

# ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

**Project Name:** Novakovich #1

**Proposed Implementation Date:** September 01, 2000

**Proponent:** Dawson County

**Type and Purpose of Action:** Knoll's Ready Mix proposes to reclaim a 12.3 acre site located on a high terrace 2 miles west of Glendive. Mining has occurred since 1989 under permit 00212-A1. Maximum depth of mining was 20 feet. The product was used for numerous jobs in the vicinity. The site would be reclaimed for use as rangeland and stock corrals by the Fall of 2000.

**Location:** SW of Sec 29 T16N R55E

**County:** Dawson

**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>[ N ] The site is located on an old alluvial terrace 2 miles west of Glendive, and several hundred feet above the Yellowstone River.</p> <p>The soils are probably of the "Tinsley" series, consisting of a maximum of 4 inches of gravelly, sandy loam overlying 10 feet or more of the same gravelly material. Because of its texture, this soil has a low water-holding capacity and little runoff, which makes it xeric site. It can also be prone to wind erosion. Annual precipitation is about 14 inches, most of which falls during May, June and July.</p> <p>The site has been previously mined. The small amount of topsoil available was salvaged and stockpiled at the site. This topsoil is very gravelly and will probably result in about a 30 percent rock mulch cover. Although this may slow up vegetative reestablishment, it also impedes water and wind erosion. On this high and windy site this may be very beneficial. Recontouring the site to a minimum 4:1 slope allows maximum infiltration.</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>[ N ] The site is about a half mile south of, and almost 200 feet above intermittent Dry Creek. The surrounding area is sparsely vegetated with sagebrush and bunchgrasses. This is probably due to the highly porous soils in the vicinity. It would not be impacted by this project.</p> <p>No groundwater has been intercepted during the operation of this pit over the years. Groundwater would not be impacted by reclamation.</p> <p>No wetlands are present on or near the site.</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>[ N ] No designated Class I or Class II airsheds exist in the area. A water truck would be available for dust control on-site.</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>[ N ] The vicinity is presently used as rangeland. The 50 percent cover consists of sage, yucca, and grasses. This type of vegetation should reestablish well.</p> <p>No rare species or cover types were found during a field inspection, and none were reported in an NRIS 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>[ N ] Because of the poor condition of the open sagebrush habitat, wildlife does not use the site much although deer, coyotes and other plains animals have been observed.</p> <p>The reclaimed site would provide better grazing, but otherwise would have little impact on wildlife.</p>
<p><b>6. UNIQUE, ENDANGERED, FRAGILE OR LIMITED ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES:</b></p>	<p>[ N ] The Montana Natural Heritage Program has no listings for the site. The only listings in the area are for the least tern, which has been sighted along the</p>

Are any federally listed threatened or endangered species or identified habitat present? Any wetlands? Species of special concern?	Yellowstone between Fallon and Glendive. This site is not suitable habitat for this species. Several aquatic species are also listed as residents of the Yellowstone River. The proposed action would not impact these aquatic species.
<b>7. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES:</b> Are any historical, archaeological or paleontological resources present?	[ N ] The State Historical Preservation Office has no listings for this area. The site has been mined in the past and topsoil stripped. No evidence was found to indicate that any surface or subsurface cultural resources exist on site. If some resource were discovered, operations would be shifted to another area for a reasonable period of time to allow for assessment of the new find.
<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 ] The site lies several miles from the Yellowstone River or a major road. Because of the fairly remote location, no visual or noise impacts are expected.
<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?	[ N ] Reclamation of this site would decrease dust from wind erosion and truck traffic. Traffic load on the Dry Creek Road would be lightened, thus reducing the possibility of vehicular accidents.
<b>12. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION:</b> Will the project add to or alter these activities?	[ N ] The site would be put back into rangeland production within the next several years, and the new landowner could build the corrals and other facilities he wants so that he can improve the management of his ranch.
<b>13. QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT:</b> Will the project create, move or eliminate jobs? If so, estimated number.	[ N ] No employment impact would occur since Knoll's has another local site from which it carries on business.
<b>14. LOCAL AND STATE TAX BASE AND TAX REVENUES:</b> Will the project create or eliminate tax revenue?	[ N ] New facilities built after reclamation might add to the taxable value of the ranch. This might be offset by the loss of gravel income.
<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 ] Traffic levels would be reduced and, therefore, would reduce the burden on the county's road infrastructure. Other impacts would remain the same.
<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 ]
<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 ] The recreational potential of this site is low because it is private ground. Impacts are not anticipated.
<b>18. DENSITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION AND HOUSING:</b> Will the project add to the population and require additional housing?	[ N ]

