

WHISKEY PINE COOPERATIVE PROJECT

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
OR-025-03-007

Bureau of Land Management
Burns District Office
28910 Hwy 20 West
Hines, Oregon 97738

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter I. Introduction: Purpose of and Need for Action.....	1
A. Purpose.....	1
B. Need	2
C. Location	2
D. Conformance with Land Use Plans.....	2
Chapter II. Proposed Action and Alternative.....	2
A. Proposed Action.....	2
B. No Action Alternative.....	6
C. Alternatives Considered but Eliminated from Further Consideration	6
Chapter III. Affected Environment	6
A. Critical Elements.....	7
1. Noxious Weeds	7
2. Migratory Birds.....	7
3. Water Quality.....	7
4. Wetland/Riparian	7
B. Noncritical Elements.....	7
1. Lands, Realty, Transportation.....	7
2. Grazing Management.....	8
3. Recreation	8
4. Soils.....	8
5. Vegetation	9
6. Visual Resources.....	9
7. Wildlife	9
Chapter IV. Environmental Consequences	9
A. Proposed Action.....	9
Critical Elements.....	9
1. Noxious Weeds	9
2. Migratory Birds.....	10
3. Water Quality.....	10
4. Wetland/Riparian	10

Noncritical Elements.....	11
1. Lands, Realty, Transportation.....	11
2. Grazing Management.....	11
3. Recreation	11
4. Soils.....	12
5. Vegetation.....	12
6. Visual Resources.....	12
7. Wildlife	12
B. No Action Alternative.....	13
Critical Elements.....	13
1. Noxious Weeds	13
2. Migratory Birds.....	13
3. Water Quality.....	13
4. Wetland/Riparian	13
Noncritical Elements.....	14
1. Lands, Realty, Transportation.....	14
2. Grazing Management.....	14
3. Recreation	14
4. Soils.....	14
5. Vegetation.....	15
6. Visual Resources.....	15
7. Wildlife	15
Chapter V. Cumulative Effects	15
Chapter VI. List of Preparers and Consultation and Coordination.....	16
A. Preparers	16
B. Consultation and Coordination	16

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CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION: PURPOSE OF AND NEED FOR ACTION

Background Information

Since August 2002, Curt Blackburn, owner of property between Mill and Soldier Creek in north central Harney County, and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) have been discussing a cooperative land management project involving Blackburn's private land and adjacent public land.

The primary elements of the cooperative project include juniper cutting, construction of an aspen enclosure, construction of a spring development and pipeline for domestic use and a trough for livestock and wildlife water, and exchange of access and water development rights-of-way and easements. Please see Chapter II, Proposed Action and Alternative for a detailed discussion of each element of the proposed project.

A. Purpose

The purpose of the juniper cutting is to allow shade intolerant aspen trees to expand and to potentially increase water yield in the area. The aspen enclosure would prevent livestock and big game from utilizing young aspen trees allowing additional aspen regeneration and recruitment. The spring development would improve the quantity and quality of water and provide water outside the aspen enclosure for domestic, livestock and wildlife consumption.

The purpose of the easements and rights-of-way would be to provide legal access rights in the area for the public, the BLM, and Blackburn, and legal authorization for Blackburn to construct and maintain the spring development and water pipeline on public land. Acquiring public access where Mill Creek Road No. 6243-OO crosses Blackburn's property is particularly important as BLM has no legal rights for the public on this segment of road. The road already receives public use under the presumption by some that it is a "public road" established under provisions of State law. However, public access may be in jeopardy because there is no record of formal adjudication or dedication of the road for public use, nor does BLM recognize or have jurisdiction over any implied rights that may exist on the road.

B. Need

The need for the proposed project is to improve rangeland conditions to facilitate the restoration of aspen, provide good quality and quantity of water for a variety of uses, and to obtain legal public, administrative, and landowner access in the area. The project would also further efforts to improve government/landowner cooperation in land management activities.

