

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
PERMITTING & COMPLIANCE DIVISION
COMMUNITY SERVICES BUREAU

Motor Vehicle Recycling & Disposal Program
MARC RACICOT, GOVERNOR



STATE OF MONTANA

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AUG 12 1998

**ENVIRONMENTAL
QUALITY COUNCIL**

August 11, 1998

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Keith & Shirley Mettleton, 6915 20th St East, Tacoma, WA 98424
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Paul Fihler, Fish, Wildlife, & Parks, 1420 E Sixth Avenue, Helena, MT 59620
Documents Section, State Library, Capital Complex, Helena, MT 59620
Dept. of Transportation, Larry Johns, Land Section, Right-of-Way Bureau, Helena, MT 59620

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Pursuant to the Administrative Rules of Montana, 17.4.609, the following Environmental Assessment has been prepared by the Department of Environmental Quality concerning Gregg Wait \ dba \ Valley Auto Wrecking a motor vehicle wrecking facility.

The purpose of the Environmental Assessment is to inform all interested governmental agencies, public groups or individuals of the proposed action and to determine whether or not the action may have a significant effect on the human environment. This Environmental Assessment will be circulated for a period of thirty (30) days at which time a decision will be made as to our future action.

If you care to comment on this proposed action, please do so within the allotted time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Bruce W. Meyer".

Bruce W. Meyer
Motor Vehicle Recycling & Disposal Program
Enc.

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DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
P.O. Box 200901, Helena, Montana 59620-0901
(406) 444-4400

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (EA)

Division/Bureau: Permitting & Compliance \ Motor Vehicle Recycling and Disposal Program

Project or Application: Valley Auto Wrecking, Plains, MT - A proposed private auto wrecking facility.

Description of Project: Gregg Wait \ dba \ Valley Auto Wrecking based in Plains, Montana, has submitted a motor vehicle wrecking facility license to this department for review. The proposed motor vehicle wrecking facility will be situated in Sanders County just south of Plains, MT. The legal description of the facility is the NW¼, SE¼, Section 1, Township 19 North, Range 26 West.

Benefits and Purpose of Proposal: Gregg Wait is proposing to establish a motor vehicle wrecking facility just south of Plains, MT. As required by the Motor Vehicle Recycling and Disposal Act, all wrecking facilities must be shielded from public view. "Public view" is defined as any point six (6) feet above the surface of the center of a public road from which the junk vehicles can be seen. By obtaining a motor vehicle wrecking facility license, the Waits would be allowed to: (1) Buy, sell, or deal in four (4) or more vehicles per year of a type required to be licensed, for the purpose of wrecking, dismantling, disassembling, or substantially altering the form of the motor vehicle, (2) Buy or sell component parts, in whole or in part, and deal in second-hand junk vehicles, and (3) Purchase wrecked vehicles from insurance companies. Insurance companies are required by state law to sell junk vehicles only to licensed motor vehicle wrecking facilities. This business would provide a commercial source of automotive parts which would provide a cost saving to the consumer and would conserve energy and natural resources otherwise used to manufacture new parts.

Description and analysis of reasonable alternatives whenever alternatives are reasonably available and prudent to consider:

Alternative #1. Not to establish and license a facility at this location. This would limit public access to used automotive parts.

Alternative #2. To establish and license a facility at a location other than the one proposed in the license application. This would require the applicant to find and acquire by purchase or lease a different parcel of property for the proposed usage.

Alternative #3. To establish and license a facility at the proposed location.

A listing and appropriate evaluation of mitigation, stipulations and other controls enforceable by the agency or another government agency: Automotive fluids must be drained from the vehicles prior to the vehicle being placed in storage. All fluids removed from the vehicles must be captured over an impermeable surface, properly containerized, and properly stored for reuse, recycling, or proper disposal. This is a management method intended to alleviate the potential for groundwater contamination. This is a license condition enforceable by the agency.

