



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Carson City District Office
1535 Hot Springs Rd., Ste. 300
Carson City, NV 89706-0638

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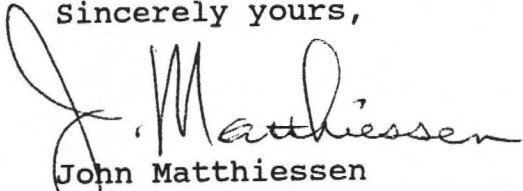
JUL 07 1995

CERTIFIED MAIL
RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

Dear Interested Party:

Enclosed is a copy of the Proposed Multiple Use Decision for the nine allotments which encompass the Pine Nut Herd Management Area. Accompanying the decision are Sections VII (Consultations) and VIII (Management Action Selected) of the allotment evaluations. Note that after the 15-day protest period a Final Multiple Use Decision will be issued.

Sincerely yours,


John Matthiessen
Area Manager
Walker Resource Area

10 Enclosures:

1 - 9. Sections VII and VIII of allotment evaluations for Buckeye, Churchill Canyon, Clifton, Eldorado, Hackett Canyon, Mill Canyon, Rawe Peak, Sand Canyon, and Sunrise allotments.

10. Pine Nut Proposed Multiple Use Decision.

sand Canyon AUL = 55% in Same HMA?
Nacket Canyon AUL = 45%

PINE NUT PROPOSED MULTIPLE USE DECISION

The Record of Decision for the Reno Grazing Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS) was issued on December 21, 1982. This document established the multiple use goals and objectives which guide management of public land in the allotments contained within the Pine Nut Herd Management Area (HMA). The Reno Rangeland Program Summary (RPS), issued on May 30, 1984, identified allotment specific objectives.

As identified in the Reno GEIS and Reno RPS, monitoring has been conducted on these allotments to determine if existing multiple uses for the allotments were consistent with the attainment of the objectives. Monitoring data has been collected and analyzed through the allotment evaluation process to determine what changes in existing management are required in order to meet specific multiple use objectives for these allotments.

Through the consultation, coordination, and cooperation process (CCC), input from the interested parties has been considered. Based on the evaluation of the monitoring data, technical recommendations contained within the allotment evaluations, and input through the CCC process, my proposed decision is presented below.

BUCKEYE ALLOTMENT LIVESTOCK GRAZING MANAGEMENT DECISION

Decisions relating to the grazing of livestock on public lands in the Buckeye Allotment are as follows:

- A. In accordance with §4130.6-1(a) the active preference for sheep will be maintained at 4973 AUMs. $\frac{1}{2} \times 5 = 995$ *consideration II*
- B. In accordance with §4130.6-1(a), if cattle are grazed instead of sheep, the active preference for cattle initially will not exceed 2200 AUMs. In accordance with §4110.3, this preference will remain in effect for five years, after which time a final active preference will be established based on additional monitoring data.
- C. In accordance with §4130.6-1 (a), if both sheep and cattle are grazed, the initial active preference will be proportioned in the direct ratio of 4973 sheep AUMs equalling 2200 cattle AUMs. For example, if the ranch uses half the preference for sheep grazing and half for cattle, this would result in 2486 sheep AUMs and 1100 cattle AUMs initial active preference.
- D. In accordance with §4130.6, §4130.6-1(a) and §4130.6-2, cattle will be authorized in the summer use portion of the allotment in conjunction with private lands. Livestock shall leave the riparian zones by mid-July. Cattle will be authorized in the west portion of the allotment only in the winter (November 1 through March 31). Grazing within the HMA will not be authorized by livestock during the growing season (April 1 through July 15).

RATIONALE

Utilization studies detailed in the evaluation showed the allotment provided full preference sheep grazing use (4973 AUMs) at light or moderate use levels. This can continue with application of good forage management techniques.

Utilization studies also showed an estimated 2700 AUMs of grass forage within the entire allotment, which includes the portion within the HMA. Excluding the potential stocking level for wild horses, there is an estimated 2200 AUMs available for cattle. Five years of studies will provide adequate information to determine a final active preference for cattle.

500 AUMs
WD = 42 WLD

The narrow band of public land in the summer use area (southeast portion of the allotment) is not practically grazed by itself by cattle (although herded sheep could use the area as a unit). But used in conjunction with the lower, primarily private, canyons, this area could comprise the high, steep portion of a three-pasture unit requiring minimal fencing to be effective.

Cattle will tend to leave the west side of the allotment anytime the valley below is green; but in winter-time the valley will be both brown and colder than the rangeland and cattle will remain on the allotment. The north end of the allotment which is within the HMA already receives growing season use by wild horses, so that additional growing season use would result in significant overgrazing which would diminish the grass vegetation.

CHURCHILL CANYON ALLOTMENT LIVESTOCK GRAZING MANAGEMENT DECISION

Decisions relating to the grazing of livestock on public lands in the Churchill Canyon Allotment are as follows:

- A. In accordance with §4130.6-1(a), the active preference for livestock will be maintained at 1074 AUMs. In accordance with §4410.3, continue to use standard Actual Use/Utilization study techniques over a three year period to refine this estimate and establish a preference for cattle which is sustainable and allows plenty of forage for wild horses and mule deer.

RATIONALE

The 1074 AUMs for livestock is a reasonable initial stocking level based upon the figures shown in the utilization study contained in Appendix IV of the evaluation. The Bureau will obtain further data to refine the estimate and establish an allocation which is sustainable.

CLIFTON ALLOTMENT LIVESTOCK GRAZING MANAGEMENT DECISION

Decisions relating to the grazing of livestock on public lands in the Clifton Allotment are as follows:

- A. In accordance with §4110.3-2(b) and §4130.6-1(a), the active preference for cattle will be adjusted from 772 AUMs to 613 AUMs. In accordance with §4110.3-3(a) &(b), this reduction in active preference will be phased in over a five year period, beginning with the effective date of the Final Multiple Use Decision (1995). The reduction will be implemented as follows:

- 1995 From 772 AUMs to 719 AUMs
- 1997 From 719 AUMs to 666 AUMs
- 1999 From 666 AUMs to 613 AUMs

In accordance with §4110.3-2(c), 159 AUMs will be suspended.

B. In accordance with §4130.6-1(a), the authorized season of use will be changed from 4/1 - 5/31 to 1/1 - 5/31.

RATIONALE

Insufficient forage is available to provide 772 AUMs for livestock. The existing livestock authorized period of use occurs during a portion of the active growing season. Wild horse use occurs throughout the active growing season. This amount and concentration of use is resulting in the loss of grass plants at the mid and lower elevations of the allotment. Adjusting livestock numbers will, in part, begin to allow these areas an opportunity to recover. By eliminating the compressed season of use for livestock and allowing more flexibility, use can be made during plant dormancy when they are least vulnerable. Snow, when available, will further help by providing the opportunity to distribute livestock over a larger portion of the allotment. These actions should provide adequate forage on a sustainable basis.

ELDORADO ALLOTMENT LIVESTOCK GRAZING MANAGEMENT DECISION

Decisions relating to the grazing of livestock on public lands in the Eldorado Allotment are as follows:

A. In accordance with §4130.4-2, livestock grazing will be authorized on a temporary non-renewable basis to take pressure off of or supplement use from other allotments.

B. In accordance with §4130.6-1 (a), the authorized season of use will be from 11/1 to 2/28. The authorization will be limited to sheep. A total of 270 AUMs will be available for livestock use.

RATIONALE

Authorizing grazing use on a temporary non-renewable basis is at the discretion of the authorized officer. If the authorized officer determines that livestock grazing, as applied for, would not meet land use plan objectives, the application would not be authorized. If the authorized officer determines that a modification to the application would meet these objectives, use would be authorized accordingly.

Authorizing sheep use during the winter is advantageous. Grass plants are in a dormant state, so are not susceptible to overgrazing. Harvesting the old growth from the grass plants will allow better access to sunlight for the spring growth and the plants can better remain vigorous. In addition, heavy browsing of the shrubs by sheep will favor the growth of the grasses which make up the bulk of the diet for wild horses.

HACKETT CANYON ALLOTMENT
LIVESTOCK GRAZING MANAGEMENT DECISION

Decisions relating to the grazing of livestock on public lands in the Hackett Canyon Allotment are as follows:

A. In accordance with §4110.3-2(b) and §4130.6-1(a), the active preference will be adjusted from 515 AUMs to 187 AUMs. No more than 146 AUMs of sheep use will be authorized in the North Pasture. No more than 41 AUMs of livestock use will be allowed in the South Pasture. In accordance with §4110.3-3(a) &(b), this reduction in active preference will be phased in over a five year period, beginning with the effective date of the Final Multiple Use Decision (1995). The reduction will be implemented as follows:

1995 From 515 AUMs to 406 AUMs
1997 From 406 AUMs to 297 AUMs
1999 From 297 AUMs to 187AUMs

In accordance with §4110.3-2(c), 328 AUMs will be suspended.

B. In accordance with §4130.6, the following terms and conditions will apply to the North and South Pastures.

1. Specific areas within the allotment will be grazed for two weeks or less each year.
2. During most years, these two week grazing authorizations will occur between 3/15 and 6/30.
3. At the discretion of the authorized officer, grazing use can occasionally be authorized after 6/30.
4. In order to provide forage for over-wintering mule deer, allow no more than 25% use on bitterbrush by livestock and wild horses before October. Yearlong use by all herbivores will not exceed 45%.

RATIONALE

Insufficient forage is available to provide 515 AUMs for livestock. The influence of pinyon-juniper woodlands severely restricts the areas that produce forage and are usable by livestock. The ability of these woodlands to out-compete other vegetation and intercept/utilize precipitation has resulted in declines of desirable forage for livestock, wild horses, and wildlife. In order to balance grazing with forage production, adjusting the livestock active preference was necessary.

Without construction of more fencing in the north pasture, cattle will probably drift off the public lands to the developing private lands north of the allotment. The allotment is historically a sheep allotment, which provides a situation where animals can be controlled through herding in the North pasture. Use in the South pasture can be made by either sheep and/or cattle since access to the developing private lands is blocked by the Eldorado Canyon Fence.

MILL CANYON ALLOTMENT
LIVESTOCK GRAZING MANAGEMENT DECISION

Decisions relating to the grazing of livestock on public lands in the Mill Canyon Allotment are as follows:

- A. In accordance with §4130.6-1(a), the active preference for sheep will be maintained at 2049 AUMs. *8/5 = 410 AUM cows*
- B. In accordance with §4110.3 and §4130.6-1(a), if cattle are grazed rather than sheep, the active preference for cattle initially will not exceed 776 AUMs. This preference will remain in effect for 5 years following such conversion, after which time a final active preference will be established based on additional monitoring data.
- C. In accordance with §4130.6-1(a), the authorized season of use will be changed from 11/1 -1/31 and 4/1 -5/31 to 11/1 - 3/31.
- D. In accordance with §4130.6-2, livestock use within the HMA portion of the allotment will be made between 11/1 and 2/28. After 2/28, all livestock use will be shifted outside of the HMA.

RATIONALE

Sheep and horses have a limited dietary overlap. Sheep prefer browse species while horses prefer grasses. The exception to this is during spring green-up, when sheep will also use the grasses. A large portion of the allotment is comprised of low sagebrush. By changing the grazing season of use for sheep from spring to fall/winter, the competition for grasses is eliminated and heavy shrub browsing by sheep will favor the grasses used by horses. Grazing occurs during plant dormancy when they are least vulnerable. Due to these factors, maintaining the active preference for sheep is practical.

Based on information provided in the evaluation it was determined that adequate forage is present to initially support 776 AUMs of cattle use in the event that a conversion is requested. Five years of studies will provide adequate information to determine a final active preference for cattle.

A sage grouse use area is located within the HMA. By removing livestock prior to the initiation of growth (i.e., green shoots of grass, forb production), the competition for this forage between livestock and wild horses will be eliminated. The vegetation along with the associated insect population are important to the sage grouse.

RAWE PEAK ALLOTMENT
LIVESTOCK GRAZING MANAGEMENT DECISION

Decisions relating to the grazing of livestock on public lands in the Rawe Peak Allotment are as follows:

- A. In accordance with §4110.3-2(b) and §4130.6-1(a), the active preference for cattle will be adjusted from 552 AUMs to 54 AUMs. In accordance with §4110.3-3(a) &(b), this reduction in active preference will be phased in over a five year period, beginning with the

effective date of the Final Multiple Use Decision (1995). The reduction will be implemented as follows:

1995 From 552 AUMs to 386 AUMs
1997 From 386 AUMs to 220 AUMs
1999 From 220 AUMs to 54 AUMs

In accordance with §4110.3-2(c), 498 AUMs will be suspended.

B. In accordance with §4130.6-1(a), the authorized season of use will be changed from 5/16 - 7/31 to 11/1 -3/31.

C. In accordance with §4110.3 and §4130.6-1(a), if sheep are grazed rather than cattle, the active preference for sheep will be initially established at 301 AUMs. This preference will remain in effect for five years, after which time a final active preference will be established based on additional monitoring data.

RATIONALE

Insufficient forage is available to provide 552 AUMs for livestock. The influence of pinyon-juniper woodlands severely restricts the areas that produce forage and are usable by cattle. The ability of these woodlands to out-compete other vegetation and intercept/utilize precipitation has resulted in declines of desirable forage for livestock, wild horses, and wildlife. In order to balance grazing with forage production, adjusting the livestock active preference was necessary.

The existing livestock authorized period of use occurs during the active growing season. Wild horse use also occurs throughout the active growing season. This concentration of use, coupled with the problems associated with the influence of the pinyon-juniper woodlands, has resulted in the loss of desirable forage.

Adjusting livestock numbers will, in part, begin to allow those areas that are usable an opportunity to recover. Use can be made by livestock during plant dormancy when they are least vulnerable. Snow, when available, will further help by providing the opportunity to distribute livestock.

SAND CANYON ALLOTMENT LIVESTOCK GRAZING MANAGEMENT DECISION

Decisions relating to the grazing of livestock on public lands in the Sand Canyon Allotment are as follows:

A. In accordance with §4110.3, the active livestock preference is cancelled.

B. In accordance with §4130.4-2, livestock grazing will be authorized on a temporary non-renewable basis.

C. In accordance with §4130.6-2, utilization shall not exceed the Allowable Use Level of 55%. This applies to livestock and wild horses.

RATIONALE

The area adjoining the allotment is a developing urban area. As Carson City continues to expand, the public lands will become valuable as open space for residents. It has become impractical as a cattle allotment.

However, it may be in the best interest of the public to use intensively managed livestock grazing as a tool in accomplishing specific environmental goals (e.g., noxious weed control, trampling seed into the soil on barren areas, stimulating decadent vegetation, etc.). Authorizing grazing use on a temporary non-renewable basis is at the discretion of the authorized officer. If the authorized officer determines that livestock grazing, as applied for, would not meet an objective(s), the application would not be authorized. If the authorized officer determines that a modification to the application would meet objective(s), use would be authorized accordingly.

SUNRISE ALLOTMENT LIVESTOCK GRAZING MANAGEMENT DECISION

Decisions relating to the grazing of livestock on public lands in the Sunrise Allotment are as follows:

A. In accordance with §4110.3-2(b) and §4130.6-1(a), the active preference for livestock will be adjusted from 1092 AUMs to 159 AUMs. In accordance with §4110.3-3(a) &(b), this reduction in active preference will be phased in over a five year period, beginning with the effective date of the Final Multiple Use Decision (1995). The reduction will be implemented as follows:

1995 From 1092 AUMs to 781 AUMs
1997 From 781 AUMs to 470 AUMs
1999 From 470 AUMs to 159 AUMs

In accordance with §4110.3-2(c), 933 AUMs will be suspended.