C. Location

Please see Maps 1 and 2 for the location of the proposed action. The legal description for each element of the proposed action is as follows:

Juniper cutting/aspen exclosure

W.M., T. 22 S., R. 32 E., sec. 2, lot 4 (Public Land), SW¹/₄NW¹/₄ (Private Land)

Spring development and water pipeline right-of-way to be granted to Blackburn and water trough to be installed, operated, and maintained by BLM

W.M., T. 22 S., R. 32 E., sec. 2, lot 4.

Exclusive (public) and nonexclusive (administrative) road easements to be provided by Blackburn to BLM

W.M., T. 22 S., R. 32 E., sec. 2, SW¹/₄NW¹/₄

Road right-of-way to be granted to Blackburn

W.M., T. 22 S., R. 32 E., sec. 2, W¹/₂SW¹/₄; sec. 11, W¹/₂NW¹/₄; sec. 14, W¹/₂W¹/₂

D. Conformance with Land Use Plans

The proposed actions and alternatives described below are in conformance with the Three Rivers Resource Management Plan, Vegetation Program Objective V1, and Lands and Realty Management Actions 2.6 and 4.1 and are consistent with Federal, State, Tribal and local laws, customs, regulations, and plans to the maximum extent possible.

CHAPTER II. PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVE

A. Proposed Action

The overall project would be developed under the authority of a cooperative agreement between BLM and Blackburn. The exchange of access water development rights would be accomplished through right-of-way grants and easements under the authority of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) of 1976.

Juniper Cutting

The juniper cutting would be completed by chain saws on approximately 5 acres of public land. The cutting would be accomplished by BLM fire crews or included in a larger contract in the area as the opportunity arises. A similar acreage has already been cut on Blackburn's adjacent private land. All live junipers, including all saplings and seedlings, less than 24 inches in diameter measured 1-foot above ground would be cut. BLM would flag the cut area boundary prior to project implementation.

Design Features

1. Stump height would not exceed 8 inches as measured on the uphill side. All juniper trees would be completely severed from the stump. No live limbs would be left on the stump of cut trees.
2. Snags, juniper trees with raptor nests, pine and hardwood trees would not be cut.
3. Cut trees would be removed from all permanent access roads.
4. All new vehicle trails created by the project would be blocked by a fallen tree over the trail when all project work is completed.
5. Cut juniper trees on public land may be salvaged by Blackburn or the public without skidding or other surface disturbance. All entities, including Blackburn, who desire to salvage these trees, shall be required to secure a wood cutting permit.

Aspen Exclosure

The construction of the aspen exclosure would involve building a 7-foot high big game/livestock exclosure fence approximately 1-mile long around the perimeter of the aspen stand and spring source. About one-quarter mile of this fence is proposed on BLM-administered land with the balance on private land. The fence would be constructed by BLM fire crew or BLM contract with contributed funds from Blackburn in proportion to the length of fencing on his land.

Design Features

1. The fence would be constructed to BLM specifications for a big game net wire exclosure fence with 16½-foot line post spacing and the top of the wire 7 feet high.
2. No blading, grading, or scalping of the fenceline or access routes would be allowed. Crushing of the brush with rubber-tired or crawler tractor equipment would be permitted.

3. All trash and debris would be removed to an approved site upon completion of the enclosure.
4. Equipment used for fence construction would be cleaned of all weeds and soil potentially containing weed seeds, prior to entering the work site.

Water Developments

BLM and Blackburn have jointly applied to the Oregon Department of Water Resources for a Permit to Use Surface Water (water right) from an unnamed spring located within the proposed enclosure on public land north of Blackburn's property. The application requested 2.25 gallons per minute from the spring for Blackburn's domestic use while BLM's portion includes 3.38 gpm for wildlife use and 3.38 gpm for livestock use. To affect use of the water, Blackburn, under BLM direction and oversight, would construct the spring development and pipeline to his property for the domestic use. The BLM would connect to the spring development and run a pipeline to a trough to be located outside the enclosure for wildlife and livestock use. Water will be delivered through the pipeline to the trough and Blackburn's property by gravity flow. Alternately, BLM may construct all of the facilities under a cost share agreement where Blackburn would reimburse BLM for his share of the water facilities.

