

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

SITE NAME: Pierce/Kelly
 LOCATION: SW & NW of Sec 30, 2N R2E

APPLICANT: Pierce Construction Company
 COUNTY: Gallatin

PROPOSED ACTION: This site is presently being mined under the 10,000-yard exemption. Pierce Construction proposes to mine and crush an unknown amount of gravel from a 15.5-acre site about 1 mile east of Three Forks. A wash plant may be installed later. Access is from Talc Road along the BN Railroad R/W. The product would be used for general construction.

The site is east of some public recreational ponds created by mining gravel, north of the BN Railroad, and south of Interstate 90. The Madison River is across the railroad to the east. Of the 24-acre parcel, about 9 acres is wetland that would not be disturbed and is not included in the permit area. Part of the mine area is within the 100-year floodplain. A Finding of Fact from the Gallatin County Floodplain Administrator has been submitted that outlines mitigation and restrictions on development.

Reclamation would be completed to ponds and grassland by the end of 2015. Both the Mt Fish Wildlife and Parks and Trout Unlimited are involved with pond reclamation. The bond is \$12,539.

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		The site occupies 15.5 acres within a triangular, 24-acre tract bounded on all sides by man-made structures - Interstate, railroad, ponds, and roads. The whole tract is in the 100-year floodplain whose base flood elevation is 4,069.2 feet. Eight acres is a delineated wetland. None of the 15.5-acre site is wetland and no wetland would be disturbed. The area has been disturbed by construction of the railroad, the interstate, a power line, an irrigation ditch, and previous gravel mining. Due to these activities there are spots with limited topsoil and piles of dirt or gravel scattered around. The site is being mined under the 10,000 yard exemption.
2. <u>GEOLOGY</u> ; Stability							X	X		Alluvium deposited by the Madison River.
3. <u>SOILS</u> ; Quality, Distribution							X		X	Silty-loam soils are from 3 to 12 inches deep with subsoil or overburden from 6 to 24 inches. Wetland soils are at the deeper end of this range. Average annual precipitation is about 14 inches. The site is to be reclaimed as a wetland /pond complex that would augment the recreational opportunities of the nearby city and state ponds.

				POTENTIAL IMPACTS		
	A	B	C	LONG TERM	SHORT TERM	EXPLANATION
4. <u>WATER</u> ; Quality; Quantity; Distribution			X		X	<p>This entire site is located in Zone A of the Flood Insurance Rate Map of 1984. The base flood elevation is 4,069.2 feet. Flooding of this area is generally the result of ice jams on the Madison River. Flood waters are expected to back up over the river's west bank levy and spill into the Three Forks drainage. It is thought that this flood water would be very slow moving. Although the top of the railroad berm is above the flood level it cannot be considered as protection because it was not constructed to withstand flood waters.</p> <p>The Willow Creek wastewater ditch, an elevated ditch, bisects the site and leaks considerable water onto the site. It is lined by wetlands on both sides.</p> <p>The one nearby well has a static water level of 4.5 feet. Test pits showed the water level fluctuated from 4 to 6 feet below ground surface. The adjacent pond water level does not fluctuate more than a foot or two.</p> <p>All disturbances would be at least 100 feet from the Madison River.</p> <p>The landowners have given permission to the Mt Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks to use a road around a pond adjacent to the site for public recreational access.</p> <p>No water right is necessary for this site at this time.</p>
5. <u>AIR</u> ; Quality			X		X	
6. <u>UNIQUE, ENDANGERED, FRAGILE, or LIMITED</u> environmental resources			X		X	<p>None. The Natural Heritage Program identified two vascular plants, and a cave-obligate crustacean found in a well, and a heron rookery in the vicinity. None of these occurred on-site. Neither the crustacean nor the rookery habitat would be enhanced at this site. It is probable that if habitat for the vascular plants ever existed on this site, it has been destroyed by the disturbance that has occurred for many years. Reclaiming to pond, wetland and native grassland might replace some habitat for these species.</p>
BIOLOGICAL ENVIRONMENT						
1. <u>TERRESTRIAL, AVIAN, and AQUATIC</u> ; species and habitats			X		X	<p>Deer, waterfowl, raccoon, and other small mammals and birds occupy this vicinity.</p> <p>Sculpins, whitefish, suckers, and trout inhabit the river.</p>

				POTENTIAL IMPACTS		
	A	B	C	LONG TERM	SHORT TERM	EXPLANATION
2. <u>VEGETATION</u> ; quantity, quality, Species			X		X	There is no wetland vegetation in the site although it exists in the adjacent 8 acres and river bottom.
3. <u>AGRICULTURE</u> ; grazing, crops Production			X		X	The site has been grazed in the past. This use would be lost.
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	This portion of Gallatin County has been developing quickly as suburban or ex-urban residential properties.
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	Construction jobs for which this site would supply material would provide temporary employment in this location. Generally, construction jobs float from one project to another within the county.
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	Most of the site has been disturbed previously by railroad ditch and road construction and gravel mining. 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	
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	Minimal impact to public roads would occur because of this project.

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, Town of Three Forks, Department of Fish Wildlife and Parks,

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED: Denial

OTHER GROUPS OR AGENCIES CONTACTED OR WHICH MAY HAVE OVERLAPPING JURISDICTION: Gallatin County Floodplain Administrator, Gallatin County Commissioners, Air Resources Management Bureau, Mining Safety and Health, Natural Heritage Program, State Historic Preservation Office, Gallatin County Weed Board, DEQ Water Protection Bureau, Department of Natural Resources - Water Resources Regional Office

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

APPROVED BY: _____ DATE: _____

Prepared by Jo Stephen, July 2006