

SECTION 23 EASEMENT AND ROAD ADJUSTMENT EA

Draft for Public Review
October 10, 2000

Introduction

This environmental assessment (EA) evaluates a request by David Hermann of Pumpkin Pine LLC to abandon, relocate and consolidate some Forest Service road and trail easements across his private lands, and build short sections of new road and trail to maintain the connections with the rest of the National Forest system. The private parcel is located in Deschutes County, adjacent to Black Butte Ranch in Township 14 South, Range 9 East, Section 23. New roads and trail connections on National Forest System (NFS) lands are in Section 22, NE 1/4, and Section 26, NW 1/4 Willamette Meridian (Figure 1). Section 23 is surrounded by NFS lands, except along the northwest corner which contains residential housing in Black Butte Ranch.

The Forest Service generally supports adjustments to their easements across private land provided there is no loss of access to the public or the agency, or other adverse effects to public resources. However, since roads can have adverse effects on resources (wildlife disturbance and spread of noxious weeds), Forest Service policy is to maintain a road and trail system necessary to provide administrative access and public enjoyment of their lands, while reducing the number of unnecessary and redundant roads.

Purpose and Need For Action

The primary purpose of this EA is to provide information to determine if the proposal by the private landowner to alter the road and trail system in and around Section 23 is in the public interest of the users and managers of the National Forest. The EA will also assess environmental and social issues which arise from changes in travel patterns caused by the proposed adjustments, as well as any effects to natural resources caused by new road and trail construction on NFS lands.

Background Information

The easements across Section 23 were established as part of a reciprocal agreement with Brooks-Scanlon Incorporated in 1975. The easements were transferred with the timberlands to Diamond International in 1983, transferred again to Crown Pacific, and once again to the Crescent Creek Company, who first formally proposed altering the easements in July 1998. The current easements allow Forest Service and public use of the roads across private lands to access other NFS lands for recreation and administrative uses. In some cases, they also allow access for other private lands owners, such as Black Butte Ranch. Crescent Creek has since sold the property to Pumpkin Pine LLC who has divided the section into three parcels for home sites. The current road and trail system is in close proximity to two of the three proposed homesites, reducing privacy and splitting the parcels. The current trail alignment on NFS lands passes within a few feet of several homes in Black Butte Ranch. The close proximity of the trail to homes intrudes on the privacy of homeowners and reduces the expected semi-primitive experience for trail users.

The Purpose and Need is twofold:

- Pumpkin Pine LLC would like to reduce public traffic impacts on the prospective home sites, reduce traffic in general, while allowing public access through the property to adjacent public lands, as well as to adjacent or nearby private lands also accessed by the current road system.
- The Forest Service would like to realign the Metolius-Windigo Horse Trail farther away from the boundary of Black Butte Ranch so that trail impacts on the neighboring homeowners are reduced, and the trail experience is enhanced for users by

being farther away from the development.

Proposed Action and Decision to be Made

The Deschutes National Forest holds easements for public access for several roads that cross private land in Section 23. These easements were acquired to provide public access along Forest roads 1012200, 205, 300, 330, and 340 to and from surrounding National Forest System lands (see attached map). The Deschutes National Forest also has an easement along a section of the Metolius-Windigo Trail that crosses the private land between Graham Corral and Glaze Meadow. The current property owner Pumpkin Pine LLC would like to close excess roads on the property and relocate portions of roads 300 and 340 and the Metolius-Windigo Trail. Public access would still be maintained across the property to Graham Corral, Glaze Meadow, Black Butte Ranch (gated entrance), and along the trail.

The Proposed Actions are:

- The Forest Service would relinquish easements along roads 200 and 205,
- The Forest Service would accept a new easement for the new portion of roads 300 and 340 that would be relocated (new road constructed on private land), and the public easement to Graham Corral would be maintained,
- A new road segment, approximately 1,000 feet, would be built on National Forest land, to connect road 300 (relocated within section 23) with road 340,
- The Forest Service would accept a new easement for the new portion of the Metolius-Windigo Trail within section 23 that would be relocated to the north and west, and
- new 1/3 mile segment of the Metolius-Windigo Trail would be constructed on National Forest land so that the trail is further from the boundary of Black Butte Ranch.

