

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Project Name: Fords Creek Colony **Proposed Implementation Date:** Summer 1999

Proponent: Konitz Contracting Inc.

Type and Purpose of Action: The proponent proposes to mine, crush, stockpile and transport 10,500 cubic yards of sand & gravel from a 2.0 acre site for resurfacing of missile roads. The site would be reclaimed by recontouring, respreading the topsoil and reseeded the site with grasses. The reclaimed use would be rangeland and the site would be reclaimed by September of 2000.

Location: N½, Sec. 28, T16N, R22E

County: Fergus

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 on a bench overlooking a small drainage to the north and Fords Creek to the south. The proposed operation is on the southeast side Judith Mountains. The soils are approximately 1 foot deep and are of a silt loam texture. There is 1 foot of sandy rocky overburden. After regrading the overburden and then the soil would be replaced. Microorganisms should reinvade the soil. There are no fragile, compactible or unstable soils present, 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>[N] The small drainage to the north contains to dams and small reservoirs. There is an irrigation ditch between the two mining areas, which has not been used for some time. The proponent would blade a portion of the ditch to cross it and would reestablish this portion when the proposed operation is reclaimed. Fords Creek is approximately 1,500 feet to the south. There should be no impact to the small drainage to the north or Fords Creek. There are no water wells within 1,000 feet of the site. The site will be mined to a depth of 8-feet, which is well above the depth to the water table. Any bulk fuel storage containers would be lined and bermed and be of sufficient size to contain any spills. Best Management Practices would be used to prevent any off site sedimentation or erosion.</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] Air quality would be degraded, but the proponent must comply with air quality standards, and an Air Quality Permit obtained from the Montana Dept. of Environmental Quality for the crusher. A water truck would be used to control any dust on the haul road.</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] There are two separate areas to be mined and the vegetation on the east end of the proposed operation is various wheatgrasses, alfalfa and various native plants, which have reinvaded the site. The west area is a cultivated field currently in fallow. Native and non-native grass species would be seeded onto the east area of the site and the west area would be returned to grainfield upon recontouring and retopsoiling. 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.</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]</p>
<p>6. UNIQUE, ENDANGERED, FRAGILE OR LIMITED ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES: Are any federally listed threatened or endangered</p>	<p>[N] Ground and literature searches were conducted and no threatened or endangered species or identified habitat or species of special concern were found on the site. No wetlands are present.</p>

species or identified habitat present? Any wetlands? Species of special concern?	
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	
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 temporary loss of grazing and grain production on 3.0 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]

