



WK: 208-354-0245
djohnson@co.teton.id.us

Public Works Department
MEMORANDUM

150 Courthouse Drive
Driggs, ID 83422

DATE March 21, 2016

TO: Board of County Commissioners

FROM: Teton County Public Works Director – Darryl Johnson, PE, PLS

SUBJECT: Teton Valley Scenic Parkway/Packsaddle Road Analysis

This Teton Valley Scenic Parkway information package is being presented to the Board of County Commissioners to analyze a variety of options for the proposed Teton Valley Scenic Parkway road improvements. Options range from accepting the full 8 mile road offering by Ag Rim LLC (Owner) to a “do-nothing” option. The intent of this package is to evaluate the different options, estimate financial impacts to the County, and attempt to determine which option best addresses the public concerns received.

Background Information

Packsaddle Road west of N9000W is currently a County Road that receives minimal annual maintenance and is not plowed during the winter months. Historically, during the winter months the road corridor is groomed by the Snowmobile Grooming District #33. The Grooming District has an agreement in place, signed by previous County Commissioners, that allows grooming and snowmobile use within the road right-of-way during the winter months. Just west of N9000W, the road is known as Kay’s Hill. Kay’s Hill has a vertical grade of approximately 19%. Teton County design standards allow for a maximum vertical grade of 10%. Winter road maintenance ends at the base of Kay’s Hill. Early every spring, Road & Bridge will spend approximately 2 weeks of labor hours to open/clear Packsaddle Road. Current summer maintenance on Packsaddle Road is estimated to be equivalent of the effort to grade the entire 10.4 mile road section once.

Previously, a project summary package was presented to the Board of County Commissioners (BoCC) on December 14, 2015. The 12/14/2015 packet included a historical summary of the proposed land exchange. A timeline has been included with this submittal summarizing significant events associated with the Packsaddle Road proposal.

Included with this submittal is a letter of intent submitted by Ag Rim LLC on 6/18/2015. The letter of intent outlines the details of the newly constructed road offering. The Owner is proposing that the newly constructed road, built to County Standards, be accepted by the County in exchange for the vacation of the current Packsaddle Road corridor.

The road corridor of concern begins at the base of Kay’s Hill and extends approximately 8.8 miles approximately 2.8 miles south of intersection of N 11500 W with SH 33.

Proposed Options

The following are options that have been identified for consideration. These options have not been discussed by the applicant so it is uncertain whether they are acceptable alternatives. These options were identified in an attempt to provide solutions to concerns that have been received by the County. Estimated costs incurred by the County for each option are also discussed in this report.

Option 1 - Accept Scenic Parkway as Presented – assume new road section will eventually attract development on some level and require year round maintenance provided by Teton County.

Option 1A - Accept with All Options

- Cross section would include a 10' separated multi-use trail
- 8.39 acre public parking area donated to Teton County
- Historical and Scenic Pullovers – 7 total
- Snowmobile route changed to follow multi-use trail

Option 1B - Accept with Multi-use Trail & Parking Area

- Cross section would include a 10' separated multi-use trail
- 8.39 acre public parking area donated to Teton County
- Snowmobile route changed to follow multi-use trail

Option 1C - Accept with Parking Area

- 8.39 acre public parking area donated to Teton County
- Snowmobile easement to follow existing road corridor?

Option 2 - Accept Scenic Parkway road section from “Kay’s Hill” to proposed parking area; Assume new parking area is end destination for winter recreationists, road section will receive year round maintenance provided by Teton County.

Option 3 – Develop Parking Area at Base of “Kay’s Hill” and Keep Existing Road - Create an end destination for year round users through acquisition of 1± acres to be developed into a more appropriate parking area for recreation users. Assume new parking area is end destination for winter recreationists. Packsaddle Road will not be maintained during winter months.

- Level of maintenance of this road would be kept to a minimum.
- The road would not receive winter maintenance/plowing west of the bottom of Kay’s Hill, a few hundred feet west of N9000W on W4000N.
- Purchase 1± acre and develop parking area (see exhibit)
- The road would be opened up in the spring which takes approximately 2 weeks of manpower.
- W4000N would remain a 19% grade
- Designated groomed snowmobile routes would remain the same.
- Estimated \$100,000 investment to acquire land and develop parking area

Option 4 - Do Nothing Scenario: This option would come as a result of the BOCC not accepting any portion of the Scenic Parkway offering.