The Forest Supervisor of the Deschutes National Forest will decide whether the proposal by the private landowner to alter the road and trail system in and around Section 23 is in the public interest of the users and managers of the National Forest.

Current Authorities, Regulations, and Policy

The private parcel (Section 23) is located adjacent to two Management Areas as described in the 1990 Deschutes National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan). These are General Forest on the west, south and east sides, and Metolius Black Butte Scenic on the north side. All of the proposed actions on NFS lands occur in General Forest. The area is east of the National Forest lands covered by the Northwest Forest Plan, and is not subject to any additional standards and guidelines from that Plan.

Documents Incorporated By Reference

The following documents were used in this analysis and are incorporated by reference. These documents are available for public review at the Sisters Ranger District Office :

- 1990 Deschutes National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan - This plan was developed to guide all natural resource management activities and establish standards/guidelines on the Deschutes National Forest.
- 1998 Deschutes National Forest Weed Control Environmental Assessment
- 1996 Metolius Watershed Assessment

Public Involvement/Scoping Process Used

Discussions have been underway between current and new landowners of Section 23 since 1997. As interested neighbors, Black Butte Ranch, represented by the General Manager, have also participated in these discussions since 1998. A scoping letter was sent on March 1, 2000 to about 200 interested citizens including all known Black Butte Ranch property owners adjacent to Section 23.

Comments were submitted which related to the purpose and need of the project, and the Proposed Actions. The comments, summarized below, ranged from objection to support of the proposed action.

- The new trail relocation would be in close proximity to houses in the SE corner of Black Butte Ranch.
- Closing Road 205 reduces emergency egress for Black Butte Ranch.
- What is the need for new segments of Road 300 and Road 340?
- Consider omitting the Black Butte segment of the Metolius-Windigo Trail, and just continue south of Camp Sherman to the west of Black Butte Ranch.
- Who pays for the actions? Taxpayers or proponents?
- Does Deschutes County zoning allow more than one house per section in the Forest Zone?
- We support the proposed adjustment because the road system would be streamlined and public access would be maintained.
- The new owner may want to relocate the trail in order to further subdivide the property, and we oppose further development of the forest area.

Issues

Many of the relevant comments received were used to focus the analysis in areas where the public desired a specific resource to be addressed. Some were used to explore alternatives which were not developed further. The remaining comments were used to formulate issues, which could not be otherwise addressed by the proposed action.

Issue #1: The proposed relocation of the Metolius-Windigo Horse Trail will adversely affect homeowners in the SE corner of Black Butte Ranch by being closer to the homes than it currently is. The proximity to the trail reduces privacy and for homeowners and impacts them with dust, noise and horse smells.

Discussion: The Proposed Action would move the horse trail on Section 23 west and north in order to avoid passing close to a prospective homesite. The scoping letter (3/00) indicated incorrectly that the trail in Section 23 would be relocated farther away from the Ranch. In fact, it is the portion of the trail on NFS lands between Graham Corral and Section 23 that would be relocated to be farther from the homes in the SE corner of the Ranch. The relocated trail in Section 23 would be closer to homes on the east boundary than it currently is, but still at least 100 to 300 feet away.

Issue #2: Changing easements and reducing roads will reduce emergency exits from Black Butte Ranch.

Discussion: Black Butte ranch residents currently use roads 330 and 300 to access the Ranch from the south. There is a cardlock gate at the Ranch boundary on the 330 road. This is also the primary emergency exit for the southern part of the Ranch. Road 205 does not currently provide emergency access or egress to Black Butte Ranch.

Alternatives

This section presents a detailed description of the alternatives responding to the "Purpose and Need" which are considered to be reasonable and viable by the decisionmaker (the Deschutes National Forest Supervisor). This section also includes a brief discussion of alternatives which were considered but eliminated from detailed study.

Alternatives Considered but Eliminated From Further Detailed Study

An alternative was considered that would have relocated the Metolius-Windigo Horse Trail completely off of Section 23. This alternative would re-route the trail south from Graham Corral, around the section and reconnect to the existing trail again in section 14. Approximately 3 miles of new trail would need to be surveyed, designed and constructed at the expense of the proponent, and then maintained by the Forest Service. The proponent did not want to delay the proposed actions further by taking on more new construction. The Forest Service does not feel that any benefits to the public from this proposal outweigh the effects of additional trail and the associated maintenance.

