

## 9. Trails Considerations for Forest Heights Circle from Judith von Ahlefeldt Adjacent Property Owner January 22, 2021 FOR EDARP record, and Public Discussion

The landscape of Forest Heights Circle and modern lots with that address was forested with and mostly a ponderosa pine forest with some wet meadow and swale openings in shallow valleys.

The 80 acres was between the East-west Quarter Section lines and half section lines, and bounded on the east by the north/south Half Section Line, and Herring Road. Some of these borders had fences from previous large pastures.

The 1954 Road was the first incursion into the 80 acres and it was built as a loop (or "circle") as described in the History Section and illustrated with Aerial Photography.

Forest Heights Circle was built perpendicular to Herring Road in 1954 and approximately far enough south of the West-East Half- Section Line to accommodate 2.5 acre lots (later 5 ac minimum lots after 1965.

Because the drainages all trend to the southwest, and all parts of Forest Heights ran east, then south, then west and then north as a rectangle, the road crosses several drainages where clay is at the surface and culverts are necessary. Some of the drainages have significant surface water after snowy winters or summer monsoons.

Because this 80 acre subdivision developed erratically from 1954 until the present subdivision effort - which completes all lots. The road was truncated to a cul de sac in 1965 due to the zoning change, and the original covenants from the mid 1950s expired in the mid 1970s. The lots of the 19060s-1990s enjoyed a lot of vacant land in the neighborhood and each individual lot owner assumed his respective parcel and most were separated by forested vacant land or the road itself and no lots had fences along the road. It was open and natural.

Forest Heights Circle itself had been connected with a social trail to Meadow Glen Lane across lot ...081 even before I came in 1970 as neighbors visited, or kids from Meadow Glen went to Herring instead of Swan Road to get the bus.

Forest Heights was used by equestrians, pedestrians and kids on bicycles after 1970 also.

It was a great place to cross country ski in the snows of the 1970s and 80s.

In the late 1990s I returned to the neighborhood

after an 11-year absence, and was involved in the establishment of the County Regional Trail around Section 16 to the south, across Shoup Road which opened to the public in 2001.

My Neighbor to the south owned two lots, 10 acres that bordered Shoup Road, and an adjacent lot on Linnwood Lane, so we built a non-motorized trail on our Parcels connecting Forest Heights Circle and Linnwood Lane (also gravel), which then accessed the Section 16 Regional Trail, which opened in 2001.

This was an action supported by the 1999 Trails Addendum to the *Black Forest Preservation Plan* which encouraged the use of gravel roads as non-motorized trails, and also encouraged landowners to allow trail use on easements connecting gravel roads, and to connect these to the Regional Trails to form an integrated system.

We had a wonderful trail from 2001 until 2015, after the Black Forest Fire. Then my neighbor moved away, the meadows became impassably wet from 2015 -2018, and a new owner blocked the trail to Linnwood Lane.

