

# ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

**Project Name:** McVee

**Proposed Implementation Date:** Winter 2000

**Proponent:** Gratech Company Ltd.

**Type and Purpose of Action:** The proponent proposes to mine, crush, stockpile and transport 28,000 cubic yards of sand & gravel from a 7.4 acre site for overlaying State Highway 24. The site would be reclaimed by recontouring, respreading the topsoil and reseeding with grasses. The reclaimed use would be pastureland. An asphalt plant would be utilized with the proposed operation. The site would be reclaimed by October 31, 2000.

**Location:** SW¼, Sec. 1, T29N, R39E

**County:** Valley

**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><b>1. GEOLOGY AND SOIL QUALITY, STABILITY AND MOISTURE:</b> Are fragile, compactible or unstable soils present? Are there unusual geologic features? Are there special reclamation considerations?</p>	<p><b>[N]</b> The proposed operation is located on a bench on the east side of the Cherry Creek drainage. The sand and gravel are glacial outwash deposited during the Quaternary Age. There is a small existing gravel pit on site used by the landowner. Soil has been salvaged from the site. The topsoil is approximately 10 inches deep and is a rocky clayey sandy 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><b>2. WATER QUALITY, QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION:</b> 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><b>[Y]</b> Cherry Creek, an ephemeral stream, is located approximately 100 feet west of the proposed operation. There are no water wells within 1,000 feet of the site. The proposed operation would continue to mine into the bench a maximum depth of 12', approximately 10' above the elevation of Cherry Creek. High water table is approximately 15' and low water table is approximately 22' below elevation of Cherry Creek drainage. Therefore a minimum separation of 25' will be maintained between pit floor and the high ground water table.</p> <p>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><b>3. AIR QUALITY:</b> Will pollutants or particulate be produced? Is the project influenced by air quality regulations or zones (Class I airshed)?</p>	<p><b>[Y]</b> 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 and asphalt plant. A water truck would be used to control any dust on the haul road and facility and stockpile areas.</p>
<p><b>4. VEGETATION COVER, QUANTITY AND QUALITY:</b> Will vegetative communities be permanently altered? Are any rare plants or cover types present?</p>	<p><b>[Y]</b> The vegetation on the site of the proposed operation is crested wheatgrass. The landowner has requested that crested wheatgrass and thickspike wheatgrass 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><b>5. TERRESTRIAL, AVIAN AND AQUATIC LIFE AND HABITATS:</b> Is there substantial use of the area by important wildlife, birds or fish?</p>	<p><b>[N]</b></p>
<p><b>6. UNIQUE, ENDANGERED, FRAGILE OR LIMITED ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES:</b> Are any federally listed threatened or endangered</p>	<p><b>[N]</b> The Montana National Heritage Program did a literature search and the northern redbelly x finescale dace was identified as being present in Cherry Creek. The creek would not be impacted by the proposed</p>

species or identified habitat present? Any wetlands? Species of special concern?	operation; therefore there would be no impact to the species. A ground search did not reveal the presence of any threatened or endangered species or identified habitat or species of special concern on the proposed mine site. No wetlands are present.
<b>7. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES:</b> Are any historical, archaeological or paleontological resources present?	[N] A cultural survey was conducted on the site and no cultural resources were found. Modern man through farming and past gravel mining has modified the site. 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.
<b>8. AESTHETICS:</b> 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]
<b>9. DEMANDS ON ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES OF LAND, WATER, AIR OR ENERGY:</b> Will the project use resources that are limited in the area? Are there other activities nearby that will affect the project?	[N]
<b>10. IMPACTS ON OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES:</b> Are there other studies, plans or projects on this tract?	[N]

### IMPACTS ON THE HUMAN POPULATION

RESOURCE	POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES
<b>11. HUMAN HEALTH AND SAFETY:</b> 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.
<b>12. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION:</b> Will the project add to or alter these activities?	[N] There would be a temporary loss of pastureland on 7.4 acres of land until the site is successfully reclaimed.
<b>13. QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT:</b> Will the project create, move or eliminate jobs? If so, estimated number.	[N]
<b>14. LOCAL AND STATE TAX BASE AND TAX REVENUES:</b> Will the project create or eliminate tax revenue?	[N]
<b>15. DEMAND FOR GOVERNMENT SERVICES:</b> 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.
<b>16. LOCALLY ADOPTED ENVIRONMENTAL PLANS AND GOALS:</b> Are there State, County, City, USFS, BLM, Tribal, etc. zoning or management plans in effect?	[N] County Zoning clearance has been obtained.
<b>17. ACCESS TO AND QUALITY OF RECREATIONAL AND WILDERNESS ACTIVITIES:</b> Are wilderness or recreational areas nearby or accessed through this tract? Is there recreational potential within the tract?	[N]
<b>18. DENSITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION AND HOUSING:</b> Will the project add to the population and require additional housing?	[N]