- No additional costs would be incurred under the Do Nothing option
- Level of maintenance of this road would be kept to a minimum.
- The road would not receive winter maintenance/plowing west of the bottom of Kay’s Hill, a few hundred feet west of N9000W on W4000N.
- The road would be opened up in the spring which takes approximately 2 weeks of

- manpower.
- W4000N would remain a 19% grade
- Designated groomed snowmobile routes would remain the same.

A cost analysis table is attached comparing Options 1 through 4 listed above.

Costs Incurred by Teton County

Existing Conditions – Current level of maintenance on the existing Packsaddle Road is minimal. Road & Bridge opens the road every spring which is estimated to be an equivalent of 80 hours to plow the road. In addition it is estimate the current maintenance is equivalent to grading the 8.8 mile corridor once per year. Estimated annual cost for the current level of maintenance on the 8.8 miles of Packsaddle Road is \$14,000.

If the County were to consider maintaining the road to a more standard level of service, annual maintenance would include grading the road 4 to 6 times per year in addition to the cost for opening the road in the spring. Estimated annual cost for the existing 8.8 mile Packsaddle Road Corridor for an average, moderately used county gravel road would be \$33,400.

Note – Estimated cost for year round maintenance is within \$100 of cost to open the roads in the spring. It is not feasible to maintain all County roads in the wintertime with the current level of manpower and equipment. The County does not like to intermittently plow roads because it might cause travelers to assume a road is plowed and venture down a road and become stranded as a result of a snow event.

Cost for Improvements – Current policy is to not provide an overlay on roads that need rebuilt or do not meet the current County road standards. This is not considered a good investment and unless special circumstances require, it is not done. Packsaddle Road is similar to most of our current county gravel roads in that they were built by laying 3”-4” of gravel on native soils. To bring Packsaddle Road to current County standards would require a complete rebuild. Cost for a complete rebuild of the existing 8.8 miles or road is estimated at \$1,340,000.

Once the road is brought up to standards, it’s lifecycle for a road that receives low to average traffic and minimal heavy truck traffic is somewhere between 10-15 years. Estimated cost for a 4” gravel overlay after the first lifecycle is \$361,000.

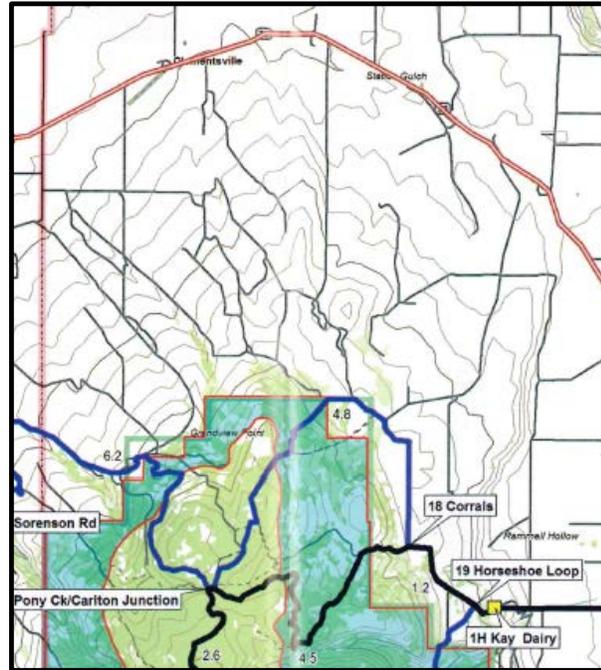
Recreational Use

Although Packsaddle Road is not maintained year round, it does experience year round recreational use. In the non-winter months it is used to access public lands by motorized and non-motorized recreationists. It serves as the north access point of the Horseshoe Canyon loop, as well as providing access to public lands at two additional points north of the Horseshoe Canyon loop. During the winter months, Packsaddle Road is used as part of the groomed snowmobile network maintained by the Snowmobile Grooming District #33 which serves Madison, Jefferson and Teton Counties. In addition to the groomed snowmobile trails, Kay’s Hill is frequented by families sledding down the closed county road and the corridor from Packsaddle Lake Road (Rammel Hollow) to Kay’s Hill provides kick sled and other gravity



dependent winter activities with a 3.25 mile corridor with less than 0.5 mile of walking between vertical drops.