B. In accordance with §4130.6, the following terms and conditions will apply:

1. Specific areas within the allotment will be grazed for two weeks or less each year.
2. During most years, these two week grazing authorizations will occur between 3/15 - 6/15.
3. At the discretion of the authorized officer, grazing can occasionally be authorized after 6/30.
4. The allowable use level of 27.5% is established for use on perennial grasses and 22.5% on bitterbrush by livestock.
5. No livestock grazing will be authorized until utilization levels by wild horses are below the allowable use level for grasses and/or bitterbrush.

RATIONALE

Insufficient forage is available to provide 1092 AUMs for livestock. This is a result of use by wild horses and the influence of pinyon-juniper woodlands. The terms and conditions set forth will provide plants the opportunity to regrow during their active growing season (spring and summer).

AUTHORITY

Authority for this decision is found in Title 43 of the Code of Federal Regulations, which states in pertinent parts:

§4100.0-8: "The authorized officer shall manage livestock grazing on the public lands under the principle of multiple-use and sustained yield, and in accordance with applicable land use plans. Land use plans shall establish allowable resource uses (either singly or in combination), related levels of production or use to be maintained, areas of use and resource condition goals and objectives to be obtained. The plans also set forth program constraints and general management practices needed to achieve management objectives. Livestock grazing activities and management actions approved by the authorized officer shall be in conformance with the land use plan as defined at 43 CFR §1601.0-5(b)."

§4110.3: "The authorized officer shall periodically review the grazing preference specified in a grazing permit or grazing lease and may make changes in the grazing preference status. These changes shall be supported by monitoring, as evidenced by rangeland studies conducted over time, unless the change is either specified in an applicable land use plan or necessary to manage, maintain, or improve rangeland productivity."

§4110.3-2(a): "Active use may be suspended in whole or in part on a temporary basis due to drought, fire, or other natural causes, or to facilitate installation, maintenance, or modification of range improvements."

§4110.3-2 (b): "When monitoring shows active use is causing an unacceptable level or pattern of utilization or exceeds the livestock carrying capacity as determined through monitoring, the authorized officer shall reduce the active use if necessary to maintain or improve rangeland productivity, unless the authorized officer determines a change in management practices would achieve the management objectives."

§4110.3-2(c): "Where active use is reduced it shall be held in suspension or in nonuse for conservation/protection purposes, until the authorized officer determines that active use may resume."

§4110.3-3(a): "Changes in active use in excess of 10 percent shall be implemented over a 5-year period, unless after consultation with the affected permittees or lessees and other affected interests, an agreement is reached to implement the increase or decrease in less than 5 years."

§4110.3-3(b): "After consultation, coordination and cooperation, suspensions of preference shall be implemented through a documented agreement or by decision. If data acceptable to the authorized officer are available, an initial reduction shall be taken on the effective date of the

agreement or decision and the balance taken in the third and fifth years following that effective date, except as provided in paragraph (a) of this section."

§4120.2 (a): States in part that "The allotment management plan shall include terms and conditions under §§ 4130.6, 4130.6-1, 4130.6-2 and 4130.6-3 of this title, and shall prescribe the livestock grazing practices necessary to meet specific multiple-use management objectives."

§4120.2 (c): "Completed allotment management plans shall be incorporated into the terms and conditions of the affected grazing permits and leases."

§4120.3-1 (a): "Range improvements shall be installed, used, maintained, and/or modified on the public lands, or removed from these lands, in a manner consistent with multiple-use management."

§4130.4-2: "Nonrenewable grazing permits or leases may be issued on an annual basis to qualified applicants when forage is temporarily available, provided this use is consistent with multiple-use objectives and does not interfere with existing livestock operations on public lands."

§4130.6: "Livestock grazing permits and leases shall contain terms and conditions necessary to achieve the management objectives for the public lands and other lands under Bureau of Land Management administration."

§4130.6-1 (a): "The authorized officer shall specify the kind and number of livestock, the period(s) of use, the allotment(s) to be used, and the amount of use, in animal unit months for every grazing permit or lease. The authorized livestock grazing use shall not exceed the livestock carrying capacity as determined through monitoring and adjusted under §§4110.3, 4110.3-1 and 4110.3-2."

§4130.6-2: "The authorized officer may specify in grazing permits and leases other terms and conditions which will assist in achieving management objectives, provide for proper range management or assist in the orderly administration of the public rangelands..."

§4130.6-3 "Following careful and considered consultation, cooperation and coordination with the lessees, permittees, and other affected interests, the authorized officer may modify terms and conditions of the permit or lease if monitoring data show that present grazing use is not meeting the land use plan or management objectives."

PROTEST

In accordance with 43 CFR §4160.2, if you wish to protest this proposed decision, you are allowed 15 days from receipt of this decision to file such protest with the Walker Resource Area Manager, 1535 Hot Springs Rd., Suite 300, Carson City, NV 89706-0638. The protest should state the reasons, clearly and concisely, why you think the decision in error (4160.2).

PINE NUT HERD MANAGEMENT AREA
WILD HORSE MANAGEMENT DECISION

Decisions relating to wild horses managed within the Pine Nut HMA are as follows:

A. In accordance with § 4700.0-6(a), the potential stocking level for wild horses in the portions of the HMA located within each allotment is as follows:

Buckeye	493 AUMs) Current pop? cows 11,297 current 10,658 in 95 19,019 in 3 yrs 9379 in 5 yrs
Churchill Canyon	154 AUMs	
Clifton	444 AUMs	
Eldorado	270 AUMs	
Hackett Canyon	187 AUMs	
Mill Canyon	296 AUMs	
Rawe Peak	54 AUMs	
Sand Canyon	95 AUMs	
Sunrise	159 AUMs	
Total	2152 AUMs	

B. The management of wild horses within the HMA will be in accordance with the Strategic Plan for Management of Wild Horses and Burros on Public Lands (June 1992).

C. In accordance with §4710.3-1 and §4710.4, the maximum Appropriate Management Level for the HMA will be 179 head of wild horses. The population will be adjusted to 34% below this maximum level and allowed to increase to the AML of 179. - 34% = 118 h's

D. In accordance with §4710.3-1, the following allotment specific objectives will apply:

Hackett Canyon Allotment: In order to provide forage for over-wintering mule deer, allow no more than 25% use on bitterbrush by livestock and wild horses before October. Yearlong use by all herbivores will not exceed 45%.

Sand Canyon Allotment: Wild horses should be allowed to graze in the allotment under the following constraints:

1. Utilization shall not exceed the Allowable Use Level of 55%. This applies to livestock and wild horses.
2. No damage attributable to wild horses shall occur on riparian habitat along the Carson River.
3. Wild horses will be removed upon request in writing from private land owners in accordance to Title 43, Code of Federal Regulations, §4720.2-1.

Sunrise Allotment: An allowable use level of 27.5% for yearlong use on perennial grasses and 22.5% on bitterbrush shall be managed for by wild horses.

RATIONALE

Generally, in observing these horses over the last three years, the Range Conservationists and Wild Horse and Burro Specialist considered many of the bands to be showing stress from inadequate forage supplies. Many areas show evidence of a constant search for forage. Utilization is occurring several miles outside of the historic HMA. In certain portions of the HMA, ecological sites are declining. In other areas the ecological sites appear to be stable but they have stabilized at the low end of their productive potential.

The analysis of available monitoring data presented in the allotment evaluations for those allotments in the Pine Nut HMA indicate that a thriving natural ecological balance will be achieved at a level of 2152 AUMs of wild horse use.

In order to minimize the disruption of band structure and the stress to individual animals, the population of wild horses would be reduced 34% below the AML. This would allow the population to increase at a projected recruitment rate of 15% per year for three years. This would further allow a three or four year interval between removals. Managing the population to maximize the intervals between removals would minimize the stress associated with removals. Reducing the wild horse numbers to a point below the maximum and then allowing them to increase to AML would have several benefits. First, allowable use levels will not be exceeded therefore allowing the forage base to remain healthy. This, in turn, results in a healthier, more viable, population of wild horses that will have less competition for forage, water and space.

AUTHORITY

The authority for this decision is contained in Sec. 3(a) and (b) of the Wild-Free Roaming Horse and Burro Act (P.L. 92-195) as amended and Title 43 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), which states in pertinent parts:

§4700.0-6 (a): "Wild horses and burros shall be managed as self-sustaining populations of healthy animals in balance with other uses and the productive capacity of their habitat."

§4710.3-1: "Herd management areas shall be established for the maintenance of wild horse and burro herds. In delineating each herd management area, the authorized officer shall consider the appropriate management level of the herd, the habitat requirements of the animals, the relationship with other uses of the public land and adjacent private lands, and the constraints contained in §4710.4....."

§4710.4 "Management of wild horse and burros shall be undertaken with the objective of limiting the animals' distribution to herd areas. Management shall be at the minimum level necessary to attain the objectives identified in approved land use plans and herd management area plans."

§4720.1 States in part that, "Upon examination of current information and a determination by the authorized officer that an excess of wild horses or burros exist the authorized officer shall remove the excess animals immediately...."

§4720.2-1 States in part that, "Upon written request from the private landowner to any representative of the Bureau of Land Management, the authorized officer shall remove stray wild horses and burros from private lands as soon as practicable.

PROTEST

Although 43 CFR §4770.3 allows for an appeal with no mention of a protest, for the purpose of consistency the multiple use decision will be initially sent as a "Proposed" decision.

If you wish to protest this proposed decision, you are allowed 15 days from receipt of this decision to file such protest with the Walker Resource Area Manager, 1535 Hot Springs Rd., Suite 300, Carson City, NV 89706-0638. The protest should state the reasons, clearly and concisely, why you think the decision is in error.

GUIDANCE

Strategic Plan for Management of Wild Horses and Burros on Public Lands, 1992
Technical Reference 4400-7, *Rangeland Monitoring Analysis, Interpretation, and Evaluation*, 1985

WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT DECISION

In order to improve habitat for wildlife, the following actions will be taken:

- A. Pinyon-Juniper woodlands will be identified for treatments that will improve conditions for wildlife. Treatment areas will be designed to increase "edge effect" and promote increased production of palatable understory plant species. The long term management will be directed toward achieving an ecosystem containing a natural balance of pinyon-juniper woodlands, and other ecological sites. It will be necessary to develop a Pine Nut Mountain "desired landscape" description which uses the Potential Natural Community information as a general guide for meeting Land Use Plan objectives. This will be developed through the consultation, cooperation, and coordination with interested parties.
- B. If monitoring shows that a critical riparian area is not making satisfactory progress toward proper functioning condition, after changes/modifications in management have been in effect, fencing will be initiated. Fences will be constructed to wildlife standards. Water will be provided outside the source for livestock and wild horses.
- C. In order to provide forage for over-wintering mule deer, allow no more than 25% use on bitterbrush by livestock and wild horses in the deer winter range before October. Yearlong use by all herbivores should not exceed 45%.
- D. Following a reduction of the wild horse population to a level which allows the horses to live within their HMA at moderate forage utilization levels, work with the Nevada Division of Wildlife to introduce pronghorn antelope into Churchill Canyon and Mill Canyon allotments.

RATIONALE

Removal of pinyon-juniper trees will provide increased edge effect for mule deer and also expand the forage base. The amount of moisture that is intercepted and the amount of groundwater used on an annual basis would be available to re-charge underground aquifers. This could potentially rehabilitate springs that are currently dry or have reduced water flows.

Riparian areas are used year-round by a combination of wild horses and wildlife. Livestock use occurs during varying portions of the year. The cumulative effect can be detrimental and can result in diminished or total loss of flow.

Cattle and sheep browse more than horses and so should be monitored to insure that forage is available for mule deer. Limiting use on bitterbrush by livestock and wild horses to 25% will allow for adequate forage (unbrowsed leaders) to remain for mule deer after completion of the grazing season and the plants need a good number of leaders remaining unbrowsed at the end of the season, as these new leaders will be the primary seed producers for the next year.

Pronghorn antelope are an important big-game species. The introduction of a population has not been possible prior to management changes made primarily in the Churchill Canyon Allotment. With a light/moderate level of cattle grazing instead of heavy sheep grazing, and the wild horses not forced to constantly search the entire area for forage, the forbs and palatable grasses needed by pronghorn should achieve adequate abundance.

GUIDANCE

Reno Grazing Environmental Impact Statement, 1982

Pine Nut Habitat Management Plan, Revised 1987

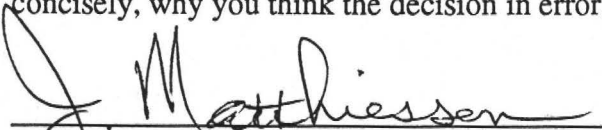
Management Framework Plan, 1975

Bureau of Land Management, Riparian-Wetland Initiative for the 1990's

Technical Reference 1737-9, *Riparian Area Management, Process for Assessing Proper Functioning Condition*, 1993

PROTEST

If you wish to protest this proposed multiple use decision, you are allowed 15 days from receipt of this decision to file your reasons with the authorized officer at the Walker Resource Area Manager, 1535 Hot Springs Rd., Suite 300, Carson City, NV 89706-0638. The protest should state the reasons, clearly and concisely, why you think the decision in error.



John Matthiessen, Area Manager
Walker Resource Area

JUL. 07 1995

PINE NUT PROPOSED MULTIPLE USE DECISION

The Record of Decision for the Reno Grazing Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS) was issued on December 21, 1982. This document established the multiple use goals and objectives which guide management of public land in the allotments contained within the Pine Nut Herd Management Area (HMA). The Reno Rangeland Program Summary (RPS), issued on May 30, 1984, identified allotment specific objectives.

As identified in the Reno GEIS and Reno RPS, monitoring has been conducted on these allotments to determine if existing multiple uses for the allotments were consistent with the attainment of the objectives. Monitoring data has been collected and analyzed through the allotment evaluation process to determine what changes in existing management are required in order to meet specific multiple use objectives for these allotments.

Through the consultation, coordination, and cooperation process (CCC), input from the interested parties has been considered. Based on the evaluation of the monitoring data, technical recommendations contained within the allotment evaluations, and input through the CCC process, my proposed decision is presented below.

BUCKEYE ALLOTMENT LIVESTOCK GRAZING MANAGEMENT DECISION

Decisions relating to the grazing of livestock on public lands in the Buckeye Allotment are as follows:

- A. In accordance with §4130.6-1(a) the active preference for sheep will be maintained at 4973 AUMs.
- B. In accordance with §4130.6-1(a), if cattle are grazed instead of sheep, the active preference for cattle initially will not exceed 2200 AUMs. In accordance with §4110.3, this preference will remain in effect for five years, after which time a final active preference will be established based on additional monitoring data.
- C. In accordance with §4130.6-1 (a), if both sheep and cattle are grazed, the initial active preference will be proportioned in the direct ratio of 4973 sheep AUMs equalling 2200 cattle AUMs. For example, if the ranch uses half the preference for sheep grazing and half for cattle, this would result in 2486 sheep AUMs and 1100 cattle AUMs initial active preference.
- D. In accordance with §4130.6, §4130.6-1(a) and §4130.6-2, cattle will be authorized in the summer use portion of the allotment in conjunction with private lands. Livestock shall leave the riparian zones by mid-July. Cattle will be authorized in the west portion of the allotment only in the winter (November 1 through March 31). Grazing within the HMA will not be authorized by livestock during the growing season (April 1 through July 15).

RATIONALE

Utilization studies detailed in the evaluation showed the allotment provided full preference sheep grazing use (4973 AUMs) at light or moderate use levels. This can continue with application of good forage management techniques.

Utilization studies also showed an estimated 2700 AUMs of grass forage within the entire allotment, which includes the portion within the HMA. Excluding the potential stocking level for wild horses, there is an estimated 2200 AUMs available for cattle. Five years of studies will provide adequate information to determine a final active preference for cattle.

