

## CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

<b>Project Name:</b>	Riverside Construction Brockway Gravel Pit
<b>Proposed Implementation Date:</b>	2016
<b>Proponent:</b>	Riverside Contracting Inc.
<b>Location:</b>	T17N-R47E-Sec 16
<b>County:</b>	McCone County

### I. TYPE AND PURPOSE OF ACTION

Riverside Contracting Inc. (Henceforth referred to as proponent) has submitted an application to take and remove gravel from State Trust Land. The project is located on trust land in T17N-R47E-Sec 16. The proponent has submitted a form DS-409 application to take and remove approximately 74,000 yards of gravel from this tract for use on reconstruction of a portion of Highway 200.

### II. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

#### 1. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT, AGENCIES, GROUPS OR INDIVIDUALS CONTACTED:

*Provide a brief chronology of the scoping and ongoing involvement for this project.*

The proponent has requested and filed that state application DS-409 application for permit to take and remove gravel from state lands. ELO staff made a field evaluation of the site on November 10, 2015. Due to the small scope of the project no public comment was sought.

#### 2. OTHER GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES WITH JURISDICTION, LIST OF PERMITS NEEDED:

Montana Department of Environmental Quality-Open Pit Mining Permit  
Montana DNRC DS-409  
Comprehensive Noxious Weed Management Plan McCone County Weed District

#### 3. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

Alternative A- Grant Permit to take and remove gravel from trust land.  
Alternative B- No Action

### III. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

- *RESOURCES potentially impacted are listed on the form, followed by common issues that would be considered.*
- *Explain POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATIONS following each resource heading.*
- *Enter "NONE" if no impacts are identified or the resource is not present.*

#### 4. GEOLOGY AND SOIL QUALITY, STABILITY AND MOISTURE:

*Consider the presence of fragile, compactable or unstable soils. Identify unusual geologic features. Specify any special reclamation considerations. Identify any cumulative impacts to soils.*

Alternative A- Most areas of the site are shallow with gravel. Any topsoil and subsoil shall be stripped and stockpiled for use in reclamation. Reclamation will require the slopes of the area to be put back to a natural contour. Once a natural contour is established subsoil and topsoil will be replaced. Once topsoil is replaced the area will be reseeded to a native grass mixture and erosion control devices will be installed where appropriate.

Alternative B- The proponent will have to pursue other means to acquire the gravel material needed for the project. This may add expense and time to the project and realize no monetary benefit to the trust. The proposed pit area would remain undisturbed.

---

**5. WATER QUALITY, QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION:**

*Identify important surface or groundwater resources. Consider the potential for violation of ambient water quality standards, drinking water maximum contaminant levels, or degradation of water quality. Identify cumulative effects to water resources.*

Alternative A-Minimal runoff of particulates could be expected. Due to the minimal amount of topsoil on the site and distance to the nearest drainage minimal impact can be expected. All construction will be done in a manner to contain any runoff. No groundwater resources should be disturbed.

Alternative B- No Impact.

---

**6. AIR QUALITY:**

*What pollutants or particulate would be produced? Identify air quality regulations or zones (e.g. Class I air shed) the project would influence. Identify cumulative effects to air quality.*

Alternative A- Pollutants and Particulates may be increased during the construction of the project. After the completion of the project pollutant and particulate levels should return to normal.

Alternative B- No impact

---

**7. VEGETATION COVER, QUANTITY AND QUALITY:**

*What changes would the action cause to vegetative communities? Consider rare plants or cover types that would be affected. Identify cumulative effects to vegetation.*

Alternative A- Vegetative cover will be disturbed in the area of mining operation. Species on the site include Western Wheatgrass (*agropyron smithii*), Blue Bunch Wheatgrass (*agropyron spicatum*), Little Bluestem (*schizachyrium scoparium*), Prairie Sandreed (*calamovilfa longifolia*), Blue Grama (*bouteloua gracilis*), Needle and Thread (*stipa comata*), Prairie Junegrass (*koleria pyramidata*), Threadleaf Sedge (*carex filifolia*) and Creeping Juniper (*juniperus horizontalis*). The proponent will be required to provide the Eastern Land Office with a comprehensive noxious weed management plan subject to approval.

Alternative B- No Impact

---

**8. TERRESTRIAL, AVIAN AND AQUATIC LIFE AND HABITATS:**

*Consider substantial habitat values and use of the area by wildlife, birds or fish. Identify cumulative effects to fish and wildlife.*

Alternative A-There may be minimal disruption to the wildlife that inhabit the area. Disruption may occur during the duration of the project. After completion and reclamation of the project wildlife species uses should return to normal levels.

Alternative B- No Impact

---

**9. UNIQUE, ENDANGERED, FRAGILE OR LIMITED ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES:**

*Consider any federally listed threatened or endangered species or habitat identified in the project area. Determine effects to wetlands. Consider Sensitive Species or Species of special concern. Identify cumulative effects to these species and their habitat.*

Alternative A- A search of the Montana Natural Heritage Database shows the sensitive species Chestnut-collared Longspur has been noted in the general project area. No significant impact to this species is expected if this project were permitted. Upon completion of the project the area of disturbance would be reclaimed. This project is not located in Greater Sage Grouse Core, Connectivity, or General Habitat. There are no noted active or inactive leks within the project area.

