

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

PROPONENT: Chouteau County
 LOCATION: NW1/4 Section 13, T25N, R11E

SITE NAME: Worrall
 COUNTY: Chouteau

TYPE AND PURPOSE OF ACTION:

Proponent has submitted an application to the Opencut Mining Program for a 7.45-acre permit to mine about 20,000 cubic yards of gravel. The site is approximately 11 miles northeast of Loma on a low, wide bench between ephemeral drainageways. Proponent has submitted all application materials required under the Opencut Mining Act and the Rules adopted thereunder. They propose to properly prepare the site, remove the mine material, and reclaim the site to a postmining land use of rangeland. Proponent will be legally bound by their permit to reclaim the site.

A: Significant Unavoidable Impacts. B: Insignificant as a result of conditioned mitigation. C: Insignificant as proposed.

	POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES					
	A	B	C	LONG TERM	SHORT TERM	EXPLANATION
PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT						
1. <u>TOPOGRAPHY</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mining will alter the topography. The site will be graded and blended into the surrounding topography and drainageways.
2. <u>GEOLOGY</u> ; Stability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Potential impacts due to the removal of mine material have been reviewed. The Department has determined that the site can be reclaimed to a stable condition.
3. <u>SOILS</u> ; Quality, Distribution	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Soil materials will be salvaged and placed on areas prepared for resoiling or stockpiled for later reclamation use.
4. <u>WATER</u> ; Quality, Quantity; Distribution	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Surface water and ground water will not be affected by the operation.
5. <u>AIR</u> ; Quality	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
6. <u>UNIQUE, ENDANGERED, FRAGILE, or LIMITED</u> environmental resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
BIOLOGICAL ENVIRONMENT						
1. <u>TERRESTRIAL, AVIAN, and AQUATIC</u> ; species and habitats	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The Montana Natural Heritage Program website shows the ferruginous hawk as a species of special concern. The distribution map shows the occurrence of this bird in 32 Montana counties. It is “apparently secure” globally, and “imperiled” in the state. No ferruginous hawks or nest sites were seen during the site inspection. Abundant similar habitat exists in the area.
2. <u>VEGETATION</u> ; Quantity, quality, species	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The Montana Natural Heritage Program website shows no species of special concern. Abundant similar habitat exists in the area.
3. <u>AGRICULTURE</u> ; grazing, crops, production	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	This small rangeland site will be temporarily out of production. It will be reclaimed to rangeland.

	POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES					
	A	B	C	LONG TERM	SHORT TERM	EXPLANATION
HUMAN ENVIRONMENT						
1. <u>SOCIAL</u> , structures and mores	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
2. <u>CULTURAL</u> ; Uniqueness, diversity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
3. <u>POPULATION</u> ; quantity and diversity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
4. <u>HOUSING</u> ; quantity and distribution	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
5. <u>HUMAN HEALTH & SAFETY</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
6. <u>COMMUNITY & PERSONAL INCOME</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
7. <u>EMPLOYMENT</u> ; quantity and distribution	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
8. <u>TAX BASE</u> ; local and state tax revenue	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
9. <u>GOVERNMENT SERVICES</u> ; demand	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
10. <u>INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL</u> and <u>AGRICULTURAL</u> activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
11. <u>HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Nothing noted during the inspection.
12. <u>AESTHETICS</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	This site is located in a remote area. There are no nearby residences.
13. <u>ENVIRONMENTAL PLANS</u> and <u>GOALS</u> ; local and regional	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
14. <u>DEMANDS</u> on <u>ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES</u> of land, water, air and energy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
15. <u>TRANSPORTATION</u> ; networks and traffic flows	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED: The Department would deny an incomplete application or one that does not comply with the Act and Rules. The proponent could then submit a modified application or submit an application for another site.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT: Agencies and individuals involved in the process included the Montana Natural Heritage Program, State Historic Preservation Office, local zoning authority, county weed control board, and landowner.

OTHER GROUPS OR AGENCIES CONTACTED OR WHICH MAY HAVE OVERLAPPING JURISDICTION: DEQ's Air Resources Management Bureau regarding air quality, DEQ's Water Protection Bureau regarding water discharge, and MSHA and OSHA regarding mine safety.

REGULATORY IMPACT ON PRIVATE PROPERTY: The analysis done in response to the Private Property Assessment Act indicates no impact. The Department does not plan to deny the application or impose conditions that would restrict the use of private property.

RECOMMENDATION FOR FURTHER ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS: No further analysis is required.

INDIVIDUALS OR GROUPS CONTRIBUTING TO THIS EA: None

Date: _____

Approved By: _____
(Signature)

Prepared by: Mark Carlstrom