The narrow band of public land in the summer use area (southeast portion of the allotment) is not practically grazed by itself by cattle (although herded sheep could use the area as a unit). But used in conjunction with the lower, primarily private, canyons, this area could comprise the high, steep portion of a three-pasture unit requiring minimal fencing to be effective.

Cattle will tend to leave the west side of the allotment anytime the valley below is green; but in winter-time the valley will be both brown and colder than the rangeland and cattle will remain on the allotment. The north end of the allotment which is within the HMA already receives growing season use by wild horses, so that additional growing season use would result in significant overgrazing which would diminish the grass vegetation.

CHURCHILL CANYON ALLOTMENT **LIVESTOCK GRAZING MANAGEMENT DECISION**

Decisions relating to the grazing of livestock on public lands in the Churchill Canyon Allotment are as follows:

- A. In accordance with §4130.6-1(a), the active preference for livestock will be maintained at 1074 AUMs. In accordance with §4410.3, continue to use standard Actual Use/Utilization study techniques over a three year period to refine this estimate and establish a preference for cattle which is sustainable and allows plenty of forage for wild horses and mule deer.

RATIONALE

The 1074 AUMs for livestock is a reasonable initial stocking level based upon the figures shown in the utilization study contained in Appendix IV of the evaluation. The Bureau will obtain further data to refine the estimate and establish an allocation which is sustainable.

CLIFTON ALLOTMENT **LIVESTOCK GRAZING MANAGEMENT DECISION**

Decisions relating to the grazing of livestock on public lands in the Clifton Allotment are as follows:

- A. In accordance with §4110.3-2(b) and §4130.6-1(a), the active preference for cattle will be adjusted from 772 AUMs to 613 AUMs. In accordance with §4110.3-3(a) &(b), this reduction in active preference will be phased in over a five year period, beginning with the effective date of the Final Multiple Use Decision (1995). The reduction will be implemented as follows:

- 1995 From 772 AUMs to 719 AUMs
- 1997 From 719 AUMs to 666 AUMs
- 1999 From 666 AUMs to 613 AUMs

In accordance with §4110.3-2(c), 159 AUMs will be suspended.

B. In accordance with §4130.6-1(a), the authorized season of use will be changed from 4/1 - 5/31 to 1/1 - 5/31.

RATIONALE

Insufficient forage is available to provide 772 AUMs for livestock. The existing livestock authorized period of use occurs during a portion of the active growing season. Wild horse use occurs throughout the active growing season. This amount and concentration of use is resulting in the loss of grass plants at the mid and lower elevations of the allotment. Adjusting livestock numbers will, in part, begin to allow these areas an opportunity to recover. By eliminating the compressed season of use for livestock and allowing more flexibility, use can be made during plant dormancy when they are least vulnerable. Snow, when available, will further help by providing the opportunity to distribute livestock over a larger portion of the allotment. These actions should provide adequate forage on a sustainable basis.

ELDORADO ALLOTMENT LIVESTOCK GRAZING MANAGEMENT DECISION

Decisions relating to the grazing of livestock on public lands in the Eldorado Allotment are as follows:

A. In accordance with §4130.4-2, livestock grazing will be authorized on a temporary non-renewable basis to take pressure off of or supplement use from other allotments.

B. In accordance with §4130.6-1 (a), the authorized season of use will be from 11/1 to 2/28. The authorization will be limited to sheep. A total of 270 AUMs will be available for livestock use.

RATIONALE

Authorizing grazing use on a temporary non-renewable basis is at the discretion of the authorized officer. If the authorized officer determines that livestock grazing, as applied for, would not meet land use plan objectives, the application would not be authorized. If the authorized officer determines that a modification to the application would meet these objectives, use would be authorized accordingly.

Authorizing sheep use during the winter is advantageous. Grass plants are in a dormant state, so are not susceptible to overgrazing. Harvesting the old growth from the grass plants will allow better access to sunlight for the spring growth and the plants can better remain vigorous. In addition, heavy browsing of the shrubs by sheep will favor the growth of the grasses which make up the bulk of the diet for wild horses.

HACKETT CANYON ALLOTMENT
LIVESTOCK GRAZING MANAGEMENT DECISION

Decisions relating to the grazing of livestock on public lands in the Hackett Canyon Allotment are as follows:

A. In accordance with §4110.3-2(b) and §4130.6-1(a), the active preference will be adjusted from 515 AUMs to 187 AUMs. No more than 146 AUMs of sheep use will be authorized in the North Pasture. No more than 41 AUMs of livestock use will be allowed in the South Pasture. In accordance with §4110.3-3(a) &(b), this reduction in active preference will be phased in over a five year period, beginning with the effective date of the Final Multiple Use Decision (1995). The reduction will be implemented as follows:

1995 From 515 AUMs to 406 AUMs

1997 From 406 AUMs to 297 AUMs

1999 From 297 AUMs to 187AUMs

In accordance with §4110.3-2(c), 328 AUMs will be suspended.

B. In accordance with §4130.6, the following terms and conditions will apply to the North and South Pastures.

1. Specific areas within the allotment will be grazed for two weeks or less each year.
2. During most years, these two week grazing authorizations will occur between 3/15 and 6/30.
3. At the discretion of the authorized officer, grazing use can occasionally be authorized after 6/30.
4. In order to provide forage for over-wintering mule deer, allow no more than 25% use on bitterbrush by livestock and wild horses before October. Yearlong use by all herbivores will not exceed 45%.

RATIONALE

Insufficient forage is available to provide 515 AUMs for livestock. The influence of pinyon-juniper woodlands severely restricts the areas that produce forage and are usable by livestock. The ability of these woodlands to out-compete other vegetation and intercept/utilize precipitation has resulted in declines of desirable forage for livestock, wild horses, and wildlife. In order to balance grazing with forage production, adjusting the livestock active preference was necessary.

Without construction of more fencing in the north pasture, cattle will probably drift off the public lands to the developing private lands north of the allotment. The allotment is historically a sheep allotment, which provides a situation where animals can be controlled through herding in the North pasture. Use in the South pasture can be made by either sheep and/or cattle since access to the developing private lands is blocked by the Eldorado Canyon Fence.

MILL CANYON ALLOTMENT
LIVESTOCK GRAZING MANAGEMENT DECISION

Decisions relating to the grazing of livestock on public lands in the Mill Canyon Allotment are as follows:

- A. In accordance with §4130.6-1(a), the active preference for sheep will be maintained at 2049 AUMs.
- B. In accordance with §4110.3 and §4130.6-1(a), if cattle are grazed rather than sheep, the active preference for cattle initially will not exceed 776 AUMs. This preference will remain in effect for 5 years following such conversion, after which time a final active preference will be established based on additional monitoring data.
- C. In accordance with §4130.6-1(a), the authorized season of use will be changed from 11/1 -1/31 and 4/1 -5/31 to 11/1 - 3/31.
- D. In accordance with §4130.6-2, livestock use within the HMA portion of the allotment will be made between 11/1 and 2/28. After 2/28, all livestock use will be shifted outside of the HMA.

RATIONALE

Sheep and horses have a limited dietary overlap. Sheep prefer browse species while horses prefer grasses. The exception to this is during spring green-up, when sheep will also use the grasses. A large portion of the allotment is comprised of low sagebrush. By changing the grazing season of use for sheep from spring to fall/winter, the competition for grasses is eliminated and heavy shrub browsing by sheep will favor the grasses used by horses. Grazing occurs during plant dormancy when they are least vulnerable. Due to these factors, maintaining the active preference for sheep is practical.

Based on information provided in the evaluation it was determined that adequate forage is present to initially support 776 AUMs of cattle use in the event that a conversion is requested. Five years of studies will provide adequate information to determine a final active preference for cattle.

A sage grouse use area is located within the HMA. By removing livestock prior to the initiation of growth (i.e., green shoots of grass, forb production), the competition for this forage between livestock and wild horses will be eliminated. The vegetation along with the associated insect population are important to the sage grouse.

RAWE PEAK ALLOTMENT
LIVESTOCK GRAZING MANAGEMENT DECISION

Decisions relating to the grazing of livestock on public lands in the Rawe Peak Allotment are as follows:

- A. In accordance with §4110.3-2(b) and §4130.6-1(a), the active preference for cattle will be adjusted from 552 AUMs to 54 AUMs. In accordance with §4110.3-3(a) &(b), this reduction in active preference will be phased in over a five year period, beginning with the

effective date of the Final Multiple Use Decision (1995). The reduction will be implemented as follows:

1995 From 552 AUMs to 386 AUMs
1997 From 386 AUMs to 220 AUMs
1999 From 220 AUMs to 54 AUMs

In accordance with §4110.3-2(c), 498 AUMs will be suspended.

B. In accordance with §4130.6-1(a), the authorized season of use will be changed from 5/16 - 7/31 to 11/1 -3/31.

C. In accordance with §4110.3 and §4130.6-1(a), if sheep are grazed rather than cattle, the active preference for sheep will be initially established at 301 AUMs. This preference will remain in effect for five years, after which time a final active preference will be established based on additional monitoring data.

RATIONALE

Insufficient forage is available to provide 552 AUMs for livestock. The influence of pinyon-juniper woodlands severely restricts the areas that produce forage and are usable by cattle. The ability of these woodlands to out-compete other vegetation and intercept/utilize precipitation has resulted in declines of desirable forage for livestock, wild horses, and wildlife. In order to balance grazing with forage production, adjusting the livestock active preference was necessary.

The existing livestock authorized period of use occurs during the active growing season. Wild horse use also occurs throughout the active growing season. This concentration of use, coupled with the problems associated with the influence of the pinyon-juniper woodlands, has resulted in the loss of desirable forage.

Adjusting livestock numbers will, in part, begin to allow those areas that are usable an opportunity to recover. Use can be made by livestock during plant dormancy when they are least vulnerable. Snow, when available, will further help by providing the opportunity to distribute livestock.

SAND CANYON ALLOTMENT LIVESTOCK GRAZING MANAGEMENT DECISION

Decisions relating to the grazing of livestock on public lands in the Sand Canyon Allotment are as follows:

A. In accordance with §4110.3, the active livestock preference is cancelled.

B. In accordance with §4130.4-2, livestock grazing will be authorized on a temporary non-renewable basis.

C. In accordance with §4130.6-2, utilization shall not exceed the Allowable Use Level of 55%. This applies to livestock and wild horses.

RATIONALE

The area adjoining the allotment is a developing urban area. As Carson City continues to expand, the public lands will become valuable as open space for residents. It has become impractical as a cattle allotment.

However, it may be in the best interest of the public to use intensively managed livestock grazing as a tool in accomplishing specific environmental goals (e.g., noxious weed control, trampling seed into the soil on barren areas, stimulating decadent vegetation, etc.). Authorizing grazing use on a temporary non-renewable basis is at the discretion of the authorized officer. If the authorized officer determines that livestock grazing, as applied for, would not meet an objective(s), the application would not be authorized. If the authorized officer determines that a modification to the application would meet objective(s), use would be authorized accordingly.

SUNRISE ALLOTMENT LIVESTOCK GRAZING MANAGEMENT DECISION

Decisions relating to the grazing of livestock on public lands in the Sunrise Allotment are as follows:

A. In accordance with §4110.3-2(b) and §4130.6-1(a), the active preference for livestock will be adjusted from 1092 AUMs to 159 AUMs. In accordance with §4110.3-3(a) &(b), this reduction in active preference will be phased in over a five year period, beginning with the effective date of the Final Multiple Use Decision (1995). The reduction will be implemented as follows:

1995 From 1092 AUMs to 781 AUMs
1997 From 781 AUMs to 470 AUMs
1999 From 470 AUMs to 159 AUMs

In accordance with §4110.3-2(c), 933 AUMs will be suspended.

B. In accordance with §4130.6, the following terms and conditions will apply:

1. Specific areas within the allotment will be grazed for two weeks or less each year.
2. During most years, these two week grazing authorizations will occur between 3/15 - 6/15.
3. At the discretion of the authorized officer, grazing can occasionally be authorized after 6/30.
4. The allowable use level of 27.5% is established for use on perennial grasses and 22.5% on bitterbrush by livestock.
5. No livestock grazing will be authorized until utilization levels by wild horses are below the allowable use level for grasses and/or bitterbrush.

RATIONALE

Insufficient forage is available to provide 1092 AUMs for livestock. This is a result of use by wild horses and the influence of pinyon-juniper woodlands. The terms and conditions set forth will provide plants the opportunity to regrow during their active growing season (spring and summer).

AUTHORITY

Authority for this decision is found in Title 43 of the Code of Federal Regulations, which states in pertinent parts:

§4100.0-8: "The authorized officer shall manage livestock grazing on the public lands under the principle of multiple-use and sustained yield, and in accordance with applicable land use plans. Land use plans shall establish allowable resource uses (either singly or in combination), related levels of production or use to be maintained, areas of use and resource condition goals and objectives to be obtained. The plans also set forth program constraints and general management practices needed to achieve management objectives. Livestock grazing activities and management actions approved by the authorized officer shall be in conformance with the land use plan as defined at 43 CFR §1601.0-5(b)."

§4110.3: "The authorized officer shall periodically review the grazing preference specified in a grazing permit or grazing lease and may make changes in the grazing preference status. These changes shall be supported by monitoring, as evidenced by rangeland studies conducted over time, unless the change is either specified in an applicable land use plan or necessary to manage, maintain, or improve rangeland productivity."

§4110.3-2(a): "Active use may be suspended in whole or in part on a temporary basis due to drought, fire, or other natural causes, or to facilitate installation, maintenance, or modification of range improvements."

§4110.3-2 (b): "When monitoring shows active use is causing an unacceptable level or pattern of utilization or exceeds the livestock carrying capacity as determined through monitoring, the authorized officer shall reduce the active use if necessary to maintain or improve rangeland productivity, unless the authorized officer determines a change in management practices would achieve the management objectives."

§4110.3-2(c): "Where active use is reduced it shall be held in suspension or in nonuse for conservation/protection purposes, until the authorized officer determines that active use may resume."

§4110.3-3(a): "Changes in active use in excess of 10 percent shall be implemented over a 5-year period, unless after consultation with the affected permittees or lessees and other affected interests, an agreement is reached to implement the increase or decrease in less than 5 years."

§4110.3-3(b): "After consultation, coordination and cooperation, suspensions of preference shall be implemented through a documented agreement or by decision. If data acceptable to the authorized officer are available, an initial reduction shall be taken on the effective date of the

agreement or decision and the balance taken in the third and fifth years following that effective date, except as provided in paragraph (a) of this section."

§4120.2 (a): States in part that "The allotment management plan shall include terms and conditions under §§ 4130.6, 4130.6-1, 4130.6-2 and 4130.6-3 of this title, and shall prescribe the livestock grazing practices necessary to meet specific multiple-use management objectives."

§4120.2 (c): "Completed allotment management plans shall be incorporated into the terms and conditions of the affected grazing permits and leases."

§4120.3-1 (a): "Range improvements shall be installed, used, maintained, and/or modified on the public lands, or removed from these lands, in a manner consistent with multiple-use management."

§4130.4-2: "Nonrenewable grazing permits or leases may be issued on an annual basis to qualified applicants when forage is temporarily available, provided this use is consistent with multiple-use objectives and does not interfere with existing livestock operations on public lands."

§4130.6: "Livestock grazing permits and leases shall contain terms and conditions necessary to achieve the management objectives for the public lands and other lands under Bureau of Land Management administration."

§4130.6-1 (a): "The authorized officer shall specify the kind and number of livestock, the period(s) of use, the allotment(s) to be used, and the amount of use, in animal unit months for every grazing permit or lease. The authorized livestock grazing use shall not exceed the livestock carrying capacity as determined through monitoring and adjusted under §§4110.3, 4110.3-1 and 4110.3-2."

§4130.6-2: "The authorized officer may specify in grazing permits and leases other terms and conditions which will assist in achieving management objectives, provide for proper range management or assist in the orderly administration of the public rangelands..."

