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DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
Permitting and Compliance Division
Air Resources Management Bureau
1520 East Sixth Avenue
P.O. Box 200901
Helena, Montana 59620-0901
(406) 444-3490

FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (EA)

Issued For: Riverside Contracting, Inc.

Permit Number: #3046-01

Preliminary Determination Issued: 05/19/06
Department Decision Issued: 06/06/06
Permit Final:

1. *Legal Description of Site*: Riverside operates a portable drum mix asphalt plant and associated equipment. Permit #3046-01 applies while operating at any location in Montana, except within those areas having a Department-approved permitting program, those areas considered tribal lands, or those areas in or within 10 km of certain PM_{10} nonattainment areas. *A Missoula County air quality permit will be required for locations within Missoula County, Montana.* Riverside will be required to obtain an addendum to this air quality permit to operate at locations in or within 10 km of certain PM_{10} nonattainment areas.

2. *Description of Project*: On April 28, 2006, the Department received a complete permit application from Riverside requesting a modification to Permit #3046-00 to replace the existing asphalt drum mix burner with a burner capable of burning a combination of propane, fuel oil, natural gas, and coal fuels. Additionally, the application requested to add a coal mill to the facility.

3. *Objectives of Project*: The object of the project would be to produce business and revenue for the company by the sale and use of asphalt. The issuance of Permit #3046-01 would continue to allow Riverside to operate the permitted equipment at various locations throughout Montana.

4. *Additional Project Site Information*: In many cases, the drum mix asphalt plant operation may move to a general site location, or open cut pit, which has been previously permitted through the Industrial and Energy Minerals Bureau (IEMB). If this were the case, a more extensive EA for the site would have been conducted and would be found in the Mined Land Reclamation Permit for that specific site.

5. *Alternatives Considered*: In addition to the proposed action, the Department considered the "no-action" alternative. The "no-action" alternative would deny issuance of the air quality preconstruction permit to the proposed facility. However, the Department does not consider the "no-action" alternative to be appropriate because Riverside demonstrated compliance with all applicable rules and regulations as required for permit issuance. Therefore, the "no-action" alternative was eliminated from further consideration.

6. *A Listing of Mitigation, Stipulations, and Other Controls*: A listing of the enforceable permit conditions and a permit analysis, including a BACT analysis, would be contained in Permit #3046-01.

7. *Regulatory Effects on Private Property Rights*: The Department considered alternatives to the conditions imposed in this permit as part of the permit development. The Department determined the permit conditions would be reasonably necessary to ensure compliance with applicable requirements and to demonstrate compliance with those requirements and would not unduly restrict private property rights.

8. *The following table summarizes the potential physical and biological effects of the proposed project on the human environment. The "no action alternative" was discussed previously.*

		Major	Moderate	Minor	None	Unknown	Comments Included
A.	Terrestrial and Aquatic Life and Habitats			X			yes
B.	Water Quality, Quantity, and Distribution			X			yes
C.	Geology and Soil Quality, Stability, and Moisture			X			yes
D.	Vegetation Cover, Quantity, and Quality			X			yes
E.	Aesthetics			X			yes
F.	Air Quality			X			yes
G.	Unique Endangered, Fragile, or Limited Environmental Resource			X			yes
H.	Demands on Environmental Resource of Water, Air, and Energy			X			yes
I	Historical and Archaeological Sites				X		yes
J.	Cumulative and Secondary Impacts			X			yes

Summary of Comments on Potential Physical and Biological Effects: The following comments have been prepared by the Department.

A. Terrestrial and Aquatic Life and Habitats

Terrestrials would use the same area as the asphalt plant operation. Impacts on terrestrial and aquatic life could result from storm water runoff and pollutant deposition, but such impacts would be minor, because the asphalt plant operation is an existing operation, would be considered a minor source of emissions, and would have intermittent and seasonal operations. Furthermore, the air emissions would have only minor effects on terrestrial and aquatic life because facility emissions would be well dispersed in the area of operations (see Section 8.F of this EA). Therefore, only minor and temporary effects to terrestrial and aquatic life and habitat would be expected from the existing asphalt operation.

