ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

SITE NAME: **Riesland** APPLICANT: **Carter Road Department**
LOCATION**: SWSW of Sec 23, T8S, R54E** COUNTY: **Powder River**

PROPOSED ACTION: **Carter County proposes to mine gravel from a 10-acre site 14 miles from Highway 212 south of Boyes. The site is half way up the side of a large ridge. Access is from an existing, well-developed oil patch road. The product would be used for maintenance of county roads in the area. Reclamation would be completed to rangeland by the fall of 2008. About 2 acres of the site has been disturbed by pre-law mining for parking of oil patch equipment.**

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. TOPOGRAPHY			X	X		Hill and valley, with bull pine forest in coulees and protected areas. This site is about 50 feet above Blowout Creek, and half way up the ridge in a small, flat area. There are no signs of erosion or runoff from the site.
2. GEOLOGY; Stability			X	X		Small pocket of gravel overlaying sedimentary rock of the Fort Union formation.
3. SOILS; Quality, Distribution			X		X	Soil depth is about 2 to 6 inches of sandy, gravelly loam. The gravel is very sandy; some places have deep, very sandy overburden ranging from 6 to 24 inches. Average annual precipitation is about 15 inches.
4. WATER; Quality; Quantity; Distribution			X		X	Blowout Creek is a perennial stream a half mile by road from the site. The bridge is good. The site would be contoured slightly to drain internally to prevent runoff toward the creek. Because of the very sandy soils, water would infiltrate quickly.
5. AIR; Quality			X		X	Good
6. UNIQUE, ENDANGERED, FRAGILE, or LIMITED environmental resources			X		X	None.
BIOLOGICAL ENVIRONMENT						
1. TERRESTRIAL, AVIAN, and AQUATIC; species and habitats			X		X	Deer, antelope, upland game birds, turkeys.
2. VEGETATION; quantity, quality, species			X		X	Wheat grasses, little bluestem, blue grama. Vegetation is thin. There is no riparian or wetland vegetation except down by the creek.

				POTENTIAL IMPACTS		
	A	B	C	LONG TERM	SHORT TERM	EXPLANATION
3. AGRICULTURE; grazing, crops			X		X	Rangeland
HUMAN ENVIRONMENT						
1. SOCIAL; structures and mores			X		X	
2. CULTURAL uniqueness/diversity			X		X	
3. POPULATION; quantity/diversity			X		X	Sparsely populated ranches
4. HOUSING; quantity/distribution			X		X	
5. HUMAN HEALTH & SAFETY			X		X	
6. COMMUNITY & PERSONAL INCOME			X		X	
7. EMPLOYMENT; quantity, distribution			X		X	
8. TAX BASE; state/local tax revenue			X		X	
9. GOVERNMENT SERVICES; Demand			X		X	This material is for maintenance of county roads.
10. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL and AGRICULTURAL activities			X		X	
11. HISTORICAL and ARCHAEOLOGICAL			X		X	A walkover of the area 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. AESTHETICS			X		X	No residences are within a mile of the site.
13. ENVIRONMENTAL PLANS and GOALS; local and regional			X		X	
14. DEMANDS on ENVIRON-MENTAL RESOURCES of land, water, air and energy			X		X	
15. TRANSPORTATION; networks and traffic flows			X		X	

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: Landowner, Carter County Commissioners, Carter County Weed Board, Natural Heritage Program, State Historic Preservation Office

OTHER GROUPS OR AGENCIES CONTACTED OR WHICH MAY HAVE OVERLAPPING JURISDICTION: DEQ's Air Resources Management and Water Protection Bureaus, DNRC's Water Rights, MSHA and OSHA.

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 so as to constitute a taking.

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

INDIVIDUALS OR GROUPS CONTRIBUTING TO THIS EA: NONE

APPROVED BY: _____ DATE: _____

Prepared by Jo Stephen, January 2006