§4130.6-3 "Following careful and considered consultation, cooperation and coordination with the lessees, permittees, and other affected interests, the authorized officer may modify terms and conditions of the permit or lease if monitoring data show that present grazing use is not meeting the land use plan or management objectives."

PROTEST

In accordance with 43 CFR §4160.2, if you wish to protest this proposed decision, you are allowed 15 days from receipt of this decision to file such protest with the Walker Resource Area Manager, 1535 Hot Springs Rd., Suite 300, Carson City, NV 89706-0638. The protest should state the reasons, clearly and concisely, why you think the decision in error (4160.2).

PINE NUT HERD MANAGEMENT AREA
WILD HORSE MANAGEMENT DECISION

Decisions relating to wild horses managed within the Pine Nut HMA are as follows:

A. In accordance with § 4700.0-6(a), the potential stocking level for wild horses in the portions of the HMA located within each allotment is as follows:

Buckeye	493 AUMs
Churchill Canyon	154 AUMs
Clifton	444 AUMs
Eldorado	270 AUMs
Hackett Canyon	187 AUMs
Mill Canyon	296 AUMs
Rawe Peak	54 AUMs
Sand Canyon	95 AUMs
Sunrise	159 AUMs
Total	2152 AUMs

B. The management of wild horses within the HMA will be in accordance with the Strategic Plan for Management of Wild Horses and Burros on Public Lands (June 1992).

C. In accordance with §4710.3-1 and §4710.4, the maximum Appropriate Management Level for the HMA will be 179 head of wild horses. The population will be adjusted to 34% below this maximum level and allowed to increase to the AML of 179.

D. In accordance with §4710.3-1, the following allotment specific objectives will apply:

Hackett Canyon Allotment: In order to provide forage for over-wintering mule deer, allow no more than 25% use on bitterbrush by livestock and wild horses before October. Yearlong use by all herbivores will not exceed 45%.

Sand Canyon Allotment: Wild horses should be allowed to graze in the allotment under the following constraints:

1. Utilization shall not exceed the Allowable Use Level of 55%. This applies to livestock and wild horses.
2. No damage attributable to wild horses shall occur on riparian habitat along the Carson River.
3. Wild horses will be removed upon request in writing from private land owners in accordance to Title 43, Code of Federal Regulations, §4720.2-1.

Sunrise Allotment: An allowable use level of 27.5% for yearlong use on perennial grasses and 22.5% on bitterbrush shall be managed for by wild horses.

RATIONALE

Generally, in observing these horses over the last three years, the Range Conservationists and Wild Horse and Burro Specialist considered many of the bands to be showing stress from inadequate forage supplies. Many areas show evidence of a constant search for forage. Utilization is occurring several miles outside of the historic HMA. In certain portions of the HMA, ecological sites are declining. In other areas the ecological sites appear to be stable but they have stabilized at the low end of their productive potential.

The analysis of available monitoring data presented in the allotment evaluations for those allotments in the Pine Nut HMA indicate that a thriving natural ecological balance will be achieved at a level of 2152 AUMs of wild horse use.

In order to minimize the disruption of band structure and the stress to individual animals, the population of wild horses would be reduced 34% below the AML. This would allow the population to increase at a projected recruitment rate of 15% per year for three years. This would further allow a three or four year interval between removals. Managing the population to maximize the intervals between removals would minimize the stress associated with removals. Reducing the wild horse numbers to a point below the maximum and then allowing them to increase to AML would have several benefits. First, allowable use levels will not be exceeded therefore allowing the forage base to remain healthy. This, in turn, results in a healthier, more viable, population of wild horses that will have less competition for forage, water and space.

AUTHORITY

The authority for this decision is contained in Sec. 3(a) and (b) of the Wild-Free Roaming Horse and Burro Act (P.L. 92-195) as amended and Title 43 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), which states in pertinent parts:

§4700.0-6 (a): "Wild horses and burros shall be managed as self-sustaining populations of healthy animals in balance with other uses and the productive capacity of their habitat."

§4710.3-1: "Herd management areas shall be established for the maintenance of wild horse and burro herds. In delineating each herd management area, the authorized officer shall consider the appropriate management level of the herd, the habitat requirements of the animals, the relationship with other uses of the public land and adjacent private lands, and the constraints contained in §4710.4....."

§4710.4 "Management of wild horse and burros shall be undertaken with the objective of limiting the animals' distribution to herd areas. Management shall be at the minimum level necessary to attain the objectives identified in approved land use plans and herd management area plans."

§4720.1 States in part that, "Upon examination of current information and a determination by the authorized officer that an excess of wild horses or burros exist the authorized officer shall remove the excess animals immediately...."

§4720.2-1 States in part that, "Upon written request from the private landowner to any representative of the Bureau of Land Management, the authorized officer shall remove stray wild horses and burros from private lands as soon as practicable.

PROTEST

Although 43 CFR §4770.3 allows for an appeal with no mention of a protest, for the purpose of consistency the multiple use decision will be initially sent as a "Proposed" decision.

If you wish to protest this proposed decision, you are allowed 15 days from receipt of this decision to file such protest with the Walker Resource Area Manager, 1535 Hot Springs Rd., Suite 300, Carson City, NV 89706-0638. The protest should state the reasons, clearly and concisely, why you think the decision is in error.

GUIDANCE

Strategic Plan for Management of Wild Horses and Burros on Public Lands, 1992
Technical Reference 4400-7, *Rangeland Monitoring Analysis, Interpretation, and Evaluation*, 1985

WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT DECISION

In order to improve habitat for wildlife, the following actions will be taken:

A. Pinyon-Juniper woodlands will be identified for treatments that will improve conditions for wildlife. Treatment areas will be designed to increase "edge effect" and promote increased production of palatable understory plant species. The long term management will be directed toward achieving an ecosystem containing a natural balance of pinyon-juniper woodlands, and other ecological sites. It will be necessary to develop a Pine Nut Mountain "desired landscape" description which uses the Potential Natural Community information as a general guide for meeting Land Use Plan objectives. This will be developed through the consultation, cooperation, and coordination with interested parties.

B. If monitoring shows that a critical riparian area is not making satisfactory progress toward proper functioning condition, after changes/modifications in management have been in effect, fencing will be initiated. Fences will be constructed to wildlife standards. Water will be provided outside the source for livestock and wild horses.

C. In order to provide forage for over-wintering mule deer, allow no more than 25% use on bitterbrush by livestock and wild horses in the deer winter range before October. Yearlong use by all herbivores should not exceed 45%.

D. Following a reduction of the wild horse population to a level which allows the horses to live within their HMA at moderate forage utilization levels, work with the Nevada Division of Wildlife to introduce pronghorn antelope into Churchill Canyon and Mill Canyon allotments.

RATIONALE

Removal of pinyon-juniper trees will provide increased edge effect for mule deer and also expand the forage base. The amount of moisture that is intercepted and the amount of groundwater used on an annual basis would be available to re-charge underground aquifers. This could potentially rehabilitate springs that are currently dry or have reduced water flows.

Riparian areas are used year-round by a combination of wild horses and wildlife. Livestock use occurs during varying portions of the year. The cumulative effect can be detrimental and can result in diminished or total loss of flow.

Cattle and sheep browse more than horses and so should be monitored to insure that forage is available for mule deer. Limiting use on bitterbrush by livestock and wild horses to 25% will allow for adequate forage (unbrowsed leaders) to remain for mule deer after completion of the grazing season and the plants need a good number of leaders remaining unbrowsed at the end of the season, as these new leaders will be the primary seed producers for the next year.

Pronghorn antelope are an important big-game species. The introduction of a population has not been possible prior to management changes made primarily in the Churchill Canyon Allotment. With a light/moderate level of cattle grazing instead of heavy sheep grazing, and the wild horses not forced to constantly search the entire area for forage, the forbs and palatable grasses needed by pronghorn should achieve adequate abundance.

GUIDANCE

Reno Grazing Environmental Impact Statement, 1982

Pine Nut Habitat Management Plan, Revised 1987

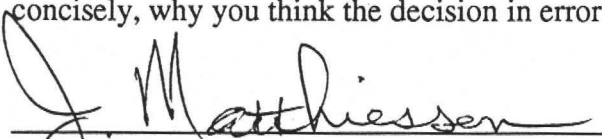
Management Framework Plan, 1975

Bureau of Land Management, Riparian-Wetland Initiative for the 1990's

Technical Reference 1737-9, *Riparian Area Management, Process for Assessing Proper Functioning Condition*, 1993

PROTEST

If you wish to protest this proposed multiple use decision, you are allowed 15 days from receipt of this decision to file your reasons with the authorized officer at the Walker Resource Area Manager, 1535 Hot Springs Rd., Suite 300, Carson City, NV 89706-0638. The protest should state the reasons, clearly and concisely, why you think the decision in error.



John Matthiessen, Area Manager
Walker Resource Area

JUL. 07 1995

BUCKEYE ALLOTMENT EVALUATION
ERRATA AND ATTACHMENTS

Insert the attached Sections VII and VIII after page 19. In the Table of Contents, insert the following after Section VI.

VII. CONSULTATIONS	20
VIII. MANAGEMENT ACTIONS SELECTED	25

VII. Consultations

On July 19, 1993, a letter was sent to persons and organizations that have shown interest in resource management in the Walker Resource Area. The purpose of the letter was to gather additional information and to determine who would be interested in participating in the evaluation process on nine allotments in the northern Pine Nut Mountain Range. Buckeye was among these allotments.

Sections I (Introduction) through VI (Technical Recommendations) of this evaluation were sent out for public review on December 15, 1994. Fifteen copies were sent to the Nevada State Clearinghouse for distribution among state agencies. In addition, the following were sent copies of this evaluation.

Buckeye Ranch	Nevada Division of Wildlife
Nevada Wildlife Federation	The Wildlife Society
Natural Resources Defense Council	Sierra Club, Toiyabe Chapter
Carson City District Grazing Advisory Board	Nevada Cattlemen's Association
Resource Concepts Inc.	Nevada Woolgrowers Association
Rutgers University, S.I. Newhouse Center of Law and Justice	Washoe Tribe
Wild Horse Organized Assistance	Bureau of Indian Affairs, Western Nevada Agency
The Honorable Barbara Vucanovich	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
The Honorable Richard Bryan	The Honorable Harry M. Reid
Paul Clifford	Nevada Humane Society
Craig C. Downer	Steven Fulstone
American Mustang and Burro Assoc.	Ms. Edie Wilson
D.A. Anderson Estate	Humane Society of Southern Nevada
Nevada Commission for the Preservation of Wild Horses	L.I.F.E Foundation
	Animal Protection Institute
	Nevada Humane Society

Comments were received from the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), the Nevada State Historic Preservation Officer, the Nevada Division of Water Resources, the Nevada Division of Wildlife (NDOW), The Commission for the Preservation of Wild Horses (Commission), and Wild Horse Organized Assistance (WHOA). Comments which pertain to the health of the land or to assessment of health are presented and discussed below.

Comment: The appropriate management level for the wild horse herd was determined by weight averaging use pattern mapping data. This procedure assumes even production and utilization of the allotment. Computations will show that over use of key or critical habitats is compromised by the massive acres of slight and light use on the allotment. (NDOW)

The appendix IIA, page II-1, presents a potential stocking rate computation that assumes uniform production and uniform utilization. Use pattern mapping for all years were not considered. Data collected in 1993 for horses, and other data in this document, failed the criteria for use of weight averaging use pattern mapping data. Weight averaging discredits the smaller portions of the allotment suffering heavy use. (Commission)(WHOA)

Response: The "Weighted Average Utilization" technique is a standard Bureau method and is detailed on page 52 of TR 4400-7 (BLM, 1985). We have further refined the method by using only the grazed areas in the averaging process, which keeps unfavorable areas from artificially lowering the calculated utilization. This produces results which correlate quite well with professional observations of the adequacy of forage in a number of different areas.

Comment: *Wild horse numbers and animal unit months are illustrated in the table. Did the numbers of horses include foals? If a cow and calf are equivalent to an AUM, is a horse and foal equivalent to an AUM? (Commission)*

Page 13, The wild horse animal unit months are depicted, but there is no explanation of whether those numbers include foals. Your cow/calf are equivalent to an AUM, is a mare/foal equivalent to an AUM? (WHOA)

Response: At the time of the aerial census wild horses counted as "foals" are usually old enough, or soon will be old enough to be consuming substantial amounts of forage. Therefore foals are counted as an animal unit. In calculating livestock AUMs for use in analysis, a calf may also be counted as an animal unit if it develops to a stage where it will be consuming substantial amounts of forage.

Comment: *Wild horse management on this allotment has been basically for the protection of private lands. Major gathers in the 1980's resulted in the removal of 803 horses outside of the herd management area. These reductions in combination with domestic sheep and cattle use in 1984 and 1985 should clearly define the carrying capacity for this allotment. However, Appendix IIA only uses data collected in 1993 when the allotment was only used by wild horses. (Commission)*

Actual use data indicates the allotment was used by wild horses, sheep, cattle and wildlife during 1984 and 1985. These data could more accurately determine the allotment's carrying capacity and suitability for cattle. Use of only 1993 actual use for wild horses defeats the purpose of monitoring versus a one time inventory process. (NDOW)

Response: Data on use and utilization from several different years are analyzed on pages 7 and 8 and summarized in Appendices II and III. Appendix IIA presents the best data we have on utilization within the herd management area; this data was recorded using careful use pattern mapping during a year in which forage production was approximately average, and was collected for all allotments containing portions of the Herd Management Area. Appendix IIIA summarizes the utilization data from 1980, 1981, and 1984. As noted in the discussion on page 8, 1984 was an unusually high production year and so use of this data in estimating stocking rates would result in overallocating the forage during more normal years (see Table IIIA). No use pattern mapping was done in 1985, so this year cannot be used in the calculations.

Comment: *Mahogany is a key species for mule deer.* (NDOW)

Response: Mountain mahogany (*Cercocarpus ledifolius*) is certainly a mule deer forage plant, but has not been identified as a *key species* on the Buckeye allotment.

Comment: *Data have not been presented to support maintenance of the active use for sheep and addition of cattle AUMs.* (NDOW)

Recommendations to curtail the Pine Nut Wild Horse Herd at the present level, maintain active preference for sheep and initiate 2200 AUMs for cattle is arbitrary. (Commission)

Your recommendations to curtail the wild horses, maintain active preference for sheep and initiate 2200 AUMs for cattle, are arbitrary. (WHOA)

Response: The reviewers seem to have misinterpreted a very important point in the evaluation: any grazing by cattle would not be *in addition to* the sheep use, but rather would be *instead of* the sheep use. And considerable data was presented showing that although the allotment produces 5000 AUMs of sheep forage, our best estimate for cattle forage is 2200 AUMs because of the difference in diet of the two types of livestock.

Comment: *Stopping "hot season" grazing of cattle on riparian areas will mitigate the adverse impacts. This action must assure only 55 percent utilization annually by combined use of cattle, sheep and wild horses.* (NDOW)

Response: The commentators seem to be mixing two very different riparian management techniques into one recommendation. The *55% utilization standard* is a sensible technique for managing a season-long riparian pasture, such as a large meadow

which forms a single management unit. The maximum 55% utilization takes care of the health of herbaceous species (the recommendation is to drop to 40% utilization if woody species are important in the pasture). But on the typical rangeland situation the riparian zones comprise a tiny fraction of the land (and forage) base and the utilization standard becomes meaningless. Here the *timing technique*, the avoidance of August - September "hot season" grazing works well and is an excellent recommendation.

Comment: *Winter use must avoid bitterbrush communities important to wildlife.* (NDOW)

Response: Since wildlife make only slight (under 20%) use of bitterbrush in this allotment, demanding absolute avoidance of bitterbrush by livestock seems to have little basis. The evaluation recommendation to limit livestock utilization to 25% should quite adequately provide for all present and future wildlife requirements. Health of the bitterbrush plants is more effectively addressed through tree removal in those areas (widespread in this allotment) where the trees are beginning to choke out brush needed by wintering deer.

