

DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT COMMENT SUMMARY

Document Code*	Comment Number**	Comments	Forest Service Response and Location in Final EA Where Concern is Addressed if Appropriate
DEA1	1	Supports the land exchange.	Thank you for your comment.
DEA2	2	"Nowhere in the accompanying report (nor referenced elsewhere) did I encounter any monetary valuation/equivalence for the Federal and Non-Federal parcels....it is not clear that CNF is receiving equivalent value in the proposed land exchange."	An appraisal of both parcels will be completed before a decision regarding the exchange is made. Appraisal information will be included in the decision document. An explanation of the valuation process may be found in the EA section entitled "The Valuation Process" on page 11.
DEA 2	3	The relevance of this report (McGavock et. al. 1986) is questionable in light of the subsequent human developments that have occurred in the intervening 21 years."	An additional reference dated 2006 has been added which supports the statements regarding well production rates contained in the EA section entitled, "Water and Soil" on page 53.
DEA2	4	"As you are no doubt aware, the area in, and surrounding the current Clear Creek RV Lodge (containing the Federal parcel) was a Southwest Forest Industries maintenance facility in the recent past. As a result of prolonged usage, it is a logical conclusion, the aquifer is significantly contaminated with diesel fuel, lubricants, and other chemicals normally associated with large-equipment maintenance activities."	Water in the Coconino aquifer in the vicinity of the Federal parcel is approximately 680 feet below ground surface. The geology of the area is such that it is highly unlikely any surface activity would contaminate the aquifer. Any water supply systems would have to meet Coconino County and State water quality requirements. For a complete description of the geology and hydrology of the subject parcels, please see the references contained in the ground water portion of the EA section entitled, "Water and Soil" on page 53.
DEA2	5	"There is a concern for the negative impact of the proposed 491 dwelling units by the land exchange beneficiaries, Clear Creek 820, LLC, will have on the management of sewerage resulting from the development/occupancy of the proposed 491 units."	Depending upon the method of sewage treatment employed, the system(s) would be regulated by Coconino County or the State.
DEA2	6	"There is a concern relative to the Clear Creek 820, LLC proposed number of 491 dwelling units will adversely impact the Experimental Forest project due to increased human activity that will naturally occur from the development of the property."	CNF consultation with representatives of the Long Valley Experimental Forest did not raise any concerns regarding the impacts of development on the experimental forest. Please see the EA section entitled "Fire and Fuels" on page 46.

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DEA3	7	"...we strongly urge the Forest Service not to allow livestock grazing on the parcel - or at the very least, not without fencing the riparian area. We understand that you are declining to make this decision as part of the current analysis, but it only makes sense to protect the area from livestock damage if you are going to tout the riparian values as a rationale for acquisition."	Thank you for your comment about and concern for the quality of the environment and the potential impacts of livestock grazing in the non-Federal parcel. Your comment will be forwarded to the Range staff.
DEA4	8	Supports the land exchange.	Thank you for your comment.
DEA5	9	"The CNF is not getting the value they should receive for this prime real estate. The Forest Service should receive additional compensation for all the advantages they are giving to the private owner."	The law requires that land values be equal or nearly equal on both sides of the exchange as determined by an agency approved appraisal. Cash equalization is permissible within set limits if values are slightly unequal. A very structured and regulated process is used to assure adequate unbiased opinions of value are assigned to the Federal and non-Federal lands in an exchange. Please see the EA section entitled "The Valuation Process" on page 11.
DEA5	10	"Under Alternative B - direct and indirect effects Federal Parcel: You keep repeating no substantial effects on the following - Vegetation - Special status species - Invasive species - Wildlife - How does one do this? When you clear 450 acres something is going to happen and not for the better."	The effects analysis does not indicate that no effects will result. The word "substantial" is used to indicate the magnitude of the effect specific to those analysis items is limited. In some cases, no representatives of the species were found on the parcel. In other cases, the larger size of areas used by the species considered is such that overall the effect within the parcel acreage considered is quite minimal. On a site specific basis, some individual plants or animals using the parcel will be impacted."
DEA5	11	"Under Socio-Economics and Environmental Justice. It does not address Density."	The Socioeconomics and Environmental Justice portion of the analysis generally speaks to "people" related considerations. The "density" referenced by the commenter is likely the density of potential structures or building lot size. That topic would ultimately be decided by the zoning allowed by Coconino County. Potential development scenarios were displayed in the EA section entitled "Land Use and Infrastructure", page 17, to show examples of the most likely uses of the involved lands - this also provided an indication of the density.