Alternatives were considered by the District Travel and Access Committee that would maintain the easement on road 205 for fire access to NFS lands east of Glaze Meadow. They also proposed a new tie road between road 340 and the gate on road 330, along the west line of Section 23. It was determined that the proposed actions provided adequate access without road 205 or the new tie road.

Alternative A - No Action

Under this alternative, there would be no change to any easements and no new roads or trails constructed on NFS lands. The existing roads and trail would remain as they are now, and the current easements would be honored. The discussion which follows describes the existing conditions and resources of the area affected by the proposed actions. This will provide a baseline from which to compare any other alternatives and their effects.

Vegetation and Site Description

National Forest Land in section 22 south of Graham Corral is primarily a plantation of ponderosa pine established approximately 15 years ago. The trees are uniformly spaced at 25 to 40 feet and sized between 10 and 12 feet tall. Approximately 30% of the ground is covered by native forbs and shrubs. On Section 23, the private land is generally comprised of a coniferous forest with slightly rolling terrain and many dry draws. The elevation is approximately 3300 feet. The dominant vegetation is ponderosa pine, bitterbrush, manzanita, and Idaho fescue. Some true fir are present. Virtually all of the larger trees have been removed, except for a few seed trees per acre. The stand is generally open-canopied, with clumps of vigorous immature pine. There are few snags or down logs or any other elements of mature or old growth forest. A large (approximately 9 acres) excavated area, originally a gravel mine and dump, is located in the NW corner adjacent to the west line of Section 23.

Old Growth

There is no old growth or late-successional forest remaining in section 23. NFS lands in section 22 are primarily pine plantations interspersed with mature stands of ponderosa pine that have been selectively logged in the past, but still contain elements of old growth forests such as large trees, snags, and down logs.

Sensitive Plants

The Section 23 Road Adjustment project was given a HIGH ranking for the risk of spreading or introducing noxious weeds because there are known noxious weed populations adjacent to the project area, heavy equipment and imported gravel will be used, there is a horse corral in the vicinity, and vehicles including Forest Service vehicles will be in the area.

The known population of noxious weeds is located within the privately owned gravel pit adjacent to the project area. Noxious weeds present in the pit are diffuse knapweed (*Centaurea diffusa*), spotted knapweed (*Centaurea maculosa*), and Canadian thistle (*Cirsium arvense*). Other known non-native invasive species in the gravel pit are black medic (*Medicago lupulina*), white horehound (*Marrubium vulgare*), woolly mullein (*Verbascum thapsus*), cheatgrass (*Bromus tectorum*) and goldenrod (*Euthamia occidentalis*).

A prefield review was completed to assess the potential for proposed endangered, threatened, or sensitive (PETS) plant occurrence within the project area. This review suggested that there is potential habitat for Peck's penstemon (*Penstemon peckii*), which has numerous populations located within the Glaze Meadow/Black Butte Area. There is a documented population located within 1 mile of the project area at Graham Corral. Upon inspection of the adjacent gravel pit, Peck's penstemon was found within a large community of noxious weeds.

Other PETS species with potential habitat in this project area are *Astragalus peckii*, *Botrychium pumicola*, and *Castilleja chlorotica*.

The Sisters Ranger District Ecologist and a Biological Technician surveyed the project area on July 6, 2000. No PETS plant species were located within the project area.

Hydrology/Water Quality

There is no surface water on either the NFS lands in section 22 or the private lands of Section 23. The area provides subsurface drainage to Indian Ford Creek, a tributary of Squaw Creek. The water table is very shallow, as evidenced by several surrounding wet meadows. Surface drainage is limited to what flows off of the roads during heavy rain events and rapid snowmelt. There is no evidence of road or vegetation damage, erosion or other soil impacts from this runoff.

Soils and Minerals

Existing soils are deep and well-drained, as typical of glacial outwash. Nearly all of the site is underlain by round gravel ranging in size from 1/4 to 20 inches in diameter. Generally, the top soil is pumice and ash.