B. Water Quality, Quantity, and Distribution

Water would be required for dust suppression on the surrounding roadways and areas of operation and for pollution control for equipment operations. Water use would cause only minor, if any, impacts to water resources in these areas because the facility has readily available water resources and would be far enough away from those resources that any pollutant deposition would be dispersed before reaching the surface water resources. The facility would only require a relatively small amount of water for pollution control and would only have minor amounts of pollutant deposition (see Section 8.F of this EA). Therefore, at most, only minor surface and groundwater quality impacts would be expected.

C. Geology and Soil Quality, Stability, and Moisture

The existing asphalt plant operation would have only minor impacts on geology and soil quality, stability, and moisture because deposition of air pollutants on soils would be minor (see Section 8.F of this EA), only minor amounts of water would be required to be used for pollution control, and only minor amounts of pollution would be generated. In addition, the pollutants would be widely dispersed before settling upon vegetation and surrounding soils (see Section 8.D of this EA). Therefore, any effects upon geology and soil quality, stability, and moisture at this proposed operational site would be minor.

D. Vegetation Cover, Quantity, and Quality

Minor impacts would occur on vegetative cover, quality, and quantity because this is an existing facility and would be operating on an intermittent and temporary basis. Pollutants would be greatly dispersed and corresponding deposition on vegetation from the proposed project would be minor (see Section 8.F of this EA). Also, water would be used for pollution control, as necessary.

E. Aesthetics

The asphalt plant operation would be visible and would create additional noise while operating at the site. However, Permit #3046-01 would include conditions to control emissions, including visible emissions, from the plant. Since the asphalt plant operation is an existing source, would be portable, and would operate on an intermittent and seasonal basis, any visual aesthetic impacts would be minor and short-lived.

F. Air Quality

Air quality impacts from the proposed project would be minor because this is an existing facility, would operate on an intermittent and temporary basis, and would originally locate at a previously disturbed site. Permit #3046-01 would include conditions limiting the facility's opacity and the facility's asphalt plant operation. Permit #3046-01 would also require water and water spray bars be available on site and used to control emissions. Permit #3046-01 would also limit total emissions from the asphalt plant operation and any additional Riverside equipment operated at the site to 250 tons/year or less, excluding fugitive emissions.

Further, the Department determined that the asphalt plant operation would be a minor source of emissions as defined under the Title V Operating Permit Program because the source's PTE was limited below the major source threshold level of 100 tons per year for any regulated pollutant. Pollutant deposition from the facility would be minimal because the pollutants emitted would be widely dispersed (from factors such as wind speed and wind direction) and would have minimal deposition on the surrounding area (due to site topography of the area and minimal vegetative cover in the area). Therefore, air quality impacts from operating the existing asphalt plant operation in this area would be minor.

G. Unique Endangered, Fragile, or Limited Environmental Resources

The Department, in an effort to assess any potential impacts to any unique endangered, fragile, or limited environmental resources previously contacted the Montana Natural Heritage Program (MNHP). Search results concluded there were no known environmental resources of special concern within the area.

H. Demands on Environmental Resources of Water, Air, and Energy

This is an existing asphalt plant and due to the relatively small size of the facility, would only require small quantities of water, air, and energy for proper operation. Only small quantities of water would be required for dust suppression of emissions being generated at the site. In addition, impacts to air resources would be minor because the source is a minor industrial source of emissions, with intermittent and seasonal operations, and because air pollutants generated by the facility would be widely dispersed (see Section 8.F of this EA). Energy requirements would be provided by a diesel generator. Overall, any impacts to water, air, and energy resources would be minor.

