

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Project Name: Marchesseau

Proposed Implementation Date: Summer 1998

Proponent: Riverside Contracting, Inc.

Type and Purpose of Action: The proponent proposes to mine, crush, stockpile and transport 190,000 cu. yds. of sand and gravel on a 19-acre site to reconstruct Interstate 15. Riverside would salvage and stockpile all soils and upon completion of mining would regrade replace the soils and seed the site with a grass mixture. An asphalt plant would be associated with the operation. The reclaimed use would be rangeland with reclamation concurrent with mining and final reclamation occurring in November of 1999.

Location: NE¹/₄NW¹/₄, Sec. 15, T5S, R9W **County:** Beaverhead

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>[N] The proposed site would be a southerly expansion of a previously mined area which lies on a relatively level portion of the Big Hole River Valley, approximately 15 miles north of Dillon. The geology consists of Quaternary alluvial and Tertiary Valley fill of silt, sand and gravel.</p> <p>The soil is a rocky silt loam texture 6 inches deep. The overburden is 6 inches deep and is a rocky loam texture. The topsoil and the overburden would be stripped and stockpiled separately and upon regrading the slopes to 3:1 or flatter the 6 inches of overburden followed by 6 inches of topsoil would be evenly placed on the site. Microbes should recolonize the soils when they have been replaced. There are no fragile, compactible or unstable soils present. There are no unusual geologic features or special reclamation considerations.</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 is an irrigation ditch on the southern most area of the proposed site. Written permission has been obtained from the ditch users to move the ditch further south to allow for the site to be mined. Approximately 1,000 feet north of the proposed operation in the lower end of the existing old pit area is a pond which is fed by groundwater and the irrigation ditch. Birch Creek is approximately 1,500 feet north of the proposed operation. The proponent would need to contact the Montana Dept. of Environmental Quality Water Protection Bureau and obtain a Stormwater Discharge Permit</p> <p>There are no water wells within 2,000 feet of the applicant's proposal. The water table is at approximately 15 feet and the site would be mined to a depth of 11 feet.</p> <p>The applicant would construct an impermeable fuel storage area according to DEQ guidelines. No asphalt or other refuse will be disposed of onsite. There should not be any impact to any surface or groundwater resources.</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>[Y] There would be an increase in airborne particulates while the soil is being salvaged, the gravel being crushed and hauled, and soil replaced. The applicant must secure an Air Quality Permit from the Montana Dept. of Environmental Quality and must abide with all applicable air quality guidelines. The proponent has committed to use water to control dust on the haul road as necessary. All crushers would be equipped with spray bars.</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 would be removed with the soil. Some roots may remain viable in the soil stockpile and regenerate upon replacement. The applicant would seed all affected land to species compatible with the post mine land use, which would be different from what is currently present on the site. With time native vegetation from the surrounding native range should reinvade the site. No rare or threatened plants were identified during a ground search. A literature search was done by the Montana Natural Heritage Program and no rare plants or cover types were identified as present in the area of the proposed operation.</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 use by wildlife is mainly of a transient nature.</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] No threatened or endangered plant or animal species or habitats were identified as present on this site during a ground search. There is no wetland present on the site. A literature search was conducted by the Montana Natural Heritage Program and no endangered or threatened species or habitat types were noted as present on the proposed mine site.</p>
<p>7. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES: Are any historical, archaeological or paleontological resources present?</p>	<p>[N] Clearance has been obtained for the proposed operation. Should significant archaeological or historical values be found, the operation would be routed around the site of discovery for a reasonable time until salvage can be made. The State Historical Preservation Office would 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 would be visible from Interstate 15, but is of a short term nature and would be reclaimed by November 15, 1999. The proposed operation is not near any residences, parks or businesses which would be impacted by any excessive noise or light.</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
11. HUMAN HEALTH AND SAFETY: Will this project add to health and safety risks in the area?	[Y] The use of heavy mining and hauling equipment increases the risk of accidents. However, the applicant must comply with OSHA and MSHA regulations and it is expected that safety considerations would be given the utmost attention.
12. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION: Will the project add to or alter these activities?	[N] The proposed operation is of a short term and the site would be reclaimed to its former use of rangeland.
13. QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT: Will the project create, move or eliminate jobs? If so, estimated number.	[N]
14. LOCAL AND STATE TAX BASE AND TAX REVENUES: Will the project create or eliminate tax revenue?	[N]
15. DEMAND FOR GOVERNMENT SERVICES: Will substantial traffic be added to existing roads? Will other services (fire protection, police, schools, etc) be needed?	[N] The site will require periodic site evaluations by DEQ staff, however they would generally be conducted in conjunction with other regional sites.
16. LOCALLY ADOPTED ENVIRONMENTAL PLANS AND GOALS: Are there State, County, City, USFS, BLM, Tribal, etc. zoning or management plans in effect?	[N] There is no zoning on the site and zoning clearance has been obtained from Beaverhead County.
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]

