

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

SITE NAME: Consol Scoria

APPLICANT Fidelity Exploration

LOCATION: S NE, Sec 13, T9S, R39E

COUNTY: Big Horn

PROPOSED ACTION: Fidelity Exploration and Production Company proposes to mine and crush 40,000 cubic yards of scoria from a 5-acre site about 2.5 miles northwest of Decker. The product would be used for construction and maintenance of private roads and pads in the gas field. A new access road would remain after mining. Reclamation would be completed to rangeland by January 2011; the reclamation bond is \$11,000.

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

	POTENTIAL IMPACTS					
	A	B	C	LONG TERM	SHORT TERM	EXPLANATION
PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT						
1. <u>TOPOGRAPHY</u>			X	X		High ridge top with 100 to 200 feet elevational change down to bottom of the gulches.
2. <u>GEOLOGY</u> ; Stability			X	X		Scoria derived from baked sandstone and shale of the Cretaceous period. Site is located in the CBM lease area outside Decker.
3. <u>SOILS</u> ; Quality, Distribution			X		X	Loamy soils from 6 to 12 inches, with no overburden. Based upon healthy sagebrush growth, the soils seem very productive. Mine-area is the flat top of the ridge. Area precipitation averages 9 inches per year.
4. <u>WATER</u> ; Quality; Quantity; Distribution			X		X	Site is 100 to 200 vertical feet above the nearest ephemeral streams. The site would be flat with a small berm around it to keep precipitation on site and control runoff.
5. <u>AIR</u> ; Quality			X		X	Good
6. <u>UNIQUE, ENDANGERED, FRAGILE, or LIMITED</u> environmental resources			X		X	None.
BIOLOGICAL ENVIRONMENT						
1. <u>TERRESTRIAL, AVIAN, and AQUATIC</u> ; species and habitats			X		X	Deer, upland game birds, raptors and golden eagles, jack rabbits.
2. <u>VEGETATION</u> ; quantity, quality, species			X		X	Range, sage, wheat grasses, blue grama. No wetland.
3. <u>AGRICULTURE</u> ; grazing, crops production			X		X	Rangeland
HUMAN ENVIRONMENT						
1. <u>SOCIAL</u> ; structures and mores			X		X	
2. <u>CULTURAL</u> uniqueness, diversity			X		X	

	POTENTIAL IMPACTS					
	A	B	C	LONG TERM	SHORT TERM	EXPLANATION
3. <u>POPULATION</u> ; quantity and diversity			X		X	Sparsely populated ranches
4. <u>HOUSING</u> ; quantity and distribution			X		X	
5. <u>HUMAN HEALTH & SAFETY</u>			X		X	
6. <u>COMMUNITY & PERSONAL INCOME</u>			X	X		Indirect income from developing the gas fields.
7. <u>EMPLOYMENT</u> ; quantity and distribution			X	X		Long term due to continuing increase in gas field development
8. <u>TAX BASE</u> ; local and state tax revenue			X	X		Indirect source of revenue from increased gas taxes
9. <u>GOVERNMENT SERVICES</u> ; demand			X		X	This material is for private oil well roads and pads
10. <u>INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL</u> and <u>AGRICULTURAL</u> activities			X		X	
11. <u>HISTORICAL</u> and <u>ARCHAEOLOGICAL</u>			X		X	A walkover of undisturbed areas did not reveal any artifacts or signs of occupation. If during operations resources were to be discovered, activities would be halted and temporarily moved to another area until SHPO was contacted and the importance of the site was determined.
12. <u>AESTHETICS</u>			X		X	
13. <u>ENVIRONMENTAL PLANS</u> and <u>GOALS</u> ; local and regional			X		X	
14. <u>DEMANDS</u> on <u>ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES</u> of land, water, air and energy			X		X	
15. <u>TRANSPORTATION</u> ; networks and traffic flows			X		X	

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.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT: Landowner, Big Horn County Commissioners, Big Horn County Weed Board, Natural Heritage Program, State Historic Preservation Office

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED: Denial

OTHER GROUPS OR AGENCIES CONTACTED OR WHICH MAY HAVE OVERLAPPING JURISDICTION:

Air Resources Management Bureau, Mining Safety and Health, MT Dept. of Transportation

RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING PREPARATION OF AN EIS: Unnecessary, No Significant Impacts

APPROVED BY: _____ DATE: _____