Comment: *A number of sites are cited that should have water rights established pursuant to Chapters 533 and 534 of the NRS if they are to be developed. Additionally, one well has been identified as needing to be properly plugged and abandoned. This well is identified on USGS Quad sheets as "Rhuenstroth Well".* (List of projects and water rights status attached showing Fish Spring Well with no water rights and other wells with documented non-use) (Nevada Division of Water Resources)

Response: Thanks! That is good information, some of which we did not have in our files. We'll need to pursue additional water rights in the allotment.

Comment: *How will it be determined when horses need to be removed?* (from the southern Pine Nut) *Given the transitory nature of horses and that they cannot distinguish boundary lines, how will the BLM determine a resident band of horses, on the southern Pine Nut HMA? How much monitoring of the southern Pine Nut HMA will be done by the BLM to ensure no resident bands of horse establish themselves?* (U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs)

Response: The Bureau Wild Horse Specialist, Range Specialists, and Wildlife Biologists note where horse bands are seen, especially when outside their normal area. The Wild Horse Specialist makes a census flight by helicopter, usually annually. With this information from a variety of sources the Wild Horse Specialist is able to determine when a band has established itself outside the Herd Area, and at this time would begin the process leading to removal.

Additionally, when notified that wild horses have moved onto private lands where they are not wanted, the Bureau will remove the horses. Unless we receive a written complaint, however, we will not remove horses without periodic observations which show the horses are establishing outside their Herd Area: the best (most vigorous, healthiest) bands of horses are the most likely to occasionally wander far from their accustomed home range.

Comment: The allottees do not wish to have any livestock graze on their allotments. If the grazing permit is converted to cattle, how will the permittee prevent the cattle from grazing on the allotments? As you know sheep are herded and control of where they graze can be accomplished much more effectively than cattle. (U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs)

Response: The Indian allotments are somewhat intermingled with public land, but they are totally intermingled with the private land of the permittee. These permittee-owned lands contain most of the forage base inside the allotment boundary and the ranch has grazed these with cattle for the past 10 years. If the Washoe allottees are firm in their desire to have no livestock, then the BLM's decision that the public lands are suitable for a limited degree of cattle grazing will have little impact on Bentley Ranch's problems. The BLM permittee has always been responsible for dealing satisfactorily with the Bureau of Indian Affairs and that will not change with type of livestock being grazed.

VIII. Management Actions Selected

Due to the necessity of implementing the wild horse decisions on a herd management area basis, only one Multiple Use Decision will be issued for all nine allotments in the Pine Nut Herd Management Area.

For the Buckeye allotment short term technical recommendations 1, 2, and 4, which set stocking levels and grazing strategies will be included in the Proposed Multiple Use Decision. Implementing recommendation 4 causes technical recommendation 3 on livestock use of bitterbrush to become irrelevant (livestock would not be in the deer winter range until after October).

Long term technical recommendation 6 for improving watershed conditions above subdivision areas will be included in the Proposed Multiple Use Decision. Technical recommendation 7 (continue classifying as an Improve category allotment) is currently implemented. The other long term recommendations are good ideas, but are not appropriately implemented through this decision: implementing these will require further planning in the form of a Pine Nut land use plan amendment.

CHURCHILL ALLOTMENT EVALUATION
ERRATA AND ATTACHMENTS

Insert the attached Sections VII and VIII after page 17. In the Table of Contents, insert the following after Section VI.

VII. CONSULTATIONS	18
VIII. MANAGEMENT ACTIONS SELECTED	21

VII. Consultations

On July 19, 1993, a letter was sent to persons and organizations that have shown interest in resource management in the Walker Resource Area. The purpose of the letter was to gather additional information and to determine who would be interested in participating in the evaluation process on nine allotments in the northern Pine Nut Mountain Range. Churchill Canyon was among these allotments.

Sections I (Introduction) through VI (Technical Recommendations) of this evaluation were sent out for public review on January 12, 1995. Fifteen copies were sent to the Nevada State Clearinghouse for distribution among state agencies. In addition, the following were sent copies of this evaluation.

Richard Huntsberger	Nevada Division of Wildlife
Nevada Wildlife Federation	The Wildlife Society
Natural Resources Defense Council	Sierra Club, Toiyabe Chapter
Carson City District Grazing	Nevada Cattlemen's Association
Advisory Board	Nevada Woolgrowers Association
Resource Concepts Inc.	Washoe Tribe
Rutgers University, S.I. Newhouse	Bureau of Indian Affairs,
Center of Law and Justice	Western Nevada Agency
Wild Horse Organized Assistance	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
The Honorable Barbara Vucanovich	The Honorable Harry M. Reid
The Honorable Richard Bryan	American Horse Protection Association
Paul Clifford	Steven Fulstone
Craig C. Downer	Rebecca Kunow
American Mustang and Burro	Humane Society of Southern Nevada
Association	L.I.F.E Foundation
Nevada Commission for the	Kathey McCovey
Preservation of Wild Horses	Nevada Humane Society
Sario Livestock Co. c/o Beatrice Presto	

Comments concerning Churchill Canyon were received from the Nevada Division of Water Resources, the Nevada Division of Wildlife (NDOW), The Commission for the Preservation of Wild Horses (Commission), Wild Horse Organized Assistance (WHOA), and Craig Downer. Comments which pertain to the health of the land or to evaluating this health are presented and discussed below.

Comment: *Weight averaging for determining carrying capacity assumes uniform production and discounts the portions of the allotments suffering heavy use, so is not in the best interests of the vegetative resource.*
(Commission) (NDOW) (WHOA)

- Response: The "Weighted Average Utilization" technique is a standard Bureau method and is detailed on page 52 of TR 4400-7 (BLM, 1985). We have further refined the method by using only the grazed areas in the averaging process, which keeps unfavorable areas from artificially lowering the calculated utilization. This produces results which correlate quite well with professional observations of the adequacy of forage in a number of different areas.
- Comment: *The allocation of forage is a simple 50:50 ratio. Data indicates that wild horses only contributed 35% of the overall use of the allotment. The assumptions are not relative to the monitoring data collected on the allotment. (NDOW)*
- Response: The 50:50 forage allocation applies only to forage within the Herd Management Area. Map 2 shows that the Herd Management Area comprises less than 20% of the allotment. Appendix IV shows that the wild horses were consuming approximately 749 AUMs (40% of the total forage) while cattle were consuming 1057 AUMs. This summarizes the situation we find on the land: the wild horse population has outstripped the ability of the land within the Herd Management Area to supply its forage needs and so is forced to go considerably outside the Herd Management Area to find forage. The cattle are not having difficulty in finding adequate forage in the 80% of the allotment outside the Herd Management Area.
- Comment: *Allocation of forage to wild horses and livestock are fair. We suggest that percentage of use be applied to the necessary reduction to achieve carrying capacity. Computations presented in this appendix clearly indicate that forage from wild horses are awarded to livestock. (Commission) (WHOA)*
- Response: Use within the portion of the allotment in the Herd Management Area, which would normally be expected to be shared fairly between wild horses and livestock, is now being made entirely by wild horses, with additional use considerably outside the herd area. That is why the reductions are needed in horse numbers in that area to bring the wild horse population into balance with their portion of the forage.
- Comment: *You note that wild horses utilize the HMA at a heavy level. If this is the case does it not argue for their being able to shift their occupied home range about a larger area over time so as to provide for the recuperation of the formerly occupied areas. (Craig Downer)*

Response: There is no physical barrier preventing these horses from shifting their use areas, and yet we are not seeing the bands of horses in this area move until apparently forced by lack of forage. Possibly the absence of an effective large predator allows these horses to establish such small and habitual ranges.

Comment: *I protest leaving only 154 AUM's, or around 13 wild horses, or 2 average sized bands, in the Churchill Canyon Allotment. This is too low a population level, even when added to the others to be at a minimally viable level. I suggest the expansion of the HMA to the south to include the Pine Nut wild horse herd's former range. It is unfair to maintain 6 -7 times as much livestock use as wild horse use! This puts the wild horses at a distinct disadvantage, even within its legal HMA, where they should be given fair consideration and proportion of resources.*
(Craig Downer)

Response: Map 2 shows the situation: only a small portion of the Herd Management Area is within the Churchill Canyon Allotment, and this portion of the HMA occupies only a portion of one pasture (the High Elevation North Pasture) of the allotment. Within the Herd Management Area the horses are given fully equal treatment in forage allocation. A major point of the Wild Horse and Burro Act of 1971 is that the Bureau is to manage horses within the HMA boundaries, and not allow expansion outside the boundaries.

Also note that since the Herd Management Area occupies less than 20% of the allotment, and even within the HMA the horses are to share the forage fairly with livestock, livestock would necessarily be expected to harvest several times as much forage within the entire allotment than would the wild horses.

Comment: *I strenuously object to this reduction of the wild horses in order to introduce pronghorn.* (Craig Downer)

Response: The proposed reduction in wild horses in this area was not intended to be done in order to make room for pronghorn, but rather because the horse population has grown beyond the ability of the area to produce forage. However, the point that pronghorn should not be allowed to increase to the detriment of the horse population does seem to be an important issue to be addressed in any pronghorn release plan.

VIII. Management Actions Selected

Due to the necessity of implementing the wild horse decisions on a herd management area basis, only one Multiple Use Decision will be issued for all nine allotments in the Pine Nut Herd Management Area.

Short term technical recommendations 1 and 2 (setting stocking levels for wild horses and cattle) and 3 (limiting use levels on bitterbrush) will be included in the Proposed Multiple Use Decision. Long term technical recommendation 6 for continuing to classify Churchill Canyon as an Improve category allotment is currently implemented. The other technical recommendations are good ideas but are not appropriately implemented through this decision: if these are to be implemented further planning is needed in the form of a pronghorn release plan or a Pine Nut ecosystem plan. At the time of this writing a team has been formed to amend the land use plan to address long term management of Pine Nut Mountain woodlands.

CLIFTON ALLOTMENT EVALUATION
ATTACHMENTS AND ERRATA

Please add the attached sections VII and VIII to your copy of the Clifton Allotment Evaluation. Place these sections immediately after Technical Recommendation (page 17). In addition, the following corrections and/or additions should be made:

Section IV. Management Evaluation

A. Actual Use

2. Wild Horses

<u>Year</u>	<u>Number</u>
1992	91
1990	59
1989	22
1986	(entire unit counted, map not available to determine allotment specific number).

Section VI. Technical Recommendations A. Potential Stocking Level - Wild Horses

In the original calculations for determining the potential stocking level, the use by wild horses outside of the HMA was not factored into the decision. This procedure was used in the other allotments that had use occurring outside the HMA boundary. Acreages shown for the slight and light use levels were reversed in the table (see attached revised Appendix II). Therefore, instead of 414 AUMs shown, the correct figure is 444 AUMs.

Section VI. Technical Recommendations B. Potential Stocking Level - Livestock

For the reasons stated above, the potential stocking level for livestock within the HMA boundary is corrected from 414 AUMs to 444 AUMs. The recommendation, "The active preference for livestock be adjusted from 772 AUMs to 583 AUMs" is changed to read, "The active preference for livestock be adjusted from 772 AUMs to 613 AUMs."

Appendix II - Potential Stocking Level Calculations

Replace this with the attached, corrected Appendix:

VII. Consultation

On July 19, 1993, a letter was sent to persons and organizations that have shown interest in resource management in the Walker Resource Area. The purpose of the letter was to gather additional information and to determine who would be interested in participating in the evaluation process on nine allotments in the northern Pine Nut Mountain Range. Clifton was among these allotments.

Sections I (Introduction) through VI (Technical Recommendations) of this evaluation were sent out for public review on January 13, 1995. Fifteen copies were sent to the Nevada State Clearinghouse for distribution among state agencies. In addition, the following were sent copies of this evaluation.

Rolling A Ranch
Nevada Wildlife Federation
Natural Resources Defense Council
Carson City District Grazing
Advisory Board
Resource Concepts Inc.
Rutgers University, S.I. Newhouse
Center of Law and Justice
The Honorable Barbara Vucanovich
The Honorable Richard Bryan
Paul Clifford
Rebecca Kunow
Humane Society of Southern Nevada
Kathy McCovey
Nevada Humane Society
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service,
Reno Field Office

Nevada Division of Wildlife
The Wildlife Society
Sierra Club, Toiyabe Chapter
Nevada Cattlemen's Association
Nevada Woolgrower's Association
Washoe Tribe
Bureau of Indian Affairs,
Western Nevada Agency
The Honorable Harry M. Reid
American Horse Protection Association
Craig C. Downer
American Mustang and Burro Association
L.I.F.E. Foundation
Nevada Commission for the Preservation of
Wild Horses
Wild Horse Organized Assistance

Comments concerning Clifton were received from the Nevada Division of Wildlife (NDOW), the Commission for the Preservation of Wild Horses (Commission), Wild Horse Organized Assistance (WHOA), and Craig Downer. Most of the comments showed a general opposition to livestock grazing. The BLM, however, is mandated to support a multiple-use concept while managing for a healthy ecosystem. It is therefore important to seek management goals that are fair to the majority of interests while maintaining or improving the health of the range.

There also appeared to be some confusion related to the potential stocking level calculated in Appendix II. The potential stocking level represents the amount of forage *available* to wild horses and livestock. "Potential stocking level" should not be confused with uneven distribution, which in turn should not be confused with resource damage. The use mapping data showed that there was an uneven distribution of wild horses and livestock use. The trend data indicated that the areas of heavy and severe utilization that occurred during the growing season had resulted in resource deterioration over portions of the allotment. Therefore, it was proposed that the active preference for livestock be reduced and the season of use adjusted. It was also proposed that the

potential stocking level for wild horses should be maintained at 444 AUMs¹, which is significantly lower than the actual use observed in 1993.

The fact that animal impacts are occurring on the range does not automatically equate to resource deterioration. Craig Downer made the following observation relating to large ungulates and their environments: "Little is said about the positive affects which these animals [wild horses] have upon the desert ecosystem, nor about the impact which their low population levels can have upon their own long-term survival." Such positive effects result from properly timed impacts. If timing and duration cannot be controlled, either through natural relationships or through intense management, then it becomes necessary to adjust use levels.

Other questions and comments that relate to the health of the land or address the evaluation of this health are discussed below.

Comment: *Wild horse census were conducted for five years of this evaluation. The actual use data were not presented in the document (NDOW).*

Response: The data is 1992 (91 horses), 1990 (59 horses), 1989 (22 horses), and for 1986 no map was available to determine allotment specific numbers.

Comment: *Page 9 shows that use pattern mapping are available for years when the allotment was jointly used by livestock and wild horses, yet, Appendix II shows only 1993 wild horse actual use and use pattern mapping were used for determining the allotments livestock stocking rate and AML. Monitoring was designed to avoid the pitfalls of "one point in time" inventory, and the process was to use all available data to determine a carrying capacity. (WHOA: the points addressed in this comments were also addressed by NDOW and the Commission).*

Response: It was the professional opinion of the BLM specialists who worked on all the evaluations that census data and use pattern mapping data used to calculate stocking levels should be collected *throughout* the entire HMA during the same year. The forage production was well within the normal range in 1993. Therefore Walker Resource Area staff made a concerted effort to collect use mapping data over the HMA as a whole, rather than in just individual allotments. This information provides the most accurate information to determine potential stocking level for all grazing animals in the allotments that are located within the boundaries of the HMA.

Although the other mappings were not used in the stocking rate calculations, this does not mean that the data was not analyzed during the evaluation process. The heavy and severe use levels during the growing season as observed in the other mappings helped explain the downward trend in areas of the allotment. This

¹Refer to Section VIII on page 21 for explanation of difference in this figure and Technical Recommendation A.

resulted in the proposal to adjust of livestock AUMs downward and modify the season of use.