Alternative B- No Impact

---

**10. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES:**

*Identify and determine effects to historical, archaeological or paleontological resources.*

Alternative A- A field review of the project area was made by the ELO Field Staff and DNRC Staff Archeologist on November 10, 2015. No historical, archeological or paleontological resources were noted during this

inspection. A search of the TLMS database shows no previously recorded resources on this tract. No impact expected.  
Alternative B- No Impact

---

**11. AESTHETICS:**

*Determine if the project is located on a prominent topographic feature, or may be visible from populated or scenic areas. What level of noise, light or visual change would be produced? Identify cumulative effects to aesthetics.*

Alternative A- This may slightly change the appearance of the landscape. After the proposed mining project is completed the proponent would be required to reclaim the area to near pre construction condition. Noise levels may be increased during the project but should return to normal after the completion of the project. The project is located in a remote and sparsely populated area.

Alternative B- No Impact

---

**12. DEMANDS ON ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES OF LAND, WATER, AIR OR ENERGY:**

*Determine the amount of limited resources the project would require. Identify other activities nearby that the project would affect. Identify cumulative effects to environmental resources.*

Alternative A-The effects on limited resources will be the removal of approximately 74,000 cubic yards of gravel material. This should have a slight impact on the limited resources on the state tract. This should not affect any nearby projects or activities.

Alternative B- No Impact

---

**13. OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTS PERTINENT TO THE AREA:**

*List other studies, plans or projects on this tract. Determine cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of current private, state or federal actions in the analysis area, and from future proposed state actions in the analysis area that are under MEPA review (scoped) or permitting review by any state agency.*

None

IV. IMPACTS ON THE HUMAN POPULATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• RESOURCES potentially impacted are listed on the form, followed by common issues that would be considered.</li><li>• Explain POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATIONS following each resource heading.</li><li>• Enter "NONE" if no impacts are identified or the resource is not present.</li></ul>



---

**14. HUMAN HEALTH AND SAFETY:**

*Identify any health and safety risks posed by the project.*

Alternative A- There may be potential safety risks for laborers but the potential risk is minimal with proper safety efforts and properly trained employees.

Alternative B- No Impact

---

**15. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURE ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION:**

*Identify how the project would add to or alter these activities.*

Alternative A- It should have a positive effect on Industrial, Commercial and Agricultural Production. Materials would be used to improve an rebuild an existing highway to modern standards.

Alternative B- No Impact

---

**16. QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT:**

*Estimate the number of jobs the project would create, move or eliminate. Identify cumulative effects to the employment market.*

Alternative A- This project has the potential to create jobs with further development possibilities.

Alternative B- No Impact

---

**17. LOCAL AND STATE TAX BASE AND TAX REVENUES:**

*Estimate tax revenue the project would create or eliminate. Identify cumulative effects to taxes and revenue.*

Alternative A- No Impact Expected

Alternative B- No Impact

---

**18. DEMAND FOR GOVERNMENT SERVICES:**

*Estimate increases in traffic and changes to traffic patterns. What changes would be needed to fire protection, police, schools, etc.? Identify cumulative effects of this and other projects on government services*

Alternative A- Traffic in the area may be slightly increased. A need for additional government services is not expected.

Alternative B- No impact

---

**19. LOCALLY ADOPTED ENVIRONMENTAL PLANS AND GOALS:**

*List State, County, City, USFS, BLM, Tribal, and other zoning or management plans, and identify how they would affect this project.*

Alternative A- No Impact

Alternative B- No Impact

---

**20. ACCESS TO AND QUALITY OF RECREATIONAL AND WILDERNESS ACTIVITIES:**

*Identify any wilderness or recreational areas nearby or access routes through this tract. Determine the effects of the project on recreational potential within the tract. Identify cumulative effects to recreational and wilderness activities.*

Alternative A- Active mining area will require a site specific recreational use closure during the duration of the activity to ensure public safety. This closure would be for the general area of mining activity.

Alternative B- No Impact

---

**21. DENSITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION AND HOUSING:**

*Estimate population changes and additional housing the project would require. Identify cumulative effects to population and housing.*

Alternative A- No Impact expected

Alternative B- No Impact

---

**22. SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND MORES:**

*Identify potential disruption of native or traditional lifestyles or communities.*

Alternative A- No Impact

Alternative B- No Impact

---

**23. CULTURAL UNIQUENESS AND DIVERSITY:**

*How would the action affect any unique quality of the area?*

Alternative A- No Impact

Alternative B- No Impact

---

**24. OTHER APPROPRIATE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES:**

*Estimate the return to the trust. Include appropriate economic analysis. Identify potential future uses for the analysis area other than existing management. Identify cumulative economic and social effects likely to occur as a result of the proposed action.*

Alternative A- There would be an estimated sale of 74,000 cubic yards of scoria at a set rate of \$1.50 per unit. This estimated income to the trust would be \$111,000.00

Alternative B- Potential revenue for the School Trust would not be captured

<b>EA Checklist Prepared By:</b>	<b>Name:</b> Scott Aye	<b>Date:</b> 12-8-2015
	<b>Title:</b> Land Use Specialist	

---

**V. FINDING**

---

**25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED:**

Alternative A

---

**26. SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS:**

The proposed gravel pit of approximately 25 acres should not result in nor cause significant environmental impacts. The predicted environmental impacts should be adequately mitigated through the Eastern Land Office and DEQ open pit mining project stipulations, reclamation bonds and surface and minerals management rules. For these reasons an environmental assessment checklist is the appropriate level of analysis for the proposed action. The proposed mining pit would satisfy the trust fiduciary mandate.

---

**27. NEED FOR FURTHER ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:**

EIS

More Detailed EA

No Further Analysis

<b>EA Checklist Approved By:</b>	<b>Name:</b> Chris Pileski
	<b>Title:</b> Area Manager; Eastern Land Office
<b>Signature:</b> /s/ Chris Pileski	<b>Date:</b> 12-8-2015