

1791 (040)
FMC Haul Road EA

October 17, 2000

SCOPING NOTICE

**FMC Corporation's Proposed Haul Road
Between Westavco and Granger**

Dear Reader:

FMC Corporation has notified the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Rock Springs Field Office, of proposed plans to construct and operate a 5.3 mile iron ore haul road, five 6- 12 inch diameter pipelines, and a fiber optic line between their Westavco and Granger plants. The enclosed document serves as notice of the beginning of the environmental analysis process to fulfill the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). An environmental assessment will be prepared for this proposal. Should the scoping process or the EA reveal the potential for significant impacts, an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) would be prepared.

If you have concerns, issues, or alternatives you would like to see addressed, please respond with your written comments by November 22, 2000. Send written comments to:

Arlan Hiner, Team Leader
Rock Springs District Office
280 Highway 191 North
Rock Springs, WY 82901

If you have questions regarding the project proposal or the NEPA process, please contact Arlan Hiner at 307-352-0206.

Sincerely,

/s/ Ted Murphy

Acting Field Manager

Enclosures Scoping notice

CC: KFO-Kelly Lamborn
RSFO-Becky Heick

**SCOPING NOTICE FOR FMC CORPORATION'S
GRANGER ORE TRANSPORTATION PROJECT**

**Bureau of Land Management
Rock Springs Field Office**

I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

FMC Corporation (FMC) has applied for a right-of-way (ROW) from the U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Rock Springs Field Office, to construct and operate a haul road on federal lands between Westvaco and Granger, Sweetwater County, Wyoming (Figure 1). The proposed 5.3-mile haul road would cross 1.7 miles (32%) of private land; 1.3 miles (25%) of state land; and 2.3 miles (43%) of federal land managed by the BLM. Its primary function would be to transport dry ore from Westvaco operations to the Granger processing plant. FMC also is proposing to install up to five pipelines and a fiber optic cable along the same route.

The Granger plant is currently supplied with ore from the Granger Mine Bed 20, which is of relatively low quality due to high concentrations of insoluble rock. This low-quality ore makes the costs per ton of ore mined and of production of refined soda ash (RSA) very high compared with competing producers. The Granger Bed 20 Mine, with current mining methods, has a projected life expectancy of less than 5 years. As a result, another source of ore is needed to supply the Granger surface facility. The trona leases at the Westvaco site hold enough ore to supply both the Westvaco and Granger plants for at least 50 years; therefore, the Westvaco mine is a logical source of ore for the Granger surface plant.