Scenic Resources

The area is visible from numerous interior roads which originate/terminate from private lands at Black Butte Ranch. The main visual feature, in addition to an open space appearance, is scattered clumps of black-barked ponderosa pine. The area is also visible to the many visitors to the summit of Black Butte itself. From this elevation (6440 feet), the area appears as a uniformly textured forest with small openings except for the open area around the excavated dump.

Wildlife

Wildlife use in the area includes deer, eagles, badgers, ground squirrels, cavity nesters, and a variety of passerine birds.

Herds of mule deer are common to the area in the spring and fall as they transition from summer to winter range east of the Metolius Basin. Although deer hiding cover is marginal within the parcel, the lands are most valued for providing quality forage during the winter months.

There are no known nesting sites on this parcel for species listed as Threatened or Endangered.

Recreation and Public Access

Both NFS lands and the private lands in Section 23 are directly adjacent to the community of Black Butte Ranch. Because of this proximity, the area receives extensive day use by the nearby residents, including walking, running, biking, wildlife viewing, and limited off-road use surrounding the old dumpsite. Graham Corral is a developed Horse Camp and major terminus the Metolius-Windigo Horse Trail that passes through both sections 22 and 23. The trail is occasionally used by hikers and mountain bikers as well.

Development on Private Lands

Section 23 is currently zoned by Deschutes County as Primary Forest Lands, F1. The zoning ordinance requires a minimum lot size of 80 acres. Homes are a permitted conditional use, in conjunction with forest management of the property. The section is currently approved for three lots and homesites, 98 acres, 241 acres, and 305 acres. The 98 acre parcel has been sold and is currently being built upon.

Fire/Fuels

The area has been identified as a high priority for fuels reduction. The watershed has had a relatively high occurrence of fires on Federal lands that required suppression action. No data was available for the private land within the watershed. Fuel loads are low to moderate because of extensive previous harvest and associated slash clean-up. Tree mortality is low. The primary fire hazard here is

in the shrub and forbs component, which is increasing due to the open nature of the stands. The fire risks here are primarily human-caused by trail and road users. Property and resource values at risk are very high as they include private development in Section 23 and Black Butte Ranch.

Heritage Resources

The project area that is on FS lands has no previous surveys. Current surveys did not locate any heritage resources within the areas of potential effect.

Alternative B - Proposed Action

The original proposed action did not move the Metolius-Windigo Horse Trail from its existing location on NFS lands along the south boundary of Black Butte Ranch. Several commenters noted that the impacts of the trail location were actually more apparent to homeowners on the south boundary, rather than on the east boundary. They also noted that the scoping letter incorrectly stated that the trail would be moved farther from the east boundary when it would actually be closer. The revised Proposed Action presented here takes advantage of the opportunity to relocate the trail so that adverse effects to BBR homeowners are reduced.

Alternative B is the Proposed Action, and includes the following activities: (See Map 1)