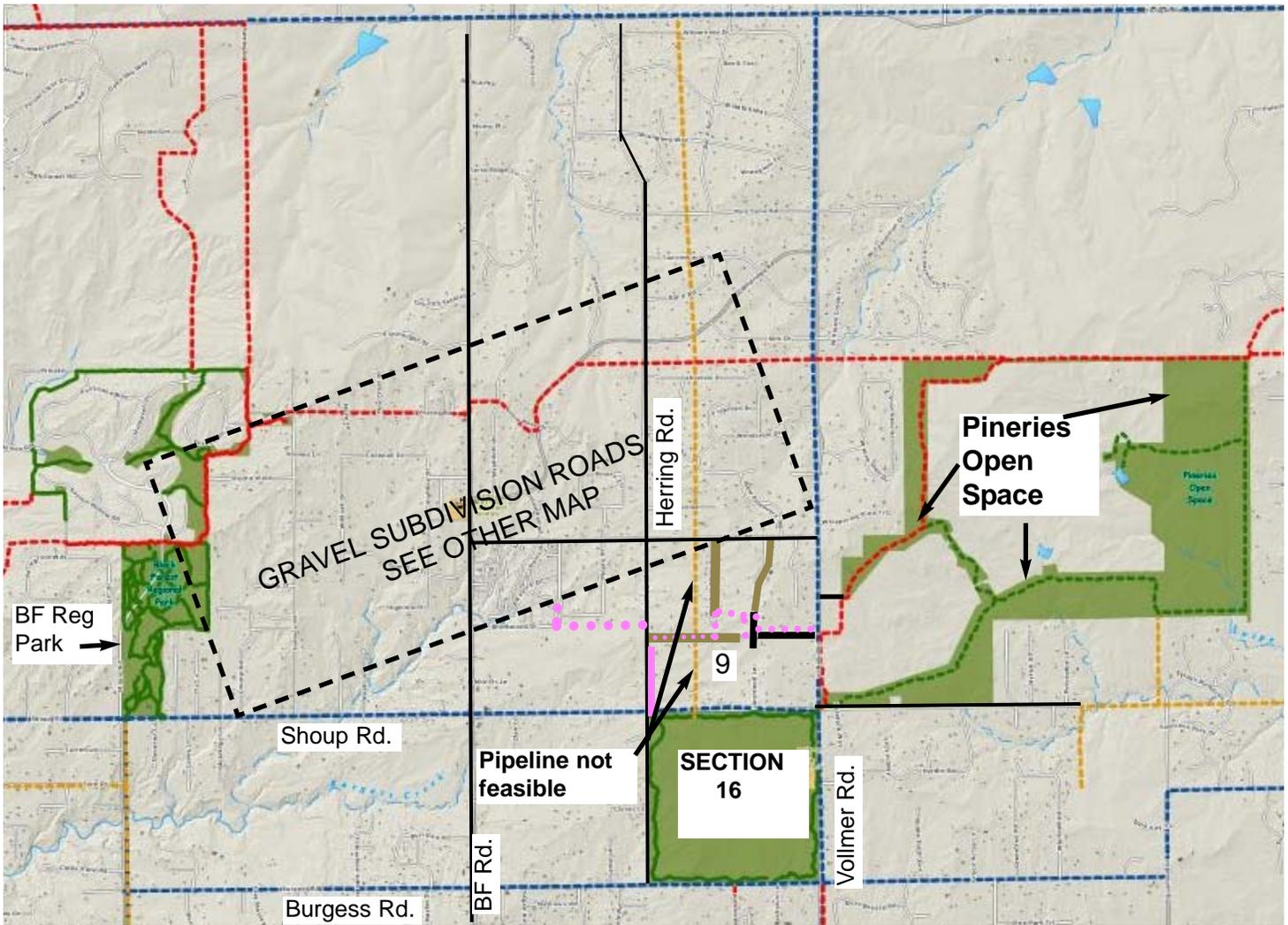
In 2017-18 the Black Forest Trails Association and I worked with a new subdivision to the east (Redtail Ranch adjacent to my eastern boundary and extending to Vollmer Road) to establish a new non-motorized trail route from the Forest Heights and Meadow Glen Neighborhoods to both the Pineries Open Space and Section 16.

The maps below show the Grand Plan to provide local neighborhood trails to access the County Trail system safely on foot, horseback or bicycle so that it is not necessary to drive a car or horse trailer to these nearby Parks and Open Spaces.

The final subdivision of lots along Forest Heights Circle by Forest Heights Properties affords a unique and excellent opportunity for the County to partner with citizens for the common goal of connecting citizens to Parks and Open Space Amenities with cooperative efforts that will create a lasting non-motorized trail system.

Black Forest Trails Association is a 501(c)(3). It was established originally in the late 1970s.

Please see the BFTA Winter 2021 Newsletter.pdf - Article on Trails and on Redtail Ranch - Winter 2021



The base map above shows the 2013 EL Paso County Parks Plan for Regional Trails (red dashed lines) and bicycle routes on roads in blue.

The gold dashed line is the Interstate Gas pipeline. This pipeline has been on two editions of the County Parks Master Plan but it is not feasible to use as a non-motorized trail through Section 9. In Section 9 it is not a long the edge of any subdivision lots.

The pipeline crosses many gravel subdivision roads north of Section 9, and the 1970s subdivisions (Wildwood Village and Wildwood Ranch) were designed around the pipeline (which was built in 1928) and easements along lot lines might be feasible north of the regional trail shown along the north boundary of Pineries Open Space which is along a local service power line easement.

The Forest Heights Properties Subdivision is in Section 9. \

Forest Heights Circle (Private Road running east for less than 1/2 mile from Herring) is currently connected to Meadow Glen Lane by a Black Forest Trails Association non-motorized trail (See photos below). This trail segment was an informal social trail dating

