



# United States Department of the Interior



## BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Folsom Field Office  
63 Natoma Street  
Folsom, CA 95630  
[www.blm.gov/ca/folsom](http://www.blm.gov/ca/folsom)

**EA Number:** CA-180-07-12      **Serial Number:** CACA 48682

**Proposed Action:** Coatsworth Access Road Right-of-Way

**Location:** Lot 13, Section 5, T. 15 N., R. 8 E., MDM; Nevada County

**Applicant:** Michael Coatsworth

## 1.0 Purpose of and Need for Action

### 1.1 Need for Action

The applicant needs the subject right-of-way (R/W) in order to obtain usable and practical access to a private parcel, upon which he plans to construct a residence, that is approximately 95% surrounded by BLM land. Mr. Coatsworth is the owner of APN 53-220-10, a 9.1 acre parcel that is the southern half of a patented lode claim. His parcel is one of four similar type parcels surrounded by BLM. None of these parcels is currently occupied, though a substantial amount of mining occurred here in the past.

Current access to the parcel is via Shooting Star Lane, a dirt road that branches off South Ponderosa Way approximately a half mile north of McCourtney Road. Mr. Coatsworth has an easement on the ¼ mile of Shooting Star where it runs through private property, but there are no R/Ws on Shooting Star where it runs through the BLM. The current physical access to Mr. Coatsworth's parcel is the Standard QM Road, west from Shooting Star and across Clear Creek, then south on Alcalde Extension Road. Though named on the county AP map, all these roads are primitive, unmaintained, one-lane dirt roads; none appear to get any regular, authorized use.

To avoid the expense of having to install a California Department of Fish and Game-approved crossing at Clear Creek, and to shorten the length of his access, Mr. Coatsworth would like to construct 711' of new road that would connect Shooting Star to his parcel. He would also like to bring Shooting Star up to county standards by improving/widening to road. Thus he has applied to BLM for authorization to build 711' of new road and improve 1336' of existing road. There is no electric power service to this area, and the applicant plans to construct a service drop along the road; as a consequence, the R/W would also be used for power line purposes. The applicant has legal and physical access to the subject BLM parcel through his easement on Shooting Star Lane.

### 1.2 Conformance with Applicable Land Use Plans

The proposed action is subject to the 1988 Sierra Planning Area Management Framework Plan (MFP) Amendment. This plan has been reviewed to determine that the proposed action conforms to the land use plan terms and conditions as required by 43 CFR 1610.5. The objective of the MFP Amendment was to augment land tenure decisions (land disposal/retention) of the original 1983 MFP; it also modified decisions of the SYU-15 Timber Management Plan. The proposed action is in the Nevada City Management Area.

## **2.0 Proposed Action and Alternatives**

### **2.1 Proposed Action**

The proposed action is to construct, to county and BLM standards, 711' of new road and improve 1,336' of existing road. The applicant would also install an electric power pole line along the shoulder of the road. Overall width of disturbance for the new and improved gravel roads with turnouts would be approximately 25'. Terrain for the new construction is basically level, with one minor drainage crossing. The existing road is on rolling terrain and also crosses one drainage. Culverts would be installed at each crossing.

The proposed right-of-way would be 2,047' long by 25' wide, encompassing approximately 1.17 acres of public land.

This right-of-way would be for a term of 30 years and would be subject to applicable policy or program requirements and prior existing rights.

### **2.2 Project Design Features**

Road construction and slash disposal will conform to BLM standards, minimizing erosion hazard. See the attached "Exhibit B, Stipulations" and "Standards for Road Construction on BLM Rights-of-Way, Folsom Field Office".

### **2.3 No Action**

The no action alternative would be to not issue a R/W or allow the road construction. In this case, the applicant would not be able to have shorter, more convenient access and he would have to develop a CDFG-approved crossing on Clear Creek. Furthermore, existing roads would not be improved.

## **3.0 Affected Environment**

The proposed right-of-way is in the Sierra Foothills at an elevation of 2,200' elevation on gently rolling upland. Water resources are not present in the R/W area. Soils are Secca-rock outcrop complex, 2-50% slopes. The plant community is northern gabbroic mixed chaparral. Nearby rare plants or species of interest are the federally endangered Stebbins' morning glory and a dwarf flannelbush which occur north and south of the site but these plants were not found in the project area. Wildlife species of interest include the California horned lizard, which was found south of the project site. More details on soils, geology, wildlife and botanical species are in the attached biological report. Rangeland resources are negligible. Forestry resources are not present. Scenic qualities and visual resources have been compromised by the existing road, but are otherwise fairly intact. Recreational values are low due to brush density.