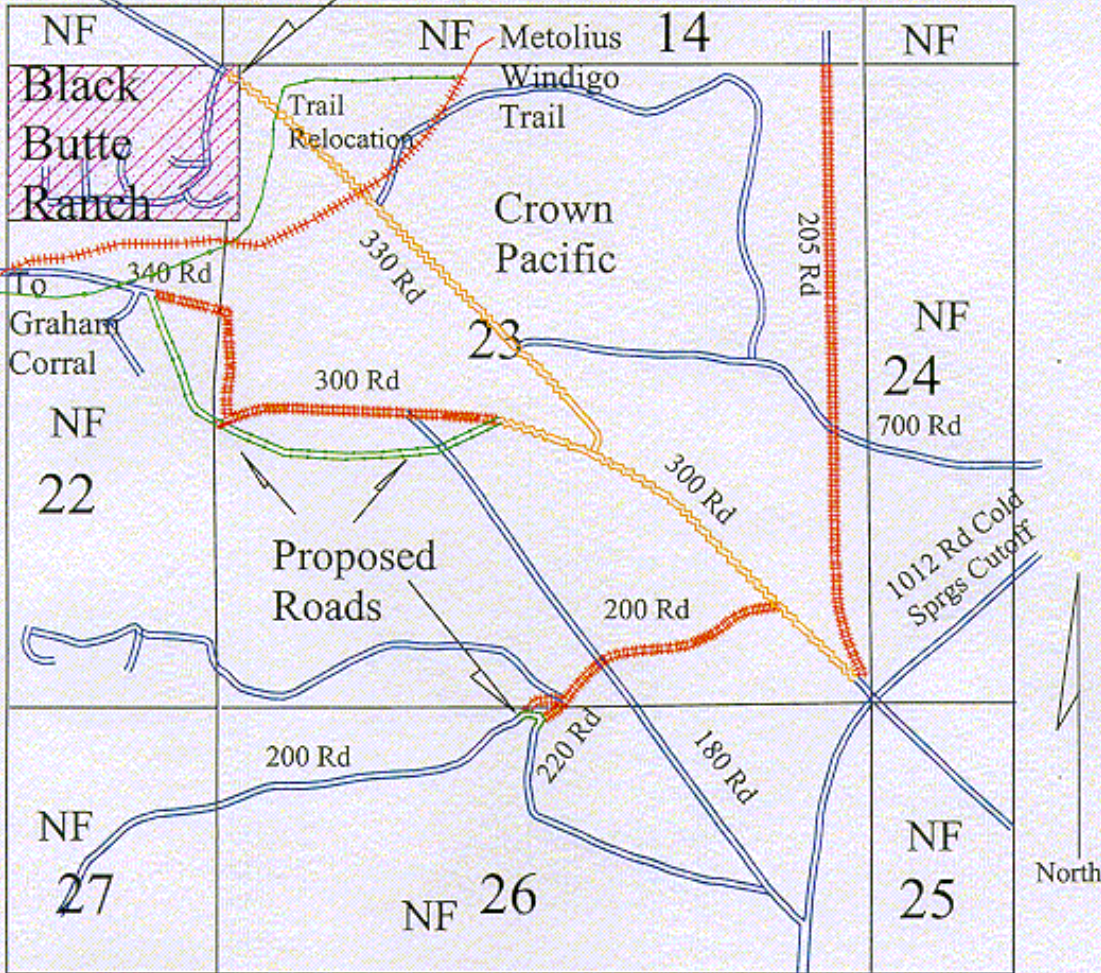
- The Forest Service would relinquish easements along roads 200 and 205. These roads would no longer be available for public access across the private lands of Section 23. Road 200 would be obliterated between road 300 and road 220 (approximately 2700 feet). Road 205 would be gated initially, and eventually obliterated (approximately 5300 feet). Road 205 does not currently provide emergency access or egress to Black Butte Ranch). The proponent would pay for obliteration and gates.
- The Forest Service would accept a new easement for the new portion of road 300 constructed on private land. This easement would allow public access to continue to Graham Corral.
- About 1000 feet of new road would be constructed on NFS lands on the west boundary of section 22, to connect the new road 300 to road 340 just south of Graham Corral. The old road 300 and 340 on private lands, and the small portion of the old road 340 on NFS lands would be obliterated (approximately 3600 feet). The proponent would pay for all new road construction and obliteration.
- The Forest Service would accept a new easement for the new portion of the Metolius-Windigo Trail within Section 23 that would be relocated to the west and north to avoid a prospective home site in Section 23. The new trail alignment would follow an existing old roadbed northeast from road 340, and turn east near the north boundary of Section 23, before crossing into the center of section 14 and reconnecting with the existing trail. The new trail would be approximately 200 feet from the SE corner of Black Butte Ranch at its closest point, and would be even farther away from houses on the east boundary of Black Butte Ranch as it extends north. A new trail about 1/3 mile long would be constructed on NFS lands running southeast from Graham Corral on the south side of road 340, before crossing over road 340 and connecting to the new trail in Section 23. The new trail on NFS lands would be 200-300 feet from houses on the south boundary of Black Butte Ranch, and across road 340. The old trail alignment on NFS lands and in Section 23 would be obliterated. The proponent would pay for all trail construction and obliteration.

Map 1







Easement Adjustment Proposal

Crown-Pacific Property, Section 23, T14S, R9E., W.M.

