

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Project Name: Horvath **Proposed Implementation Date:** August 97

Proponent: Jim Gilman Excavating

Type and Purpose of Action: The proponent proposes to mine, crush, stockpile and transport 13,000 cubic yards of sand and gravel from a 4 acre site to overlay with asphalt a state highway. The proponent would salvage soils, mine sand and gravel, recontour, resoil and reseed the site. An asphalt plant will be set up at the site.

Location: SW¼, Sec. 19, T5N, R12W **County:** Deer Lodge

N = Not present or No Impact will occur.

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

IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT	
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>[Y] The proposed site lies within the Warm Springs Creek alluvial valley and slopes down gradient to the east. This area is predominantly a glacial deposit which has been reworked by Warm Springs Creek. The mine area itself is basically glacial outwash material.</p> <p>The soil depth varies from thin surface cover to 1 foot. The thin soils contain an abundance of coarse fragments. The deeper soils on the west end of bench and the lower reclaimed pit contains soils of a silty loam texture. The soils would be salvaged prior to mining and replaced on the mine site, crusher site, hardstand areas, and mineral stockpile sites following recontouring. There is no overburden to salvage. Microorganisms should reinvade the site.</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>[Y] There are no wells within 1,000 feet. The landowner obtains his water from a spring box upstream west of his house. The landowner's house is approximately 500 plus feet up gradient from the proposed operation. The proposed operation would mine the bench to a depth of 10 feet. Test holes revealed no ground water at a depth of 12 feet. There should be no impact to groundwater. Warm Springs Creek is approximately 500 feet plus to the northwest of the proposed operation. There are several irrigation ditches within the immediate area, none of which will be impacted by the proposed operation.</p> <p>The applicant will berm and line any fuel and fuel storage areas to contain any petroleum-based products spills. The Department of Environmental Quality Water Protection Bureau has been contacted concerning the need for a Stormwater Discharge Permit.</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] There will be an increase in airborne particulates while the soil is being salvaged, the gravel being crushed and hauled, and soil replaced. The applicant will need to secure an Air Quality Permit from the Montana Dept. of Environmental Quality prior to crushing activities and must abide with all applicable air quality guidelines. Spray bars will be placed on the crusher to suppress dust. The hard stand areas, soil stockpiles, and haul roads will be watered as necessary.</p>
<p>4. VEGETATION COVER, QUANTITY AND QUALITY: Will vegetative communities be permanently altered? Are any rare plants or cover types present?</p>	<p>[Y] Existing vegetation will be removed with the soil. Some roots may remain viable in the soil stockpile and regenerate upon replacement. The applicant will seed all affected land to species compatible with the post mine land use. The site currently contains native and non native grasses. The site will be seeded with native species of grasses. There are no threatened or endangered plants present. The majority of the site has been modified by past mining.</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] The location of the proposed operation precludes the significant use of wildlife, although it would be expected to receive transient use by various avian species, deer and rodents.</p>
<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 not identified any threatened or endangered plant or animal species present on this site. There are no wetlands present on the site.</p>
<p>7. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES: Are any historical, archaeological or paleontological resources present?</p>	<p>[N] A Ground search by DEQ did not reveal the presence of any archaeological or historic values and clearance has been given by the State Historic Preservation Office. Should a significant archaeological or historical value be found, the operation will be routed around the site of discovery for a reasonable time until salvage can be made. The State Historic Preservation Office will be promptly notified.</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 will be visible from people traveling Highway 1. The operation will operate from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.</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] Zoning clearance has been obtained.</p>

<p align="center">IMPACTS ON THE HUMAN POPULATION</p>	
<p align="center">RESOURCE</p>	<p align="center">POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES</p>
<p>11. HUMAN HEALTH AND SAFETY: Will this project add to health and safety risks in the area?</p>	<p>[Y] The use of heavy mining and hauling equipment will increase the risk of accidents. However, the applicant must comply with OSHA and MSHA regulations and it is expected that safety considerations will be given the utmost attention.</p>
<p>12. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION: Will the project add to or alter these activities?</p>	<p>[Y] 4.0 acres will be temporarily removed from agricultural production (pasture) until such time as the site is fully reclaimed.</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] The site will require periodic site evaluations by DEQ staff, however they would generally be conducted in conjunction with other regional sites.</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] Zoning clearance has been secured from Deer Lodge County.</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?	[N]
18. DENSITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION AND HOUSING: Will the project add to the population and require additional housing?	[N]
19. SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND MORES: Is some disruption of native or traditional lifestyles or communities possible?	[N]
20. CULTURAL UNIQUENESS AND DIVERSITY: Will the action cause a shift in some unique quality of the area?	[N]
21. OTHER APPROPRIATE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES:	[N]

22. Alternatives Considered: Alternative # 1: Denial. The owner of the gravel resource would be denied full utilization of his property at this time.

23. Public Involvement, Agencies, Groups or Individuals contacted: Montana Natural Heritage Program; Deer Lodge County Weed Board and Commissioners.

24. Other Governmental Agencies with Jurisdiction, List of Permits Needed: Deer Lodge County for Zoning Compliance and weeds, & MSHA and OSHA for safety permits.

25. Magnitude and Significance of Potential Impacts: Not applicable. A finding of significance is relevant only to the requirement to prepare an EIS under MEPA. However, the statutory time constraints of the Opencut Mining Act preclude preparation of an EIS. Therefore, no such finding is necessary here.

26. Regulatory Impact on Private Property: The analysis conducted in response to the Private Property Assessment Act indicates no impact.

Recommendation for Further Environmental Analysis:

EIS More Detailed EA No Further Analysis

EA Checklist Prepared By: Jerry Burke

Name

Program Coordinator

Title

Approved By: Steve Welch

Name

Industrial & Energy Minerals Bureau Chief

Title

Signature

Date