# ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

**Project Name:** Storey **Proposed Implementation Date:** March 99
**Proponent:** Alpha Construction, Inc.
**Type and Purpose of Action:** The proponent proposes to mine, crush and transport 100,000 cubic yards of sand and gravel from a 5.0 acre site for supplying the local area with sand and gravel products. The site would be reclaimed by recontouring, respreading the topsoil and reseeding the site with grasses. Reclamation would be completed by October of 2010.
**Location:** NW¼ NW¼, Sec. SEC.15, T2S, R4E **County:** Gallatin

**N = Not present or No Impact will occur.**
**Y = Impacts may occur (explain under Potential Impacts).**

| IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT | |
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| **RESOURCE** | **[Y/N] POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES** |
| **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? | **[N]** The proposed operation is located in sands and gravels of Tertiary valley fill. This would be an expansion of an existing pit which is partially reclaimed. The soil varies from 6 inches to approximately 1 foot deep and is of a silty sandy texture and there is up to 12 inches of overburden. The topsoil would be stripped and stockpiled and after regrading would be evenly replaced. The overburden would be sold as a product. Microorganisms should reinvade the site. |
| **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? | **[N]** The nearest surface water is an irrigation ditch is immediately to the east of the proposed operation. If necessary, the proponent would place silt fence on the uphill side to catch any sedimentation which may erode from the mine site or haul and access road. The site will be mined to a depth of 20 feet which is above the depth to the water table which is estimated to be at 100 feet. The nearest domestic water well is located approximately 0.25 miles to the west. Fuel storage tanks would be lined and bermed, and be of sufficient size to contain any leaks or spills. Any spills of petroleum-based products would be immediately cleaned up and properly disposed of. Best Management Practices would be implemented to protect any surface or ground waters. |
| **3. AIR QUALITY:** Will pollutants or particulate be produced? Is the project influenced by air quality regulations or zones (Class I airshed)? | **[Y]** Air quality would be degraded, but the proponent must comply with air quality standards and obtain the proper permits from the Montana Dept. of Environmental Quality and comply with the conditions of the permits. Water would be applied to the haul and access road and any hardstand and facility areas to prevent dust. If dust is noted coming from the topsoil stockpiles a tackifier would be applied on the stockpiles to control any dust until vegetation becomes established. |
| **4. VEGETATION COVER, QUANTITY AND QUALITY:** Will vegetative communities be permanently altered? Are any rare plants or cover types present? | **[Y]** The area of the proposed operation has mainly native grass species growing on the undisturbed portions. Native and nonnative species will be seeded on the area upon recontouring and retopsoiling. The composition and species which will be seeded will be different then what is currently growing on the site. The site is surrounded by a grain field. A literature search was done by the Montana National Heritage Program and no rare plants or cover types were identified and none were identified during a ground search. |
| **5. TERRESTRIAL, AVIAN AND AQUATIC LIFE AND HABITATS:** Is there substantial use of the area by important wildlife, birds or fish? | **[N]** |

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| **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]** A ground and literature search were conducted and no threatened or endangered species, species of special concern or identified habitat were found on the site. No wetlands are present. |
| **7. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES:** Are any historical, archaeological or paleontological resources present? | **[N]** A cultural survey was conducted on the site and no cultural resources were found. If the operator of the proposed operation discovers any cultural resources the operation must be routed around the site of discovery for a reasonable amount of time until salvage can be made. The State Historical Preservation Office must 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]** |
| **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]** |

| **IMPACTS ON THE HUMAN POPULATION** | |
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| **RESOURCE** | **POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES** |
| **11. HUMAN HEALTH AND SAFETY:** Will this project add to health and safety risks in the area? | **[Y]** There will be increased hazards because of equipment activity and hauling of the sand and gravel. The applicant must comply with OSHA and MSHA regulations however, proper precautions will be taken to avoid accidents. |
| **12. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION:** Will the project add to or alter these activities? | **[N]** There will be a loss of grazing on 5.0 acres of land until the site is successfully reclaimed. |
| **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, but these will be done in conjunction with other operations in the area. |
| **16. LOCALLY ADOPTED ENVIRONMENTAL PLANS AND GOALS:** Are there State, County, City, USFS, BLM, Tribal, etc. zoning or management plans in effect? | **[N]** County Zoning clearance has been obtained. |
| **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]** |

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| **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 & Gallatin County Planning Office & Weed Control District. One completed and signed Resident Notification Form was submitted.

**24. Other Governmental Agencies with Jurisdiction, List of Permits Needed:** Mine Safety & Health Administration for safety permit; Montana Department of Labor & Industry, Bureau of Safety for safety permit:

**25. Magnitude and Significance of Potential Impacts:** Impacts are unlikely to be significant on the general environment because of the size of the operation, sight and sound barriers, and reclamation being concurrent with mining.

**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 [ X ] No Further Analysis

EA Checklist Prepared By: Jerry Burke Title: Supervisor, Opencut Mining Program, IEMB

Approved By: Steve Welch Title: Industrial & Energy Minerals Bureau Chief

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Signature Date