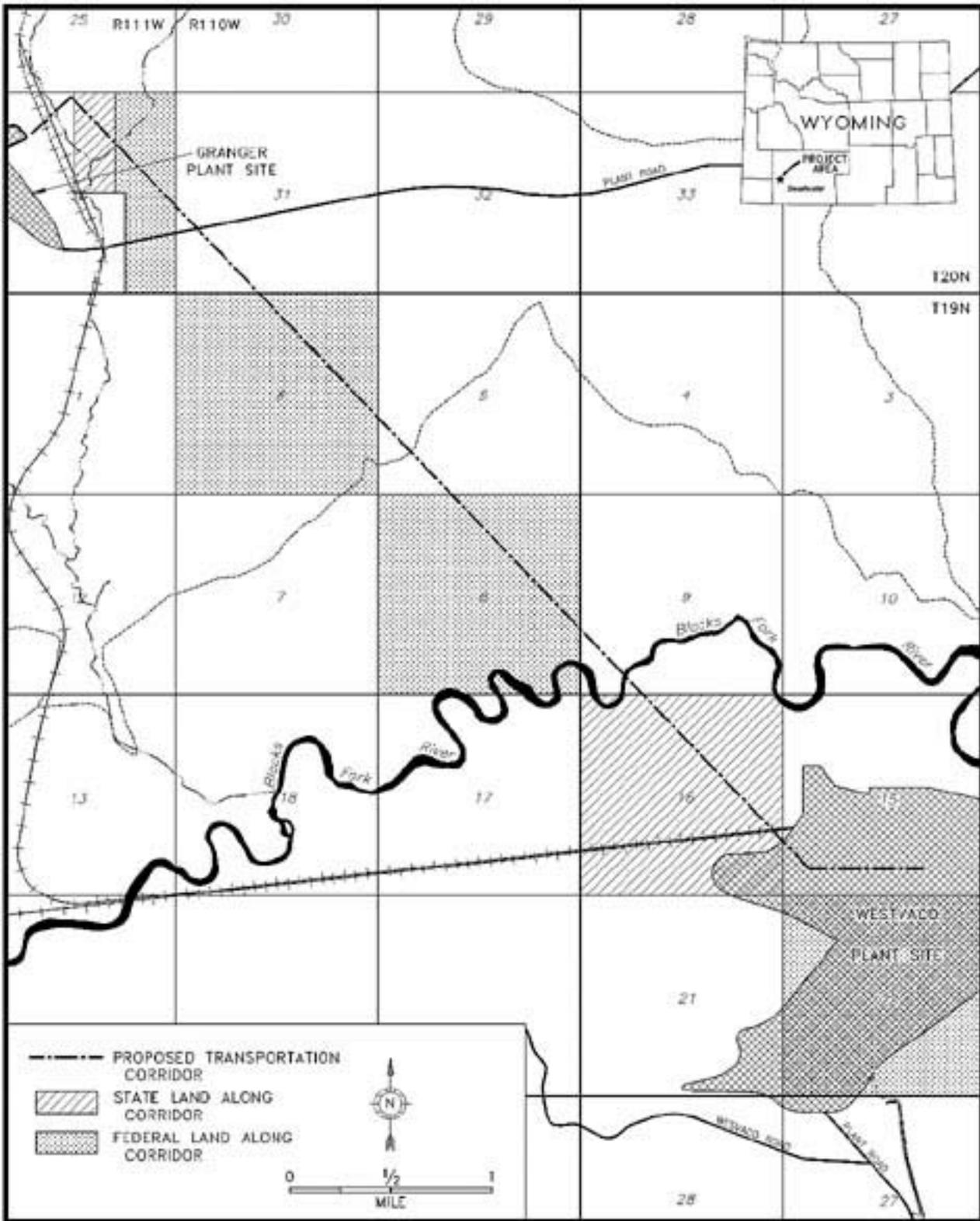
The haul road would be designed and constructed to meet or exceed BLM standards. A temporary construction ROW width of 400 ft and a permanent operation and maintenance ROW width of 200 ft would be required. Direct surface disturbance would typically be limited to a 200-ft wide corridor; however, up to 400 ft would be needed in certain areas such as steep terrain due to cuts and fills necessary to construct and stabilize the road on slopes. Surface disturbance would be approximately 130-260 acres. Disturbance on BLM land would be 56-112 acres.

The haul road would be approximately 40 ft wide and paved with asphalt. Construction would include surveying and staking, clearing and grading, placement and grading of roadbed material, installation of drainage structures, paving, erecting traffic signs, and reclamation of those areas disturbed during construction that are not needed for operations and maintenance.

Ancillary facilities would include:

- . a railroad overpass;
- . a bridge over the Blacks Fork River;
- . a haul truck service and maintenance building;

- . an ore loading facility including fugitive dust control equipment (at Westvaco);
- . a conveyor from the existing Westvaco ore distribution system to the loading facility;
- . an ore unloading facility including fugitive dust control equipment (at Granger);
- . a conveyor from the Granger unloading facility to an existing ore distribution system; and
- . the existing ore processing facilities at the Westvaco and Granger plants.



The maintenance building, ore loading and unloading facilities, and the Westvaco and Granger conveyors would be located in the respective plant areas and not in the BLM ROW.

FMC is proposing to use 150-ton, three-trailer haul trucks. The maximum annual tonnage of ore to be hauled is 2.7 million tons; so, assuming a truck capacity of 150 tons, two to four trucks would be required, each making between 14 and 27 trips per day depending on the final number of trucks selected and the number of hours per day that the ore haul operates. The haul road would be available for use 24 hours/day, 7 days/week. Ore transport would occur on a demand basis up to and including 24 hours/day, 7 days/week, if necessary. Truck frequency would be approximately one truck every 50 minutes during the period of operation. Ore transportation would occur an estimated 330 days/year. The road would also be used by other vehicles traveling between the two plants--approximately 100 round trips/week of this interplant traffic is anticipated.