The corridor is one of the county's major recreation destinations for snowmobilers. Kay's Hill is an access point to miles of snowmobiling trails groomed and maintained by the Snowmobile Grooming District #33. There is a major concern that the proposed alignment would not provide the same quality of winter snow conditions due to the fact that it is more exposed and becomes windblown. A condition of the road offering is that the existing county right of way be vacated. This would mean the snowmobile trail system would need modified to follow the new road alignment. One option to the road offering is that a multi-use trail be constructed parallel to the new road alignment to accommodate year round recreational use with minimal vehicle conflicts. Another option that has been brought up by winter enthusiast is to preserve a recreation easement along the current corridor. If a multi-use trail were constructed as part of the road offering, no "loop" routes would be eliminated. Assuming that year round maintenance would be provided to the proposed recreation parking area, the main concern would be getting back to trail 19, Horseshoe Loop.



Possible Conditions for Accepting the Offering

The County should consider negotiating conditions to accepting the offering. To date, the County has not asked if the applicant and future landowners would be willing to share in the cost for road maintenance. A conversation is certainly worth having about any cost sharing options that might be available. Other topics that might be discussed are;

- Multi-use trail that has been included in the offering in the past
- Scenic, informational pullouts that have been offered in the past
- Re-vegetation of the vacated road corridor provided by the applicant
- Continue improvements an additional 2.8 miles to intersect with Hwy 33
- Preserving a recreation easement along the current corridor

Concerned Agencies

Teton County solicited comments from surrounding landowners, county citizens and government agencies. Government agencies and there concerns are as follows:

US Forest Service:

- Make sure proposed parking lot is constructed to accommodate appropriate level of use
- Will snowmobile users be expected to share plowed roads with vehicle traffic or would there be a parallel groomed snowmobile path?
- Will the county be expected to install cattle guards at all fence crossings?
- The new route may potentially impact big game grazing on the exposed slopes. It might also improve big game security next to the forest.

BLM:

- The applicant has expressed an interest in re-aligning a portion of the road through BLM property. The applicant and the County have had numerous conversations with the BLM and have a good understanding of what will be required. An application must be submitted to the BLM requesting permission to re-align the road. There have been conversations as to who should submit this application. In the past, the applicant has requested that the County submit the application. A problematic issue associated with the BLM permit application is that it requires an Environmental Assessment Report. A service offered by the BLM but would take years to complete due to their backlog. An option would be for the applicant to have a private party prepare the EA report but no action by the applicant or the County has been taken to date.

Idaho Transportation Department:

- ITD has requested that a traffic impact study be conducted at the intersection of Milk Creek Road (N11500W) and SH-33. The traffic impact study would include intersection improvement recommendations based on projected increased traffic generated by improving this corridor.

Access Modifications

Existing driveways for adjacent landowners will be affected if the road offering is accepted. As part of the December 2015 submittal, access details were provided showing all land access driveways and proposed modifications. A note on the plans states “improved access to be built according to County specifications and funded by Assante and Felger. Contributed land by Bainbridge”. Follow up with the landowners confirmed this arrangement is acceptable by all parties.

Implications of Not Accepting the Offer

The reality is that Ag Rim will build the road as proposed to the County. Construction has been under way for the past 2 years and the Ag Rim intends to complete the road as outlined, meeting County standards. Should it be decided that accepting the offering is not in the County’s best interest, there will soon be 2 roads on this bench, one private and one public.

Development Concerns

The applicant, Ag Rim LLC & Grandview Ranch LLC make up an estimated 5,000 contiguous acres in the northwest corner of Teton County. Although it is the opinion of the Public Works Department that acceptance of the road offering should not be tied to future development possibilities, a brief summary of maximum densities under the current zoning and proposed zoning ordinances has been provided.

Current Zoning – Currently, the land is zoned A-20. Simply put, A-20 allows for 20 acre minimum lot sizes. Not taking into account roads or other open space that might be considered with land development, A-20 allows for 250 lots.

Proposed Zoning – Under the proposed zone changes, this property would be zoned as Foothills. The proposed zoning allows for a 1 lot per 10 acres density with 75% open space. Under this zoning the 5,000 acres would require that 3,750 be open space. The remaining 1,250 acres could be split into 125 lots, minimum one acre.

Under either of these scenarios, as a part of the development process, the applicant would be required to analyze projected costs incurred by the County as a result of developing.

