravalli County, Montana.

Description of Project: This permit is for the operation of a 1960 Stansteel TM-15B Portable Asphalt Plant (maximum production 40 tph) with a primary cyclone, inlet dampers, cyclone spray chamber, a large holding tank, and associated equipment.

Benefits and Purpose of Proposal: This plant produces asphalt for small projects in the Corvallis area.

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, including a BACT analysis, are contained in permit #3015-00.

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
1	Terrestrial and Aquatic Life and Habitats			X			
2	Water Quality, Quantity and Distribution			X			
3	Geology and Soil Quality, Stability and Moisture			X			
4	Vegetation Cover, Quantity and Quality			X			
5	Aesthetics			X			
6	Air Quality			X			
7	Unique Endangered, Fragile or Limited Environmental Resource			X			
8	Demands on Environmental Resource of Water, Air and Energy			X			
9	Historical and Archaeological Sites				X		
10	Cumulative and Secondary Impacts			X			

Potential Impact on Human Environment

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

SUMMARY OF COMMENTS ON POTENTIAL IMPACTS: The following comments have been prepared by the Department.

POTENTIAL IMPACT ON PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

1. Terrestrial and Aquatic Life and Habitats

   Terrestrials will use the same areas as the asphalt plant. However, the asphalt plant alone will present only minor affects to the terrestrial life. The plant is relatively small compared to most asphalt plants and operates considerably less hours per year than other asphalt plants. Aquatic life will not be impacted by this particular asphalt plant.

2. Water Quality, Quantity and Distribution

   Water will be used as pollution control and dust suppressant, but will only cause a minor disturbance to the area. The water that will be used for dust control will be spread evenly around the affected areas and no additional runoff is expected as a result of the fugitive watering. If the asphalt plant moves into a permitted open cut pit, any accidental spills or leaks from equipment will be properly handled as required by the open cut mining contract.

3. Geology and Soil Quality, Stability and Moisture

   The soils will be impacted by the asphalt plant. Gravel and other aggregate may be taken from the area immediately around the asphalt plant if the plant moves into a permitted open cut pit. It is likely that the soils around the asphalt plant will become less stable. The area around the asphalt plant will likely be impacted by the components of asphalt. If the asphalt plant moves into a permitted open cut pit, the impacts to the surrounding geology and soil quality, stability, and moisture will be minor because Schlecht Excavating must comply with the requirements that are incorporated in an open cut mining contract for reclamation procedures.

4. Vegetation Cover, Quantity and Quality

   The vegetation cover will be affected by the asphalt plant. Depending on the location of the asphalt plant, the area around the plant may be required to be revegetated once the operations are finished..

5. Aesthetics

   The asphalt plant will be visible and will create additional noise in the area. Permit #3015-00 includes conditions to control emissions (including visible emissions) from the plant; therefore, any impacts will be minor. However, the plant is operated sparingly and can only produce 40 tons of asphalt per hour.

6. Air Quality

The air quality impacts from the asphalt plant are minor. Permit #3015-00 includes conditions limiting the opacity from the plant, as well as a particulate matter emissions limit. The plant requires initial testing (EPA methods 1-5 and 9) and then every-four-year testing thereafter. The testing ensures that Schlecht Excavating is complying with the air quality limitations contained in permit #3015-00.

7. Unique, Endangered, Fragile or Limited Environmental Resources

The affects to unique, endangered, fragile or limited environmental resources are minor because the asphalt plant is using relatively small portions of land with regard to the surrounding area.

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

The asphalt plant will only demand small quantities of water, and energy for proper operation. Water will be used to suppress the fugitive emissions emitted from the site and as a control device in the cyclone spray chambers and holding tank. The asphalt plant will be operated with a diesel powered generator.

9. Historical and Archaeological Sites

Historical and archaeological sites are not known to be present at the original location where the asphalt plant will operate. The operator will give appropriate protection if any values or artifacts are discovered in the affected area; including routing around the site of discovery for a reasonable amount of time and contacting the State Historical Preservation Office.

10. Cumulative and Secondary Impacts

There is potential for other operations such as crushers or screens to locate at this site. However, crushers and screens will have to apply for and receive the appropriate permits from the department prior to operation. These permits will address the environmental impacts associated with any crusher or screen at this or any other site. Overall, the asphalt plant will have minor impacts on the area because it is limited by permit #3015-00 and because it is operated sparingly over the course of a year. Other environmental regulations may apply if there are discharges to state waters or if there are spills of regulated substances. In addition, there may be impacts created by fugitive emissions from county roads.

POTENTIAL IMPACT ON HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

1. Social Structures and Mores

There will be no disruption of native or traditional lifestyles or communities from the asphalt plant.

2. Cultural Uniqueness and Diversity

The asphalt plant will not cause a change in the cultural uniqueness and diversity of the area.

3. Local and State Tax Base and Tax Revenue

The asphalt plant will have a minor impact on the local and state tax base and tax revenue.

4. Agricultural or Industrial Production

The asphalt plant will not create any agricultural production. The asphalt plant is small by industrial standards and will therefore have only a minor impact on local industrial production.

5. Human Health

Permit #3015-00 incorporates conditions to ensure that the asphalt plant will be operated in compliance with all applicable rules and standards. These rules and standards are designed to be protective of human health.

6. Access to and Quality of Recreational and Wilderness Activities

Minor impacts to the quality of recreational and wilderness activities may be created by the asphalt plant. The plant will create additional noise in the area and may create some additional visual impacts to the immediate area. More than likely, the plant will only operate within the immediate Corvallis area and will not affect the access to or quality of recreational and wilderness activities.

7. Quantity and Distribution of Employment

The activities from the asphalt plant will not greatly affect the quantity and distribution of employment in the area. More than likely, the activities will only employ people that currently work for Schlecht Excavating.

8. Distribution of Population

The asphalt plant will not require additional or less housing in the area. Since the asphalt plant is a seasonal operation, any increase in population is likely to be temporary. However, it is more likely that the asphalt plant will employ local people and that no change in the distribution of population will occur.

9. Demands of Government Services

The asphalt operation will only create minor impacts on governmental agencies. Schlecht Excavating will need to acquire the appropriate permits from governmental agencies.

10. Industrial and Commercial Activity

The asphalt plant represents a minor increase in the industrial activity in the area. The plant is relatively small by industrial standards.

11. Locally Adopted Environmental Plans and Goals

The asphalt plant is limited by permit #3015-00. Since Ravalli County has no environmental programs in place to further regulate the asphalt plant, the conditions in permit #3015-00 will be the main control for this asphalt plant.

12. Cumulative and Secondary Impacts

There is potential for other operations such as crushers or screens to locate at this site. However, crushers and screens will have to apply for and receive the appropriate permits from the department prior to operation. These permits will address the environmental impacts associated with any crusher or screen at this or any other site. Overall, the asphalt plant will have minor impacts on the area because it is limited by permit #3015-00 and because it is operated sparingly over the course of a year. Other environmental regulations may apply if there are discharges to state waters or if there are spills of regulated substances. In addition, there may be impacts created by fugitive emissions from county roads.

Recommendation: No EIS is required.

If an EIS is not required, explain why the EA is an appropriate level of analysis: This plant is a portable source and any impacts will be minimal. In addition, the controls contained in permit #3015-00 will limit the emissions from the asphalt plant.

Other groups or agencies contacted or which may have overlapping jurisdiction: Department of Environmental Quality, Industrial and Energy Minerals Bureau.

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

EA prepared by: Dan Walsh
Date: 06/30/98