Comment: *Was actual use by wild horses determined by the assumption of one adult/foal equals an animal unit month? (Commission)*

Was the actual use of cow/calve versus mare/foal equivalent to one AUM used? (WHOA)

Response: At the time of aerial censuses, wild horses counted as "foals" are usually old enough, or soon will be old enough to be consuming substantial amounts of forage. Therefore, foals are counted as an animal unit. In calculating AUMs for use in analysis, a calf may also be counted as an animal unit if it develops to a stage where it will be consuming substantial amounts of forage.

Comment: *Page 15, VI., A: What else do you expect for a wild species, such as the wild horse, whose whole habitat and whole year needs should be accommodated at truly viable population levels? The potential stocking level for wild horses at 414, or 34 wild horses year round, is much too low. (Craig Downer)*

Response: Allotment-based horse numbers are immaterial since the allotment boundaries within the HMA are unfenced and groups of wild horses are free to come and go at will. Therefore it becomes more important to establish wild horse numbers (i.e., the AML) for the entire HMA. Instead of proposing numbers for individual allotments, the allotment evaluations proposed stocking levels based on the availability of forage for wild horses and other considerations such as trend and condition. Based on the combined stocking levels for all nine allotments, no more than 179 wild horses can be supported within the HMA.

VIII. Management Action Selected

An error was noted in the potential stocking level calculations contained in Appendix II of the evaluation. Inadvertently, the use being made outside of the HMA boundary, by wild horses, was excluded in the calculations. In order to be consistent with the proper procedures applied to other allotments within the HMA, this error has been corrected. The Technical Recommendation covering the potential stocking levels for wild horses and livestock are modified as follows:

The potential stocking level for wild horses within the allotment will be changed from 414 AUMs to 444 AUMs.

The potential stocking level for livestock will be changed from 583 AUMs to 613 AUMs.

The active preference for cattle will be adjusted from 772 AUMs to 613 AUMs. This reduction in active preference will be phased in over a five year period, beginning with the effective date of the Final Multiple Use Decision (1995). The reduction will be implemented as follows:

1995 From 772 AUMs to 719 AUMs
1997 From 719 AUMs to 666 AUMs
1999 From 666 AUMs to 613 AUMs

A total of 159 AUMs will be suspended.

The authorized season of use will be changed from 4/1 -5/31 to 1/1 - 5/31.

It was decided by the Carson City District staff that, because of the potential economic, aesthetic, cultural and recreational values associated with pinyon-juniper woodlands, the longer term management of the woodlands in the Pine Nut Mountains should be addressed in the upcoming land use plan amendment. At the time of this writing, an amendment team had been formed and letters had been sent out to the public soliciting comments.

**APPENDIX II
CLIFTON ALLOTMENT
STOCKING LEVEL CALCULATIONS**

Shown below are the series of calculations used to derive the potential stocking level for wild horses in the Clifton Allotment. Stocking levels are determined using the Potential Actual Use formula from BLM Technical Reference (TR) 4400-7, *Rangeland Monitoring Analysis, Interpretation, and Evaluation* (November, 1985), Appendix 2, pages 54-56:

Acreages shown below are taken from the 1993 use pattern mapping. The "No Use" category was not used in calculations relating to wild horses. Being free-roaming creatures of habit, the wild horses don't use these portions of the allotment due to topographical restrictions, fear of predation, and/or lack of forage due to dense pinyon-juniper overstory. Therefore, these areas are considered to be ungrazable by wild horses.

No livestock were grazed in the Clifton Allotment in 1993, therefore all use is by wild horses. Use occurred outside of the HMA, on public and private lands, as well as on private lands within the HMA. Establishing a potential stocking level considers use made only within the HMA (public land) and excludes private lands.

**TABLE I
UTILIZATION DATA**

Utilization Class	Acres inside HMA by class	Acres outside HMA by class
Slight	3530	2830
Light	635	0
Moderate	0	0
Heavy	4974	0
Severe	958	0
Total	10097	2830

TABLE II
UTILIZATION SUMMARY

Utilization Class	(x1) Acres in HMA by Class	(x2) Acres outside HMA by Class	(y) Class Midpoint	x1 * y Within HMA Acres X Utilization	x2 * y Outside HMA Acres X Utilization
Slight	3530	2830	10	35300	28300
Light	635	0	30	19050	0
Moderate	0	0	50	0	0
Heavy	4974	0	70	348180	0
Severe	958	0	90	86220	0
Totals	10097	2830		488750	28300
Desired Utilization	10097	0	27.5	277668	0

Present Horse Numbers	"PRESENT MULTIPLE" Present Sums of Acres X Utilization (1)	"DESIRED MULTIPLE" Desired Sums of Acres X Utilization (2)	Number of horses needed to achieve desired utilization (3)
68	517050	277668	36.52 = 37 horses

(1) Includes the sum of both inside (546650) and outside (84900) the HMA.

(2) The sum 27.5% desired utilization multiplied by the number of acres of HMA being grazed by these horses.

(3) Solving for "x" in the ratio equation: $\frac{517050}{68 \text{ horses}} = \frac{277668}{x(\text{number of horses to achieve desire utilization levels})}$

AUMs provided for the desired number of horses (37) is 444 in the Clifton Allotment.

ELDORADO ALLOTMENT EVALUATION
ERRATA AND ATTACHMENTS

Insert the attached Sections VII and VIII after page 23. In the Table of Contents, insert the following under Section VI:

VII. CONSULTATIONS	24
VIII. MANAGEMENT ACTIONS SELECTED	29

VII. Consultations

On July 19, 1993, a letter was sent to persons and organizations that have shown interest in resource management in the Walker Resource Area. The purpose of the letter was to gather additional information and to determine who would be interested in participating in the evaluation process on nine allotments in the northern Pine Nut Mountain Range. Eldorado was among these allotments.

Sections I (Introduction) through VI (Technical Recommendations) of this evaluation were sent out for public review on November 30, 1994. Since a considerable amount of time had elapsed since the original scoping letter had been sent out, the evaluation was sent to all persons and organizations who had expressed interest in wildlife, wild horse and livestock grazing on public lands within the Walker Resource Area. Fifteen copies were sent to the Nevada State Clearinghouse for distribution among state agencies. In addition, the following were sent copies of this evaluation.

Wild Horse Organized Assistance	Animal Protection Institute
Nevada Wildlife Federation	The Wildlife Society
Natural Resources Defense Council	Sierra Club, Toiyabe Chapter
The Nature Conservancy	Carson City District Grazing Advisory Board
Nevada Cattlemen's Association	Resource Concepts Inc.
Nevada Woolgrowers Association	Bureau of Indian Affairs, Western Nevada Agency
Rutgers University, S.I. Newhouse Center of Law and Justice	U.S. Wild Horse and Burro Foundation
Washoe Tribe	The Honorable Harry M. Reid
The Honorable Barbara Vucanovich	American Bashkir Curley Register
The Honorable Richard Bryan	Bobby Royal
American Horse Protection Association	
Craig C. Downer	American Mustang and Burro Association
Dan Keiserman	Humane Society of Southern Nevada
Fund for Animals	Kathy McCovey
International Society for the Protection of Mustangs and Burros	L.I.F.E Foundation
Ann Earle	National Mustang Association, Inc.
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Reno Field Office	Nevada Humane Society
Paula S. Askew	Paul Clifford
Steven Fulstone	Rebecca Kunow
U.S. Humane Society	The Mule Deer Foundation

Comments were received from the Association of Conservation Districts, the Nevada Division of Wildlife (hence forth referred to as NDOW, or simply "the Division"), Commission for the Preservation of Wild Horses (hence forth referred to as "the Commission"), Wild Horse Organized Assistance (WHOA) and Craig Downer. Most of the comments showed a general opposition to livestock grazing. The BLM, however, is mandated to support a multiple-use concept while managing for a healthy ecosystem. It is therefore important to seek management goals that are fair to the majority of interests while maintaining or improving the health of the range.

There also appeared to be some confusion related to the potential stocking level calculated in Appendix II. The potential stocking level represents the amount of forage *available* to wild horses and livestock. "Potential stocking level" should not be confused with uneven distribution, which in turn should not be confused with resource damage. The use mapping data showed that there was an uneven distribution of wild horses and livestock use. The trend data indicated that the areas of heavy and severe utilization have resulted in resource deterioration over portions of the allotment. Therefore, it was proposed that the 600 AUM objective for livestock should no longer be applicable and that the stocking level for wild horses should be maintained at half the calculated potential stocking level.

The fact that animal impacts are occurring on the range does not automatically equate to resource deterioration. Craig Downer made the following observation relating to large ungulates and their environments: "Little is said about the positive affects which these animals [wild horses] have upon the desert ecosystem, nor about the impact which their low population levels can have upon their own long-term survival." Such positive effects result from properly timed impacts. If timing and duration cannot be controlled, either through natural relationships or through intense management, then it becomes necessary to adjust use levels.

Other questions and comments that relate to the health of the land or address the evaluation of this health are discussed below.

Comment: Are population estimates made using census data? Do census observe all horses? Does one adult/foal equal one cow/calf? (Commission)

Response: These questions were in reference to the table on page 9. The numbers in the "Total" column are all wild horses counted during aerial census. At the time of aerial censuses, wild horses counted as "foals" are usually old enough, or soon will be old enough to be consuming substantial amounts of forage. Therefore, foals are counted as an animal unit. In calculating AUMs for use in analysis, a calf may also be counted as an animal unit if it develops to a stage where it will be consuming substantial amounts of forage.

Comment: The years 1988 and 1990 are the only data representing joint use by livestock and wild horses. These years best represent data for a carrying capacity to sustain any livestock use on the allotment. (NDOW)

Again we have an allotment with constant wild horse use and infrequent domestic sheep use. Your data shows that when livestock were authorized in 1988 and 1990 that the amounts of heavy and severe use increased on the allotment. These years of use should provide significant data in the determination of stocking rates and appropriate management levels. (WHOA)

Page 11, we strongly recommend that all available data from those years be used. (WHOA)

Response: It is assumed that the commenters were making an indirect reference to the stocking level calculations used in Appendix II, which used data collected in 1993. The data collected in 1988 and 1990 were collected in spring, immediately after sheep were taken off the range. Therefore, the data for these years did not show all the use by wild horses, who continued grazing after the livestock were removed. This is one reason that the 1993 data was used, since it was collected later in the year (note the larger area showing use by horses). Also, due to the mandate to establish AMLs by 1995, more effort was spent in 1993 in documenting use patterns *throughout* the HMA, rather than on an individual allotment basis. This resulted in detailed use pattern maps for all nine allotment within the HMA made during the same year of a wild horse census.

However, just because the other mappings were not used in the stocking rate calculations, this does not mean that the data was not analyzed during the evaluation process. The heavy and severe use levels recorded during the 1988 and 1990 mappings, along with 1993 data, helped explain the downward trend observed in areas of the allotment. This showed that damage was actually occurring from the uneven distribution of both livestock and horses. This resulted in the elimination of the objective to provide 600 AUMs for livestock and establishing a potential stocking level of 270 AUMs for wild horses instead of 541 AUMs. In addition to these actions, it may be necessary to incorporate terms and conditions addressing animal distribution (depending on the specific operation) if temporary and nonrenewable grazing is authorized in the Eldorado Allotment.

Comment: p. 7: I think that 600 AUM's for livestock is unreasonable and that this proportion should be reduced to accommodate more wildlife, including wild horses.
(Craig Downer)

p. 14. Conclusions: I object to increasing livestock use to 600 AUMs. This confirms my fears that the wild horses are being overmagnified as to their impacts and squeezed out, as they have been in so many other places where they have legal right. (Craig Downer)

Response: These comments are in reference to the old allotment objective to provide 600 AUMs of livestock use. Mr. Downer's concerns reflect the conclusions made by the authors of this evaluation, which resulted in Technical Recommendation 1, page 21 ("The objective identifying 600 AUMs of use by livestock will no longer be applicable"). It is further recommended that only temporary and nonrenewable livestock grazing be allowed in winter (dormancy period of key plant species). Therefore, wild horses were not "singled out" while increasing livestock use.

Comment: p.12: Evaluations for all grazer categories should be made, not just one or the other. This will establish unbiased information by which to base future conclusions.
(Craig Downer)

Response: It is assumed that Mr. Downer is referring to the actual use table on page 12. 1988 and 1990 data was collected in spring immediately after the sheep were removed, therefore reflecting primarily livestock use with some wild horse use. No grazing occurred in 1992 and 1993, therefore the use was by wild horses. Once the AML has been established and livestock are authorized, it may be necessary to take more than one reading per year.

Comment: Much of the resource decline is due to drought which should be alleviated this year by unusually heavy precipitation received to date. (Craig Downer)

Response: It is important to prevent resource degradation, even during years of reduced annual precipitation. Properly managed rangelands should provide adequate amounts of forage to grazing animals, even during times of reduced annual precipitation. The actions defined in this evaluation will accomplish this.

Comment: I note that bitterbrush is not effected by wild horses and that they may be quite compatible with mule deer. (Craig Downer)

Response: Bitterbrush is not the only component in the ecosystem that is important to mule deer. As an example, horses directly compete with mule deer in the spring when green grass is important to both animals. Cured grass is also important in the winter diets of both mule deer and wild horses. Indirect effects may result from disrupted water, energy and nutrient cycles due to improper grazing by wild horses. Any example of this could be a reduction of water sources, decrease in forage plant seedlings, and decrease of riparian vegetation.

Comment: I recommend developing a variety of water sources and making accessible sources that have been restricted so that the horses do not have to concentrate too much upon any one source. (Craig Downer)

Response: It must be remembered that, in the absence of large predators, wild horses will concentrate in riparian areas. In lieu of an intensive grazing system to control the timing and duration of impacts, the only two options open in some areas may be the fencing of riparian areas or the total elimination of wild horses. Where the expense of fence construction and maintenance is justified, the projects can be constructed in order to provide water while protecting riparian vegetation.

Comment: p. 19: Also give consideration to what is a healthy viable population of wild horses, for too small population numbers can cause serious problems for the long term survival of the horses. I recommend a considerably larger wild horse herd size than the current one. (Craig Downer)

p.20: VI. A. "Self sustaining populations ..." means adequate population numbers to prevent inbreeding, not mere token numbers which are themselves placed in jeopardy of extinction by a variety of causes. (Craig Downer)

Recom. 5: As usual the tiny minority of wild horses are being targeted. 22 horses year round is much too few. I strenuously object to your reducing wild horse population here to this level, and rather favor an increase in their numbers, resource permitting. (Craig Downer)

p.22: top: This fails to account for the fact that the wild horse has been largely eliminated throughout the West. Ipso facto, where meager numbers persist, such as here in the Pine Nut Range, their numbers should be allowed to increase to at least minimally viable population levels, estimate at 1,000 breeding adults. (Craig Downer)

Response: The AML will be established for the *entire* HMA, not for individual allotments. Therefore the 22 horses is meaningless since Eldorado Allotment represents only ten percent of the HMA. Based on the analysis of monitoring data presented in all nine allotment evaluations, a population of 179 wild horses can be supported within the HMA.

Comment: Why is there the big fluctuation in wild horse numbers: gatherings, migration for adjoining areas? (Craig Downer)

Response: The fluctuation of horse numbers shown on page 19 of this evaluation is mostly due from movement of wild horses throughout the HMA. A few have been gathered by BLM when they moved onto private lands near Dayton.

VIII. Management Actions Selected

Due to the necessity of implementing the wild horse decisions on a herd management area basis, only one PMUD will be issued for all nine allotment in the Pine Nut HMA.