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DEA5	12	"What does this mean 3B/M (Modification)"	This is a reference to the visual quality objective category for the area. 3B/M refers back to the visual management coding for the specific land area being referred to. This is a standardized system used on all National Forests. In the specific coding of 3B/M: 3 refers to the land character subtype which is "foothill lands", B refers to the variety class which is "common", and (Modification) is the visual quality objective. Under the modification visual management objective, management activities may visually dominate the original characteristic landscape, although they are expected to be compatible in form and shape with the natural surroundings.
DEA5	13	"Were all of the property owners in Clear Creek Pines Units 1 and 2 notified?"	Many of the property owners in the two Clear Creek Pines subdivisions were included in the initial scoping notice sent out on October 25, 2005 to over 1,100 addresses. An additional 200 addresses were sent project notification in a second mailing on February 28, 2006. For the second mailing, the Coconino County property records were checked for names and addresses of all landowners within a two mile radius of the Federal land. All of the landowners of record as of February 2006 in Clear Creek Pines Unit 2 would have been notified in one of the two mailings. It appears that most of the landowners in Clear Creek Pines Unit 1 also received a direct mailing. Notice was also provided through announcements in the High Country Informant and Arizona Daily Sun Newspapers.
DEA6	14	"...after reviewing the proposed land parcel exchange, it is my opinion that there is not sufficient evidence presented to support the equal value of the land parcels involved in this exchange. Basically, the CNF is not being compensated fairly in this exchange."	Please see the responses to comments 2 and 9.
DEA7	15	"Additional homes and people will definitely affect the wildlife..."	The impacts of the proposed land exchange on wildlife have been analyzed and the results may be found in the EA section entitled "Wildlife" on page 34.

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DEA7	16	"It will greatly increase the road traffic, and noise on Lake Mary Road."	The impacts of potentially increased traffic on Lake Mary Road (FH3) have been analyzed and are discussed in the EA section entitled "Roads" on page 57. The impacts of the proposed land exchange on noise levels are discussed in the EA section entitled "Noise" on page 50.
DEA7	17	"Concerned about parcel sizes. Should be 10 acres, as per zoning codes, at least no less than 5 acres/lot."	Potential development scenarios were displayed in the EA section entitled "Land Use and Infrastructure", page 17, to show examples of the most likely uses of the involved lands. This topic would ultimately be decided by the zoning allowed by Coconino County.
DEA8	18	"While I am not in opposition to the principle of land exchanges, this one in particular is not meeting the objectives of the forest management plans or the area around Clint's Well. My understanding of land exchanges, was to consolidate holdings for the Forest Service and give private land holders parcels next to urban areas with which to develop."	A determination was made in the EA section entitled "Forest Plan Consistency" on page 10 that this exchange would be consistent with the direction in the Forest Plan. While many land exchanges do involve lands trading Federal land adjacent to towns and cities, many do not. The concept of consolidating private lands and public lands for management efficiency is being met by this exchange. The non-Federal lands which would be acquired in this proposed exchange eliminate a large inholding totally surrounded by National Forest System lands. Federal lands which would be exchanged are directly contiguous to 83 acres of private land, portions of which are developed and have existing, developed infrastructure, including year round access and utilities.
DEA8	19	"...the private parties involved should identify parcels adjacent to incorporated city limits to mitigate the effects of a development of this scope and magnitude."	At this time, the exchange being considered is that which was submitted by the private party and accepted by the Forest Service. If different lands were identified, the Forest Service would need to acknowledge a new exchange proposal and, if accepted, start the process anew.
DEA9	20	"...photo 4 of the federal land, the water tank that is shown there is not federal land that tank is on non-federal land."	Thank you for bringing this error to our attention. The photograph has been removed from the EA.

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DEA9	21	"The land that the private party purchased is non productive timber wise..."	The biological analysis of the non-Federal parcel identified a well developed ponderosa forest east of East Clear Creek. The description of vegetation on the non-Federal parcel may be found in the EA section entitled "Vegetation" on page 28. Should the exchange occur, the non-Federal parcel would include lands to be managed under Management Areas 3 and 12. Management Area 3 includes a sustained yield of timber and firewood production among other uses. A discussion of the parcel and the Management Areas may be found in the EA section entitled "Forest Plan Consistency" on page 10.
DEA9	22	"...it seems no threat to the Forest Service for them developing this property as it would be too costly for them to pursue..."	Potential development scenarios were displayed in the EA section entitled "Land Use and Infrastructure", page 17, to show examples of the most likely uses of the involved lands. The development scenarios were prepared in consultation with Coconino County staff.
DEA10	23	"My opposition is primarily due to the appearance of a 'gift' of easily developed land to a developer in exchange for less easily developed private land located in Coconino National Forest."	The law requires that land values be equal or nearly equal on both sides of the exchange as determined by an agency approved appraisal. A very structured and regulated process is used to assure adequate unbiased opinions of value are assigned to the Federal and non-Federal lands in an exchange. Please see the EA section entitled "The Valuation Process" on page 11.
DEA10	24	"Development of the relatively isolated existing federal parcel would set the precedent for new growth in an area that up to now has been unique in having no new development since (I am assuming) the creation of Happy Jack 2 lodge."	At this time, the exchange being considered is that which was submitted by the private party and accepted by the Forest Service. Future proposals must be considered on their own merits and in compliance with laws governing land exchanges.
*Identifies a specific letter received during the comment period for the Draft Environmental Assessment;			
** Identifies a specific comment contained within a comment letter			