Black Butte Ranch Fire Exit



Legend

- Existing Easement to Close 
- New Road to Construct and New Easement 
- Existing Roads 
- Easements to Keep 
- Metolius-Windigo Trail 
- New Trail to Construct and New Easement 

Sisters Ranger District, Deschutes National Forest
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Environmental Consequences

This section discloses environmental consequences expected as a result of Alternative A (No Action) and Alternative B (Proposed Action). This section provides the scientific and analytic basis for comparison of the alternatives. It also describes the effects of the alternatives, while addressing the effects on issues as discussed on pages 4 and 5. Unless otherwise noted, the effects described are those that would occur on NFS lands, or that would affect users or neighbors of both NFS and private lands.

Effects on Vegetation

Alternative A – There are no effects to vegetation on NFS lands under Alternative A. No trees would be removed on public lands to make way for new road construction.

Alternative B – Approximately ½ acre maximum (20,000 square feet) would be affected by new road construction and clearing. All forbs, shrubs, and between 25 and 50 small ponderosa pine trees would be removed from the road right-of-way in the plantation in section 22. No trees would be removed for the new trail segment, but some limbing may be necessary.

Old Growth

Alternative A - There are no effects to Old Growth.

Alternative B - There are no effects to Old Growth from the proposed actions. All of the proposed activities on NFS lands are confined to plantations.

Sensitive Plants

Alternative A – There are no effects to Sensitive Plants.

Alternative B - There are no expected direct effects to PETS plants or their habitats by implementation of this project. However, there is severe infestation of noxious weeds in the adjacent gravel pit that may invade into the project area and have an indirect and cumulative effect on PETS plants and their habitats.

The Noxious Weed Assessment determined that the Section 23 Road Adjustment project was given a HIGH-risk ranking. There are known noxious weed populations adjacent to the project area, heavy equipment and imported gravel will be used, there is a horse corral in the vicinity, and vehicles including Forest Service vehicles will be in the area. Mitigations related to a HIGH-risk ranking are as follows:

1. Limit accidental transport of weed seed. Require clean equipment. Use contract and permit clauses to prevent the introduction or spread of noxious weeds.
2. Prevent new infestations during construction and maintenance. Minimize ground disturbance and clearing limit widths. Use weed free gravel and other materials. Do not stage equipment in weed-infested areas.
3. Encourage weed awareness. Notify private landowners of noxious weed populations. Provide helpful information on various treatment options and considerations.
4. Provide early detection and control. Monitor disturbed areas associated with the road adjustment project for the next 1-3 years. Document and map any newly discovered sites and manually remove any new weed starts.

Adjacent noxious weed populations may cause an indirect or cumulative effect within the project area. There are no expected direct impacts to PETS plants by implementation of this project.

The Biological Evaluation and Noxious Weed Assessment are on file at the Sisters Ranger District.

Effects on Hydrology/Water Quality

Alternative A – There are no effects to water quality or hydrology.

Alternative B – There may be slight changes to surface drainage patterns during high runoff events due to changes in the road network. Since roads are reduced overall, surface drainage should generally be less than it is now. The new road sections on both NFS and private lands will be constructed to standards that manage runoff better than the the current roads.

Soil Resources

Alternative A - Alternative A would have no effect on the physical component of the soil resource.

Alternative B - Soil would be displaced during construction and permanently compacted by the new road and trail. Approximately 2.15 miles (11,300 feet) of road would be eliminated on private lands in Section 23, and approximately 660 feet of road would be eliminated on NFS lands in Section 22. Approximately 2500 feet on new road would be constructed on private land in Section 23 and approximately 1000 feet would be constructed on NFS lands in Section 22. This results in a net change of approximately 8460 feet less road and resulting soil impact. The amount of horse trail obliterated and the amount that would be newly constructed are about the same – approximately 4600 feet.

Road Number	Amount of Road Obliterated	Amount of New Construction
Rd 200 Pvt land	2700 feet	
Rd 205 Pvt land	5300 feet	
Old Rd 340 NFS lands	660 feet	
Old Rd 340 Pvt lands	1000 feet	
New Rd 340 NFS lands		1000 feet
Old Rd 300 Pvt land		2300 feet
New Rd 300 Pvt land		2500 feet
TOTALS	11,960 feet	3500 feet

Scenic Resources

Alternative A – There are no effects to scenic resources.

Alternative B – The effects to scenic resources are generally positive. Views from the new road 340 segment will be little different than the present. Trees will obscure the view of the dumpsite from the new road. Viewers from the new horse trail segment will notice little change. Homeowners at Black Butte Ranch may still see users of the horse trail, but at a considerably farther distance.

