

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Project Name: Whalen

Proposed Implementation Date: Summer 1999

Proponent: Pumco Inc.

Type and Purpose of Action: The proponent proposes to mine, crush, stockpile and transport 150,000 cubic yards of sand and gravel and borrow material from an 18.0 acre site for reconstructing a portion of Highway 1. 100,000 cubic yards of the total volume would be crushed. There would be no asphalt plant involved with this operation. The site would be reclaimed by recontouring, respreading the topsoil and reseeding the site with grasses. The reclaimed use would be irrigated pasture and site reclamation would be completed by November of 1999.

Location: SE¼, Sec. 23, 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 on a bench on the west side of the Flint Creek Valley, approximately 4 miles south of Drummond. The soils are approximately 6 inches deep and are of a rocky silt loam texture. The overburden would be mined and used as borrow material for the reconstruction of the highway. After regrading the soil would be replaced. Microorganisms should invade 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>[Y] There are several small irrigation ditches on the property which would be removed by the mining and would be reestablished by the landowner. According to well logs for the area the depth to the static water level is 40 feet. The site would be mined to a depth of 11 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. With the above precautions there should be no impact to any ground or surface water sources.</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 is needed from the Montana Dept. of Environmental Quality for the crusher. A water truck would be used to control any dust on the site and 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] The vegetation on the site of the proposed operation is various wheatgrasses, alfalfa, bluegrass and knapweed. Native and nonnative grass species would be seeded onto the site upon recontouring and retopsoiling. A literature search was done by the Montana Natural Heritage Program and no rare plants or cover types were identified and none were identified during a ground search. The site has been cultivated in the past destroying any rare plants or cover types which may have been 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]</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 borrow material. The applicant must comply with OSHA and MSHA regulations however, proper precautions will be taken to avoid accidents. There is a natural gas pipeline to the west of the proposed operation and no mining will occur within 50 feet of the pipeline as required by the owner of the pipeline. The pipeline will be bridged, by placing a minimum of 3 feet of fill over the pipeline.
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 irrigated hayland on 18.0 acres 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]
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	[N]

