DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
Permitting and Compliance Division
Air and Waste Management Bureau
P.O. Box 200901, Helena, Montana 59620
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FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (EA)

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ENVIRONMENTAL
QUALITY COUNCIL

Issued For: LHC, Inc.
P.O. Box 7338
Kalispell, MT 59904-0338

Air Quality Permit Number: 2615-10

Department Decision on Modification Issued: 12/03/98

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

Legal Description of Site: Various locations throughout Montana, original location at Sections 25 and 26, T29N, R22W, Flathead County, Montana.

Description of Project: Renewal of an addendum to operate in or with PM-10 nonattainment areas during the winter and summer months, from September 30, 1998 through September 30, 1999.

Benefits and Purpose of Proposal: This plant crushes and sorts sand and gravel for use in construction projects.

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 #2615-10.

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

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

Potential Impact on Human Environment

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

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

This facility will cause only nonsignificant impacts. The operation is portable and operates on small portions of land.

2. Water Quality, Quantity and Distribution

Water will be used as pollution control but is not expected to have significant impacts on the water quality, quantity or distribution because this operation is small and will not operate at any one site for long periods of time.

3. Geology and Soil Quality Stability and Moisture
4. Vegetation Cover, Quantity and Quality

Only nonsignificant impacts to the geology and soil quality, stability and moisture will be experienced. Only nonsignificant impacts to the vegetation cover, quantity and quality is expected. The original site of Section 25 and 26, T29N, R22W in Flathead County, has an opencut contract with the Industrial Minerals Bureau, which includes a reclamation plan for this site. The reclamation plan considers soil stabilities and vegetative cover when mining is complete.

5. Aesthetics

The crusher operations will be visible and will create additional noise in the area. However, the impacts are expected to be nonsignificant because this operation is small by industrial standards and operates on small portions of land.

6. Air Quality

The department must be notified if there is a change in size of operation or equipment that results in an increase in emissions. Air quality impacts from the operation are nonsignificant. This permit includes conditions limiting the opacity from the plant, as well as requiring water spray bars to control air pollution.

7. Unique, Endangered, Fragile or Limited Environmental Resources

The department has contacted the Montana Natural Heritage Program (MNHP) in an effort to identify any species of special concern associated with the proposed site location. Search results have concluded there are several such environmental resources in the area. Area in this case will be defined by the township and range of the proposed site, with an additional five mile buffer.

These species of special concern include the Bald Eagle, Black Tern, Shorthead Sculpin, Subartic Bluet,Last Best Place Damselfly, Short Styled Thistle, Spalding's Campion, Latah Tule Pea, Spurred Gentian, Pygmy Water Lilly, Deer Indian Paintbrush, Beaked Spikerush, Red Root Flat Sedge, Slender Cottongrass, Water Bullrush, Small Yellow Lady's-Slipper, and

Maidenhair Spleenwort. While these resources are found within the defined area, the MNHP search did not indicate any species of special concern located directly on the proposed site. Therefore, It is unlikely that any of the previously listed species will be adversely affected by the proposed project.

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

The operation will only demand small quantities of water, air and energy for proper operation; therefore, nonsignificant impacts to these resources is expected.

9. Historical and Archaeological Sites

The original site of Section 25 and 26, T29N, R22W in Flathead County, is not a recorded historical or archaeological site.

10. Cumulative and Secondary Impacts

There is potential for other portable operations to locate at any mining site where nonmetallic mineral processing may occur. However, any such operation would have to apply for and hold the appropriate permits/contracts from the department prior to operation. These permits/contracts will address the environmental impacts associated with such operations at this or any other site. Overall, the operations will have only nonsignificant impacts on the area because they affect only a small amount of property. All sites are limited to total particulate emissions of 250 tons/year or less from the plant and any associated equipment. There may be nonsignificant impacts created by traffic on haul roads; however, the authorizing agent of the road is required to take reasonable precautions to reduce fugitive emissions.

POTENTIAL IMPACT ON HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

1. Social Structures and Mores
2. Cultural Uniqueness and Diversity
8. Distribution of Population

There will be no disruption of native or traditional lifestyles or communities from this operation. The cultural uniqueness and diversity of the area will not be impacted by this operation. No change in housing needs will be required due to this operation.

3. Local and State Tax Base and Tax Revenue
7. Quantity and Distribution of Employment
9. Demands of Government Services

The operations will have little, if any, affects to the local and state tax base and tax revenue. This operation is not a permanent, stationary operation at any one site. Activities associated with this type of operation usually do not greatly affect the quality and distribution of employment in the area. Employees of the company travel with the equipment to various sites; however, local workers may be hired for short-term employment. The only government services demanded for this project will be acquiring the appropriate permits from government agencies.

4. Agricultural or Industrial Production
10. Industrial and Commercial Activity

Operations will not displace any agricultural production. This operation is very small by industrial standards and will, therefore, have only nonsignificant impact on local industrial production. More than likely, the activities will only employ people from the company. It is possible that company employees may stay in the area during the short-term project. No additional industrial or commercial activity is expected as a result of the operations.

5 Human Health

This permit incorporates conditions to ensure that the operations will be operated in compliance with all applicable rules and standards. These conditions are designed to be protective of human health and will, therefore, constitute nonsignificant impacts.

6. Access to and Quality of Recreational and Wilderness Activities

The operations will not affect access to recreational and wilderness activities.

11. Locally Adopted Environmental Plans and Goals

There will be no affect to the locally adopted environmental plans and goals because this plant will operate at sites where current zoning does not exclude this type of industry. Furthermore, Addendum 10 of permit #2615 limits production and visible emissions while operating within the PM-10 nonattainment to insure compliance with ambient standards.

12. Cumulative and Secondary Impacts

There is potential for other portable operations to locate at this site. However, any such operation would have to apply for and hold the appropriate permits/contracts from the DEQ, prior to operation. These permits/contracts will address the environmental impacts associated with such operations at this or any other site. Overall, the operations will have only nonsignificant impacts on the area because they affect only a small amount of land. All sites are limited to total particulate emissions of 250 tons/year or less from the plant and any associated equipment. There may be nonsignificant impacts created by traffic on haul roads, however, the authorizing agent of the road is required to take reasonable precautions to reduce fugitive emissions.

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 there will be no significant impacts. In addition, the controls contained in permit #2615-10 will further limit the emissions.

Other groups or agencies contacted or which may have overlapping jurisdiction: None

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

Prepared by: Lana Hedlund
Date: 11/24/98