CFCs (Freon) must not be released to the environment. This is a federally enforceable requirement and is enforced by the U.S. EPA.

Recommendation: N/A

If an EIS is needed, and if appropriate, explain the reasons for preparing the EA: N/A

If an EIS is not required, explain why the EA is an appropriate level of analysis: Based on the information submitted for review with the license application, it is the preliminary determination of the department that an Environmental Assessment (EA) will provide an adequate review for this proposal.

Other groups or agencies contacted or which may have overlapping jurisdiction: Sanders County Commissioners and the DEQ Junk Vehicle Program manager.

Individuals or groups contributing to this EA: Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation; United States Department of Agriculture, Natural Resource Conservation Service; Montana Historical Society, and State Historic Preservation Office.

EA prepared by: Bruce W. Meyer

Date: August 11, 1998

POTENTIAL IMPACT ON PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

	Maj	Mod	Min	None	Unkn	Att
1. Terrestrial and Aquatic Life and Habitat			xxx			xxx
2. Water Quality, Quantity, and Distribution			xxx			xxx
3. Geology and Soil Quality, Stability and Moisture			xxx			xxx
4. Vegetation Cover, Quantity and Quality			xxx			xxx
5. Aesthetics				xxx		xxx
6. Air Quality				xxx		
7. Unique, Endangered, Fragile or Limited Environmental Resources				xxx		
8. Demands on Environmental Resources of Water, Air, and Energy				xxx		
9. Historical and Archaeological Sites				xxx		xxx

*Maj = Major; Mod = Moderate; Min = Minor; Unkn = Unknown; Att = Attached

CUMULATIVE AND SECONDARY IMPACTS: Upon closure of the facility and removal of the junk vehicles the aesthetics of the site will return to their original state.

POTENTIAL IMPACT ON HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

	Maj	Mod	Min	None	Unkn	Att
1. Social Structure and Mores				xxx		
2. Cultural Uniqueness and Diversity				xxx		
3. Local and State Tax Base and Tax Revenue			xxx			xxx
4. Agricultural or Industrial Production				xxx		
5. Human Health				xxx		
6. Access to and Quality of Recreational and Wilderness Activities				xxx		
7. Quantity and Distribution of Employment			xxx			xxx
8. Distribution of Population				xxx		
9. Demands for Government Services			xxx			xxx
10. Industrial and Commercial Activities				xxx		
11. Locally Adopted Environmental Plans and Goals				xxx		xxx

*Maj = Major; Mod = Moderate; Min = Minor; Unkn = Unknown; Att = Attached

CUMULATIVE AND SECONDARY IMPACTS: N/A

VALLEY AUTO WRECKING - ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

General Comments

The Montana Department of Environmental Quality licenses and regulates motor vehicle wrecking facilities under the authority of the Motor Vehicle Recycling & Disposal Act (75-10-501, MCA) and Administrative Rules of Montana (ARM 17.50.201).

To be eligible for licensing, a proposed wrecking facility must:

- 1) Be in compliance with all existing zoning ordinances on the date the license application is submitted to the department.
- 2) Be capable of being shielded from view of any existing public road. If the license application is approved, the applicant must construct all necessary shielding prior to licensure.
- 3) Not create any adverse environmental impacts.

The department has made the preliminary determination that the applicant is in compliance with the existing zoning ordinances as of the date of the submittal of the application and can effectively shield the proposed facility from all public roads in the area. The purpose of the Environmental Assessment is to determine if the proposed motor vehicle wrecking facility can be established without posing significant adverse environmental impacts.

Potential Impacts on Physical Environment

1. Terrestrial & aquatic life habitats
4. Vegetation cover, quantity and quality

The proposed site of the wrecking facility is a 4 acre parcel owned by the applicant. The specific site is just south of Plains, MT on US Highway 200. The applicant plans to use the parcel for a wrecking facility. The southwest side is adjacent to US Highway 200, the rail road right of way and then the Clark Fork river. The east side is adjacent to some small hills. The west side is adjacent to an old cement plant.

