

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Project Name: Senner/Deckert

Proposed Implementation Date: September 5, 2000

Proponent: Dawson County

Type and Purpose of Action: The company proposes to mine 110,000 cubic yards of gravel for use on a highway project. The project requires a crusher and screen, and an asphalt plant. Reclamation would be completed by September, 2001, and would return the land to small grain farming and CRP.

Location: SWSE and the SESW of Sec 33 T21N R53E County: Dawson

N = Not present or No Impact will occur.

Y = Impacts may occur (explain under Potential Impacts).

| IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT | |
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| RESOURCE | [Y/N] POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES |
| <p>1. GEOLOGY AND SOIL QUALITY, STABILITY AND MOISTURE: Are fragile, compactible or unstable soils present? Are there unusual geologic features? Are there special reclamation considerations?</p> | <p>[N] The site is located on fairly flat ground of the Fort Union Formation in the sedimentary plains portion of Montana. The gravels are Quaternary deposits laid down during glacial periods of the last 500,000 years.</p> <p>The soils are mainly of the Turner Beaverton Series which developed in older alluvium. The loamy topsoil averages 1 foot thick with about 6 inches of subsoil. These soils overlay 5 to 18 feet of gravel.</p> <p>Precipitation ranges from 10 to 14 inches.</p> |
| <p>2. WATER QUALITY, QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION: Are important surface or groundwater resources present? Is there potential for violation of ambient water quality standards, drinking water maximum contaminant levels, or degradation of water quality?</p> | <p>[N] The North Fork of Thirteen Mile Creek is a mile to the north and east of the site. A small ephemeral creek lies to the west about 150 feet, and a swale crosses the southeast corner of the site. Both of these features carry water only during snowmelt and major rainfall events.</p> <p>The nearest well is 2 miles away and has a static water level of 100 feet. Test pits were dug to a depth of 20 feet and did not contact ground water. The elevation of the western edge of the site is about 20 feet above the creek bed, while the eastern edge slopes down to the swale. It is estimated that groundwater would be no higher than the elevations of the creek bed and swale. Mining would proceed to a depth of 25 feet in the middle of the site, which is about 35 feet above the elevation of the nearby drainage features. However, mining would cease if it were to contact groundwater, and the reclaimed surface would be 3 feet above groundwater after replacement of overburden and soils.</p> <p>No fuel, asphalt, or other chemicals would be stored on site.</p> <p>No impact to groundwater is anticipated.</p> <p>The topsoil and overburden would be stockpiled around the perimeter of the site, and at the southeastern corner a silt fence or hay bales would be placed to impede runoff.</p> <p>No impact to surface water is expected.</p> |
| <p>3. AIR QUALITY: Will pollutants or particulate be produced? Is the project influenced by air quality regulations or zones (Class I airshed)?</p> | <p>[N] A water truck would be used for dust abatement on site. The crusher and screen are permitted by the Air Quality section of MtDEQ. The crusher is equipped with sprayers and /or nozzles for dust abatement.</p> |
| <p>4. VEGETATION COVER, QUANTITY AND QUALITY: Will vegetative communities be permanently altered? Are any rare plants or cover types present?</p> | <p>[N] The site is presently used for raising wheat and 3 acres are in CRP. No noxious weeds are present. The company would follow the Dawson County weed control plan to eradicate noxious weeds should they occur in the future. No rare species or cover types were found during a field inspection.</p> |
| <p>5. TERRESTRIAL, AVIAN AND AQUATIC LIFE AND HABITATS: Is there substantial use of the area by important wildlife, birds or fish?</p> | <p>[N] Occasionally deer and antelope wander through the site. Thus, very little wildlife impact is expected.</p> |

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| <p>6. UNIQUE, ENDANGERED, FRAGILE OR LIMITED ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES: Are any federally listed threatened or endangered species or identified habitat present? Any wetlands? Species of special concern?</p> | <p>[N] The Montana Natural Heritage Program has no listings in the vicinity. The site does not fit the criteria for wetlands. No species of special concern are present.</p> |
| <p>7. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES: Are any historical, archaeological or paleontological resources present?</p> | <p>[N] The State Historical Preservation Office has no listings for this area. A field inspection showed that no resources or artifacts were found either on the surface, or other disturbed areas along the road. However, if a resource were to be discovered, operations would be curtailed for a reasonable time to allow for assessment of the find.</p> |
| <p>8. AESTHETICS: Is the project on a prominent topographic feature? Will it be visible from populated or scenic areas? Will there be excessive noise or light?</p> | <p>[N] The site lies miles from the any town or the nearest resident. Although the ground is fairly level, the site's isolation make its impacts almost nil.</p> |
| <p>9. DEMANDS ON ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES OF LAND, WATER, AIR OR ENERGY: Will the project use resources that are limited in the area? Are there other activities nearby that will affect the project?</p> | <p>[N]</p> |
| <p>10. IMPACTS ON OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES: Are there other studies, plans or projects on this tract?</p> | <p>[N]</p> |

IMPACTS ON THE HUMAN POPULATION

| RESOURCE | POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES |
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| <p>11. HUMAN HEALTH AND SAFETY: Will this project add to health and safety risks in the area?</p> | <p>[N] The gravel would be used for a highway reconstruction project. This would promote safer travel and better year-round access for the local residents.</p> |
| <p>12. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION: Will the project add to or alter these activities?</p> | <p>[N] About 3 acres of CRP and 15 acres of small grain production would be lost for a few years. Final reclamation would be completed by 2001.</p> |
| <p>13. QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT: Will the project create, move or eliminate jobs? If so, estimated number.</p> | <p>[N]</p> |
| <p>14. LOCAL AND STATE TAX BASE AND TAX REVENUES: Will the project create or eliminate tax revenue?</p> | <p>[N]</p> |
| <p>15. DEMAND FOR GOVERNMENT SERVICES: Will substantial traffic be added to existing roads? Will other services (fire protection, police, schools, etc) be needed?</p> | <p>[N] Truck traffic generated by this project in this sparsely populated area would be insignificant.</p> |
| <p>16. LOCALLY ADOPTED ENVIRONMENTAL PLANS AND GOALS: Are there State, County, City, USFS, BLM, Tribal, etc. zoning or management plans in effect?</p> | <p>[N]</p> |
| <p>17. ACCESS TO AND QUALITY OF RECREATIONAL AND WILDERNESS ACTIVITIES: Are wilderness or recreational areas nearby or accessed through this tract? Is there recreational potential within the tract?</p> | <p>[N]</p> |
| <p>18. DENSITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION AND HOUSING: Will the project add to the population and require additional housing?</p> | <p>[N]</p> |
| <p>19. SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND MORES: Is some disruption of native or traditional lifestyles or communities possible?</p> | <p>[N]</p> |

