

**ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
RIVERSIDE CONTRACTING, INC.
HAHN BORROW SITE, ARLEE, MONTANA**

PROPONENT: Riverside Contracting, Inc.

PROJECT NAME: Opencut Gravel Mining – Hahn Site

LOCATION: E½ SE¼ Section 35, T17N, R20W **COUNTY:** Lake

TYPE AND PURPOSE OF ACTION:

The applicant proposes to mine and haul 100,000 cubic yards of borrow from a new pit located 2 miles northwest of Arlee. The site is a gravel outwash deposit in the foothills of the Mission Mountain Range at approximately 3000 feet, MSL, in an area where groundwater lies an unknown number of feet well below the proposed site’s surface. The topsoil averages 6” with up to 12” of overburden below it. The site would be reclaimed to pasture grasses. The slopes of the reclaimed area would be reduced to 3:1 or flatter and the floor would be graded fairly flat. The site would be reclaimed by November 2010.

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		Mining would permanently alter the topography, but reclamation would level and smooth the site and grasses would be planted onto the back slopes.
2. <u>GEOLOGY</u> ; Stability						No effect on geology.
3. <u>SOILS</u> ; Quality, Distribution			X		X	Soils would be stripped, saved and replaced after mining is finished.
4. <u>WATER</u> ; Quality, Quantity; Distribution			X		X	The operation would not affect ground or surface waters including the Jocko River, which lies across Hwy 93 from the site.
5. <u>AIR</u> ; Quality			X		X	Some deterioration of air quality would occur, but this is a borrow site for a single project and would be reclaimed immediately after. Dust would be controlled around the site with a water truck.
6. <u>UNIQUE, ENDANGERED, FRAGILE, or LIMITED</u> environmental resources						No unique, endangered, fragile or limited species or habitat are known at this site.
BIOLOGICAL ENVIRONMENT						
1. <u>TERRESTRIAL, AVIAN, and AQUATIC</u> ; species and habitats			X		X	Wildlife displaced during active mining would return following reclamation.
2. <u>VEGETATION</u> ; Quantity, quality, species			X		X	Existing irrigated hayfield will be replanted into grasses of a compatible type.
3. <u>AGRICULTURE</u> ; grazing, crops, production			X		X	Some grassland would be temporarily taken out of production, but would be replanted with grasses.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT						
1. <u>SOCIAL</u> , structures and mores						No Social impacts are anticipated.
2. <u>CULTURAL</u> ; Uniqueness, diversity						No unique or diversified cultural values exist.
3. <u>POPULATION</u> ; quantity and diversity						No effect on the population is anticipated.
4. <u>HOUSING</u> ; quantity and distribution						No effects are anticipated on housing.
5. <u>HUMAN HEALTH & SAFETY</u>			X		X	Some dust and additional traffic may be generated at the site but the operator would be required to comply with existing traffic and air quality laws.
6. <u>COMMUNITY & PERSONAL INCOME</u>			X		X	The landowner may benefit from additional income from this operation.
7. <u>EMPLOYMENT</u> ; quantity and distribution			X		X	No additional employees would be hired to assist in daily operations.
8. <u>TAX BASE</u> ; local and state tax revenue			X		X	Additional taxes may be generated for the state and county as aggregates are hauled and sold.
9. <u>GOVERNMENT SERVICES</u> ; demand			X		X	The site would be monitored through its permit life along with other sites in the area.
10. <u>INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL and AGRICULTURAL</u> activities			X		X	The site would be removed from hay production, and used commercially until reclamation when it would be reclaimed to grazing land.
11. <u>HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL</u>						No historical, cultural or archaeological values are present.
12. <u>AESTHETICS</u>			X		X	The site sits along Hwy 93 and is visible to the general public.
13. <u>ENVIRONMENTAL PLANS and GOALS</u> ; local and regional						There are no known land use plans for this site.
14. <u>DEMANDS on ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES</u> of land, water, air and energy						There are no unusual demands on environmental resources.
15. <u>TRANSPORTATION</u> ; networks and traffic flows			X		X	There would be some additional traffic added as this borrow pit accesses the highway project.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED: **The Department would deny an incomplete application or one that does not comply with the Act or Rules. The proponent could then submit a modified application or submit an application for another site.**

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT: **Agencies and individuals involved in the process included the Montana Natural Heritage Program, State Historic Preservation Office, local zoning authorities, county weed control board, and the landowner.**

OTHER GROUPS OR AGENCIES CONTACTED OR WHICH MAY HAVE OVERLAPPING JURISDICTION: **DEQ's Air Resources Management Bureau regarding air quality, MSHA and OSHA regarding mine safety.**

REGULATORY IMPACT ON THE APPLICANT'S 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.**

INDIVIDUALS OR GROUPS CONTRIBUTING TO THIS EA: **None**

RECOMMENDATION FOR FURTHER ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS: **No further analysis is required.**

Approved By _____
(Signature)

(Date)

Prepared by Rod Samdahl