All short term technical recommendations will be included within the Proposed Multiple Use Decision (PMUD). It was decided by the Carson City District staff that, because of the potential economic, aesthetic, cultural and recreational values associated with pinyon - juniper woodlands, the long term management of the woodlands in the Pine Nut Mountains should be addressed in the upcoming land use plan amendment. At the time of this writing, an amendment team had been formed and letters had been sent out to the public soliciting comments.

HACKETT CANYON ALLOTMENT EVALUATION
ERRATA AND ATTACHMENTS

Insert the attached Sections VII and VIII after page 17. In the Table of Contents, insert the following under Section VI:

VII. CONSULTATIONS	18
VIII. MANAGEMENT ACTIONS SELECTED	22

Page 17, Technical Recommendation 1: recommendation should read : "The maximum allowable use by wild horses in the Hackett Canyon Allotment should not exceed 187 AUMs..." (instead of 168). This is a typographical error; 187 AUMs was the stocking level calculated in Appendix II.

VII. Consultations

On July 19, 1993, a letter was sent to persons and organizations that have shown interest in resource management in the Walker Resource Area. The purpose of the letter was to gather additional information and to determine who would be interested in participating in the evaluation process on nine allotments in the northern Pine Nut Mountain Range. Hackett Canyon was among these allotments.

Sections I (Introduction) through VI (Technical Recommendations) of this evaluation were sent out for public review on November 30, 1995. Since a considerable amount of time had elapsed since the original scoping letter had been sent out, the evaluation was sent to all persons and organizations who had expressed interest in wildlife, wild horse and livestock grazing on public lands within the Walker Resource Area. Fifteen copies were sent to the Nevada State Clearinghouse for distribution among state agencies. In addition, the following were sent copies of this evaluation.

Joe Ricci Estate	Wild Horse Organized Assistance
Nevada Wildlife Federation	The Wildlife Society
Natural Resources Defense Council	Sierra Club, Toiyabe Chapter
The Nature Conservancy	Carson City District Grazing Advisory Board
Nevada Cattlemen's Association	Resource Concepts Inc.
Nevada Woolgrowers Association	Bureau of Indian Affairs, Western Nevada Agency
Rutgers University, S.I. Newhouse Center of Law and Justice	U.S. Humane Society
Washoe Tribe	The Honorable Harry M. Reid
The Honorable Barbara Vucanovich	American Bashkir Curley Register
The Honorable Richard Bryan	Animal Protection Institute
American Horse Protection Association	Craig C. Downer
Bobby Royal	American Mustang and Burro Association
Dan Keiserman	Humane Society of Southern Nevada
Fund for Animals	Kathy McCovey
International Society for the Protection of Mustangs and Burro	L.I.F.E Foundation
Ann Earle	National Mustang Association, Inc.
Nevada Humane Society	Paul Clifford
Paula S. Askew	Rebecca Kunow
Steven Fulstone	The Mule Deer Foundation
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Reno Field Office	U.S. Wild Horse and Burro Foundation

Comments were received by the Nevada Division of Wildlife (hence forth referred to as NDOW, or simply "the Division"), Commission for the Preservation of Wild Horses (hence forth referred to as "the Commission"), Wild Horse Organized Assistance (WHOA) and Craig Downer. Most of the comments showed a general opposition to livestock grazing. The BLM, however, is mandated to support a multiple-use concept while managing for a healthy ecosystem. It is therefore important to seek management goals that are fair to the majority of interests while maintaining or improving the health of the range.

There also appeared to be some confusion related to the potential stocking level calculated in Appendix II. The potential stocking level represents the amount of forage *available* to wild horses and livestock. "Potential stocking level" should not be confused with uneven distribution, which in turn should not be confused with resource damage. The use mapping data showed that there was an uneven distribution of wild horse use. The trend data indicated that the areas of heavy and severe utilization may have resulted in resource deterioration over portions of the allotment. Therefore, it was proposed that the stocking level for wild horses should be maintained at half the calculated potential stocking level, and livestock grazing should be authorized under strict timing and duration constraints.

The fact that animal impacts are occurring on the range does not automatically equate to resource deterioration. Craig Downer made the following observation relating to large ungulates and their environments: "Little is said about the positive affects which these animals [wild horses] have upon the desert ecosystem, nor about the impact which their low population levels can have upon their own long-term survival." Such positive effects result from properly timed impacts. If timing and duration cannot be controlled, either through natural relationships or through intense management, then it becomes necessary to adjust use levels.

Other comments that relate to the health of the land or address the evaluation of this health are discussed below.

Comments: The allotment has not been used by cattle for the past seven years and not used by sheep for at least 11 years. The evaluation has no data to support a carrying capacity and allocation of forage between uses. (NDOW)

Since the allotment has not had domestic sheep use for over 11 years and no cattle use for the past seven years, the procedures to establish carrying capacity and allocate forage to wild horses and livestock cannot be supported. (Commission)

Since the allotment has not had domestic sheep licensed for over 11 years, the procedures to establish carrying capacity and allocate forage to wild horses and livestock cannot be supported. (WHOA)

Response: Based on the calculations in Appendix II, approximately 374 AUM's can be used by wild horses and other herbivores with similar forage preferences. Based on the source cited in the footnote on page 15 of this evaluation, cattle and horses have similar forage preferences over most of the year. As explained on page 15, there is some dietary overlap between wild horses and sheep in spring (the proposed livestock season of use) when both will compete for grass. Therefore, the calculations in Appendix II will apply to all three kinds of herbivores (horses, sheep, and cattle) during the recommended season of use for livestock in the Hackett Canyon Allotment.

Comment: It should be noted that the bitterbrush component has shown recruitment during drought years. In order to protect this component in the vegetation communities, livestock use should be curtailed. (NDOW)

Response: This point was addressed in detail on page 16. Based on potential problems resulting in stress and carbohydrate storage in the roots of key plant species (including bitterbrush), it was recommended that grazing between 03/15 to 06/30 be restricted to two weeks or less on specific areas. It was also recognized that animal impact later than 06/30 may be beneficial for seedling establishment and therefore should occasionally be allowed at the discretion of the Area Manager. Since most of Hackett Canyon Allotment is key mule deer winter range, it will be necessary to restrict use on bitterbrush by livestock to 23% (approximately half the recommended yearlong use levels on bitterbrush). This last restriction will ensure that adequate forage will be left for overwintering mule deer. Yearlong use by all herbivores (wild horses, livestock and wildlife) should not exceed 45% on bitterbrush in order to maintain its health and vigor.

Comment: The documented damage to riparian areas by as few as six horses in 1992 suggest the area cannot be managed for wild horses. (NDOW)

We encourage the District to develop fencing projects to protect the riparian area [sic] until those areas are functioning properly. (Commission)

We encourage the protection of riparian and the District to develop fencing projects that will allow those areas to recover. (WHOA)

Response: This point is addressed on pages 12 and 17 of this evaluation. Three of the riparian areas where heavy to severe utilization was observed in 1993 are north of the Eldorado Canyon Fence, which means they are currently excluded from grazing by wild horses. Although a riparian area south of the fence was identified as not functional, this area had received only slight use and had no punching, which would tend to show that the observed erosion was not caused by wild horse overutilization (e.g., it could be a natural occurrence and/or be due to lack of animal impacts).

If further monitoring indicates that degradation to riparian areas is occurring due to wild horses, then management will be developed to address specific problems. Fencing is one of these management actions.

Comment: pg. 13: 12 wild horses seems quite inadequate for this area. I support more wild horses. (Craig Downer)

[p.17] bottom: 168 AUMs for wild horses is a very small allocation. I favor a large allocation. (Craig Downer)

Response: The number on page 13 was based on an aerial census of the Pine Nut Mountains made in 1993. The 168 AUM's shown under Technical Recommendation 1 on page 17 is a typographical error (the correct number is 187 AUMs). Hackett Canyon Allotment represents only six percent of the area within the Pine Nut

HMA. Based on the analysis of monitoring data presented in all nine allotment evaluations, 2152 AUMs of forage is available for wild horses within the HMA.

Comment: p. 14: You lump wild horses and livestock together, later to describe the season of use. Since the overuse "probably occurred during the growing season of plants" and livestock are grazed during spring and summer, I would suggest that you consider livestock reduction for improving the situation. (Craig Downer)

Response: Mr. Downer's comment is correct in reference to long duration grazing by *both* wild horses and livestock during the growing season of perennial plant species (as may have caused the downward trend at Photo Plot No. 1). The reasons for keeping the spring use for livestock is described under "Authorizing Livestock Use" on pages 15 and 16. In addition to the stocking rate of livestock being reduced from 515 AUMs to 187 AUMs, a two week timing restriction on specific areas is being recommended to mitigate stress on plants during the active growing season.

Comments: I am also concerned by the El Dorado Canyon Fence. Will it impose any crippling hardship upon the wild horses, by limiting their seasonal migrations or impeding access to important watering areas? Such fences have caused serious suffering and death in other areas where the wild horses have legal right, especially during critical periods of the winter or the summer, when cold or water limit. (Craig Downer)

p. 15: You state that the fence will reduce competition between wild horses and livestock, but has the overall effect it will have upon the wild horses population been evaluated? (Craig Downer)

p.16: top: Yes, I favor your not fencing the south boundary so as to impede the free movement of wild horses throughout the Pine Nut HMA. (Craig Downer)

Response: As stated on page 2 of this evaluation, the Eldorado Canyon Fence was constructed to prevent wild horses from drifting onto the solid block of private lands lying to the north, which would necessitate their removal when the residents of Dayton complained. The wild horses have complete access to the remainder of the HMA, which is the reason why the southern boundary of the allotment will remain unfenced. Wild horses have more than enough water sources south of the fence. It was recommended that only sheep (a herded animal) be allowed to graze on the public lands remaining north of the fence.

Comment: -- Again your stress on "direct competition for grass during the spring" causes me to recommend that you change the season of use of livestock or reduce livestock competition. (Craig Downer)

Response: Much of the competition between wild horses and livestock is being eliminated by restricting most of the livestock grazing to the North Pasture (currently not grazed by horses).

VIII. Management Actions Selected

Due to the necessity of implementing the wild horse decisions on a herd management area basis, only one PMUD will be issued for all nine allotment in the Pine Nut HMA.

All short term technical recommendations will be included within the Proposed Multiple Use Decision (PMUD). Technical Recommendation 2a("This pasture will be grazed for two weeks or less each year") should be modified to read " *Specific areas within the allotment* will be grazed for two weeks or less each year." Under an intensive management system, sheep could be continuously moved from one area to another without staying very long in one spot. The recommended modification of the technical recommendation would allow a permittee to adopt an intensive management system, and, as long as the sheep do not stay in one spot, graze throughout the grazing season. If they "camp" on one area for more than two weeks during the growing season, they will be told to remove their livestock. In either case, the purpose preventing resource damage is fulfilled.

It was decided by the Carson City District staff that, because of the potential economic, aesthetic, cultural and recreational values associated with pinyon - juniper woodlands, the long term management of the woodlands in the Pine Nut Mountains should be addressed in the upcoming land use plan amendment. At the time of this writing, an amendment team had been formed and letters had been sent out to the public soliciting comments.

MILL CANYON ALLOTMENT EVALUATION
ERRATA AND ATTACHMENTS

Insert the attached Sections VII and VIII after page 17. In the Table of Contents, insert the following under Section VI:

VII. CONSULTATIONS	18
VIII. MANAGEMENT ACTIONS SELECTED	21

VII. Consultation

On July 19, 1993, a letter was sent to persons and organization that have shown interest in resource management in the Walker Resource Area. The purpose of the letter was to gather additional information and to determine who would be interested in participating in the evaluation process on nine allotments in the northern Pine Nut Mountain Range. Mill Canyon was among these allotments.

Sections I (Introduction) through VI (Technical Recommendations) of this evaluation were sent out for public review on January 13, 1995. Fifteen copies were sent to the Nevada State Clearinghouse for distribution among state agencies. In addition, the following were sent copies of this evaluation.

Borda Brothers
Nevada Wildlife Federation
Natural Resources Defense Council
Carson City District Grazing
Advisory Board
Resource Concepts Inc.
Rutgers University, S.I. Newhouse
Center of Law and Justice
Wild Horse Organized Assistance
The Honorable Harry M. Reid
The Honorable Richard Bryan
Paul Clifford
Rebecca Kunow
Humane Society of Southern Nevada
Kathy McCovey
Nevada Commission for the
Preservation of Wild Horses

Nevada Division of Wildlife
The Wildlife Society
Sierra Club, Toiyabe Chapter
Nevada Cattlemen's Association
Nevada Woolgrowers Association
Washoe Tribe
Bureau of Indian Affairs,
Western Nevada Agency
The Honorable Barbara Vucanovich
Steven Fulstone
American Horse Protection Association
Craig C. Downer
American Mustang and Burro Association
L.I.F.E. Foundation
Nevada Humane Society
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service,
Reno Field Office

Comments concerning Mill Canyon were received from the Nevada Division of Wildlife (NDOW), The Commission for the Preservation of Wild Horses (Commission), Wild Horse Organized Assistance (WHOA), and Craig Downer. Most of the comments showed a general opposition to livestock grazing. The BLM, however, is mandated to support a multiple-use concept while managing for a healthy ecosystem. It is therefore important to seek management goals that are fair to the majority of interests while maintaining or improving the health of the range.

There also appeared to be some confusion related to the potential stocking level calculated in Appendix II. The potential stocking level represents the amount of forage *available* to wild horses and livestock. "Potential stocking level" should not be confused with uneven distribution, which in turn should not be confused with resource damage. The use mapping data showed that there was an uneven distribution of wild horse use. The trend data indicated that the areas of heavy and severe utilization may have resulted in resource deterioration over portions of the allotment. Therefore, it was proposed that the stocking level for wild horses should be maintained at half the calculated potential stocking level, and the season of use, whether by sheep or cattle, should be during the fall and/or winter when the plants are dormant.

The fact that animal impacts are occurring on the range does not automatically equate to resource deterioration. Craig Downer made the following observation relating to large ungulates and their environments: "Little is said about the positive affects which these animals [wild horses] have upon the desert ecosystem, nor about the impact which their low population levels can have upon their own long-term survival." Such positive effects result from properly timed impacts. If timing and duration cannot be controlled, either through natural relationships or through intense management, then it becomes necessary to adjust use levels.

Other comments that relate to the health of the public land within the Mill Canyon Allotment or address the evaluation of this health are discussed below.

Comment: *In order for sheep to be converted to cattle on this allotment, we suggest the District conduct a suitability study with available monitoring data. The only rationale given on page 15 is that "wool subsidies are being eliminated." This rationale is not based upon the allotment's resources or its suitability for cattle. (NDOW)*

If this evaluation is to justify a livestock conversion, then suitability and a "grazing pattern that will allow for protection of riparian and also reduce competition for forage" must be presented. (NDOW)

We suggest the allotment be evaluated for cattle suitability and a carrying capacity be determined only for wild horses. (Commission)

Response: The range survey (forage inventory) rated the allotment for both sheep and cattle use, therefore the allotment has already been determined to be suitable for use by cattle. The potential stocking level calculation (Appendix II) established an AUM figure for the HMA portion of the allotment and refined the AUM availability for cattle within what could be a dual use area for cattle and horses. This was based on monitoring data (utilization levels, use pattern mapping, wild horse census).

The season of use for cattle recommended in the range survey (forage inventory) was primarily the spring. However, the season of use in the evaluation recommended that the allotment be used, whether by sheep or cattle, during the fall/winter when the plants are dormant. Forage is most desirable and most susceptible to harmful grazing (refer to General Response section for explanation) during the spring. By adjusting the season of use for livestock, this potential danger has been averted. Livestock use, if managed intensively, could take place during the spring and harmful grazing could be minimized, but in the presence of horses continually occupying the area, could not be averted.

In addition, to protect the riparian areas, which are located more or less exclusively in the western portion of the allotment, after 2/28 (before the onset of plant growth), livestock must be removed outside the HMA.