Although availability of water is a factor in recreational cabin site development in eastern Oregon, it is not typically an overriding factor that a landowner considers in his decision to develop the property for this purpose. County zoning requirements, access, and amenities may be more important considerations to a landowner. Due to the intermittent nature of recreational occupancy permanent water is generally not necessary. Other options exist, including hauling water, cisterns or wells. For these reasons Blackburn's cabin site development is not a connected action and is not being analyzed in this assessment.

Design Features

1. A preliminary design for the spring development would be done by the BLM. A BLM representative shall be on site at the time of actual spring development to approve any design changes during construction. Development would involve excavating the spring source and installing a spring box (typically a section of 30-inch diameter culvert pipe), and drain pipe and backfilling the excavations with drain rock. The spring box would be covered to prevent entry and drowning of small animals. Valves would be installed and maintained to ensure excess water remains at the spring source to protect the wet meadow characteristics.
2. Pipelines would be installed using mechanized equipment to excavate a trench for pipeline burial. The backhoe would be allowed to clear vegetation as necessary to properly excavate the trench, install pipe, and backfill the trench. Upon completion of trenching and excavation, area disturbed from this activity would be backfilled, contoured, and seeded with a seed mix approved by BLM.

3. Surface disturbance would be limited to an area of no more than 20 feet in total width for pipeline installation.
4. Where possible, pipes would be buried at least 18 to 30 inches below the ground surface.
5. The water trough would include an escape ramp to reduce the potential for wildlife mortality by drowning.
6. All trash and excess materials would be removed from the project site upon completion of construction and disposed of in a manner and at a location approved by BLM.
7. Equipment used for construction would be cleaned of weeds and soil potentially containing weed seeds, prior to entering the work site.
8. Above ground structures would be painted to blend with the local surroundings.

Access and Domestic Water Development Rights

Another element of the proposed action would be to grant Blackburn a FLPMA right-of-way to use, operate and maintain an existing road across public lands to secure documented legal access to his property. The proposed road right-of-way would be approximately 2.12 miles long and 30 feet in width to encompass any maintenance activity or appurtenant cuts, fills or other structures adjacent to the roadbed. In addition BLM would grant Blackburn a right-of-way to authorize the operation and maintenance of the domestic water pipeline and spring development. The pipeline right-of-way would be approximately 95 feet long and 20 feet wide with a 50-foot by 50-foot site for the spring development. The right-of-way would be issued for a renewable term of 30 years to coincide with the anticipated life of the spring development. Both the access and pipeline rights-of-way would be exempt from cost recovery and rent in accordance with 2808.1(b)(3) and 43 CFR 2803.1-2(b)(2)(v) due to the reciprocal, cooperative nature of the project, the valuable access easements, and other public benefits that Blackburn would provide to BLM.

In reciprocation for the rights-of-way granted by BLM, Blackburn has agreed to provide BLM with an exclusive public easement across about one-quarter mile of existing road crossing his land. Blackburn would also grant BLM a nonexclusive administrative easement along a spur road leading to the spring development/exclosure area and adjacent public land.

The road easements and rights-of-way exchanged would contain commensurate terms and conditions including perpetual terms and maintenance requirements. During periods of heavy use (heavy hauling, frequent or continuous use) roads would be maintained and the cost borne by the user conducting the heavy use (including BLM, Blackburn or other authorized user). During those times the road would be maintained by the user to a condition that is equal to or better than the condition before the use. Where concurrent, heavy use is occurring by two or more users maintenance costs would be shared by each user. All weather access is not being proposed at this time; although occasional snow plowing and travel on frozen roads can be expected.

B. No Action Alternative

The Whiskey Pine Project would not be completed. No aspen exclosure or juniper cutting would occur on public land. Blackburn's pipeline, spring development, and road right-of-way application would be rejected. BLM, on behalf of the public would not acquire any legal public or administrative access rights in the area.

C. Alternatives Considered but Eliminated from Further Consideration

Rerouting the existing roads to public land to avoid Blackburn's private land was initially considered as an alternative to acquiring the easements. This alternative was eliminated from consideration because steep slopes and rimrocks limit the feasibility of new road construction in order to entirely avoid private land.

