

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Project Name: Clark

Proposed Implementation Date: Winter 2000

Proponent: ARG Sand & Gravel, Inc.

Type and Purpose of Action: The proponent proposes to mine, stockpile and transport 40,000 cubic yards of sand & gravel from a 1.4 acre site for building approaches to a new bridge on Highway 287 across the Madison River. A portion of the material would be crushed. 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 not be utilized with the proposed operation. The site would be reclaimed by December of 2002.

Location: SE¼, Sec. 11, T6S, R1W

County: Madison

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 the east facing side of the Cedar Creek alluvial fan. The sand and gravel are glacial outwash deposited during the Quaternary Age. Much of the soils were lost during previous mining activities from the 1940's through the early 1990's. There are two existing small stockpiles of topsoil on site and the proposed operation will expand into an area, which has soils approximately 6 inches deep and are of a sandy silty loam texture. There is no overburden. After regrading the soils 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] Cedar Creek, an ephemeral stream, is located approximately 50 feet east of the proposed facility and stockpile area. According to the landowner, the last time the creek had water in it at this point was approximately 20 years ago. There is a capped water well, which is not currently used, approximately 150 feet east of the base of the alluvial fan. According to the landowner the static water level is at 80 feet. The elevation of the top of the well casing and the pit floor are approximately the same. The proposed operation would continue to mine into the alluvial fan and keep the mining depth at its current elevation, which is the toe of the fan. The site will be mined to the height of the top of the alluvial fan (50 feet). This leaves a separation of approximately 80 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 varies, with the top of the fan having been planted with crested wheatgrass and the slopes contain native vegetation consisting of western wheatgrass, rocky mountain juniper, fescue and blue grama. The landowner has requested that crested wheatgrass and dryland alfalfa 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> |

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| 5. TERRESTRIAL, AVIAN AND AQUATIC LIFE AND HABITATS: Is there substantial use of the area by important wildlife, birds or fish? | [N] |
| 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? | [N] The Montana National Heritage Program did a literature search and no threatened or endangered species or identified habitat or species of special concern were found on the site. A ground search did not reveal the presence of any 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 | |
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| 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 on 1.4 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] |

