

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Project Name: Johnson

Proposed Implementation Date: May 1999

Proponent: Schellinger Construction Co., Inc.

Type and Purpose of Action: The proponent proposes to mine, crush, stockpile and transport 190,000 tons of sand and gravel from an 18.0 acre site for use in the reconstruction of a portion of Highway 1. The site would be reclaimed by recontouring, respreading the topsoil and reseeding the site with grasses. The reclaimed use would be irrigated pasture and hayfield. The proposed operation is less than 0.25 miles south of Hall. The proposed hours of operation for crushing would be 6:00 a.m. to 1:00 a.m. Monday through Friday, however the most likely situation will be 6:00 a.m. to 1:00 a.m. Monday through Thursday and 6:00 a.m. to 2 p.m. Friday. Crushing operations would last approximately 2 months. There would be an asphalt plant involved with the operation and it would operate during daylight hours 5 days a week, and there may be occasion when it would operate on a Saturday. The asphalt plant would start operating approximately the early August and operate to mid-August, and then return approximately mid-October to complete the project. The site would be reclaimed by December 31 of 2000.

Location: NW¼ Sec. 35, T10N, R13W

County: Granite

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 operation is located within the Flint Creek alluvial valley. The proponent would mine the site to a maximum depth of 10 feet. The topsoil is clay loam and is approximately 8 inches deep. The proposed mine area has approximately 4 inches of overburden. The topsoil and the overburden would be stripped and stockpiled separately and after regrading the overburden and then the topsoil would be evenly replaced. The site would be reclaimed to have 6:1 or flatter slopes to the west and north and be daylighted to the south and west. Microorganisms should reinvade the soil. There are no fragile, compactible or unstable soils present, 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 a large irrigation ditch located at approximately the midpoint of the proposed area. The ditch at the midpoint would remain in place as it provides water to landowners downstream. Vegetative buffers would be provided along the ditch boundaries and would be monitored periodically to ensure performance. Should additional controls be required silt fence would be erected to provide adequate protection of the irrigation ditches. There are several small feeder irrigation ditches which would be impacted by the mining, but would be reestablished to the satisfaction of the landowner.</p> <p>There are several water wells within the immediate area. The wells are used for domestic purposes and are generally 25 to 190 feet deep. The proponent would line and berm any fuel storage areas with impermeable materials to contain any spills. Any accidental spills of petroleum-based products would be immediately cleaned up and the contaminated material properly disposed. Best Management Practices (BMP) would be used to contain any stormwater. There would be no impact to any surface water.</p> <p>The low water table is normally at 18 feet below the bench elevation of the site. From May to September when the site is irrigated the water table rises a maximum of 3 feet. With the mining depth of 10 feet and</p>

	the implementation of BMP there should not be any impact to ground water.
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 and there would be an increase in particulate matter and odor. Dozers, loaders, crushers and trucking equipment typically cause dusty conditions in disturbed soil sites and asphalt plants typically emit odors that may be offensive to some people. However, crushers and asphalt plants are regulated for dust and other emissions, and the equipment used must be tested and approved by the Montana Dept. of Environmental Quality. The proper Air Quality Permits must be secured and any conditions attached to the permits must be followed. Spray bars will be used on the crusher and transfer points, and water would be applied within the site and on the haul road as needed to reduce dust.
4. VEGETATION COVERS, QUANTITY AND QUALITY: Will vegetative communities be permanently altered? Are any rare plants or cover types present?	[N] The vegetation on the site consists of smooth brome, sedges, and wheatgrasses. Grasses and legumes would be seeded on the site upon recontouring and retopsoiling. A literature search was done by the Montana National Heritage Program and no rare plants or cover types were identified as present at this site 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] Various mammals and birds may use the site occasionally, but the site is an irrigated field next to Hall, which would preclude extensive use.
6. UNIQUE, ENDANGERED, FRAGILE OR LIMITED ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES: Are any federally listed threatened or an endangered species or identified habitat present? Any wetlands? Species of special concern?	[N] The Montana Natural Heritage Program did not identify any federally listed, threatened or endangered species or habitat as present on or near the site. A ground search was conducted and no threatened or endangered a species or identified habitats were found on the site. There are two wetlands nearby and neither of these should be impacted by the proposed operation. No species of special concern were found on the site during the ground search.
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. 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?	[Y] The site is visible from Highway 1 and from Hall, but it is a short-term operation and would be reclaimed by December 31, 2000. Topsoil and overburden would be stockpiled to the north of the proposed operation to reduce impacts of sight, noise and light in the town of Hall. There is at times noise created by the nearby sawmill and traffic on the highway. Also, equipment working in the reconstruction of the highway will create additional noise. The site is visible by homes in the local area and to traffic along the Interstate and other roads. The proposed hours of operation for crushing would be 6:00 a.m. to 1:00 a.m. Monday through Friday, however the most likely situation will be 6:00 a.m. to 1:00 a.m. Monday through Thursday and 6:00 a.m. to 2 p.m. Friday. Crushing operations would last approximately 2 months. There would be an asphalt plant involved with the operation and it would operate during daylight hours 5 days a week and there may be occasion when it would operate on a Saturday. The asphalt plant would start operating approximately the early August and operate to mid-August, and then return approximately mid-October to complete the project. Hauling from stockpiles may occur at any time. Lights and generators running during the hours of operation could increase local impacts. On-site noise levels generated by operating equipment at the pit are generally within the range of 60 to 90 decibels,

	but decrease with distance. As a comparison, sound levels for ordinary activities such as close conversation and music from a radio are 60 decibels and 70 decibels and are considered to be moderate. Levels above 90 decibels are severe, and prolonged exposure can lead to hearing loss. Strategically locating the soil and overburden stockpiles would reduce noise and visual impacts to the surrounding residents.
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

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 would 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] 16 acres would be taken out of irrigated pasture and hayfield until such time as 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] 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]
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]