Green areas - EPC Parks or Open Space

--- Bicycle Paths on Roads

--- Regional Trails

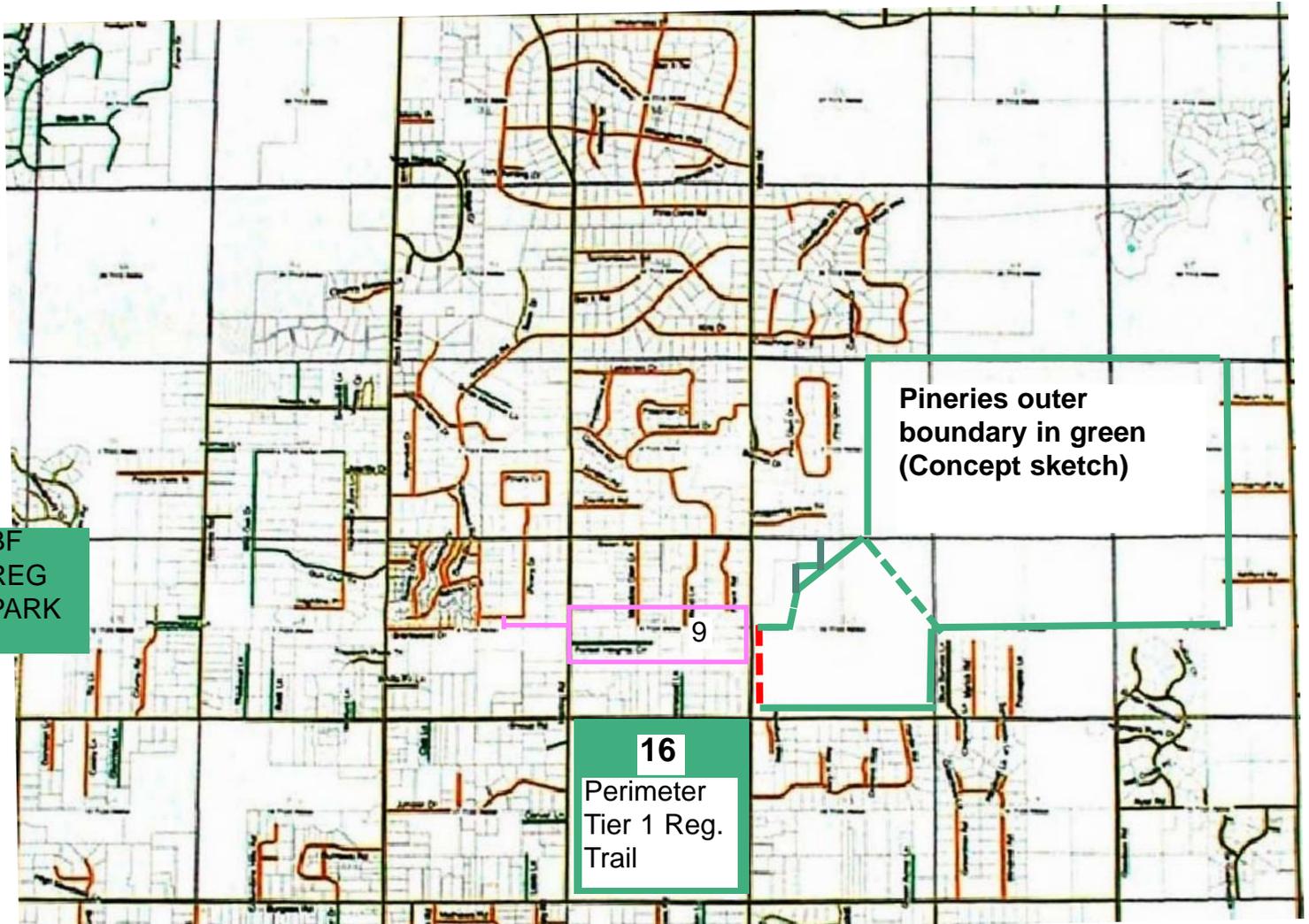
— Gravel Road

●●●●● BFTA local trails (on gravel oads and private land easements)

back to the mid-1950s. It has been part of the BFTA system since about 2000. an east-west trail across two properties (Didleau and von AHlefeldt) was built in 2020 to connect to the platted trail in Red Tail Ranch which is designed to connect to the future Regional Trail on an easement along Vollmer Road, which is part of the Regional Trail System on Pineries Open Space.

The red dotted line trails are on the EPC Parks Master Plan for Pineries Open Space.

The Pink dots (BFTA local trail using Forest Heights Circle and Adjacent Property private land easements enables access to both The Section 16 Trail (in place since about 2000) and to the newly opened Pineries Open Space for local residents.



The base map above is fairly recent (courtesy of EPC Public Works) and shows the gravel trails in central Black Forest used locally by equestrians, pedestrians and bicycles. The “boxes” are square mile Sections - so this map shows about 35 square miles and includes the same Parks and Open Spaces. Forest Heights Properties (with Forest Heights Circle) and also Red Tail Ranch (reaches Vollmer Rd). are within the **Pink Polygon** in Section 9. Section 9 is in a unique position to provide non-motorized trail connectivity among BFTA local trails and the Regional Park and Open Spaces.

View to south - Meadow Glen to Forest Hts  
Long- established trail

View to east to Red Tail Ranch-Ward Lane  
New Trail in Fall 2020 Eagle Scout project