Construction Oversight

It is assumed that the County will continue to provide construction oversight for the project. To date Public Works has provided random inspections on work being conducted within the current right of way to ensure the road is being constructed to County Standards. Should the BoCC decide to accept the Offering, Public Works will expand its presence to include inspections along the entire road corridor. No cost estimates for construction oversight were calculated or considered as part of this report.

State Funding

The County receives funds through state gas tax for roads claimed. Teton County currently claims 342 miles of roads. Roads are classified as;

Earth – graded & drained

Gravel – graded & drained

Asphalt less than 1” or dust suppressant treated gravel

Cold Plant Mix Asphalt

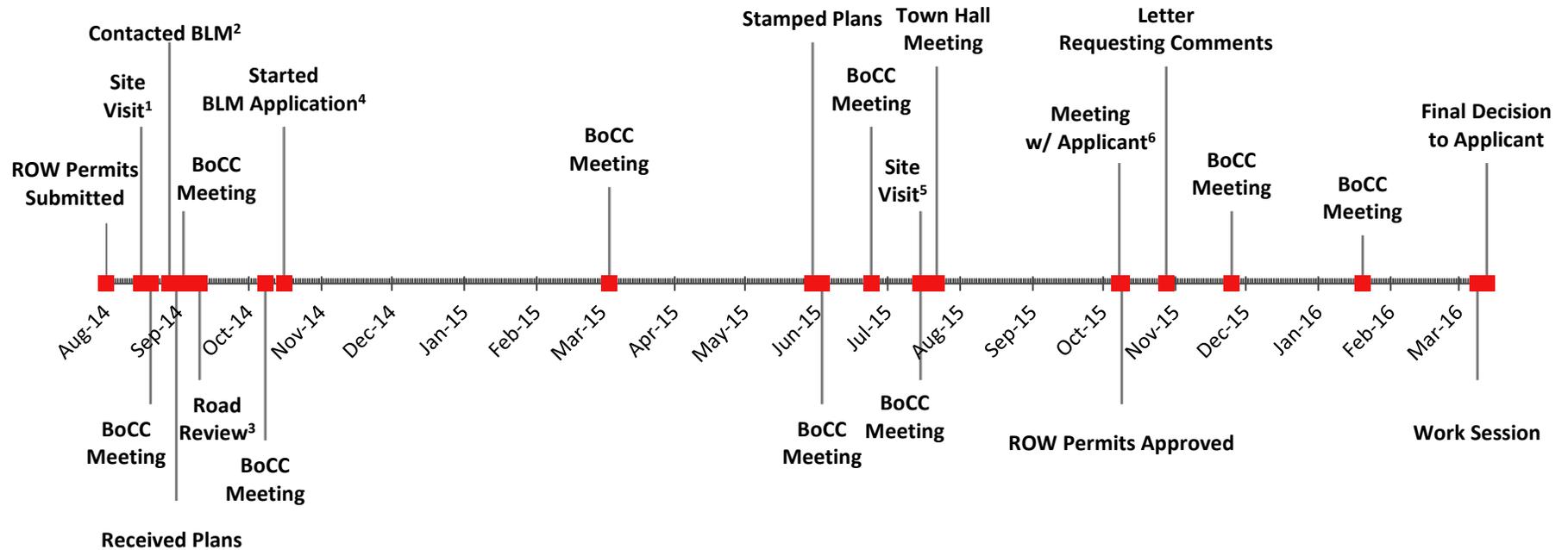
Hot Mix Asphalt Pavement

The amount of state funds received do not vary based on road type. Currently, Teton County claims this entire road corridor as either Earth – graded or Gravel – graded. There would not be any additional state funds received by accepting this road offering.

ACTION REQUIRED

During the August 3, 2015 Board of County Commissioners meeting, the BoCC committed to providing the applicant with a decision on whether or not the County is interested in adopting the new road by early spring of 2016.

