

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Project Name: Kalina

Proposed Implementation Date: Winter 2000

Proponent: Fisher Sand & Gravel Co.

Type and Purpose of Action: The proponent proposes to mine, crush, stockpile and transport 35,000 cubic yards of sand & gravel from a 25 acre site for resurfacing of the Crooked Creek county road. The site would be reclaimed by recontouring, respreading the topsoil and reseeding the site with a grain crop. The reclaimed use would be grainfield. An asphalt plant would not be utilized with the proposed operation. The site would be reclaimed by May 2001.

Location: SE¼ Sec. 4 & NE¼, Sec. 9, T18N, R23E

County: Fergus

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 |
| <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 approximately 500 feet southwest of Box Elder Creek. The soils are approximately 8 inches deep and are of a clay loam texture. There is approximately 24 inches of 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] Box Elder Creek, an intermittent stream, is approximately 500 feet to the northeast. There are no water wells identified on the Montana Bureau of Mines and Geology Water Well Report within 1,000 feet of the proposed operation. It is estimated that the water table is 10 feet below the elevation of the toe of the bench. The proposed operation would mine into the bench, which is approximately 10 feet high. This leaves a separation of approximately 10 feet from the bottom of the proposed mine site 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 and facility area.</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 site is currently plowed. Upon recontouring and retopsoiling, the site would be seeded with grain during the first appropriate agricultural season. A literature search was done by the Montana National Heritage Program and no rare plants or cover types were identified as being present on the site 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 species or identified habitat present? Any wetlands? Species of special concern?</p> | <p>[N] The Montana National Heritage Program did a literature search and the ferruginous hawk was identified as being present in the general area, but no nests or nesting substrate was found during a ground search. The site would be mined during the winter months when the ferruginous hawk is not present. A ground search did not reveal the presence of any other threatened or endangered species or identified habitat or species of special concern. No wetlands are present.</p> |

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| <p>7. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES: Are any historical, archaeological or paleontological resources present?</p> | <p>[N] Modern man has modified the site, therefore a cultural survey was not required by the Montana Dept. of Transportation. 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.</p> |
| <p>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?</p> | <p>[N]</p> |
| <p>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?</p> | <p>[N]</p> |
| <p>10. IMPACTS ON OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES: Are there other studies, plans or projects on this tract?</p> | <p>[N]</p> |

IMPACTS ON THE HUMAN POPULATION

| RESOURCE | POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES |
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| <p>11. HUMAN HEALTH AND SAFETY: Will this project add to health and safety risks in the area?</p> | <p>[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.</p> |
| <p>12. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION: Will the project add to or alter these activities?</p> | <p>[N] There will be a temporary loss of grain production on 25 acres of land until the site is successfully reclaimed.</p> |
| <p>13. QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT: Will the project create, move or eliminate jobs? If so, estimated number.</p> | <p>[N]</p> |
| <p>14. LOCAL AND STATE TAX BASE AND TAX REVENUES: Will the project create or eliminate tax revenue?</p> | <p>[N]</p> |
| <p>15. DEMAND FOR GOVERNMENT SERVICES: Will substantial traffic be added to existing roads? Will other services (fire protection, police, schools, etc) be needed?</p> | <p>[N] The site will require periodic site evaluations, but these will be done in conjunction with other operations in the area.</p> |
| <p>16. LOCALLY ADOPTED ENVIRONMENTAL PLANS AND GOALS: Are there State, County, City, USFS, BLM, Tribal, etc. zoning or management plans in effect?</p> | <p>[N] County Zoning clearance has been obtained.</p> |
| <p>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?</p> | <p>[N]</p> |
| <p>18. DENSITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION AND HOUSING: Will the project add to the population and require additional housing?</p> | <p>[N]</p> |
| <p>19. SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND MORES: Is some disruption of native or traditional lifestyles or communities possible?</p> | <p>[N]</p> |

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| 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. Impacts would not occur at this location but, however, the proponent could apply to mine another area and similar impacts may be expected.

23. Public Involvement, Agencies, Groups or Individuals contacted: Montana Natural Heritage Program, Fergus County Commissioners and Weed Control District .

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: Air Quality Bureau of DEQ for air quality permit for the crusher and asphalt plant.

25. Magnitude and Significance of Potential Impacts: Impacts are unlikely to be significant on the general environment because of the small amount of disturbance and short duration of the project.

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 Title: Supervisor, Opencut Mining Program, IEMB

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

Signature
Date