MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
Permitting and Compliance Division
Waste and Underground Tank Management Bureau
Solid Waste Section
Metcalf Building
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ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

DIVISION/BUREAU/SECTION:
Permitting and Compliance Division, Waste and Underground Tank Management Bureau, Solid Waste Section.

PROJECT OR APPLICATION:
This Environmental Assessment (EA) will document environmental issues related to the transfer of a solid waste management system license from the former owner of the property where the current facility is located to the new land owner.

DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT – SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS:
The Stimson Lumber Company has operated the Stimson West Riverside Major Class III Woodwaste Monofill under the Montana Solid Waste License #356. The woodwaste monofill is located in the main historic logyard of Stimson Lumber Company's West Riverside facility in Bonner. The sawmill closed in 2008. After closure, The Montana Improvement Company, LLC (MIC) purchased approximately 116-acres of property from Stimson Lumber Company that included the 33-acre woodwaste monofill. The purpose of this license transfer is to transfer the obligations of licensure and all responsibilities associated with site management, maintenance, and closure to MIC as the current owner of the property. The facility name will not be changed.

Site Location:
The site is located in the S ½ of the NE ¼ of the NW ¼ of Section 21, T13N, R18W, Missoula County, at the site of the Milltown logyard on West Riverside Street in Bonner, Montana (Figure 1). The facility occupies 33-acres of property within the 116-acre parcel currently owned by MIC.

Site History and Operation & Maintenance (O&M) Plan: The woodwaste monofill was licensed in 1993 for the disposal of logyard waste from the active Stimson Lumber Company sawmill operation. Typical logyard wastes are comprised of small diameter rocks, tree bark, small wood debris, and soil material. The Stimson Lumber Company decided to recover woodwaste from the monofill for the production of beauty bark and other wood-based landscape products. For this, woodwaste was excavated from the monofill and transported to an off-site facility for processing. Prior to closure of the Stimson Lumber Company, the monofill had been inactive since 2003.

MIC proposes to develop a portion of the 116-acre parcel as a public space. As part of the development, MIC will remove all of the logyard waste from the 33-acre parcel. The logyard wastes will be screened and the rocks and soil materials will be separated from the wood wastes. MIC will use the rocks and soil materials screened from the logyard waste for the construction of berms. The berms, constructed as site beautification features, will be seeded with a native drought-tolerant seed mixture. The tree bark and wood debris screened from the logyard wastes will be transported to an off-site facility for processing and resource recovery.

