

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

SITE NAME: Stewart Street APPLICANT: Envirocon, Inc.
 LOCATION: Sec 13 T4N R10W COUNTY: Deer Lodge

PROPOSED ACTION: Envirocon, Inc. proposes to mine 1,171,879 cubic yards of borrow from a 39.6-acre area located near Opportunity within the Anaconda Regional Water, Waste, and Soils Operable Unit Remedial Design Unit (RDU) 9 – Fluvial Tailings Final Design Report (FDR), published by Arco in 2007. Plan of Operations Appendix C, RDU-9 Technical Specifications, describes the materials, methods, equipment, and procedures that will be used as a guide for reclaiming this site.

There is an existing graveled access road. The borrow would be used as cover growth medium on the material that has been mined from the Milltown Dam project and has been transported to the Opportunity area.

Envirocon would not salvage the topsoil but would stockpile 6 inches of fines to be used as reclamation growth medium on the site. The plan of operations requires the salvaged material to be augmented with compost, a specified seed mix and probable mulch. Hydroseeding may be used.

Reclamation would be completed to grassland by January 2010. A reclamation bond of \$124,186 has been posted.

A: Significant Unavoidable Impacts B: Insignificant as a result of conditioned mitigation C: Insignificant as proposed
 L: Long term Impacts S: Short Term Impacts

	POTENTIAL IMPACTS					EXPLANATION
	A	B	C	L	S	
PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT						
1. <u>TOPOGRAPHY</u>			X	X		The site is at the end of a ridge which abuts the interstate. Elevation reduces from 5026 feet msl at the eastern boundary to 4960 feet msl at the interstate. Average elevation would be lowered by about 30 feet. The ridge would be mined to daylight to the west and southwest.
2. <u>GEOLOGY</u> ; Stability			X	X		Test pits were only dug to a depth of 8 feet. According to these pit records, the top 8 feet consists of fines – clays, silts and sands. This is the product of interest. A site inspection shows that the existing small pit in the northeast portion of the site has fines at least 15 feet deep. The coulee just north of the permit area shows fines throughout its 10-foot depth. Two well cores about 2,000 feet to the south show fines for the first 7 feet and decomposed granite or granite below that. The plan states that if coarse material were encountered it would not be mined.
3. <u>SOILS</u> ; Quality, Distribution			X		X	The surface material on part of the site has been modified to remove or nullify toxic matter that may have been deposited by past smelter operations. The other portion of the site was not treated. Test pits show that fine materials are at least 8 feet deep. It is unknown if they are deeper. The operator would

						POTENTIAL IMPACTS					
						A	B	C	L	S	EXPLANATION
											<p>salvage 6 inches of fines from below the surface in order to avoid possible toxic materials being replaced during reclamation. Following the Fluvial Tailings Final Design Report (FDR), the fines would be augmented with compost or dried manure, and may be mulched with straw or other organics. This would make an adequate growth material for reclamation.</p> <p>Average annual precipitation is between 12 and 15 inches, most of which falls during the growing season. Reclamation to rangeland would be accomplished.</p>
4. <u>WATER</u> ; Quality; Quantity; Distribution								X		X	<p>Drainage ditches are located north and south of the site. The site slopes from the north to the south. The north ditch intercepts run-on. Runoff from the disturbance would generally drain toward the south ditch. It would be protected from siltation with best management practices that would remain until vegetation was reestablished.</p> <p>One well with a static water level of over 90 feet is located across the interstate to the west. Two wells located about 2000 feet to the south have static water levels of 10 to 13 feet. It is unknown what elevation the water table is at the site, but the plan states that mining would not go down into the water table and final reclamation elevation would be at least 3 feet above the water table.</p> <p>It is estimated that two water trucks per day would be required for dust suppression.</p> <p>There would be no impact to water quality or quantity from mining.</p>
5. <u>AIR</u> ; Quality								X		X	<p>This is a borrow site. Fugitive dust would be controlled with the use of water trucks. Air quality impacts would be minimal.</p>
6. <u>UNIQUE, ENDANGERED, FRAGILE, or LIMITED</u> environmental resources											<p>The Natural Heritage Program reported that in the general area, there may be habitat for gray wolves, Canada lynx, wolverine, and a caddis fly. The FDR previously evaluated the natural environment including wildlife and vegetation, within Remedial Design Unit 9 (RDU-9). It was found that no adverse impacts to fish and game would occur.</p>
BIOLOGICAL ENVIRONMENT											
1. <u>VEGETATION</u> ; quantity, quality, species								X		X	<p>The site contains 4 native grasses and three shrubs. Mining would have minimal impact because of the short duration of disturbance and the small area to be disturbed.</p>
2. <u>TERRESTRIAL, AVIAN, and AQUATIC</u> ; species and habitats								X		X	<p>Mining would have minimal impact on wildlife mainly because the site has limited forage, shelter, or other wildlife value.</p>
3. <u>AGRICULTURE</u> ; grazing, crops Production								X		X	<p>The site is not used for agriculture. Reclamation may improve its value as pasture.</p>
HUMAN ENVIRONMENT											

