

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Project Name: Wellborn

Proposed Implementation Date: Winter 2000

Proponent: Riverside Contracting, Inc.

Type and Purpose of Action: The proponent proposes to mine, crush, stockpile and transport 40,000 cubic yards of sand & gravel from a 6.7 acre site for resurfacing of Interstate 15. The site would be reclaimed by recontouring, respreading the topsoil and reseeding the site with grasses. The reclaimed use would be pastureland. An asphalt plant would be utilized with the proposed operation. The site would be reclaimed by November 15, 2000.

Location: NE¼, Sec. 9, T11S, R10W

County: Beaverhead

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 Beaverhead River valley. The soils are approximately 6 inches deep and are of a silty loam texture. There is 12 inches of overburden. After regrading the overburden and then 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. This proposed operation is a western expansion of the south end of a gravel pit, most of which has been reclaimed. The facility and stockpile areas have been previously stripped of soil in the past and the soil stockpiled around the perimeter. The proponent would use that area for a facility and stockpile area and would reclaim it.</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] There are surface water resources present within 1,000 feet of the proposed operation. Approximately 800 feet north of the proposed operation there is a water well used for irrigation and stockwater located in the pit floor. This well is 20 feet deep with the static water level at 8 feet. There is an increase in elevation of approximately 7 feet from the site of the well to the toe of the reclaimed highwall, which the proponent proposes to mine. The site will be mined to the height of the reclaimed highwall (30 feet). This leaves a separation of approximately 15 feet from the bottom of the proposed mine site to the static 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 vegetation on the site of the proposed operation is various wheatgrasses. There is just about a complete lack of vegetation on the area that has no soil on it. Native and nonnative grass species would be seeded onto 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 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</p>	<p>[N] The Montana National Heritage Program did a literature search and</p>

LIMITED ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES: Are any federally listed threatened or endangered species or identified habitat present? Any wetlands? Species of special concern?	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 BLM was contacted and there are no nests etc. near this area and they have no concerns. 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.
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 pastureland on 6.7 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	[N]

