

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

April 26, 2000

Project Name: MM 150 Site

Proposed Implementation Date: October, 1999

Proponent: Ed Clark

Type and Purpose of Action: The applicant proposes to mine, crush, stockpile, and transport 60,000 cubic yards of sand and gravel from a 15-acre site located 4½ miles north of Olney. The site would be mined to a depth of 20 feet, from the highway level up to the top of a ridge. The reclaimed use would be a building site with a meadow. The site would be reclaimed by re-contouring, re-topsoiling the mine, facility and stockpile area and reseeding the site with grasses. The slopes of the pit would be reduced to at least 3:1. Reclamation would be completed in approximately October of 2004.

Location: NE¼ NE¼, Section 25, T33N, R24W

County: Flathead

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 their unusual geologic features? Are there special reclamation considerations?</p>	<p>[N] The proposed operation is located in a glacial alluvial valley in sands and gravels of the Quaternary to Recent geologic age. The proponent would mine to a height of 20 feet which is well above the low water table, estimated from a water well log to be 50 feet. The mine area would have all available soil stripped and salvaged. The mine, facility and stockpile areas would have 6 to 8 inches of soil material stripped and salvaged. The soil is a gravelly, clayey silt loam. Soil microbes should re-colonize the soils following replacement. There are no fragile, compactible, or unstable soils present, unusual geologic features, or special reclamation considerations. The reclaimed slopes will be reduced to a 3:1 or flatter angle.</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] The nearest surface water is a small, unnamed stream located several hundred feet to the northeast, separated from the mine area by a ridge. Upper Stillwater Lake is located ¾ mile southwest over substantial bedrock formations and topographic landforms. No water will enter or leave the site. The site would be mined with a dozer. There would be no discharge from the pit area. There is a single water well within 1,000 feet belonging to the applicant. The well encountered water at approximately 50 feet, 18 feet of gravel and 72 feet of bedrock. The mine will not intercept potable water or otherwise effect this well. No bulk fuel storage will be located on site. The proponent will not need to obtain a Stormwater Discharge Permit from the Montana Department of Environmental Quality, but will implement best management practices to prevent any off site erosion or sedimentation.</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 will be degraded, but the proponent must comply with air quality standards and an Air Quality Permit obtained from the Montana Department of Environmental Quality for the crusher.</p>
<p>4. VEGETATION COVER, QUANTITY AND QUALITY: Will vegetative communities be permanently altered? Are any rare plants or cover types present?</p>	<p>[N] Vegetation on the site of the proposed operation consists of Douglas fir, lodgepole pine, pinegrass, kinnikinick, Oregon grape and covers 80% of the ground. A literature search was done by the Montana Natural Heritage Program and no threatened or endangered plants or animals or rare plants or cover types were identified 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] The site is utilized by deer, bears, elk, small mammals, and various species of raptors and song birds. Exact number for these species are not known. These animals will be locally displaced during heavy activity but will return temporarily during quite periods of work stoppage, and will return permanently following reclamation.</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>[Y] A ground search was conducted and no threatened or endangered species or identified habitats were found on the site. The literature search conducted by the Montana Natural Heritage Program identified the general area as occupied habitat for grizzly bears. It is highly unlikely that this proposed operation would impact the bear due to the lack of suitable habitat on the site and the nearby presence of residences.</p>
<p>7. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES: Are any historical, archaeological or paleontological resources present?</p>	<p>[N] A cultural resource ground survey and field inspection was conducted and no resources were found. Two grave pits are marked on the USGS Quad maps both northwest and southeast, several thousand feet from the site.</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>[Y] The proposed operation is located on a hillside along Highway 93 and is very visible to traffic. The project is not long termed at this time with reclamation being planned for the year 2004. The pit is visible to residences in the area. Hours of operations for the crusher will be 7:00 a.m. through 7:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Any need to operate outside those hours will be noticed to the DEQ for approval prior to start-up.</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
<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 the equipment activity and hauling of the sand and gravel. The applicant must comply with OSHA and MSHA regulations however, 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]</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>

