

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

SITE NAME: Samuelson Hilltop

APPLICANT: Powder River Road Department

LOCATION: SWSW of Sec 20, T3S R48E

COUNTY: Powder River

PROPOSED ACTION: Powder River County proposes to mine gravel from a 15-acre site 1 mile north of Highway 212 up Pumpkin Creek Road. The site is half mile up a draw on top of a large ridge. Access is from an existing 2-track road. The product would be used for maintenance of county roads in the area. Reclamation would be completed to rangeland by the end of 2009.

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 hills, foothills to the Little Wolf Mountains
2. <u>GEOLOGY</u> ; Stability			X	X		Gravel overlaying sedimentary rock of the Fort Union formation.
3. <u>SOILS</u> ; Quality, Distribution			X		X	Soil depth is about 2 to 6 inches of sandy, gravelly loam with overburden in some places up to a foot deep. The gravel is very sandy. Average annual precipitation is about 15 inches.
4. <u>WATER</u> ; Quality; Quantity; Distribution			X		X	There are no wells or water features within 200 vertical feet of the site.
5. <u>AIR</u> ; Quality			X		X	
6. <u>UNIQUE, ENDANGERED, FRAGILE, or LIMITED</u> environmental resources						None
BIOLOGICAL ENVIRONMENT						
1. <u>TERRESTRIAL, AVIAN, and AQUATIC</u> ; species and habitats			X		X	Severe habitat, high and steep. Not good habitat. Mining would have minimal impact.
2. <u>VEGETATION</u> ; quantity, quality, species			X		X	Wheat grasses, little bluestem, blue grama. Vegetation is thin. Mining would have minimal impact.
3. <u>AGRICULTURE</u> ; grazing, crops Production			X		X	Mining would result in a minimal short term reduction of rangeland.
HUMAN ENVIRONMENT						
1. <u>SOCIAL</u> ; structures and mores			X		X	
2. <u>CULTURAL</u> uniqueness/diversity			X		X	
3. <u>POPULATION</u> ; quantity/diversity			X		X	Sparsely populated ranches. Mining would not affect any residences.

	POTENTIAL IMPACTS					
	A	B	C	LONG TERM	SHORT TERM	EXPLANATION
4. <u>HOUSING</u> ; quantity/distribution			X		X	
5. <u>HUMAN HEALTH & SAFETY</u>			X		X	
6. <u>COMMUNITY & PERSONAL INCOME</u>			X		X	
7. <u>EMPLOYMENT</u> ; quantity, distribution			X		X	
8. <u>TAX BASE</u> ; state/local tax revenue			X		X	
9. <u>GOVERNMENT SERVICES</u> ; demand			X		X	
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 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. <u>AESTHETICS</u>			X		X	No residences are within several miles of the site.
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	This material is for maintenance of county roads.

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.

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

OTHER GROUPS OR AGENCIES CONTACTED OR WHICH MAY HAVE OVERLAPPING JURISDICTION: Air Resources Management Bureau, Mining Safety and Health, MT Dept. of Transportation

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED: Denial

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

APPROVED BY: _____ DATE: _____

Prepared by Jo Stephen,