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

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ENVIRONMENTAL
QUALITY COUNCIL

Issued For: Troy Sand and Gravel
P.O. Box 398
Troy, MT 59935

Permit Number: 3022-00

Preliminary Determination on Permit Issued: 12/10/98

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

Legal Description of Site: The original plant site is located at Section 19 (SW¼ NE¼), T31N, R33W, In Lincoln County, Montana.

Description of Project: Troy Sand and Gravel proposes to use this crushing plant and associated equipment to crush and sort sand and gravel materials for use in construction operations.

For a typical operational setup, the raw material is fed into the hopper by a front-end loader, or similar piece of equipment. From the hopper, the material is sent on a feed conveyor to the screen deck. From the screen deck the material is sent through the Jaw, rolls, and ultimately conveyed to a stockpile for use.

Benefits and Purpose of Proposal: Increased business and revenue for the company.

Description and analysis of reasonable alternatives whenever alternatives are reasonably available and prudent to consider: None available.

A listing and appropriate evaluation of mitigation, stipulations and other controls enforceable by the agency or another government agency: A listing of the enforceable permit conditions and a permit analysis, including a Best Available Control Technology analysis, is contained in permit #3022-00.

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 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 Included
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 Resource				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

		Major	Moderate	Minor	None	Unknown	Comments Included
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

   Terrestrials will use the areas in which the crusher operations occur. However, the crusher operations alone will present only minor affects to the terrestrial life. In addition, the crusher operations are portable and the affects will be limited by short-term nature of operation.

2. Water Quality, Quantity and Distribution

   Water will be used as pollution control, but will only cause a minor disturbance to the area. No surface water or ground water quality problems are expected as a result of using water for pollution control. Any accidental spills or leaks from equipment will be handled according to the appropriate environmental regulations in an effort to minimize any potential adverse impact on the immediate and surrounding area.

3. Geology and Soil Quality, Stability and Moisture

   The soils will be impacted by the crusher operations. However, given the size, temporary nature of the operation, and the previous industrial disturbance at the site location, any potential impacts will be minor.

4. Vegetation Cover, Quantity and Quality

   The quality and quantity of vegetation cover will be affected by the crusher operations. However, given the size, temporary nature of the operation, and the previous industrial disturbance at the site location, any potential impacts will be minor.

5. Aesthetics

   The crusher operations will be visible and will create additional noise in the area. Permit #3022-00 includes conditions to control emissions (including visible emissions) from the plant. In addition, given the temporary nature and relatively small size of the operation any noise impacts will be minimal.

6. Air Quality

   The air quality impacts from the crusher operations are minor. Permit #3022-00 includes conditions limiting the opacity from the plant, as well as requiring water spray bars to control air pollution. The crusher operations are limited, by permit #3022-00, to total particulate emissions of 250 tons/year or less from non-fugitive sources at the plant, in addition to any additional equipment at any individual site.

7. Unique Endangered, Fragile or Limited Environmental Resources

The Montana Natural Heritage Program (MNHP) has been contacted 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 one mile buffer. These species of special concern include the Coeur D'Alene Salamander, Common Loon, Harlequin Duck, Bald Eagle, Grizzly Bear, White Sturgeon, Geyer's Biscuitroot, Shinyleaf Gooseberry, and Mountain Moonwort. 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 crusher operations will only demand small quantities of water, air, and energy for proper operation. Generally, the operations are seasonal, which results in smaller demands on the environmental resources.

9. Historical and Archaeological Sites

The proposed project is to crush and screen rock material within a previously disturbed industrial site. According to the Montana State Historic Preservation Office, there is low likelihood of adverse disturbance to any known archaeological or historic site, given previous industrial disturbance within that area. Therefore, it is unlikely the crusher operation will have an adverse affect on any known historic or archaeological site.

10. Cumulative and Secondary Impacts

The crusher operations will cause a minor affect to both the physical environment and human environment. There is potential for other operations to locate at these sites. However, any operations will have to apply for and hold the appropriate permits from the department prior to operation. These permits will address the environmental impacts associated with the operations at this or any other site. The crusher operations are limited by permit #3022-00 to total particulate emissions of 250 tons/year or less from non-fugitive crusher operations and any other additional equipment used at the site.

POTENTIAL IMPACT ON HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

1. Social Structures and Mores

The crusher operation will cause no disruption to the native or traditional lifestyles or communities of the area.

2. Cultural Uniqueness and Diversity

The crusher operation will have no impact on the cultural uniqueness and diversity of the area.

3. Local and State Tax Base and Tax Revenue

   The crusher operations will have little, if any, affects on the local and state tax base and tax revenue.

4. Agricultural or Industrial Production

   The crusher operations will take place in an existing pit and, therefore, will not displace any agricultural production. The crusher operations are small by industrial standards and will, therefore, have only a minor impact on local industrial production.

5. Human Health

   Permit #3022-00 incorporates conditions to ensure that the crusher operations 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

   The crusher operations will not affect any access to recreational and wilderness activities. However, minor affects to the quality of recreational and wilderness activities may be created by the noise from the site. Any impacts from the site will be temporary due to the portable nature of the crusher operations.

7. Quantity and Distribution of Employment

   The activities from the crusher operations will not affect the quantity and distribution of employment in the area. Troy Sand and Gravel will utilize a few company employees for the duration of the project.

8. Distribution of Population

   The crusher operations will not disrupt the normal population distribution in the area.

9. Demands of Government Services

   Minor increases will be seen in traffic on existing roads in the area while the crusher operations are in progress. In addition, government services will be required for acquiring the appropriate permits from government agencies. Demands for government services will be minimal.

10. Industrial and Commercial Activity

    The crusher operations represent only a minor increase in the industrial activity in the area. No additional industrial or commercial activity is expected as a result of the crusher operations.

11. Locally Adopted Environmental Plans and Goals

    The department is not aware of any locally adopted environmental plans or goals. The state standards will protect the proposed site and the environment surrounding the site.

12. Cumulative and Secondary Impacts

The crusher operations will cause a minor affect to both the physical environment and human environment. There is potential for other operations to locate at these sites. However, any operations will have to apply for and hold the appropriate permits from the department prior to operation. These permits will address the environmental impacts associated with the operations at this or any other site. The crusher operations are limited by permit #3022-00 to total particulate emissions of 250 tons/year or less from the crusher operations and any other additional equipment used at the site.

Recommendation: No EIS is required.

If an EIS is not required, explain why the EA is an appropriate level of analysis: Permit #3022-00 includes conditions and limitations which, if properly applied, will safeguard any potential environmental threat created by the proposed crushing operation.

Other groups or agencies contacted or which may have overlapping jurisdiction: Department of Environmental Quality, Montana Natural Heritage Program, Montana Historical Preservation Office (State Historical Society), Industrial and Energy Minerals Bureau.

Individuals or groups contributing to this EA: Department of Environmental Quality, Permitting and Compliance Division, Montana Natural Heritage Program, Montana Historical Preservation Office (State Historical Society), Industrial and Energy Minerals Bureau.

Revised EA prepared by: M. Eric Merchant, MPH
Date: December 4, 1998