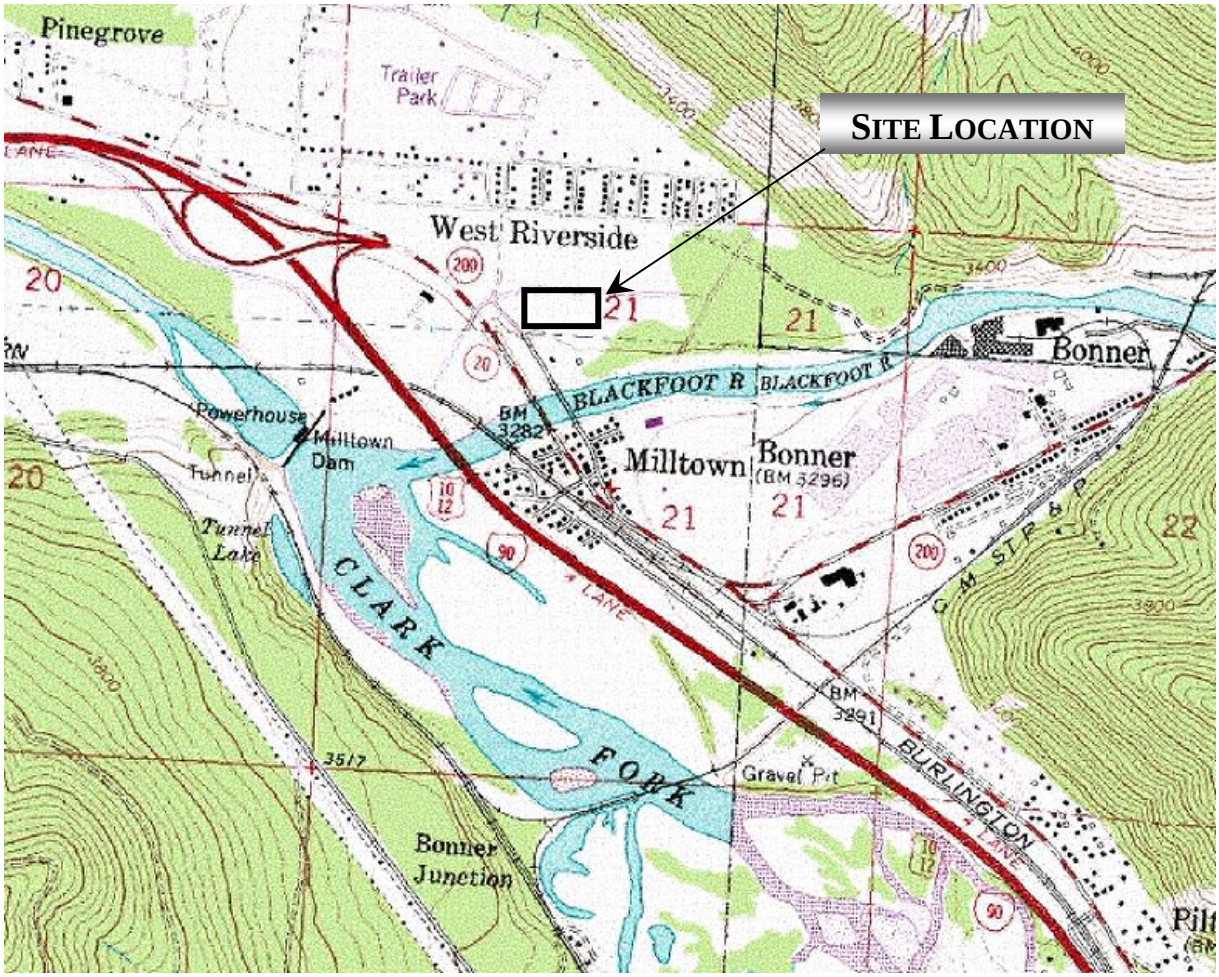

Figure 1 – Site Location Map

Site Access and Control:
The site is gated with chain-link fencing surrounding the property. The gate is locked when MIC personnel are not on site. The site is currently inactive and will not be open to the public.

Benefits and Purpose of Project:
The purpose of this Department's action is to transfer the license from Stimson Lumber Company to MIC, the new site owner. Upon transfer of the license, MIC will assume liability and responsibility for the maintenance and management of the woodwaste monofill located on the property.

Solid Waste Section Roles and Responsibilities:
The Department's Solid Waste Section is responsible for ensuring activities proposed under the Solid Waste Management Act are in compliance with the Act and with other State and Federal regulations. A license issued pursuant to these regulations do not confer any property rights to the licensee. Each licensee is responsible for obtaining any special use permits and complying with other agency, county, and local/city restrictions and requirements.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:
Following the Department's finding that the license transfer application was complete, the Department considered two alternatives in the preparation of this EA:

Alternative A – No Action: Under the "no-action" alternative, the Department would not transfer the license to the new owner as proposed. As a result, the former site owner would be responsible for obtaining access to the property to maintain the site and/or close the site under a Department approved site closure plan.

Alternative B – Transfer License: Transfer the facility license to the new site owner, as proposed by the applicant. The key factor to support the viability of this option is:

1. The applicant, MIC, owns the property on which the woodwaste monofill is located. MIC, as licensee, will be responsible for maintenance of the site and will be liable for completing site closure in accordance with a Department approved closure plan.

Based on the information provided and Department's research on the area surrounding the woodwaste monofill, the potential environmental impacts of Alternative B were evaluated for the proposed project. The results of the Department's evaluation are summarized in Tables I and II.

Recommendation:
The recommended action is to approve the license transfer application.

If an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is needed, and if appropriate, explain the reasons for preparing the EA:
Due to the absence of significant potential environmental impacts as indicated by this EA, the Department finds that an EIS is not necessary.

If an EIS is not required, explain why the EA is an appropriate level of analysis:
The Department finds that transfer of the solid waste management system license from Stimson Lumber Company to MIC as proposed would not significantly affect the quality of the physical and human environment. MIC, as the new site owner, has a vested interest in the property and in

the maintenance and management of the site. Thus, an EA is an adequate document to address potential impacts of the proposed license transfer.

Other groups or agencies contacted or which may have overlapping jurisdiction:
Missoula County Office of Planning and Grants
Missoula County Health Department

Individuals or groups contributing to this EA:
The Montana Improvement Company, LLC.