Packsaddle Timeline



- 1 Site visit with Jason Boal and Lindsey Moss
- 2 Jason Boal contacted BLM regarding the easement across their property
- 3 Jorgenson Engineering reviewed the plans
- 4 Jason Boal started an application with BLM
- 5 Site visit with Commissioners, Jess Horton, Darryl Johnson, Clay Smith, Mary Lou Hanson, public
- 6 Meeting regarding ROW permits attended by: Jess Horton, Drew Meppin, Darryl Johnson, Clay Smith, Jay Millin

Packsaddle Concerns and Mitigation

Concerns	Possible Options - Best to Worst				Possible Mitigation
Quality & access - recreational pathways	3	4	1A	2	Keep easement in place for winter recreation
Impacts on private property	3	4	2	1C	Install fencing and/or signage in possible conflict areas
Impacts on wildlife	3	4	2	1C	Install speed limit signs
Impacts on conservation easements	4	3	2	1C	Install fencing and/or signage in sensitive areas
Parking accommodations for recreational users	3	1A	2	4	
Unsafe design of Kay's Hill	1A	2	3	4	Increase maintenance to improve road condition
Promote increased trespassing	3	4	2	1B	Install fencing and/or signage in possible conflict areas
Promote increased littering	3	4	2	1B	Install signage in sensitive areas
Does not conform to Comp Plan	3	4	2	1A	
Increased traffic	3	4	2	1B	
Improvement to existing conditions	1A	2	3	4	
Unwanted development	4	3	2	1C	Require a development plan
Financial burden to County	4	3	2	1C	Require winter maintenance be handled by applicant
Loss of recreation	3	4	1B	2	Require construction of a multi-use trail



WK: 208-881-4048
jmillin@co.teton.id.us

Public Works Department
MEMORANDUM

150 Courthouse Drive
Driggs, ID 83422

DATE: 3-3-2016

TO: Public Works Director – Darryl Johnson
FROM: Teton County Engineering Tech – Jay Millin
SUBJECT: **Packsaddle Option Costs**

Option 1 - Accept Scenic Parkway as Presented – assume new road section will eventually attract development on some level and require year round maintenance provided by Teton County.

20 snow plowings = 10.4 miles / 3 mph x 20 x \$125/hr = \$8,700

6 gradings = 6 x 3 hours/mile x 10.4 x \$125 = \$23400

Year round maintenance = \$32,100 / year

Option 2 - Accept Scenic Parkway road section from “Kay’s Hill” to proposed parking area - assume new parking area is end destination for winter recreationists road section will eventually attract development on some level and require year round maintenance provided by Teton County.

2 miles @ year round maintenance (\$3,200/mile) = \$6,400

7.4 miles @ current maintenance (\$1,511/mile) = \$11,200

Total = \$17,600 / year

Option 3 – Develop Parking Area at Base of “Kay’s Hill” and Keep Existing Road - Create an end destination for year round users through acquisition of 1± acres to be developed into a more appropriate parking area for recreation users. Assume new parking area is end destination for winter recreationists. Packsaddle Road will not be maintained during winter months.

Spring clearing = 4 days x 10 hours x 2 graders x \$125/hr = \$10,000

One grading = 8.8 miles x 3hrs/mile x \$125/hr = \$3,300

Current Maintenance = \$13,300

Cost to build 110’ x 270’ Parking Area = \$87,500 (Extrapolated from Fox Creek Park & Ride)

Cost to acquire 1 acre = \$10,000

Total = \$13,300 / year + \$97,500 initial investment

Option 4 - Do Nothing Scenario: This option would come as a result of the BOCC not accepting any portion of the Scenic Parkway Offering.

Spring clearing = 4 days x 10 hours x 2 graders x \$125/hr = \$10,000

One grading = 8.8 miles x 3hrs/mile x \$125/hr = \$3,300

Current Maintenance = \$13,300 / year

Packsaddle Cost Estimates

Option 1: \$32,100/year

Option 2: \$17,600/year

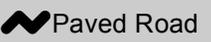
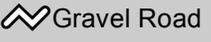
Option 3: \$13,300/year + \$97,500 Initial Investment

