

**PUBLIC SCOPING STATEMENT  
DOUGLAS QUARRY EXPANSION  
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

**BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
CASPER FIELD OFFICE**

**DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT**

Introduction

In mid-2010, rights to the Huxtable Quarry located in the SW¼ of section 33, T. 32 N., R. 72 W., Converse County, Wyoming (private surface, federal minerals) were acquired by Pinnacle Materials, Inc. (Pinnacle) for purposes of continuing operations and production of crushed aggregate products. This operation activity is described in the *Environmental Assessment of the Proposed Huxtable Quarry Mineral Materials Project, Converse County, Wyoming* (April 2005). In mid-2010, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) issued a contract (WYW-178426) for the sale of mineral materials for 280,000 tons of crushed and broken stone over a five-year term. This contract replaced an expired contract (WYW-157739) that was originally granted in 2005 based on the EA. Pinnacle is operating under permits issued by the State of Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality (WDEQ), Air Quality Division (AQD), Land Quality Division (LQD), and Water Quality Division (WQD). The LQD permit is for a maximum disturbance of 10 acres (Notification and Surface Owner Consent for Limited Mining Operations also known as ten-acre exemption). An application for a small mine permit has been filed with LQD for increasing the disturbed area and annual throughput consistent with this proposed project.

Expansion of production depends on market conditions within the immediate area of the quarry. Historically, the quarry produced less than 100,000 tons annually. However, since mid-2010 production has steadily increased to over 20,000 tons per month.

Pinnacle is requesting a BLM renewable competitive sales contract for three million tons with a term of 10 years. Upon fulfillment of this contract, Pinnacle would request renewal of this contract for an additional three million tons over 10 more years. The sales contract would total the six million tons identified as being present within the 40-acre site.

Projected Mineral Material Production

Pinnacle plans to increase operations throughput to as much as one million tons per year within a 40-acre area as described in Alternative A: 40-acre Quarry of the 2005 EA. The quantity of limestone available within the 40-acre quarry area

would be sufficient for removal of six million tons or more by current quarrying methods. The thickness of the in-place limestone formation is at least 130 feet. This volume calculation considers stable highwall and endwall slopes, set-back from property boundaries, buffer for topsoil removal and access roads, surface water control features, and stockpile areas.

The affected area estimated for each year of operation is as follows:

Current – 10 acres  
Year 1 – 7 acres  
Year 2 – 5 acres  
Year 3 – 4 acres  
Year 4 – 4 acres  
Year 5 – 4 acres  
Year 6 – 4 acres  
Year 7 – 0 acres (reclamation of final highwall)

Total – 38 acres

The limestone formation for quarrying is exposed at the surface over most of the affected area and there would not need to be an overburden stockpile as overburden material is limited. Only topsoil, where present, would be removed and stockpiled for use in reclamation of the site.

The operation is designed to operate on a seven day per week schedule throughout the year. Considering down time for weather, holidays, etc., daily production would average approximately 3,000 tons with peak daily production of 9,000 tons. The typical plant operation would be 10 hours per day plus time for preparation and maintenance. Loading and haulage activities would be scheduled over a wider daily time period to accommodate customer needs.

The operations components include surface water control, topsoil removal and stockpiling, drilling and blasting, loading and transport of run-of-mine blasted aggregate to the crushing and sizing equipment, crushing, screening, and stockpiling, and loading and haulage from the site. These activities would occur throughout the day and night time throughout the year. Dust from operations within the quarry area and access road is controlled by water at transfer points and periodic applications on the road surface, as required.

#### Transportation of Salable Mineral Materials

The existing private access road that connects the quarry with the nearest public road (Cold Springs Road) has been improved suitable for the increased level of production. Existing public roads that would be used for transport of the aggregate to customers would include the Cold Springs Road (Wyoming

Highway 91), Old Yellowstone Highway (Wyoming Highway 96), and others depending on locations of customer's projects.

The maximum number of available operating days is estimated to be 345 considering weather, holidays, etc. Each day may have operating time of 24 hours that would result in an average daily transport quantity of 3,000 tons with peak daily production of up to 9,000 tons. Using an average load factor of 35 tons per truck, the number of round trips per day would range from 86 to 258 or an average number of round trips per hour of 4 to 11.