EA prepared by:
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Date: June 17, 2009

IMPACTS TO THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT	Major	Moderate	Minor	No	Unknown	Attached
1. TOPOGRAPHY: Are there unusual geologic features?				**X**		
Will the surface features be changed?				**X**		
2. GEOLOGY & SOIL QUALITY, STABILITY & MOISTURE: Are fragile, compactible or unstable soils present?				**X**		
Are there special reclamation considerations?				**X**		
3. WATER QUALITY, QUANTITY & DISTRIBUTION: Are important surface or ground water resources present?				**X**		
Is there potential for violation of ambient water quality standards, drinking water maximum contaminant levels, or degradation of water quality?				X		
4. AIR QUALITY: Will pollutants or particulate be produced?			**X**			**X**
Is the project influenced by air quality regulations or zones (Class I airshed)?				**X**		
5. DEMANDS ON ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES OR LAND, WATER, AIR OR ENERGY: Will the project use resources that are limited in the area?				**X**		
Are there other activities nearby that will affect the project?				**X**		
6. IMPACTS ON OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES: Are there other studies, plans or projects on this tract?				**X**		
7. TERRESTRIAL, AVIAN, AND AQUATIC LIFE AND HABITATS: Is there substantial use of the area by important wildlife, birds or fish?				**X**		
8. VEGETATION COVER, QUANTITY & QUALITY: Will vegetative communities be permanently altered?				X		
Are any rare plants or cover types present?				**X**		
9. UNIQUE, ENDANGERED, FRAGILE OR LIMITED ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES: Are any federally listed threatened or endangered species or identified habitat present?				**X**		
Any wetlands?				**X**		
Any species of special concern?				**X**		
10. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE: Are any historical, archaeological or paleontological resources present?				**X**		
11. AESTHETICS: Is the project on a prominent topographical feature?				**X**		
Will it be visible from populated or scenic areas?				**X**		
Will there be excessive noise, light or odors?				X		
12. AGRICULTURE: Will grazing lands, irrigation waters or crop production be affected?				X		

IMPACTS TO THE HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT	Major	Moderate	Minor	No	Unknown	Attached
1. SOCIAL STRUCTURES & MORES: Is some disruption of native or traditional lifestyles or communities possible?				**X**		
2. CULTURAL UNIQUENESS & DIVERSITY: Will the action cause a shift in some unique quality of the area?				**X**		
3. DENSITY & DISTRIBUTION OR POPULATION & HOUSING: Will the project add to the population and require additional housing?				**X**		
4. HUMAN HEALTH & SAFETY: Will this project add to health and safety risks in the area?				**X**		
5. COMMUNITY & PERSONAL INCOME: Will the facility generate or degrade income?				**X**		
6. QUANTITY & DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT: Will the project create, move or eliminate jobs?			X			X
If so, estimate number.						
7. LOCAL & STATE TAX BASE REVENUES: Will the project create or eliminate tax revenue?				**X**		
8. DEMAND FOR GOVERNMENT SERVICES: Will substantial traffic be added to existing roads?				**X**		
Will other services (fire protection, police, schools, etc.) be needed?				**X**		
9. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL & AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES & PRODUCTION: Will the project add to or alter these activities?				X		
10. ACCESS TO & QUALITY OF RECREATIONAL & WILDERNESS ACTIVITIES: Are wilderness or recreational areas nearby or accessed through this tract?				**X**		
Is there recreational potential within the tract?				**X**		
11. LOCALLY ADOPTED ENVIRONMENTAL PLANS & GOALS: Are there state, county, city, USFS, BLM, tribal, etc., zoning or management plans in effect?				**X**		
12. TRANSPORTATION: Will the project affect local transportation networks and traffic flows?			**X**			**X**

IMPACTS TO THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

4. AIR QUALITY: Will pollutants or particulates be produced?

   Dust may be generated on site as the logyard wastes are recovered from the site, but will be minimized by actively watering during recovery activities. Water used for dust control will be supplied by pumps already on site that were used historically by Stimson Lumber Company for log deck watering.

IMPACTS TO THE HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

6. QUANTITY & DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT: Will the project create, move or eliminate jobs?

   Additional jobs might be created during woodwaste recovery operations on site.

12. TRANSPORTATION: Will the project affect local transportation networks and traffic flows?

   There may be an increase in traffic flow once recovery activities commence at the site. However, the impact is expected to be minor, since the facility is located within an area zoned for industrial use, and as such, truck traffic is a common occurrence. The site is also located in close proximity to a major gas station and truck stop. The increase in traffic due to the recovery activities at the site will be negligible in comparison to the round-the-clock usage of the gas station nearby.