

excavator will ford the river in the existing low water ford area that is approximately ¼ mile down river (north) of the proposed bridge site. The excavator will be walked down the south side of the river on an old existing road that was originally accessed via the ford.

Proposed bridge sites were reviewed on the ground with Kevin Herkamp, Division of State Lands, Bend Office and with Cindy Vergari, Oregon Parks and Recreation, Baker City Office on May 4, 2006. Mr. Herkamp gave specific direction on what would be appropriate for bridge installation and eliminate the need for Oregon DSL involvement in the project.

Block 4. Proposed Project Purpose and Need

Jason Wharton purchased the property along the Middle Fork John Day River in the spring of 2005. The property consists of three separate tax lots 1900, 600, and 605 (see attached tax lot map) and each tax lot is eligible for development under zoning regulations for Grant County and the state of Oregon. However, there is no legal access to any of these tax lots from the south. Any access that could be obtained through other legal processes would not be year round due to the topography, nor would much of the property be accessible due to the rugged terrain. Constructing an "all weather" road system from the south that would allow access during the wet and snowy months of the year would not only be cost prohibitive, it would potentially have many more wide ranging detrimental affects to the Middle Fork, such as long term erosion, than would the proposed bridge.

Mr. Wharton's property boundary is the Middle Fork Road 20. The proposed bridge will allow use and access to the property. A bridge across the river does not require an easement from other landowners and is the most environmentally sensitive, the most expedient, and the least expensive method of accessing this property. Grant County road department and Grant County planning department were supportive of the proposal. Access to the property will allow for development and improvement of the property, which is now inaccessible. Development of the property will lead to the associated economic benefits for the county, which is desirable since Grant County is economically poor.

No fill and removal in either the Middle Fork John Day River or the associated wetlands is required for the proposed bridge installation. No wetlands will be entered or impacted. The proposed bridge site was selected with the idea of minimizing impacts to the river, associated wetlands and riparian areas. Any minor soil disturbance in the uplands, as a result of constructing the abutments will be mitigated through grass seeding and reshaping the area. The concrete abutments will be located out of any wetlands and above the ordinary high watermark. On the south side of the river there is an old road that is currently covered with cheat grass and other dry site species. This will be the area where the concrete abutment on the south side of the river is located. On the north side of the river the concrete abutment will be located below the Grant County Right of Way and above the ordinary high watermark and any wetlands. This area is also covered with cheat grass, mullen and other species that indicate a dry site. Any excess material that develops on the site on the north side of the river as a result of excavation to construct the forms will