CHAPTER III. AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

The following critical elements of the human environment are not known to be present or are not affected by the proposed action or alternative and are not discussed further in this document:

- Area of Critical and Environmental Concern
- Adverse Energy Impacts
- Air Quality
- Areas of Critical Environmental Concern
- Cultural Resources
- Environmental Justice
- Farm Lands (prime or unique)
- Floodplains
- Hazardous Materials
- American Indian Concerns and Traditional Cultural Properties
- Paleontology
- Special Status Species (Flora)
- Special Status Species (Fauna)
- Threatened, Endangered, Candidate and Sensitive Species
- Wild and Scenic Rivers
- Wilderness and Wilderness Study Areas

The following critical elements and resources are present in the project area and are subject to analysis:

A. Critical Elements

1. Noxious Weeds

No noxious weeds were discovered during a site-specific botanical inventory of the project area. However, the proposal is within a general area where Dalmatian toadflax is rapidly expanding. In addition, approximately 1.25 miles south of the proposed project area are several large infestations (50+ acres) of medusahead rye. It is in an expansion mode, and spreading out from its current locations.

2. Migratory Birds

Habitat for many migratory bird species occurs at the proposed project site. Some of these species include American robin, Townsend's solitaire, Williamson's sapsucker, hairy woodpecker, and American kestrel. Other species that utilize aspen and juniper woodland habitat types may also frequent the area.

3. Water Quality

Livestock and wildlife have direct access to the spring source. The ground surface shows some damage from hoof action. Water quality is unknown but is suspected to be degraded due to access by livestock based on visual observations.

4. Wetland/Riparian

Aspen, willow, and other riparian species are generally decadent and in poor condition but root shoots and remnant plants remain. There is some damage to the spring source and associated riparian area from hoof action.

B. Noncritical Elements

1. Lands, Realty, Transportation

The existing road to the project area is known as the Mill Creek Road, BLM No. 6243-OO. The Burns District Transportation Plan categorizes the road as a resource road with a maintenance level 3. The road is constructed from existing soils, is unsurfaced and is suitable for seasonal access during dry or frozen soil conditions. It has been used in the past for occasional heavy hauling of timber products and is generally suitable for this task with necessary maintenance before and after the haul. Where the road crosses through Blackburn's property it follows a narrow ridgeline with vertical rim rocks on both sides. This factor limits the feasibility of construction of a new road around the property as an option to a public access easement.

Blackburn currently uses the southernmost 2 miles of this road to access his property under the provisions of casual use but has applied for a FLPMA right-of-way to ensure that he has documented legal access rights. BLM has no legal access where the road crosses the Blackburn property and other private land. This road is considered by some landowners, road users, and others to be a public road established under the provisions of State law where unrestricted use over time may have created a public right-of-way. Because of this presumption the road receives public use for hunting, woodcutting, private land access, grazing use, and other purposes. However, there is no record of formal adjudication or dedication of the road for public use, nor does BLM recognize or have jurisdiction over any implied rights that may exist on the road.

The spur road where BLM would acquire an administrative easement originates off the Mill Creek Road on Blackburn's property and drops off the ridge into the canyon where the unnamed spring is located. The road passes by Blackburn's proposed cabin site and terminates near the spring at the private/public land boundary. This spur was constructed by Blackburn in 2002 to provide private access to the canyon area of his property.

2. Grazing Management

The project area is within BLM's Camp Harney Allotment which has 913 Animal Unit Months (AUMs) of active permitted use, 624 AUMs of suspended AUMs for a total of 1,537 AUMs. The permittees are Jon and Margarita White, Bar T Bar Ranch, and Rattlesnake Creek Ranch. Currently the permittees graze from May 1 to June 19.

3. Recreation

The area receives some recreational use in the form of hunting big game species such as deer and elk. Additionally some snowmobiling occurs in the area.

4. Soils

The majority of the project area is located in a draw bottom with level topography where soils are predominantly silty loam soils. The water erosion hazard is moderate on slopes less than 15 percent and high on slopes greater than 15 percent. The wind erosion hazard is slight when the soils are disturbed. Soils are generally suitable for road purposes along existing roads where the rights-of-way and easements are proposed.

