

# ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

**Project Name:** Janssen

**Proposed Implementation Date:** December 1, 2000

**Proponent:** Scanlan Construction

**Type and Purpose of Action:** Scanlan Construction proposes to mine and screen 25,000 yards of gravel from an 8.5-acre rangeland site. The product would be used for private projects in the vicinity over the years. Mining would occur to a depth of 15 feet. The site would be reclaimed to rangeland by the Fall of 2005.

**Location:** SW of Sec 17 T8N R47E

**County:** Custer In EA 2000, December

**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 ] This rangeland site is located in a draw about ¼ mile from the county road. The majority of the site was previously mined so little topsoil is available for salvage. The facilities area is located in the bottom of the draw with the mining area bowl-like surrounding it.</p> <p>The soils that are available are thin. Approximately 6 inches of stoney loam topsoil and some overburden overlies the gravel. Some pockets contain deeper soil. Front-end loaders, cats or other available equipment would be used for salvaging the soil materials.</p> <p>The southern portion of the site was mined previously and has been regraded to about 5:1 slopes. The north or highwall side would have 3:1 or shallower slopes. Drainage through the site would be maintained from the southeast to the northwest corners.</p> <p>Annual precipitation is about 14 inches, the majority of which falls during warm season precipitation events.</p> <p>Screened fines would be used to augment the limited topsoil. Because of the mostly shallow slopes, use of fines and amount of topsoil available, the site should reclaim to its proposed use as rangeland.</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 ] No surface water is close to the site. The Yellowstone River lies about 3 miles to the south, and is several hundred feet below the site. Sunday Creek lies about 1½ miles to the northwest and 200 feet in elevation below.</p> <p>The site is located at the head of a draw draining to the northwest that is dry except during large precipitation or runoff events. Just off the southeast corner of the site, a larger draw flows to the northeast and attracts upstream runoff.</p> <p>The plan calls for use of oversized materials at the northwest or downstream corner of the draw to impede runoff and protect the natural channel from increased flow and erosion.</p> <p>No wells or springs are located in this section. Test pits did not intercept any groundwater.</p> <p>The road to the site was previously existing and requires no improvements and would not be reclaimed.</p> <p>Scanlan Construction uses fuel tanks carried in pickups, so no fuel would be stored on site. No trash would be buried on-site. Reject materials that would not be used for reclamation would be placed by the highwall and buried.</p> <p>No impacts are expected from this project.</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 site is presently used as rangeland and has a poor cover of range grasses, including wheatgrasses, with a little sagebrush, yucca and cactus. The nature of the soils and screened fines subsoil would help to hold moisture and would allow for better revegetation. This area would return to rangeland use after reclamation.</p> <p>No noxious weeds were seen on site; under the weed control plan, the county would control or eliminate any weeds they should invade the site.</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 ] Wildlife use the site to some extent. Deer, antelope and coyotes have been observed. The small disturbance area would have little impact on wildlife.</p>
<p><b>6. UNIQUE, ENDANGERED, FRAGILE OR LIMITED ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES:</b> Are any federally listed threatened or endangered species or identified habitat present? Any wetlands? Species of special concern?</p>	<p>[ N ] The Montana Natural Heritage Program has no listings for the site. No wetlands are present on the site. No species of special concern are present.</p> <p>Several listed aquatic species are listed for the Yellowstone River, but none of these would be impacted by the project.</p>
<p><b>7. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES:</b> Are any historical, archaeological or paleontological resources present?</p>	<p>[ N ] The State Historical Preservation Office has no listings for this area. During a field survey 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 time period to allow for assessment of the new find.</p>
<p><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?</p>	<p>[ N ] The site is located in a draw about 400 yards from the state secondary road. The site would be visible from the road, but noise from the operation probably would not be heard. The operation cannot be seen or heard from the Yellowstone River. The plan calls for the pit to be open for 5 years.</p>
<p><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?</p>	<p>[ N ] This location has had several gravel operations nearby.</p>
<p><b>10. IMPACTS ON OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES:</b> Are there other studies, plans or projects on this tract?</p>	<p>[ N ]</p>

<p align="center"><b>IMPACTS ON THE HUMAN POPULATION</b></p>	
<p align="center"><b>RESOURCE</b></p>	<p align="center"><b>POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES</b></p>
<p><b>11. HUMAN HEALTH AND SAFETY:</b> Will this project add to health and safety risks in the area?</p>	<p>[ N ] This is a small private operation. The increase in truck traffic on the state secondary road would not be noticeable.</p>
<p><b>12. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION:</b> Will the project add to or alter these activities?</p>	<p>[ N ]</p>
<p><b>13. QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT:</b> Will the project create, move or eliminate jobs? If so, estimated number.</p>	<p>[ N ] Most of the product from this operation would be used locally in the Miles City area. There would be no impact to employment except that the company would have a gravel source to maintain its present and possible future business.</p>
<p><b>14. LOCAL AND STATE TAX BASE AND TAX REVENUES:</b> Will the project create or eliminate tax revenue?</p>	<p>[ N ] There would be no effect on taxes.</p>
<p><b>15. DEMAND FOR GOVERNMENT SERVICES:</b> Will substantial traffic be added to existing roads? Will other services (fire protection, police, schools,</p>	<p>[ N ] Truck traffic generated by this project would not be noticeable, nor would it be dangerous or overburden the county's infrastructure.</p>

etc) be needed?	
<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 ]
<b>19. SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND MORES:</b> Is some disruption of native or traditional lifestyles or communities possible?	[ N ]
<b>20. CULTURAL UNIQUENESS AND DIVERSITY:</b> Will the action cause a shift in some unique quality of the area?	[ N ]
<b>21. OTHER APPROPRIATE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES:</b>	[ N ]

**22. Alternatives Considered:**

Alternative I: Alternate location of the site. Another pit location could be farther from the proposed use sites of the product, and thus would increase transportation costs and risks unnecessarily from this alternative.

Alternative II: Denial. This alternative would result in denying the use of a resource to the landowner.

**23. Public Involvement, Agencies, Groups or Individuals contacted:** Montana Natural Heritage Program, State Historic Preservation Office, Custer County Weed Control District, Custer County Planning Board

**24. Other Governmental Agencies with Jurisdiction, List of Permits Needed:** Mine Safety & Health Administration for safety permit; Montana Department of Labor & Industry, Bureau of Safety for safety permit; MtDEQ Air and Waste Management Bureau for air quality permits,

**25. Magnitude and Significance of Potential Impacts:** Impacts are unlikely to be significant on the general environment because of the small area of disturbance and the short duration of the project.

**26. Regulatory Impact on Private Property:** The analysis conducted in response to the Private Property Assessment Act indicates no impact.

**Recommendation for Further Environmental Analysis:**

EIS                       More Detailed EA                       No Further Analysis

EA Checklist Prepared By: Jo Stephen Title: Reclamation Specialist

Approved By: Jerry Burke Title: Opencut Mining Program Supervisor, IEMB

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Signature

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Date