### Douglas Quarry Reclamation Practices and Procedures

The final advance of the active quarry highwall would be modified by design of the upper benches so that an overall slope of 2H:1V would be achieved. This overall slope would include intermittent highwall segments that are stable with benches that are available, as required for the surface owners use and replacement of topsoil materials so that revegetation can be completed. Access to benches would be maintained during the post-mining reclamation phase and for use by livestock and wildlife. The surface owner may also use a portion of the highwall area for construction of a house and related buildings for long-term use. Rubble slopes may form a portion of the final highwall configuration. These slopes mimic talus slopes similar to other adjacent landforms and would be formed by use of controlled and designed blasting of the final highwall. Care would be taken to ensure that the final configuration meets the landowner requirements and exhibit long-term stability. This landform provides wildlife habitat and breaks up the linear highwall configuration sometimes present with final quarry pits. This configuration also makes the site blend in with adjacent undisturbed lands particularly when viewed from public roads and adjacent land owners in the area.

## **RELATIONSHIP TO EXISTING PLANS AND DOCUMENTS**

**Land Use Plan (LUP) Name** - Record of Decision and Approved Casper Resource Management Plan (BLM). Date approved/amended: December 7, 2007.

The proposed action is in conformance with the applicable LUP because it is specifically provided for in the following LUP decision(s):

2008, MR:1 Mineral material sales are discretionary actions; therefore, disposal will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Stipulations to protect important resource values will be based on interdisciplinary review of individual proposals.

2021 MR:1 BLM-administered mineral estate, except areas identified as necessary for the protection of specific resource values or uses, is open to the disposal of mineral materials.

**Use Authorizations** - An approved plan of operations is subject to mitigation and monitoring measures to prevent unnecessary or undue degradation of public lands. Other conditions of approval to protect important resources may be added to the authorization if analysis proves such measures would further reduce environmental impact.

## **NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT (NEPA)**

On reviewing the proposal, the BLM has determined that an environmental assessment (EA) will be prepared.

The existing operation activities are described in the *Environmental Assessment of the Proposed Huxtable Quarry Mineral Materials Project, Converse County, Wyoming* (April 2005). The Huxtable Quarry EA will be incorporated by reference into the new EA. Incorporation by reference provides opportunities to reduce paperwork and redundant analysis in the NEPA process. It also allows BLM to briefly summarize the relevant portions of the Huxtable Quarry EA rather than repeat them.

The impact analysis presented in the EA will result in one of three outcomes, as determined by the BLM. 1) the proposed project would not result in significant impacts and a Decision Record with a Finding of No Significant Impact (DR/FONSI) would be signed, allowing the project to be implemented); 2) the project as proposed would result in significant impacts and would require the preparation of an environmental impact statement (EIS); or, 3) no action would be approved.

For this project, the BLM has determined that scoping activities will be conducted prior to the preparation of an EA.

- to determine reasonable development alternatives to be considered in the document;
- to identify issues of concern related to the proposed project; and,
- to determine the depth and range of analyses for issues addressed in the document.

This scoping statement has been prepared to enable government agencies, the public, and other interested parties to participate in, and contribute to, the analysis process. Public input is important in establishing the scope of analysis for any NEPA document, and the BLM encourages public participation.

## **IDENTIFIED RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ISSUES AND CONCERNS**

The following issues and concerns have been identified to-date. This list is not meant to be all-inclusive, but rather to serve as a starting point for public input.

Once all issues and concerns have been gathered through scoping and BLM consideration of the project, corresponding resource disciplines will be identified to conduct analysis for individual issues and concerns.

- air quality
- noise
- surface and ground water
- increased traffic
- socioeconomic impacts
- reclamation of disturbed areas and control of noxious weeds
- visual impacts

### **TIMING NEEDS AND REQUIREMENTS**

Government agencies, the public, and other interested parties are encouraged to participate throughout the environmental analysis process to help identify the level of analysis needed, alternatives to be considered, issues or concerns that should be assessed, mitigation opportunities, and any other comments or ideas to help ensure that the analysis process is comprehensive.

An open house is planned in Douglas, Wyoming during this comment period to provide the public with an opportunity to review the proposal and project information.

The scoping period for this project ends on March 8, 2011. Please submit your comments to:

Tom Foertsch, Geologist  
Bureau of Land Management  
Casper Field Office  
2987 Prospector Drive  
Casper, Wyoming 82604

E-mail: [casper\\_wymail@blm.gov](mailto:casper_wymail@blm.gov). Please refer to the Douglas Quarry Project in your response.