



June 30, 2006

Harlowton Times - Clarion

RE: Notice of Application for an Operating Permit and Release of a Draft Checklist Environmental Assessment for Rock Picking and Sandstone Removal in Wheatland County

Dear Editor:

Please place the following notice in the legal publication section of your newspaper:

Legal Notice

Draft Checklist Environmental Assessment Released for an Operating Permit for Rock Picking and Sandstone Removal in Wheatland County

Rocky Mountain Stone, Inc., located at P.O. Box 6, Bozeman, MT 59771 filed an application on May 5, 2006 and a revised application on June 29, 2006 for an Operating Permit from the Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), Environmental Management Bureau in Helena. Rocky Mountain Stone, Inc. will use hand tools, skidders, and a loader to pick up sandstone rock and boulders for landscaping and masonry purposes from six sites. Five sites would be on private land in Sections 34 and 35, Township 7 North, Range 16 East and Section 2, Township 6 North, Range 16 East. The other site would be on State of Montana land in Section 2, Township 6 North, Range 15 East. The sites are located about ten miles south and southeast of Harlowton, MT.

Rocky Mountain Stone, Inc. seeks approval of its application for a 100 total acre permit area. A total of 38 acres would potentially be disturbed including 20 acres on State land and 18 acres on private land. Ground disturbance would normally be less than two feet in depth. If a permit is approved, Rocky Mountain Stone, Inc. would post a bond to ensure reclamation is completed.

The proposed operation has been reviewed for compliance under a Supplemental Programmatic Environmental Assessment (SPEA) for a General Quarry Operating Permit published by the DEQ in February 2004. DEQ has determined that this operation does not meet the requirements listed in the SPEA due to the number of sites and because there would be more than five acres disturbed and unreclaimed at any one time. Rocky Mountain Stone, Inc. cannot receive an operating permit until additional environmental analysis is completed. DEQ has

released a draft Checklist Environmental Assessment (CEA) on the proposed operating permit.

The Draft CEA addresses issues and concerns raised during public involvement and from agency scoping. DEQ must decide whether to approve the operating permit as proposed, deny the request for an operating permit, or approve the operating permit with modifications. DEQ has decided to approve the permit as proposed as the preliminary preferred alternative. This is not a final decision. This conclusion may change based on comments received from the public on the Draft CEA, new information, or new analysis that may be needed in preparing the Final CEA.

Copies of the application can be reviewed by the public at DEQ offices at 1520 E. 6th Ave., in Helena, MT. Please submit comments or questions on the proposal by August 9, 2006. For information on the project and to submit comments on the proposal, contact:

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The Draft CEA will also be posted on the DEQ web page:
www.dew.state.mt.gov.