The establishment of a motor vehicle wrecking facility will disturb and displace a minor portion of the vegetation and wildlife habitat within the proposed location. The impact by the wrecking facility should not be significant to the area's ecosystem since the majority of the this area was used for a gravel pit. This location would serve as habitat for birds and small mammals.

2. Water quality, quantity, and distribution

Groundwater in the area is estimated at an average depth of 35 feet. This groundwater depth was obtained from the well log supplied by the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation.

3. Geology and soil quality, stability, and moisture

The soils in the vicinity of the site are classified by the U.S. Natural Resource Conservation Service as Yellowbay Gravelly Loam. Yellowbay Gravelly Loam is more than 60 inches deep with a lighter colored surface layer. These soils are on stream terraces, and hills. The Slope is 2 to 8 percent. The available water capacity in inches is 2.1 to 2.8. The frost-free season is 100 to 120 days.

Waste anti-freeze, gasoline, and lubricating oils contain petroleum distillates, heavy metals, and possibly toxic compounds, if improperly disposed of, can cause surface and groundwater degradation. The applicant plans on building a shop with a concrete floor. This impermeable surface will be used for the removal of the fluids. The applicant proposes to remove and recycle all of the above-named automotive fluids prior to storing the vehicles at the proposed site. Some lubricating oils and anti-freeze may drip from the vehicles stored at the facility. This residual dripping is not expected to be significant or result in heavy soil accumulations.

5. Aesthetics

The applicant proposes to use an earthen berm with chain link fencing with slats on top of the berm for shielding the facility on the southwest side. The applicant proposes to use another earthen berm on the inside of the facility to shield a second level from public view. Both the berms will be seeded back to a grass mixture to control any erosion or weeds. The other three sides of the facility all have natural shielding to conceal the wrecking facility from public. An onsite evaluation by department personnel determined that the shielding will be adequate to meet the requirements of the Motor Vehicle Recycling & Disposal Act.

"Public view" is defined as any point six (6) feet above the surface of the center of a public road from which the junk vehicles can be seen.

9. Historical and archaeological sites

No known historical or archaeological sites are located within the boundaries of the proposed motor vehicle wrecking facility.

Potential Impacts on Human Environment

3. Local & state tax base & tax revenue
7. Quantity and distribution of employment

The establishment of the proposed motor vehicle wrecking facility may provide a source of used motor vehicles or component parts for sale to the public. The issuance of a motor vehicle wrecking facility license will allow the applicant to: (1) Buy, sell, or deal in four or more vehicles per year of a type required to be licensed for the purpose of wrecking, dismantling, disassembling, or substantially altering the form of the motor vehicle, (2) Buy or sell component parts, in whole or in part, and deal in second-hand motor vehicle parts, and (3) Purchase wrecked vehicles from insurance companies. Insurance companies are required by state law to sell junk vehicles only to licensed motor vehicle wrecking yards.

The establishment of a motor vehicle wrecking facility may create an additional labor requirement and may result in additional employment. This employment and the employment requirements for the support services of this yard may provide a neutral to positive employment impact for the community.

9. Demands for governmental services

The issuance of a motor vehicle wrecking facility license will require administrative and inspection services of the Montana Department of Environmental Quality and the Sanders County Junk Vehicle Program personnel.

11. Locally adopted environmental plans and goals

The establishment of a motor vehicle wrecking facility at this location does not conflict with any existing zoning ordinances. Sanders County has no zoning ordinances.

Effect on Adjoining Landowners and Land Uses Other Site-Specific Information

Information gathered for the preparation of this Environmental Assessment reveals that the natural topography of this location isolate it very well from the adjoining properties on three sides. The fourth side is adjacent to highway 200 the railroad right of way and the Clark Fork River. The location of this wrecking facility should have minor or no impact on the adjoining landowners and land uses.