

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

SITE NAME: Ponessa Station 67

APPLICANT: MK Weeden

LOCATION: NW of Sec 12, T10N R44E

COUNTY: Rosebud

PROPOSED ACTION: MK Weeden proposes to mine sand borrow from an 8-acre site near milepost 21 on Highway 59, north of Miles City. The site is adjacent to the R/W on the east side of the highway. The product would be used for an MDT project. Reclamation would be completed to rangeland by June 2008. The bond is \$16,011.

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		Almost flat rangeland sloping downhill toward the highway.
2. <u>GEOLOGY</u> ; Stability			X	X		Recent sand deposit from erosion of the sedimentary rocks.
3. <u>SOILS</u> ; Quality, Distribution			X		X	The sandy soil is about 6 inches deep. Average annual precipitation is ~ 14 inches. Good salvage of soil would reduce impacts to this soil.
4. <u>WATER</u> ; Quality; Quantity; Distribution			X		X	Sunday Creek is across the highway a quarter mile away to the west. Groundwater is about 400 feet deep. There would be no impact to water quality or quantity from mining.
5. <u>AIR</u> ; Quality			X		X	Fugitive dust would be controlled with the use of water trucks. Air quality reduction would be minimal.
6. <u>UNIQUE, ENDANGERED, FRAGILE, or LIMITED</u> environmental resources						None. No species were identified. The area is at the southern extent of the Missouri Breaks Megasite.
BIOLOGICAL ENVIRONMENT						
1. <u>TERRESTRIAL, AVIAN, and AQUATIC</u> ; species and habitats			X		X	This general area is inhabited by mule deer and antelope. Mining would have minimal impact because of the small area that would be disturbed and the short timeframe for disturbance.
2. <u>VEGETATION</u> ; quantity, quality, Species			X		X	Vegetation is a mix of sagebrush and native grasses. Mining would have minimal impact because of the short duration of the project and reclamation to a rangeland seed mix.
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/diversity			X		X	There are no nearby residences.
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	This highway project would result in temporary employment in the area.
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	
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 reconstruction of Highway 59 and possibly other local jobs.

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, 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, Rosebud County Commissioners, Rosebud County Weed Board

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED: Denial

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

APPROVED BY: _____ DATE: _____

Prepared by Jo Stephen, July 2006