5. Vegetation

The dominant vegetation communities are mountain sagebrush/bunchgrass which has been encroached by western juniper. There are aspen clones on the project site which are entirely dominated by western juniper. The spring area has an aspen overstory with sedges and rushes in the understory. All of these plant communities are in stages of transition to juniper woodlands.

6. Visual Resources

The spring development/aspen area is in a steep narrow canyon, sage and grass are interspersed with juniper trees and aspen trees. Predominate colors are gray-green vegetation and tan to light brown for soils. Existing roads involved in the project are located generally along the ridgelines and are the primary human intrusions in the area. Due to vegetation screening the project area is not visible from these roads.

The proposed project falls within a Visual Resource Management (VRM) Class III area. Within VRM Class III areas, contrasts caused by management activities may be evident and begin to attract attention; however, these changes should remain subordinate to the existing landscape. Changes should repeat the basic elements found in the predominant natural features of the landscape.

7. Wildlife

Mule deer, Rocky Mountain elk, coyote, rattlesnake, and deer mouse as well as many other species common to the aspen and juniper woodland habitat types utilize the proposed project area.

CHAPTER IV. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

A. Proposed Action

Critical Elements

1. Noxious Weeds

Burned areas are becoming noticeably infested with toadflax anywhere in the Blue Mountain foothills in Harney County. Any ground disturbance is likely to encourage toadflax establishment and/or expansion if it already occurs on or near the site. Once junipers are cut, monitoring for toadflax establishment becomes more difficult because of slash and new vegetative growth which limit access to the area and inhibit visibility of the ground surface.

Monitoring and treatments may need to occur for several years following completion of the project.

2. Migratory Birds

Migratory bird species that utilize the juniper woodland habitat would be negatively affected by the proposed action while species that require aspen would be positively affected. The juniper woodland habitat type has expanded by at least 100 percent in this area in the last 100 years while the aspen habitat type has decreased by at least 50 percent and is thought to be limiting to some migratory bird species. The beneficial effects of the aspen habitat improvement would be expected to outweigh the negative effects to the juniper woodland habitat as the aspen habitat is much less prevalent in the area. Free water for use by migratory birds would continue to be present at the spring source. Wildlife escape ramps in the trough should reduce or eliminate the potential for bird and other wildlife drowning.

3. Water Quality

Elimination of livestock grazing at the spring source would have a positive effect to water quality at the spring. During spring and pipeline development there may be a temporary effect to water quality (suspended solids) from construction equipment operating within the wet area of the spring.

4. Wetland/Riparian

The fencing project would protect aspen shoots and other riparian species from browsing and trampling by livestock and wildlife. Juniper thinning would also promote recovery of the aspen stand and other riparian vegetation.

There would be temporary, short-term disturbance on approximately .1-acre of riparian area associated with excavation for the spring development and a portion of the pipeline. Upon completion of the project, restoration of the habitat would be expected within one to two growing seasons due to design features of the project. This restoration would be further accelerated by the expected improvement of the aspen stand and other riparian vegetation.

The design of the trough, spring development, and pipeline would allow excess water to remain in the riparian area of the spring maintaining soil moisture and riparian vegetation.

Noncritical Elements

1. Lands, Realty, Transportation

BLM would obtain documented legal public access to approximately 3,000 acres of public land not currently legally accessible by motorized vehicle via the Mill Creek Road. In addition, the administrative easement would provide efficient vehicular access for BLM employees, licensees, and contractors to approximately 360 acres of public land and resources that are not currently accessible except by foot or horseback.

Grant of a road right-of-way to Blackburn would ensure him of having long-term documented legal access to his property that provisions of casual use do not provide. The road right-of-way would have no effect on the use of the road by the public as FLPMA grants are considered nonexclusive. Grant of the right-of-way for the spring development and pipeline would provide Blackburn with a reasonable supply of water for his recreational cabin development.

A slight increase in use of the road and related effects may be expected due to the imposition of a public easement on the road. This increase is expected to be minor because public use is already ongoing due to public presumption that a public right-of-way exists. Public visitation to the area would also be limited by the current road standard which is not proposed to be changed at this time and limited attractions in the area.

