

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Project Name: Ramsey

Proposed Implementation Date: Fall 98

Proponent: Centennial Concrete, Inc.

Type and Purpose of Action: The proponent proposes to mine, crush, stockpile and transport 50,000 cubic yards of sand and gravel from a 12-acre site for local projects requiring sand and gravel. The proponent would salvage soils, mine sand and gravel, recontour, reseed and reseed the site. The reclaimed use would be grazing. Final reclamation on the site would be completed in May 1999.

Location: SW¼, Sec.14 & SE¼, Sec. 15, T3N, R9W

County: Silverbow

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 operation is 0.25 miles north of Ramsey. The proposed operation is on the alluvial valley of Silver Bow Creek. Much of the soil has been lost by past placer and gravel mining conducted prior to the advent of reclamation laws. The soil which is on the previous undisturbed areas is a sandy silt loam approximately 6 inches deep. There is no overburden to be salvaged. The soils are not fragile, compactible or unstable. The soil would be salvaged and stockpiled prior to mining and after regrading the slopes to 3:1 or flatter would be evenly replaced. The site would be mined to a maximum depth of 6 feet. Microorganisms should reinvade the site. There are no unusual geologic features and no 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>[N] There are no water wells within 1,000 feet of the proposed operation. The water table is at 9 feet as observed in backhoe trenches and since the proposed operation would be mined to a depth of 7 feet there should be no impact to groundwater. Any accidental spills or leaks of petroleum-based products would be immediately cleaned up and properly disposed of. Any storm water would be contained within the existing pit area. Silver Bow Creek parallels the proposed operation on the southwest. There should be no impact to surface water.</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 would be an increase in airborne particulates while the soil is being salvaged, the gravel being crushed and hauled and soil replaced. The applicant would 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 would 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>[N] Existing vegetation would be removed with the soil. After regrading and topsoiling the area would be reseeded with grass species compatible with the reclaimed use. A literature search by the Montana Natural Heritage Program and a ground search found no threatened or endangered plants present.</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>

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?	[N] The Montana Natural Heritage Program and a ground search did not identify any threatened or endangered plant or animal species present on this site. There are no wetlands present on the site.
7. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES: Are any historical, archaeological or paleontological resources present?	[N] A cultural resource survey was done and no resources were found and clearance has been obtained from the State Historic Preservation Office. Should a significant archaeological or historical value be found, the operation would be routed around the site of discovery for a reasonable time until salvage can be made. The State Historic Preservation Office would be promptly notified.
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?	[N] The site would be visible from people traveling along the interstate highway, but the proposed operation is of a temporary nature.
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?	[N]
10. IMPACTS ON OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES: Are there other studies, plans or projects on this tract?	[N] Zoning clearance has been obtained.

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 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.
12. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION: Will the project add to or alter these activities?	[N] 12.5 acres would be temporarily removed from agricultural production (grazing) until such time as the site is fully reclaimed. Much of the area has limited grazing potential due to past mining, but with the reclaiming of the site production would increase.
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 would 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] Zoning clearance has been secured from Silverbow 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]
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 and the mineral would be obtained from a different source.

23. Public Involvement, Agencies, Groups or Individuals contacted: Montana Natural Heritage Program; Silverbow County Weed Board and Commissioners; & State Historic Preservation Office.

24. Other Governmental Agencies with Jurisdiction, List of Permits Needed: Silverbow County for Zoning Compliance and weeds, DEQ for air quality permits and stormwater permit, & OSHA & MSHA for safety permits.

25. Magnitude and Significance of Potential Impacts: No significant impacts associated with the proposed operation are anticipated.

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

Supervisor, Opencut Mining Program, IEMB
Title

Approved By: Steve Welch
Name

Industrial & Energy Minerals Bureau Chief
Title

Signature

Date