

## CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

**Project Name:** Havre Sand and Gravel Inc. Aggregate Testing

**Proposed**

**Implementation Date:** Spring 2026

**Proponent:** Havre Sand and Gravel Inc.

**Location:** 33N, 18E, 31 (E ½ E ½ E ½) & 32 (W ½ W ½ W ½)

**County:** Blaine County, MT

**Trust:** Common Schools

**Introduction:** In January of 2025, the Minerals Management Bureau of the Forestry and Trust Lands Division of the Montana DNRC, completed a programmatic environmental analysis for aggregate testing. The programmatic environmental analysis goes into further detail and evaluates a wider scope of resources than this checklist environmental assessment. This checklist environmental assessment should be read and understood in conjunction with the programmatic environmental analysis. The programmatic environmental assessment can be found on the Departments website at:

<https://dnrc.mt.gov/TrustLand/subsurface-resources/Aggregate-Testing-Programmatic-EA-FINAL.pdf>

### I. TYPE AND PURPOSE OF ACTION

On April 17, 2026, The Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) received an application from Havre Sand and Gravel, Inc., henceforth known as the proponent, for aggregate testing on State of Montana School Trust Lands. The application was made for testing location, Township 33N, Range 18E, Section 31 and 32. This checklist analysis, in conjunction with the programmatic analysis, will evaluate the impacts of an action alternative and no action alternative.

This issuance of an aggregate testing permit allows the proponent to dig holes between 3ft and 20 ft in depth to observe and test the aggregate resource present. The proponent will salvage and replace topsoil and reseed disturbed areas with an approved seed mix.

### 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 application was forwarded by the Minerals Management Bureau to the Lewistown Unit Office, April 17, 2026.

The surface lessee for this tract will be contacted and informed of the application.

#### 3. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

**No Action Alternative:** The aggregate testing permit application would be denied.

**Action Alternative:** The aggregate testing permit application would be approved with standard stipulations along with any special stipulations identified resulting from this analysis.

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

Will the project impact any unique geologic features?  
No.

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

List any species of concern identified in the proposed testing area through review of the Montana Natural Heritage Program Map. Identify any impacts that aggregate testing would have on each of these species.

- F - Northern Redbelly Dace (*Chrosomus eos*) SOC
- F - Iowa Darter (*Etheostoma exile*) SOC
- F - Northern Pearl Dace (*Margariscus nachtriebi*) SOC
- F - Sauger (*Sander canadensis*) SOC
- M - Little Brown Myotis (*Myotis lucifugus*) SOC
- B - Bobolink (*Dolichonyx oryzivorus*) SOC
- M - Northern Hoary Bat (*Lasiurus cinereus*) SOC
- M - Eastern Red Bat (*Lasiurus borealis*) SOC
- B - Great Blue Heron (*Ardea herodias*) SOC
- M - Silver-haired Bat (*Lasionycteris noctivagans*) SOC
- B - Greater Sage-Grouse (*Centrocercus urophasianus*) SOC
- F - Northern Redbelly X Finescale Dace (*Chrosomus eos* x *Chrosomus neogaeus*) SOC
- O - Bat Roost (Non-Cave) (Bat Roost (Non-Cave)) IAH

This location is adjacent to a pre-existing gravel pit operated by the proponent. Additionally, this location is utilized for agricultural fields and has been previously altered from an original landscape. Although the agricultural fields located where the aggregate testing is proposed may be suitable or used for the listed species of concern, it is unlikely the aggregate testing process will have any lasting detrimental effects on Species of Concern. Species of concern in the area during aggregate testing operations, would likely temporarily disperse and seek other suitable habitat on adjacent tracts. Due to the nature of the disturbance and its associated length, it is unlikely that the selection of the action would impact species of concern in a significant manner. Overall, the impacts would be expected to be short-term and minor.

Is the testing area contained within the boundaries of the DNRC Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP)?  
No.

