BEFORE Applying for a New or Amending an Existing Aggregate Mining Permit in Oregon

Following is a summary of issues regularly encountered at aggregate mining sites in Oregon. To avoid delays in the DOGAMI-MLRR permitting process, DOGAMI urges applicants to review the following information and contact the lead Reclamationist for their county prior to applying for a permit.

Confirm Local Land Use Approval
The process of determining if a site is appropriate for mining resides with the local land use authority, not with DOGAMI. Generally, the land use authority resides with the local county; some sites require approval from the BLM or USFS. DOGAMI will require written findings from the land use authority stating the proposed use is compatible with the acknowledged comprehensive plan or is otherwise exempt. If the local jurisdiction finds the mining proposal incompatible with the local plan, DOGAMI cannot issue a permit.

Geologic Hazards (landslides, highwalls)
It is the responsibility of the applicant to maintain stable slopes during and after operations, and provide all information required to determine the safety and stability of mining operations. Depending on your proposed plan of operation, DOGAMI may require you provide geotechnical evaluations which illustrate your operations will not result in slope failure, etc. The Oregon Board of Geologist Examiners maintains a list of Geologists and Certified Engineering Geologists (http://www.oregon.gov/OSBGE/Pages/index.aspx).

Floodplains and Waterways
Is your site located within a mapped 100-year floodplain? Is there a stream, drainage, or body of water located within or adjacent to your site? If you answered yes to either question, you may need to provide technical evaluations of the risks your operation may pose to these water bodies. It is likely your operation will require additional permits from other agencies besides DOGAMI. The studies and permits may be complicated and time consuming; please contact Vaughn Balzer, Floodplain Mining & Water Quality Reclamationist, for more information.

Storm Water Management
You will need to comply with state and federal water quality laws at your site. If you can keep all water that comes into contact with areas disturbed by mining on-site, you may not need a DEQ permit. If on-site evaporation and infiltration of stormwater is insufficient to prevent discharges of stormwater from the site permit coverage from the Department of Environmental Quality will be required. Contact Vaughn Balzer, Floodplain Mining and Water Quality Reclamationist, for more information. Also see our website (http://www.oregongeology.org/mlrr/waterquality.htm).

Surface and Ground Water Resource Protection
The use of water in the state of Oregon is regulated by the Water Resources Department, and a permit to use water may be required for your operations. Please check with your local District Watermaster (http://www.oregon.gov/owrd/pages/offices.aspx) to determine if your use of water requires permits. Additionally, if you plan on moving or pumping water to accommodate mining, you may need to provide a groundwater characterization report, as well as information on adjacent wells and water bodies. Please contact Hydrogeologist Bob Brinkmann for more information.

Utility Right of Way and Protection of Infrastructure
Do power lines or pipelines cross the proposed site? Are there any utility lines nearby? If so, you may be required to provide geotechnical reports that your proposed operation will not jeopardize the utility’s infrastructure.

Cultural Resources and State Historic Preservation Office
Historic and cultural resources in Oregon are protected by state law. Applicants are encouraged to contact the State Historic Preservation Office (http://www.oregon.gov/oprd/HCD/SHPO/Pages/index.aspx) and local Tribal governments prior to submitting a mining application to determine if a review is required for the site. Please contact Reclamationist Ben Mundie for information on Tribal contacts and further information on cultural resource issues and mining.

Fish and Wildlife Species, Habitats and Endangered Species Protections
Oregon is home to several federal and state Endangered and Threatened species. Applicants are encouraged to contact the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (http://www.dfw.state.or.us), United States Fish and Wildlife Service, and National Marine Fisheries Service very early in the planning stages to identify any critical species or habitats that may be present or nearby, as their presence will impact how a project is permitted. Please contact Isaac Sanders, Fish and Wildlife Biologist, for more information.