2. Grazing Management

Implementation of the proposed action would not result in any change in active permitted grazing use in the Camp Harney Allotment. Development of the spring and trough would ensure the continued availability of clean water for livestock outside the enclosure and provide for improvement of the water quality and aspen/riparian community.

3. Recreation

The public easement would provide legal access potentially enhancing recreation opportunity, primarily for big game hunting, on public land in the area. It would also provide for better public/landowner relationships by clarifying the access situation on the Mill Creek Road by eliminating the debate that implied access rights may or may not exist. The improved access situation would probably not result in a large increase in snowmobile use of the area because more favorable snow conditions exist in other areas with better public access such as the Malheur National Forest to the north. An increase in Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) use in the area is not expected because vegetation and topography limits areas that can be traveled.

Improvement of the aspen stand and water availability may result in increased wildlife use, particularly for big game, improving wildlife hunting and viewing opportunity.

4. Soils

There would be a minimal effect to soils except where the pipeline and spring development are proposed. In this area, soils would be disturbed by trenching and excavation. Construction of the enclosure would result in less long-term soil compaction from livestock and wildlife trampling around the spring and the aspen community, thus stabilizing disturbed soils and improving riparian conditions.

Soil disturbance and compaction from use of the Mill Creek Road may be expected to increase slightly over the current situation due to slight increase of public use of the road.

5. Vegetation

Initially, there would be short-term vegetation disturbance with the construction activities of the enclosure, pipeline, trough and spring development, and juniper cutting. Over the long term the aspen stand and riparian conditions would be expected to improve. The rangeland health of the plant communities would be restored through removal of juniper and subsequent reestablishment of the aspen plant community and the protection of the spring source.

6. Visual Resources

The pipeline development, trough and spring development activity would introduce linear, horizontal, and rectangular features to the local landscape. However, the location of the project area in the bottom of a steep canyon distant from public viewing minimizes the overall visual effect due to screening by topography and vegetation. Due to these factors coupled with the identified design features the proposed project would meet VRM Class III objectives.

7. Wildlife

Some disturbance to wild animals would occur during the juniper cutting and the fence construction. The predicted improvement in the aspen habitat type would benefit those species that use aspen habitat. For mule deer and elk benefits would not be realized until the proposed fence is removed and animals have access to the area. Free water would be available to wildlife at the trough.

B. No Action Alternative

Critical Elements

1. Noxious Weeds

Under the no action alternative no new ground disturbance would occur from water development, enclosure construction, and juniper cutting. This would limit the potential toadflax establishment and/or expansion. Continued degradation of the aspen and riparian community over time may offset this advantage providing the opportunity for toadflax establishment. Since no junipers would be cut the ground area would be more visible and have better access improving the ability to monitor the area for toadflax and other noxious weeds.

2. Migratory Birds

Migratory bird species that utilize the juniper woodland habitat would be positively affected by no action while species that require aspen would be negatively affected. The juniper woodland habitat would continue to expand and may limit some migratory bird species that use aspen habitats. Free water for use by migratory birds would probably continue to be available at the spring source except for extreme drought years. Since no trough would be constructed any potential for bird other wildlife drowning in a trough would be eliminated.

3. Water Quality

Water quality at the spring source would continue to be degraded from livestock and wildlife trampling, along with bodily wastes directly and indirectly entering the water source. Water quality would not be affected by construction and development of the spring and pipeline.

4. Wetland/Riparian

Aspen shoots and other riparian species would continue to be browsed and trampled by livestock and wildlife. Juniper would continue to encroach into the riparian area ultimately replacing the riparian community.

The spring development and pipeline construction would not be authorized so there would be no trenching, excavation or other surface disturbance in the riparian community. All water which is not used onsite at the spring source by wildlife and livestock would remain within the drainage and be available for riparian plant growth.

Noncritical Elements

1. Lands, Realty, Transportation

Under the no action alternative the BLM would not obtain documented legal public access on one-quarter mile of the Mill Creek Road. Although public access may continue, Blackburn or a successor landowner may choose to fence and gate the road eliminating public access to approximately 3,000 acres of public land. This could result in landowner-public conflicts and possible litigation. Without the administrative easement BLM employees, licensees, and contractors would have to walk or horseback to administer adjacent public land and resources causing an inefficient use of employee time and public funds.