A survey for cultural resources was conducted but nothing was found.

## **4.0 Environmental Effects**

The following critical elements have been considered for this environmental assessment, and unless specifically mention later in this chapter, have been determined to be unaffected by the proposal: air quality, areas of critical environmental concern, prime/unique farmlands, floodplains, water quality,

threatened or endangered species, hazardous waste, cultural resources, native American concerns, wetlands and riparian zones, wild and scenic rivers, wilderness, invasive, nonnative weeds, and environmental justices.

#### **4.1 Impacts from the No Action Alternative**

Impacts to resources described above would not be expected from the no action alternative.

#### **4.2 Impacts from the Proposed Action**

Approximately 0.78 acres of native vegetation (brush and ground cover) would be removed during road construction/improvement. The alignment for new construction was selected specifically to avoid impact to blue oaks. No trees would be affected by the road improvement. Bringing Shooting Star Lane up to county and BLM standards would reduce erosion and enhance watershed protection. Compliance with BLM and county standards for road construction and design will help reduce the risk of road related erosion to small, immeasurable levels. Plants that reproduce asexually or by seeds that do not disperse far from the parent plant could be affected. However, no known rare plants would be affected because none were found in the project area. If undetected plants were affected, there would still be sufficient numbers of plants outside the project area to ensure that the project would not measurably impact species' ability to persist.

Although the site contains potential California horned lizard habitat, no lizards were found. Therefore, the project is not expected to impact that species.

No residences are near enough to be affected by the temporary dust and noise of road construction and improvement. The amount of additional traffic generated by one new residence would be negligible.

#### **4.3 Cumulative Impacts**

Erosion, rare plants, and California horned lizards are not expected to be impacted at the site specific scale. Therefore, cumulative impacts at a larger scale are not expected. The project is not expected to cumulatively contribute to dust and noise because these road construction-related impacts would be very short term and there are no other known similar activities expected to occur at the same time in the nearby vicinity that could conceivably combine to constitute a considerable cumulative impact.

### **5.0 Agencies and Persons Consulted**

#### **5.1 BLM Interdisciplinary Team**

- Dean Decker, Rights-of-Way, Cultural Resources and EA Writer
- Jeff Babcock, Engineering
- Al Franklin, Biological Resources

#### **5.2 Availability of Document and Comment Procedures**

The EA, posted on Folsom Field Office's website ([www.blm.gov/ca/folsom](http://www.blm.gov/ca/folsom)) under Planning (or available upon request), will be available for a 15-day public review period. Comments should be sent to the BLM at 63 Natoma Street, Folsom, CA 95630 or emailed to us at [ca180@ca.blm.gov](mailto:ca180@ca.blm.gov).

# EXHIBIT B

CACA 48682 (2800)

Date:

## STIPULATIONS

1. The right-of-way is subject to all valid existing rights.
2. The holder shall maintain the road in a safe, usable condition by providing road surfacing appropriate to loading and traffic volume, making provisions for proper drainage of the roadway performing grading as necessary, and taking any other measures required to prevent erosion and other damage to the roadway or surrounding public land.
4. No trees over 6" dbh shall be removed without the permission of the authorized officer.
5. The holder shall contact the authorized officer in case of a change in the holder's mailing address, change in business or corporate status, change in the holder's designated agent, or in case of a sale of the property served by the right-of-way.
6. Although sufficient vegetation clearing to obtain legally required clearances, plus a reasonable buffer to allow for regrowth, is authorized by this instrument, the holder will make efforts to minimize clearing and will avoid excessive clearing. The holder shall trim trees in preference to cutting trees. Only trees that constitute an obvious hazard shall be cut; no trees shall be removed by bulldozing.
7. Slash generated in the course of clearing vegetation shall be disposed of either by: (1) removal from public land; or (2) lopping and scattering (all slash must be reduced to a size that is within 12" of the ground at all points); or (3) burning in compliance with state and local codes (burn sites on public land must be approved by the authorized officer).
8. Construction sites shall be maintained in a sanitary condition at all times; waste materials at those sites shall be disposed of promptly at an appropriate waste disposal site. "Waste" means all discarded matter including, but not limited to, human waste, trash, garbage, refuse, oil drums, petroleum products, ashes, and equipment.
9. All operations under this grant shall comply with State and Federal laws concerning the use of insecticides, herbicides, fungicides, rodenticides, and other similar substances. These shall be used only in accordance with their registered uses and within the limitations imposed by the Secretary of the Interior. Prior to use of such substances, the holder shall obtain from the authorized officer written approval of a plan showing the type and quantity of substance to be used, pest(s) to be controlled, method of application, location of storage and disposal of containers, and any other information required by the authorized officer. All use of substances shall be in accordance with the approved plan. Approval of the plan will be at the discretion of