I. Historical and Archaeological Sites

The Department previously contacted the Montana Historical Society - State Historical Preservation Office (SHPO) in an effort to identify any historical and/or archaeological sites that may be present in the proposed area of construction/operation. Search results concluded that there are no previously recorded historical or archaeological resources of concern within the area proposed for initial operations. According to past correspondence from the Montana State Historic Preservation Office, there would be a low likelihood of adverse disturbance to any known archaeological or historic site given previous industrial disturbance to an area. Therefore, no impacts upon historical or archaeological sites would be expected as a result of operating the proposed asphalt plant operation.

J. Cumulative and Secondary Impacts

The asphalt plant operation would cause minor cumulative and secondary impacts to the physical and biological aspects of the human environment because the facility is an existing source and would be limited in the amount of PM, PM_{10}, NO_x, VOC, CO, and SO_x emissions to be generated. Emissions and noise generated from the equipment would, at most, result in only minor impacts to the area of operations because it would be seasonal and temporary in nature. Additionally, this facility, in combination with other emissions from equipment operations would not be permitted to exceed 250 tons per year of non-fugitive emissions. Overall, cumulative and secondary impacts to the physical and biological aspects of the human environment would be minor.

9. *The following table summarizes the potential economic and social effects of the proposed project on the human environment. The "no action alternative" was discussed previously.*

		Major	Moderate	Minor	None	Unknown	Comments Included
A.	Social Structures and Mores				X		yes
B.	Cultural Uniqueness and Diversity				X		yes
C.	Local and State Tax Base and Tax Revenue			X			yes
D	Agricultural or Industrial Production			X			yes
E.	Human Health			X			yes
F.	Access to and Quality of Recreational and Wilderness Activities			X			yes
G	Quantity and Distribution of Employment				X		yes
H.	Distribution of Population				X		yes
I.	Demands for Government Services			X			yes
J.	Industrial and Commercial Activity			X			yes
K.	Locally Adopted Environmental Plans and Goals			X			yes
L.	Cumulative and Secondary Impacts			X			yes

SUMMARY OF COMMENTS ON POTENTIAL ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL EFFECTS: The following comments have been prepared by the Department.

A. Social Structures and Mores

The asphalt plant operation would cause no disruption to the social structures and mores in the area because the source is an existing source, would be a minor industrial source of emissions, and would only have temporary and intermittent operations. Further, the facility would be required to operate according to the conditions that would be placed in Permit #3046-01, which would limit the effects to social structures and mores.

B. Cultural Uniqueness and Diversity

The cultural uniqueness and diversity of this area would not be impacted by the existing asphalt plant operation because the facility would be a portable source, with seasonal and intermittent operations. The predominant use of the surrounding area is rural and would not change as a result of this asphalt plant operation. Therefore, the cultural uniqueness and diversity of the area would not be affected.

C. Local and State Tax Base and Tax Revenue

The asphalt plant operation would have little, if any, impact on the local and state tax base and tax revenue because the facility is an existing facility, would be a minor industrial source of emissions, and would have seasonal and intermittent operations. Thus, only minor impacts to the local and state tax base and revenue could be expected from the employees and facility production. Furthermore, the impacts to local tax base and revenue would be minor because the source would be portable and the money generated for taxes would be widespread.

D. Agricultural or Industrial Production

The asphalt plant operation would have only a minor impact on local industrial production since the facility is an existing facility and would be a minor source of asphalt production and air emissions. Also, the facility would generally locate in a rural area. Therefore, because minimal deposition of air pollutants would occur on the surrounding land (see Section 8.F of this EA), only minor and temporary effects on the surrounding vegetation (i.e. agricultural production) would occur. In addition, the facility operations would be temporary in nature and would be permitted with operational conditions and limitations that would minimize impacts upon surrounding vegetation (see Section 8.D of this EA).