Option 4: \$13,300/year



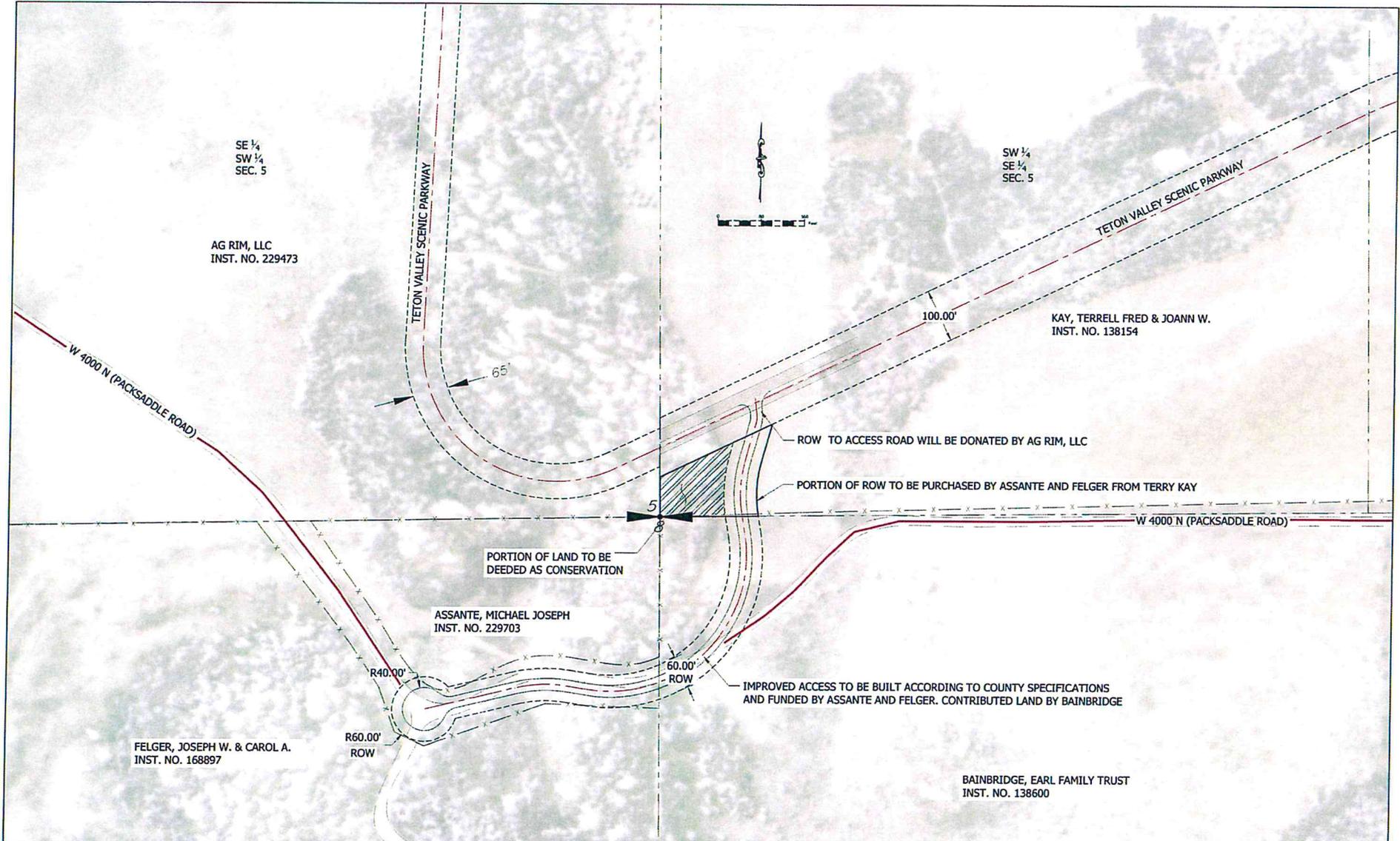
1-acre land acquisition would provide a 110' x 270' parking area suitable for twelve 20-ft wide pull-through parking spots.

Legend

-  Proposed Parking Area
-  Paved Road
-  Parcel Boundary
-  Gravel Road

Kay's Hill Parking Area





LEGEND		HORIZONTAL SCALE	
	ROAD TO BE RELOCATED		HISTORIC PULLOUT
	EXISTING COUNTY ROAD		SCENIC OVERLOOK
	TETON VALLEY SCENIC PARKWAY		* (INCH) NO CHANGE IN ADDRESS LOCATION
	US NATIONAL FOREST SERVICE ROAD		
		22'-8 1/2" 1"=85'	
		11'-1 1/2" 1"=100'	

ACCESS DETAIL	
ASSANTE, BAINBRIDGE, & FELGER ACCESS	

BENCHMARK
LAND SURVEYING

TETON VALLEY SCENIC PARKWAY INSET 1.1		SHEET
		1
DATE: 3-8-2015	789 NORTH 450 EAST	OF
DESIGNER: F.W./F.R.H.	FIRTH, IDAHO 83236	1
DRAWN: F.W./F.R.H.		
PROJECT NO: 14016		
CLIENT:		