BLM, and approval may be withheld if the Authorized Officer determines that herbicide use would be inconsistent with the agency's land management objectives.

10. Unless otherwise agreed to by the authorized officer in writing, powerlines shall be constructed in accordance to standards outlined in "Suggested Practices for Raptor Protection on Powerlines," Raptor Research Foundation, Inc., 1981. The holder shall assume the burden and expense of proving that pole designs not shown in the above publication are "eagle safe." Such proof shall be provided by a raptor expert approved by the authorized officer. The BLM reserves the right to require modifications or additions to all powerline structures placed on this right-of-way, should they be necessary to ensure the safety of large perching birds. Such modifications and/or additions shall be made by the holder without liability or expense to the United States.
11. The holder shall adhere in all respects to the attached "Standards for Road Construction...."
12. The holder shall furnish and install culverts of the gauge, materials, diameter(s) and length(s), indicated and approved by the authorized officer. Culverts shall be free of corrosion, dents, or other deleterious conditions. Culverts shall be placed on channel bottoms on firm, uniform beds which have been shaped to accept them and aligned to minimize erosion. Backfill shall be thoroughly compacted. No equipment shall be routed over a culvert until backfill depth is adequate to protect the culverts.
13. The holder shall conduct all activities associated with the construction, operation, and termination of the right-of-way within the authorized limits of the right-of-way.
14. During construction, the holder will furnish and apply water, as needed, for dust control.
15. No construction or maintenance activities shall be performed when the soil is too wet to adequately support construction equipment.
16. Prior to construction, the holder will place construction control stakes as directed by the authorized officer (may include: limits of R/W; limits of disturbance; grading; culvert location, slope, etc.). When staked, the authorized officer will be notified and allowed the opportunity to inspect the staking.
17. In all operations associated with the use of the right-of-way, the holder shall comply with the relevant provisions of the California Interagency Cooperative Fire Prevention Agreement.
18. With regard to surfacing materials used in road maintenance and construction, the holder shall comply with the California Code of Regulations, Title 17, Section 93106, *Asbestos Airborne Toxic Control Measures for Surfacing Applications*, as well as all local and county Air Pollution Control and Air Quality Management District rules and regulations relating to asbestos control measures, including those developed by county governments pursuant to Health and Safety Code Section 39666.

## **Standards for Road Construction on BLM Rights-of-Way, Folsom Field Office**

These standards will apply unless otherwise specified by the Authorized Officer.

### Clearing

1. Trees of non-commercial value, brush and slash shall be disposed of by lop and scatter. Accumulations of debris shall not exceed 12 inches in depth.
2. Clearing limits shall be a maximum of 2 feet beyond the top of back slope and toe of fill.

### Road Criteria

1. Single lane traveled way width shall be a minimum of 12 feet to a maximum of 14'.
2. Road surface shall be outsloped 3%.
3. Back slopes shall be constructed @ 1:1.
4. Fill slopes shall be constructed @ 1.5:1.
5. All culverts shall have a minimum 18-inch diameter and have a minimum of 18 inches of compacted cover. Flow line of culverts shall be a minimum of 5% or match existing drainage.

### Earthwork

1. All construction equipment shall be of a type and size suitable for the specific site conditions associated with the road construction.
2. Excavated material shall be used for embankment construction and not wasted.
3. Embankments shall be compacted to a minimum 95% relative compaction. Material used for embankment construction shall be moistened as necessary to ensure minimum compaction requirements.