Two bridges would be required for the project, one over the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) at the Westvaco Plant and one over the Blacks Fork River. Bridges would be designed and constructed in conformance with American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) standards; the bridge over the railroad would also meet additional UPRR requirements, if any. Bridges would be constructed with steel girders and a concrete deck. Abutments would likely be constructed with concrete supported by steel piling.

Bridge construction over Blacks Fork River may result in disturbance in the riparian area--best management practices would be used to minimize disturbance, stabilize banks, and reclaim all disturbed areas not required for operations.

Trucks would load at the Westvaco site from a bin supplied by a conveyor from the Mono Distribution Building. At the Granger plant, trucks would drive onto a bin and belly-dump into it. Ore would be transported from the bin by conveyor to the existing Granger Tipple Bin. Both sites would have truck turn-around areas and dust control measures would be implemented at both facilities. Trucks transporting ore would be covered.

An estimated five 6- to 12-inch diameter pipelines and a fiber optic cable would be installed in the ROW adjacent to the haul road. The pipelines will carry various alkaline solutions ranging in concentration from 2-30% alkalinity. The fiber optic cable would be used to improve voice, video, and computerized communications between the two sites.

Pipeline construction would involve surveying and staking, grading and trenching, pipe stringing and coupling, backfilling and erosion control, and hydrostatic testing. Pipelines would be buried side-by-side within the ROW. Trenches would be approximately 6 ft deep. The pipelines would be drilled under the Blacks Fork River using boring or directional drilling techniques, so no surface disturbance would occur in the river or the riparian area. Pipelines would be constructed

to industry standards using approved practices similar to other pipelines constructed in the area.

The fiber optic cable would be installed on the opposite side of the road from the pipelines using standard plowing, trenching, and boring construction techniques similar to those used for other fiber optic cables recently installed in the region. The cable would be suspended on the bridge over the Blacks Fork River.

Final cleanup and restoration would occur immediately following construction and testing (i.e., pressure-testing pipelines). Waste materials (e.g., brush, rock, construction materials) would be removed from the area and recycled or disposed of at approved facilities. Revegetation of any areas disturbed during construction but not needed for operations would occur in the first fall following construction.

The project would be constructed in phases. Construction of the haul road, two pipelines, and the fiber optic cable is expected to commence on or about August 1, 2001, and would be completed in the fourth quarter of 2002. Paving cannot be completed in cold weather, so any paving-related work would be suspended over the 2001/2002 winter. All disturbed areas would be stabilized prior to suspending operations. The remaining pipelines would be installed at 2-year intervals over the following 4 years (i.e., 2004 and 2006).

Most land along the route is utilized for rangeland and wildlife habitat and, except for the haul road corridor, these land uses would continue. Existing roads, fences, structures, or drainage facilities that are damaged during construction would be replaced or repaired to a condition equal to or better than that which existed before construction. The width and alignment of existing roads would not be altered. Existing roads would not be used if deep rutting (in excess of 4 inches) would occur. Access would be limited to existing roads and the proposed ROW.

II. RELATIONSHIP TO EXISTING LAND USE PLANS AND OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTS

The project area is within the area covered by the Green River and Kemmerer Resource Management Plans. The management objectives in these plans provide for the development of transportation facilities and pipelines with stipulations to protect certain important natural resources when siting these systems.

III. COMPLIANCE WITH THE NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT

In compliance with the *National Environmental Policy Act* (NEPA) and Council on Environmental Quality regulations for implementing NEPA, BLM has determined that an environmental assessment (EA) will be necessary to evaluate the proposed project. The purpose of the EA is to provide the public and decision-makers with sufficient information to understand

the environmental consequences of FMC's proposed project and to identify and develop appropriate mitigation measures to minimize environmental impacts.

One transportation alternative that has been identified is FMC's construction of an overland conveyor to transport ore along the same route. A haul road is FMC's preferred alternative because it would be less expensive to construct and operate and it would decrease the time traveled by interplant traffic (it currently takes about 45 minutes to drive between plants). Aspects of the alternative (e.g., ROW needed, location, construction schedule) are similar to the haul road alternative. However, construction, operations, and maintenance would be notably different.