Blackburn may continue to use the road under the provisions of casual use but no formal right-of-way would be granted limiting his ability to maintain the road or use it for heavy hauling or other uses exceeding the casual use threshold. This could have adverse affects to his landowner rights by limiting reasonable uses of his property. Not granting the right-of-way for the spring development and pipeline would force Blackburn to haul water, drill a well or develop a cistern for water for domestic use on his private land.

2. Grazing Management

There would be no change in grazing use in the Camp Harney Allotment. There would be water available at the spring source for livestock although the quality and quantity of water may be degraded by trampling and livestock waste.

3. Recreation

Public recreation opportunity for big game hunting, snowmobiling, and other pursuits would remain stable unless public access is restricted by a landowner on the Mill Creek Road. As long as no public easement exists on the road, access and the recreation it supports would be in jeopardy. Wildlife hunting and viewing opportunity may diminish over time as the condition of the aspen habitat and spring source degrades.

4. Soils

There would be no effect to soils from pipeline and spring development. Soil compaction from livestock and wildlife trampling around the spring and the aspen community would continue.

Soil disturbance and compaction from use of the Mill Creek Road remain stable or decrease if the road is gated, locked, and public access denied.

5. Vegetation

No short-term disturbance to vegetation would occur. Over the long term the aspen stand and riparian community would continue to degrade and be replaced by juniper woodland.

6. Visual Resources

There would be no new effects to visual resources on public land.

7. Wildlife

There would be no short-term disturbance to wildlife from juniper cutting, fence construction or water development projects. The species that utilize aspen habitat would gradually be displaced by the encroachment of juniper and the species that utilize juniper habitat. Free water would be available to these animals at the spring source.

CHAPTER V. CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

Cumulative effects from the proposed action on resources analyzed in Chapter IV are anticipated to be minimal. Past and existing land uses and disturbances in the Blue Mountain foothills including livestock grazing and wildland fire have resulted in long-term changes to the environment that are not likely to be incrementally changed by the proposed action in any major way.

Similar water developments in the Blue Mountain foothills and in the Camp Harney Allotment have both provided negative and beneficial cumulative effects. This project would provide cumulative beneficial effects including improved aspen and riparian condition, water quality and quantity, and wildlife habitat. Improvement of aspen stands on a regional scale could ultimately result in higher deer and elk populations with a corresponding increase in hunting and viewing opportunity.

The cumulative effect of improved public access to the Blue Mountain foothills as a whole is limited by the public attractions and low standard roads accessing the area. The primary attraction to the area is elk and deer hunting. Numbers of hunters for these species, and thus the amount of visitation from this major attraction, is controlled by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. Road surfacing, minor reconstruction, culvert installation, and other road work would be authorized by the easements and rights-of-way. Upgrading roads to higher standards would have greater effect on the level of visitation to the area than acquisition of the public easement on a single unimproved road. Cumulative negative effects related to visitation include the potential for spread of noxious weeds, harassment of wildlife, noise, dust, and other human disturbances.

Authorizing a private landowner to utilize water from a BLM spring source is not likely to set a precedent of new water rights filings on BLM water sources for domestic or recreational use in the District. BLM maintains its discretion to protest any such filing and deny rights-of-way for transportation of water derived from such sources. If it were not for the benefits the landowner was providing through the project, no private domestic use of a BLM water source would be considered.

CHAPTER VI. LIST OF PREPARERS AND CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

A. Preparers

Gary Foulkes, District Planning and Environmental Coordinator
Eric Haakenson, Rangeland Management Specialist
Holly LaChapelle, Land Law Examiner
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Fred McDonald, Natural Resource Specialist
Skip Renschler, Realty Specialist, Team Lead
Jon Reponen, Natural Resource Specialist
Lesley Richman, Weed Coordinator
Fred Taylor, Wildlife Biologist
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B. Consultation and Coordination

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Oregon Department of Water Resources