



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest Service

Pacific
Northwest
Region



January 2007

Buckhorn Access Project

Final Environmental Impact Statement

RECORD OF DECISION and Summary

Tonasket Ranger District
Okanogan and Wenatchee National Forests
1 West Winesap
Tonasket, WA 98855



Marias Creek Road

**Record of Decision and Summary
Final Environmental Impact Statement
Buckhorn Access Project
Okanogan County, WA
January 2007**

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Okanogan and Wenatchee National Forests

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Abstract: The Buckhorn Access Project final Environmental Impact Statement describes the purpose and need for an access project over and on National Forest System lands, the proposed action, issues raised regarding the proposal, alternatives to the proposed action, mitigation and monitoring measures, affected resources and effects to those resources. The Responsible Official has identified Alternative B1, with modifications, as the preferred alternative, which will allow Crown Resources/Kinross Gold Corporations to utilize the Marias Creek route to construct and reconstruct roads, build a pipeline to a water infiltration gallery and water augmentation sites, construct a project fence, drill wells, construct livestock management features (fences, cattle guards, gates, well, water troughs) and construct utilities across National Forest System lands to facilitate Crown's plan to mine an ore body on their private lands that are surrounded by Federal lands. Alternative B1 will reconstruct approximately 5.2 miles of existing road and construct approximately 1.5 miles of new road, and would close approximately 2.6 miles of existing road in Bear Trap Canyon. Other alternatives considered a variation on Alternative B1, or other access routes up to the private lands. All alternatives include the project fence, water infiltration gallery and pipeline, water augmentation sites, monitoring well and water monitoring, wildlife guzzlers and utility construction. Alternative B considers the same Marias Creek route as Alternative B1, but has fewer mitigation measures. Alternative C considers the Nicholson Creek route, with 12.4 miles of reconstruction and 0.6 miles of new road construction. Alternative D considers the Cow Camp route, with 2.1 miles of reconstruction and 0.6 miles of new road construction. None of the other alternatives include closures in Bear Trap Canyon. Each alternative also has different mixes of mitigation measures. Comments on the draft EIS, and its preceding preliminary EA were considered and resulted in alternative and analysis modifications presented in the final EIS. Response to comments on the draft EIS and preliminary EA are located in Appendix F. Changes between draft and final EIS are highlighted at the end of Chapter I of the final EIS.

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