						POTENTIAL IMPACTS
	A	B	C	L	S	EXPLANATION
1. <u>SOCIAL</u> ; structures and mores			X		X	
2. <u>CULTURAL</u> uniqueness/diversity			X		X	
3. <u>POPULATION</u> ; quantity/diversity			X		X	This is a rural site. One home is within a quarter mile but across the interstate.
4. <u>HOUSING</u> ; quantity/distribution			X		X	
5. <u>HUMAN HEALTH & SAFETY</u>			X		X	This material is being used for cover materials and reclamation of the Milltown Dam dredge material that is being buried at the Opportunity Ponds. Good cover and reclamation of this potentially toxic material would be of benefit to human and environmental health.
6. <u>COMMUNITY & PERSONAL INCOME</u>			X		X	
7. <u>EMPLOYMENT</u> ; quantity, distribution			X		X	This is a temporary job. The material is being used for cover materials and reclamation of the Milltown Dam dredge material that is being buried at the Opportunity Ponds.
8. <u>TAX BASE</u> ; state/local tax revenue			X		X	
9. <u>GOVERNMENT SERVICES</u> ; demand			X		X	
10. <u>INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL</u> and <u>AGRICULTURAL</u> activities			X		X	
11. <u>HISTORICAL</u> and <u>ARCHAEOLOGICAL</u>			X		X	A walkover of the area did not reveal any artifacts or signs of occupation. No signs were evident at depth in the previously disturbed area. If during operations resources were to be discovered, activities would be halted, or possibly temporarily moved to another area until SHPO was contacted and the importance of the site was determined.
12. <u>AESTHETICS</u>			X		X	There are no residences or businesses nearby that would be disturbed by this project.
13. <u>ENVIRONMENTAL PLANS</u> and <u>GOALS</u> ; local and regional			X		X	This project is part of the Superfund cleanup being conducted by ARCO. The general remedial plan being followed for reclamation of the Milltown Dam Dredge material and this borrow site has been previously approved through the superfund system. The zoning compliance form has been signed. The site is not zoned. In a phone conversation with planning director for Anaconda-Deer Lodge County, Connie Daniels, on November 18, 2008, it was clarified that because the site would be returned to its present use through revegetation, a special use permit would not be required.
14. <u>DEMANDS</u> on <u>ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES</u> of land, water, air and energy			X		X	

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15. <u>TRANSPORTATION</u> ; networks and traffic flows								X		X	The material is being trucked along the outskirts of Opportunity. It should not cause much disruption of the community.

REGULATORY IMPACT ON PRIVATE PROPERTY: The analysis done in response to the Private Property Assessment Act indicates no impact. The Department does not plan to deny the application or impose conditions that would restrict the use of private property so as to constitute a taking.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT: Landowner, Natural Heritage Program, State Historic Preservation Office

OTHER GROUPS OR AGENCIES CONTACTED OR WHICH MAY HAVE OVERLAPPING JURISDICTION: Air Resources Management Bureau, Mining Safety and Health, Anaconda-Deer Lodge County Commissioners, Anaconda Deer Lodge County Weed Board, Anaconda Deer Lodge Planning Department

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED: Denial

RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING PREPARATION OF AN EIS: Unnecessary, No Significant Impacts

APPROVED BY: _____ DATE: _____

Prepared by Jo Stephen, 11/08