Is the testing area within Core or General Sage Grouse Habitat?  
No

Is the testing area within one-half mile of an active Bald or Golden Eagle Nest?  
No.

**10. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES:**  
*Identify and determine effects to historical, archaeological or paleontological resources.*

A Class I (literature review) level review was conducted by the DNRC staff archaeologist for the area of potential effect (APE) for the proposed Lohman Gravel Pit expansion in the East half of Section 31 and

West half of Section 32 T33N R18E. This entailed inspection of project maps, DNRC's sites/site leads database in TLMS, land use records, General Land Office Survey Plats, and control cards. The Class I search revealed that no cultural or paleontological resources have been identified in the APE. Further, the APE is fully disturbed with past cultivation and the shallow upper prairie sediments would not contain deeply buried cultural material that extend below the plow zone. If cultural remains were ever present in the APE, they have been fully disturbed and would not contribute any meaningful information to archaeology. No additional archaeological investigative work will be conducted in response to the proposed gravel pit expansion. However, if previously unknown cultural or paleontological materials are identified during project related activities, all work will cease until a professional assessment of such resources can be made.

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

Are there other studies, plans, or projects currently in place on this tract?

Yes – the following are included on this Trust Lands Tract:

DNRC Ag & Grazing Lease – AG 9624

- The DNRC currently leases the project area for agriculture. The digging of aggregate test holes will temporarily disturb agricultural areas. Damages to the surface lessee’s lease would be paid by the proponent in accordance with Administrative Rule 36.25.138.

DNRC Gravel Permit – G-1162-88

- The proponent of the aggregate testing currently holds the above listed Gravel Permit.

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

Are there any locally adopted environmental plans and goals for the tracts upon which aggregate testing is proposed?

No.

<b>Checklist EA Prepared By:</b>	<b>Name:</b> KELLY BERTELLOTTI	<b>Date:</b> 4/23/2026
	<b>Title:</b> MINERALS RESOURCE SPECIALIST	

**25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED:**

**Action Alternative:** The proponent’s application would be granted, and the proponent would be allowed to conduct aggregate testing.

**26.SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS:**

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I have concluded that through the implementation of the stipulations listed below that the impacts of the proposed action are non-significant, being either negligible or minor and short-term in nature.

- The Permittee shall only conduct operations under dry or frozen conditions. Operations are not allowed under wet or muddy conditions.
- The Permittee shall inspect and wash any equipment being utilized in operations prior to commencing work. This shall mitigate the risk of fire and the spread of noxious and invasive weeds.
- The Permittee shall be responsible for the elimination of noxious and invasive weeds that are introduced or exacerbated resulting from permitted activities.
- The Permittee shall keep a fire extinguisher readily available during operations. A fire start caused by Permitted operations is the sole responsibility of the Permittee.
- The Department may postpone operations if they are deemed as a fire risk.
- If any previously unidentified historical, archeological or paleontological resources are encountered during permitted activities the Permittee shall avoid the site and report it to the nearest DNRC unit office.
- The Permittee must contact the Department's surface lessee prior to testing and notify them of their presence in the project area. Any damage to the surface lessee's leasehold interest, caused by the Permittee's activities authorized herein are subject to Administrative Rule 36.25.138.

<b>Checklist EA</b>	<b>Name:</b> <i>Josh Stoychoff</i>
<b>Approved By:</b>	<b>Title:</b> <i>Lewistown Unit Manager - MT DNRC</i>
<b>Signature:</b> <i>Josh Stoychoff</i>	<b>Date:</b> <i>4/23/26</i>

# Map for DNRC Testing Permit

Havre Sand & Gravel, Inc.  
Testing for Aggregate Application  
Submitted 4/17/26

## Legend

- 2023 Amended Total Area
- North Testing Location
- Opencut #3245 State Lohman Pit
- Proposed Amended Area
- South Testing Location
- Unbonded