E. Human Health

Permit #3046-01 would incorporate conditions to ensure that the asphalt plant operation would be operated in compliance with all applicable air quality rules and standards. These rules and standards are designed to be protective of human health. As described in Section 8.F. of this EA, the air emissions from this facility would be minimized by the use of water spray and other process limits that would be required by Permit #3046-01. Also, the facility is an existing facility and would be operating on a temporary basis and pollutants would be dispersed (see Section 8.F of this EA). Therefore, only minor impacts would be expected on human health from the asphalt plant operation.

F. Access to and Quality of Recreational and Wilderness Activities

This facility would have little affect on Access to and Quality of Recreational and Wilderness Activities because the facility would usually operate on private property used for similar activities that has little recreational or wilderness value. Also, the facility would operate on a seasonal and intermittent basis on private land and would be a relatively minor industrial source of emissions. Therefore, any changes in the quality of recreational and wilderness activities created by operating the equipment at this site would be expected to be minor and intermittent.

G. Quantity and Distribution of Employment

The existing asphalt plant operation would require no new employees to operate and would have seasonal and intermittent operations. No individuals would be expected to permanently relocate to this area of operation as a result of operating the asphalt plant operation. Therefore, no effects upon the quantity and distribution of employment in this area would be expected.

H. Distribution of Population

The existing portable asphalt plant operation is a portable industrial facility that would require the existing employees to operate. No individuals would be expected to permanently relocate to this area of operation as a result of operating the asphalt plant operation. Therefore, the asphalt plant operation would not impact the normal population distribution in the initial area of operation or any future operating site.

I. Demands of Government Services

Minor increases would be seen in traffic on existing roadways in the area while the asphalt plant operation is in progress. In addition, government services would be required for acquiring the appropriate permits for the proposed project and to verify compliance with the permits that would be issued. Demands for government services would be minor.

J. Industrial and Commercial Activity

The asphalt plant operation would represent only a minor increase in the industrial activity in the proposed area of operation because this source is a relatively small industrial source that would be portable and temporary in nature. No additional industrial or commercial activity would be expected as a result of the proposed operation.

K. Locally Adopted Environmental Plans and Goals

Riverside would be allowed, by Permit 3046-01, to operate in areas designated by EPA as attainment or unclassified for ambient air quality. Permit #3046-01 would contain limits for protecting air quality and to keep facility emissions in compliance with any applicable ambient air quality standards, as a locally adopted environmental plan or goal for operating at this proposed site. Because the facility is an existing portable source and would have intermittent and seasonal operations, any impacts from the facility would be minor and short-lived.

L. Cumulative and Secondary Impacts

The asphalt plant operation would cause minor cumulative and secondary impacts to the social and economic aspects of the human environment in the immediate area of operation because the source is an existing source and would be a portable and temporary source. Further, no other industrial operations are expected to result from the permitting of this facility. Minor increases in traffic would have minor effects on local traffic in the immediate area. Because the source is relatively small and temporary, only minor economic impacts to the local economy would be expected from operating the facility. Further, this facility may be operated in conjunction with other equipment owned and operated by Riverside, but any cumulative impacts upon the social and economic aspects of the human environment would be minor and short-lived. Thus, only minor and temporary cumulative effects would result to the local economy.

Recommendation: An EIS is not required.

If an EIS is not required, explain why the EA is an appropriate level of analysis: All potential effects resulting from construction and operation of the proposed facility are minor; therefore, an EIS is not required.

Other groups or agencies contacted or which may have overlapping jurisdiction: Montana Department of Environmental Quality - Permitting and Compliance Division (Industrial and Energy Minerals Bureau); Montana Natural Heritage Program; and the State Historic Preservation Office (Montana Historical Society).

Individuals or groups contributing to this EA: Montana Department of Environmental Quality (Air Resources Management Bureau and Industrial and Energy Minerals Bureau), Montana State Historic Preservation Office (Montana Historical Society).

EA prepared by: Eric Thunstrom
Date: May 3, 2006