The conveyor would consist of a rubber belt mounted on rollers and supported by a metal framework. The metal framework would be supported by concrete footings and the conveyor would be covered with a light-weight, corrugated-steel, quonset-type cover. Passages would be provided to allow for the movement of wildlife, livestock, ranchers, recreationists, and other area users. These passages would be developed in consultation with the BLM and the Wyoming Game and Fish Department. Ancillary facilities would include an access road and dust control facilities at ore transfer points, as well as existing facilities at the Granger and Westvaco plants.

Conveyor construction would involve initial grading and possibly development of a road base along a corridor approximately 50 ft wide to create a relatively flat surface for conveyor and access road construction. The access road would be constructed in accordance with BLM's road standards.

Trona ore would be loaded onto the conveyor via a portable crusher/hopper system. The conveyor would operate as necessary to supply the required quantity of ore to Granger. Maintenance would include daily inspections for spills and cleanup. Drive train components would be serviced and maintained weekly and moving parts would be lubricated monthly.

The Proposed Action may be modified as a result of comments received during scoping or during EA preparation. The conveyor alternative will also be addressed in the EA, along with a No Action Alternative and any other alternatives that may be developed as a result of this scoping notice.

IV. LAND AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ISSUES AND CONCERNS

Land and resource management issues and concerns specific to haul road and pipeline construction, operation, and maintenance that will be addressed in the EA include the following:

- . cultural and historic resources;
- . nesting raptors;
- . surface water, wetlands, riparian areas, and floodplains;

- . threatened, endangered, candidate, and sensitive species;
- . noxious weeds;
- . general soil types and sensitive soils;
- . big game and livestock crossings;
- . air quality;
- . spill containment;
- . noise;
- . revegetation; and
- . cumulative impacts.

This list is intended as a starting point from which to identify issues and concerns specific to the proposed project. Additional issues, concerns, and opportunities may be identified during scoping and preparation of the EA. All identified issues and concerns regarding FMC's proposed project that are deemed appropriate by BLM will be analyzed during the NEPA process.

V. SCHEDULE FOR PUBLIC INPUT

The public is encouraged to participate throughout the environmental analysis process. This process is scheduled to be completed by July 2001. The public should submit comments on this scoping statement by November 22, 2000. Please send your comments to:

U.S. Bureau of Land Management
Rock Springs Field Office
Arlan Hiner, Project Leader
280 Highway 191 North
Rock Springs, WY 82901

VI. SCOPING STATEMENT INITIAL MAILING DISTRIBUTION

This scoping notice was mailed to approximately 150 federal, state, and local government entities, citizens, special interest groups, and companies, including but not limited to the following.

FEDERAL AGENCIES

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
U.S. Congresswoman Barbara Cubin

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. Senator Mike Enzi
U.S. Senator Craig Thomas

STATE AGENCIES

Governor Jim Geringer
Office of State Lands and Investments
State Representatives
State Senators
Wyoming Department of Environmental
Quality

Wyoming Department of Transportation
Wyoming Game and Fish Department
Wyoming Geological Survey
Wyoming Office of Federal Land Policy
Wyoming State Historic Preservation Office

COUNTY GOVERNMENT

Sweetwater County Commissioners

Sweetwater County Planning Commission

MUNICIPALITIES

Mayor - Granger
Mayor - Lyman

Mayor - Rock Springs
Mayor - Green River

NATIVE AMERICAN TRIBES

Eastern Shoshone Nation
Northern Arapahoe Business Council
Shoshone-Arapahoe Joint Tribal
Council

Shoshone-Bannock Tribes
Shoshone Tribal Business Council
Ute Tribal Council

LOCAL MEDIA

A press release was sent to local media.

LANDOWNERS AND GRAZING PERMITTEES

This scoping notice has been sent to known property owners and grazing permittees that would be affected by this project.

OTHER AGENCIES, INDUSTRY REPRESENTATIVES, AND INDIVIDUALS

Oregon California Trails Association
People for the USA
People for Wyoming
Sweetwater Wildlife Association
Trout Unlimited
Western Wyoming Mule Deer Foundation
Wyoming Association of Professional
Archaeologists

Wyoming Association of Professional
Historians
Wyoming Mining Association
Wyoming Outdoor Council
Wyoming Public Lands Council
Wyoming Sportsman's Association
Wyoming Wildlife Federation