Effects on Wildlife

Alternate A – There would be no effects to TES species. Current wildlife use of the parcel would continue. This includes deer, eagles, badgers, ground squirrels, cavity nesters, and a variety of passerine birds. Bald eagles nest nearby, it is unknown whether or not these eagles use the area as part of their home range for food. Herds of mule deer are common to the area in the winter, especially adjacent to the Urban Growth Boundary. Human/wildlife interactions are relatively frequent due to the close proximity of residential areas. The Forest would continue to be managed under Forest Plan direction for deer winter range and watchable wildlife. Maintenance or improvement of forage conditions within the parcel would continue.

Alternative B - There are no effects predicted for TES species. All species on the R-6 TES Species List that have potential habitat within the project area on the Sisters District were considered.

The majority of activities will occur on private lands. Road construction activities occurring on Forest Service lands will be minimal and will occur in an existing plantation. Roadwork will include the use of heavy machinery and impacts will be localized to a small area. No blasting is expected. The new trail location will utilize old skid roads as much as possible and where this cannot be achieved, ground disturbance will only result in a 6-foot wide clearing. The number of recreational users is not expected to change with the reconstruction of the trail. Old roads will be put to bed as well as each end of the trail. No habitat exists for TES species listed above. There will be No Effect on TES species or their habitat with the implementation of this project. All activities are consistent with the project design criteria listed in the FY00 Programmatic Biological Assessment.

The Biological Evaluation is on file at the Sisters Ranger District.

The Forest would continue to be managed under Forest Plan direction for deer winter range and watchable wildlife.

Effects on Recreation/Public Access

Alternative A - There would be no change to current public access and recreational amenities. The Forest Service would continue to authorize public access across private land via the existing easements. Homes on the southeast boundary of Black Butte Ranch would continue to be affected by the close proximity of the horse trail.

Alternative B - This alternative would allow continued public access through Section 23, while allowing the owner the ability to reduce traffic and traffic impacts to prospective new homesites.

Relocating the horse trail on NFS lands allow us to move the trail away from homes along Black Butte Ranch's southern boundary, thus reducing impacts of dust, noise, and loss of privacy. The new trail location offers several improvements over the existing location. The existing location skirts the corner of Black Butte Ranch. The new location moves the trail to the east and provides a vegetative buffer between the trail and the homes. In addition, as the trail proceeds north it offers a filtered view of Glaze Meadow while at the same time providing enough of a buffer to protect the meadow from the impacts of riding and noxious weeds. The new location through Sec. 23 blends easily with the existing trail location as it enters the National Forest lands on the north and west boundaries.

Effects on Development Potential on Private Lands

Alternative A - There would be no change in development patterns or potential. The owners of Section 23 already have permission under Deschutes County Planning regulations to split the 640-acre property into three separate lots and homesites, which they have done. The No Action alternative would mean that the road and trail easements and locations would stay the same as they are now. The owners of two of the three new homesites in Section 23 would be adversely impacted by traffic noise and dust, and loss of privacy due to the proximity to public travel corridors. Trespass and fire risk to improvements are other potential impacts. The public users of the roads and trails might notice more development (houses and associated structures) adjacent to their travel routes.

Alternative B - Changing the easements will not affect the development potential of Section 23. The property has already been approved for three lots and homesites. Any further subdivision would be subject to public review and County approval. Moving the easements reduces traffic-related impacts to the new homesites.

Fire/Fuels

Alternative A – This area has been identified as high priority area for fuels reduction. In the next five to ten years, activities which reduce risk of high intensity wildfires in the urban interface would be implemented. These would include understory thinning, prescribed burning, and brush mowing. Community prevention efforts to reduce fuel loadings around houses and adjoining forested lands would continue. Fire suppression would remain the primary responsibility of the Forest Service.

Alternative B – There are no effects to fire risk or fuel loads that result from the proposed actions.

Other Effects on Humans

Alternative A – There are no other identified effects to humans.

Alternative B - New road and trail construction may result in a minor inconvenience to nearby residents due to noise, exhaust emissions from construction equipment, and public access disruption; however, construction impacts would be of very short duration, 5 to 10 days.

