

MDT has received approximately 100 comments from the public in response to Mammoet USA South Inc.'s application for permits to transport modules owned by Imperial Oil Ventures Resources, Ltd on Montana's Interstate Highway system. The comments did not introduce new issues or concerns that have not been considered during the permit application review.

The commenters have primarily commented that any decision to issue oversize permits must be done in conformity with the Montana Environmental Policy Act, including public participation, and that any environmental review must consider the impacts of tar sands mining in Canada.

MDT would like to thank the commenters for providing the Department with their comments.

MDT has conducted an environmental review and concluded that an Environmental Assessment (EA) or an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) was not necessary for this proposed action. The proposed action does not require modification to the Interstate system and MDT's rules provide that it is not required to prepare an EA or an EIS for operation of an existing facility or for an action that is primarily social or economic in nature and that does not otherwise affect the human environment.

Because the proposal does not require an EA or an EIS, formal public review requirements are not triggered. Nevertheless, MDT thought it important to advise the public of the pending application and issued a press release and published information on MDT's website to inform the public of the proposal.

With respect to comments regarding evaluation of the tar sands in Canada, MEPA precludes MDT from conducting an environmental review of actual or potential impacts beyond Montana's borders. MEPA also provides that an environmental review under MEPA may not include actual or potential impacts that are regional, national or global in nature.

MDT encourages the public to contact MDT if they have concerns or questions regarding the transport of these oversize loads on Montana's interstate highways.