Relocation of the horse trail 100 - 300 further away from Black Butte Ranch homes along the south and east boundary will result in reduced dust, noise and intrusions to privacy caused by trail users.

Emergency access to and from Black Butte Ranch would continue via the same route as present.

Access through sections 22 and 23 to private lands to the west will still be allowed via easement.

There would no longer be motorized access to the SE corner of section 14 and the south side of Indian Ford Creek via road 205. Motorized access into this area would continue to be available from Hwy 20.

Effects of Other Resources Not Previously Mentioned

Heritage Resources

No heritage resources are present which are eligible or potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Proposed activities in Alternative B are in compliance with The National Historic Preservation Act and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. There would be no known direct, indirect, or cumulative effect to these resources.

Prime Lands

This parcel is not classified as prime forest, farm, or rangelands. Proposed activities in Alternative B are in compliance with the Farmland Protection Policy Act and Department Regulation 9500-3, "Land Use Policy". There would be no direct, indirect, or cumulative effects to these resources.

Social Factors

There would be no known direct, indirect, or cumulative adverse effects on Native Americans, minority groups, women, or the civil rights of citizens as a result of any alternative.

Public Controversy

Following review of public comments, the effects of implementation of either Alternative A or B to the human environment are not likely to be highly controversial. This is defined as cases where the size, nature, or effect of a major federal action generates controversy, not opposition to a use.

Executive Order 11988 (Floodplains) and 11990 (Wetlands)

Executive Orders 11988 and 11990 direct Federal agencies to avoid, to the extent possible, both long- and short-term adverse impacts associated with the modifications of floodplains and wetlands. All alternatives have no specific actions, which adversely affect floodplains and wetlands.

Compliance with State and Local Laws

There are no actions in either alternative that would result in noncompliance with any state or local law or ordinance.

Environmental Justice

The proposed project is not located in a minority community and would have no effect to residents of low or moderate income. Therefore, construction would not pose a disproportionately high or adverse effect to those populations. Proposed activities in Alternative B are in compliance with Executive Order 12989 "Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations".

Discussion of Reasonably Foreseeable Future Actions and Cumulative Effects

Reasonably foreseeable future actions would include further development of Section 23, changes in the road and trail system in section 23 and adjacent NFS lands, and effects to recreation on NFS lands as a result of increased development in Section 23. As mentioned above in the Effects section, the property has already been approved for three lots and homesites. Any additional partition would be dependent in approval by Deschutes County, subject to County ordinances governing minimum lot size and zoning. Such a change would undergo review by neighboring landowners including the Forest Service, as well as the general public. Under the current 80-acre minimum lot size, it would be possible to partition two of the parcels into an additional four lots, for a total of seven lots and homesites.

Under the current development pattern, it is in the stated best interests of the private landowners to minimize the amount of roads and trails on their properties. New roads in Section 23, other than driveways, are thus unlikely. There is no foreseeable need for new roads to be built on the adjacent NFS lands, nor would any new public access roads likely be needed nor easements granted across Section 23.

Three new homeowners in Section 23 will not contribute substantially to the recreation load on the surrounding NFS lands. It is possible that increased subdivision if allowed in the future would increase recreation use. This would be considered by the Forest

Service when reviewing any future change in density or zoning proposed for Section 23.

List of Preparers and Consultation With Others

This section identifies the Forest Service personnel who participated in the environmental analysis and the preparation of the EA. For a list of organizations and individuals contacted during the scoping process, refer to the Project File located at the Sisters Ranger District.

Interdisciplinary Team

Paul Engstrom – Wilderness and Trails Manager
Jeff Sims - Special Uses and Lands Specialist
Maret Pajutee - District Ecologist
Heidi Suna – Botany Technician
Lauri Turner - Wildlife Biologist
Randy Gould - Hydrologist
Terry Craig - Soils Scientist
Don Zettel - Archeologist
Brian Tandy - Forester
Mike Hernandez - Team Leader
Rod Bonacker - Writer/Editor
Walt Miller – Surveys and Titles

[Deschutes and Ochoco National Forests Website](http://www.fs.fed.us/centraloregon/manageinfo/nepa/documents/sisters/section23/section23eadraft.html)

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