Comment: *Are population estimates made using census data? Do census observe all horses? Does one adult/foal equal one cow/calf AUM?*

Response: Population estimates presented within this evaluation are based on aerial census data. At the time of aerial censuses, wild horses counted as "foals" are usually old enough, or soon will be old enough to be consuming substantial amounts of forage. Therefore, foals are counted as an animal unit. In calculating AUMs for use in analysis, a calf may also be counted as an animal unit if it develops to a stage where it will be consuming substantial amounts of forage.

Comment: *Are you sure there are no threatened, endangered, or candidate plant or animal species in the allotment. I believe the Peregrine Falcon has been spotted in former years in cliffs (Craig Downer).*

Response: We are not aware of any such sightings. If you can provide information confirming their existence in the allotment, it will be appreciated.

VIII. Management Action Selected

Due to the necessity of implementing the wild horse decisions on a herd management area basis, only one Proposed Multiple Use Decision will be issued for all nine allotments in the Pine Nut Herd Management Area.

The active preference for sheep will be maintained at 2049 AUMs.

If a conversion is made from sheep to cattle, the active preference for cattle initially will not exceed 776 AUMs. This preference will remain in effect for 5 years following such conversion, after which time a final active preference will be established based on additional monitoring data.

The authorized season of use will be changed from 11/1 -1/31 and 4/1 -5/31 to 11/1 - 3/31.

Livestock use within the HMA portion of the allotment will be made between 11/1 and 2/28. After 2/28, all livestock use will be shifted outside of the HMA.

The potential stocking level for wild horses in the portion of the HMA located within the allotment is 296 AUMs.

It was decided by the Carson City District staff that, because of the potential economic, aesthetic, cultural and recreational values associated with pinyon-juniper woodlands, the longer term management of the woodlands in the Pine Nut Mountains should be addressed in the upcoming land use plan amendment. At the time of this writing, an amendment team had been formed and letters had been sent out to the public soliciting comments.

RAWE PEAK ALLOTMENT EVALUATION
ERRATA AND ATTACHMENTS

Insert the attached Sections VII and VIII after page 15. In the Table of Contents, insert the following under Section VI:

VII. CONSULTATIONS	16
VIII. MANAGEMENT ACTIONS SELECTED	19

VII. Consultation

On July 19, 1993, a letter was sent to persons and organization that have shown interest in resource management in the Walker Resource Area. The purpose of the letter was to gather additional information and to determine who would be interested in participating in the evaluation process on nine allotments in the northern Pine Nut Mountain Range. Rawe Peak was among these allotments.

Sections I (Introduction) through VI (Technical Recommendations) of this evaluation were sent out for public review on January 13, 1995. Fifteen copies were sent to the Nevada State Clearinghouse for distribution among state agencies. In addition, the following were sent copies of this evaluation.

Rolling A Ranch	Nevada Division of Wildlife
Nevada Wildlife Federation	The Wildlife Society
Natural Resources Defense Council	Sierra Club, Toiyabe Chapter
Carson City District Grazing Advisory Board	Nevada Cattlemen's Association
Resource Concepts Inc.	Nevada Woolgrower's Association
Rutgers University, S.I. Newhouse Center of Law and Justice	Washoe Tribe
The Honorable Barbara Vucanovich	Bureau of Indian Affairs, Western Nevada Agency
The Honorable Richard Bryan	The Honorable Harry M. Reid
Paul Clifford	American Horse Protection Association
Rebecca Kunow	Craig C. Downer
American Mustang and Burro Association	Steven Fulstone
Nevada Commission for the Preservation of Wild Horses	Humane Society of Southern Nevada
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Reno Field Station	L.I.F.E. Foundation
	Kathey McCovey
	Nevada Humane Society
	Wild Horse Organized Assistance

Comments concerning Rawe Peak were received from the Nevada Division of Wildlife (NDOW), The Commission for the Preservation of Wild Horses (Commission), Wild Horse Organized Assistance (WHOA), and Craig Downer. Some of the comments showed a general opposition to livestock grazing. The BLM, however, is mandated to support a multiple-use concept while managing for a healthy ecosystem. It is therefore important to seek management goals that are fair to the majority of interests while maintaining or improving the health of the range.

Other questions and comments that relate to the health of the land or address the evaluation of this health are discussed below.

Comment: *We find it surprising that 16 percent of the allotment suffered heavy utilization without livestock or wild horse use. Without verified actual use, it will be difficult to establish a carrying capacity for the allotment. (NDOW: similar comments were received from the Commission and WHOA)*

It may be conceivable that the allotment is used by wild horse each year; however, are there livestock that could have been on the allotment in 1993? The adjacent Churchill Canyon Allotment had livestock use during 1993. (Commission)

Response: Use pattern mapping data shown on page 8 actually reflects 13% of the total acreage receiving heavy utilization. On page 10 of the evaluation, it was noted that "sporadic use is occurring in the open areas that provide grazing opportunities. Forage production is severely lacking. Horses apparently move in and out from Mill and Churchill Canyon allotments."

The bands of the northern Pine Nut Horses ranging upon the Churchill Canyon Allotment also graze the Rawe Peak and Mill Canyon allotments so census and utilization data for these three allotments were combined for analysis. The allotments are not physically separated.

During the collection of utilization data in the Rawe Peak allotment in 1993, it was noted on the utilization forms that horse sign was present (fresh tracks and dung). Although no physical observations were made during this study and the aerial census conducted in 1993, it was evident that horses were using the allotment. There was no livestock sign observed during the data collection.

Based upon the utilization data and mapping of use patterns, the calculations contained in Appendix IIA, established the potential stocking level for cattle and horses in the allotment. Regardless of actually seeing animals, identifying and classifying grazed areas provides adequate information to establish a carrying capacity.

Comment: *We cannot find the procedure used in this evaluation in the Technical Manual 4400-7. (WHOA)*

We cannot find the procedure used in this evaluation in the Technical Manual 4400-7. (Commission)

Appendix IIA We could not determine how procedures within Technical Manual 4400-7 were applied. We would appreciate a better explanation on how the carrying capacity for this allotment was determined. (NDOW)

Response: The potential stocking level calculation found in Appendix II is based on a formula found on page 55 of Technical Reference (TR) 4400-7 (*Rangeland Monitoring Analysis, Interpretation, and Evaluation*). One of the parameters required in this formula is "AVERAGE/WEIGHTED AVERAGE UTILIZATION".

Weighted Average Utilization is determined based on procedures found on page 52 of TR 4400-7.

Comment: *There are 379 AUM, or ca. 31 wild horses, and 552 AUMs, or ca. 46 cattle, in this "Category C" early seral area of low production and potential. You state that you will manage for the status quo in the short term but that in the long term you will except the wild horses in this provision. It is important that the Pinenut herd be increased as a whole to a more substantial, viable herd size, which I suggest to be 1000 breeding adults, though 500 at a minimum, for the long term survival and given the size of contiguous public lands in the Pine Nut Range. (Craig Downer)*

Appendix IIB: I object to these low levels of wild horses and encourage a higher number through an effort on the part of the government authorities to provide a productive and suitable habitat for these animals here in their legal Herd Management Area. (Craig Downer)

Response: The long term objective mentioned in the first comment, above, dealt with checkerboard land patterns. This allotment doesn't meet the criteria and the objective was inadvertently included.

Allotment-based horse numbers are immaterial since the allotment boundaries within the HMA are unfenced and groups of wild horses are free to come and go at will. Therefore it becomes more important to establish wild horse numbers (i.e., the AML) for the entire HMA. Instead of proposing numbers for individual allotments, the allotment evaluations proposed stocking levels based on the availability of forage for wild horses and other considerations such as trend and condition. Based on the combined stocking levels for all nine allotments, no more than 179 wild horses can be supported within the HMA.

VIII. Management Action Selected

Due to the necessity of implementing the wild horse decisions on a herd management area basis, only one Proposed Multiple Use Decision will be issued for all nine allotments in the Pine Nut Herd Management Area.

The potential stocking level for wild horses in the portion of the Pine Nut Herd Management Area (HMA) located within the allotment is 54 AUMs.

The active preference for cattle will be adjusted from 552 AUMs to 54 AUMs. This reduction in active preference will be phased in over a five year period, beginning with the effective date of the Final Multiple Use Decision (1995). The reduction will be implemented as follows:

1995 From 552 AUMs to 386 AUMs

1997 From 386 AUMs to 220 AUMs

1999 From 220 AUMs to 54 AUMs

A total of 498 AUMs will be suspended.

The authorized season of use will be changed from 5/16 - 7/31 to 11/1 -3/31.

If a conversion is made from cattle to sheep, the active preference for sheep will be initially established at 301 AUMs. This preference will remain in effect for 5 years, after which time a final active preference will be established based on additional monitoring data.

It was decided by the Carson City District staff that, because of the potential economic, aesthetic, cultural and recreational values associated with pinyon-juniper woodlands, the longer term management of the woodlands in the Pine Nut Mountains should be addressed in the upcoming land use plan amendment. At the time of this writing, an amendment team had been formed and letters had been sent out to the public soliciting comments.

SAND CANYON ALLOTMENT EVALUATION
ERRATA AND ATTACHMENTS

Insert the attached Sections VII and VIII after page 14. In the Table of Contents, insert the following under Section VI:

VII. CONSULTATIONS	15
VIII. MANAGEMENT ACTIONS SELECTED	17

VII. Consultations

On July 19, 1993, a letter was sent to persons and organizations that have shown interest in resource management in the Walker Resource Area. The purpose of the letter was to gather additional information and to determine who would be interested in participating in the evaluation process on nine allotments in the northern Pine Nut Mountain Range. Sand Canyon was among these allotments.

Sections I (Introduction) through VI (Technical Recommendations) of the Sand Canyon Allotment evaluation were sent out for public review on December 15, 1994. Fifteen copies were sent to the Nevada State Clearinghouse for distribution among state agencies. In addition, the following were sent copies of this evaluation.

Buckeye Ranch	Nevada Humane Societ
Nevada Wildlife Federation	The Wildlife Society
Natural Resources Defense Council	Sierra Club, Toiyabe Chapter
Carson City District Grazing Advisory Board	Nevada Cattlemen's Association
Resource Concepts Inc.	Nevada Woolgrowers Association
Rutgers University, S.I. Newhouse Center of Law and Justice	Washoe Tribe
The Honorable Barbara Vucanovich	Bureau of Indian Affairs, Western Nevada Agency
The Honorable Richard Bryan	L.I.F.E Foundation
Paul Clifford	The Honorable Harry M. Reid
Craig C. Downer	Nevada Humane Society
American Mustang and Burro Assoc.	Steven Fulstone
Animal Protection Institute	Edie Wilson
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Reno Field Office	Humane Society of Southern Nevada
	D.A. Anderson Estate
	Wild Horse Organized Assistance

Comments were received by the Nevada Division of Wildlife (hence forth referred to as NDOW, or simply "the Division"), Commission for the Preservation of Wild Horses (hence forth referred to as "the Commission") and Wild Horse Organized Assistance (WHOA). Other comments that relate to the health of the land or address the evaluation of this health are discussed below.

Comment: This allotment is obviously a low priority and received considerable non-use by livestock in recent years. It is interesting to note the condition of bitterbrush during the summer and fall months. This may explain the better condition and vigor of bitterbrush on Sand Canyon Allotment compared to the adjacent Buckeye Allotment. (NDOW)

Response: It was noted on page 8 of this evaluation in reference to Photo Plot No. 1 that antelope bitterbrush had vigorous leader growth in 1993. Many annual plants were also observed in 1993, which would tend to show that site specific climatological factors were favorable in 1993. This may be the reason for the vigorous leader growth in 1993 (i.e., not necessarily non-use by livestock). An effect that can be

disappearance of needlegrass due to a buildup of dead material in the crowns. This may also be the reason for a lack of reproduction by perennial grasses and forbs. In order to prevent surface erosion, it may be necessary in the future to promote an increase of perennial grasses and forbs through the use of controlled livestock impacts.

Comment: Data presented in this document suggest that wild horses are not having any adverse impacts to public land. We do not agree with the procedures, assumptions and data that determined the appropriate management level in the Buckeye and Sand Canyon Allotment Evaluation. However, we do support the retirement of the grazing permit to avoid any potential conflict or over allocation of the available forage on this allotment. (Commission)

The comments from WHOA were essentially the same as the Commission's.

Response: The recommendation to cancel active preference was not based on a lack of forage. As Carson City continues to expand, the public lands will become much more valuable as open space for residents. Therefore it was recommended that the Sand Canyon Allotment be managed primarily for recreation and wildlife. Although the permit may be cancelled, this does not preclude the authorization of livestock on public lands. As illustrated in the previous response and as stated on page 13 of this evaluation, it may be necessary to graze livestock in order to accomplish environmental goals.

Similarly, forage may not be the limiting factor for wild horses in this portion of the HMA. Conflict between wild horses and private land owners will probably occur before the wild horse population has exceeded the thriving ecological balance. If these conflicts result in written complaints from the land owners, we are required to take action under the BLM regulations.

VIII. Management Actions Selected

Due to the necessity of implementing the wild horse decisions on a herd management area basis, only one PMUD will be issued for all nine allotment in the Pine Nut HMA.

All short term technical recommendations will be included within the Proposed Multiple Use Decision (PMUD). It was decided by the Carson City District staff that, because of the potential economic, aesthetic, cultural and recreational values associated with pinyon - juniper woodlands, the long term management of the woodlands in the Pine Nut Mountains should be addressed in the upcoming land use plan amendment. At the time of this writing, an amendment team had been formed and letters had been sent out to the public soliciting comments.

SUNRISE ALLOTMENT EVALUATION
ERRATA AND ATTACHMENTS

Insert the attached Sections VII and VIII after page 17. In the Table of Contents, insert the following under Section VI:

VII. CONSULTATIONS	18
VIII. MANAGEMENT ACTIONS SELECTED	18

VII. Consultations

On July 19, 1993, a letter was sent to persons and organizations that have shown interest in resource management in the Walker Resource Area. The purpose of the letter was to gather additional information and to determine who would be interested in participating in the evaluation process on nine allotments in the northern Pine Nut Mountain Range. Sunrise was among these allotments.

Sections I (Introduction) through VI (Technical Recommendations) of this evaluation were sent out for public review on February 11, 1994. Fifteen copies were sent to the Nevada State Clearinghouse for distribution among state agencies. In addition, the following were sent copies of this evaluation.

Rutgers University, S.I. Newhouse Center of Law and Justice	Bureau of Indian Affairs, Western Nevada Agency
Washoe Tribe	Craig C. Downer
The Honorable Barbara Vucanovich	The Honorable Harry M. Reid
The Honorable Richard Bryan	Paul Clifford
Joe Ricci Estate	Wild Horse Organize Assistance
Borda Brothers Company	F. M. Fulstone, Inc.
Natural Resource Defense Council	Sierra Club, Toiyabe Chapter
Carson City District Grazing Advisory Board	Nevada Cattlemen's Association
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Reno Field Office	Nevada Woolgrowers Association
	Animal Protection Institute

Grace Ricci (representing the Joe Ricci Estate) was the only person to respond. Ms. Ricci supported the removal of pinyon and juniper trees to increase forage for livestock, wild horses and wildlife. This issue is addressed in the next section.

VIII. Management Actions Selected

Due to the necessity of implementing the wild horse decisions on a herd management area basis, only one PMUD will be issued for all nine allotment in the Pine Nut HMA.

All short term technical recommendations except Technical Recommendation No. 6 will be included within the Proposed Multiple Use Decision (PMUD). Recommendation No. 6 related to off highway vehicle (OHV) management, which will be addressed in the upcoming land use plan amendment. It was decided by the Carson City District staff that, because of the potential economic, aesthetic, cultural and recreational values associated with pinyon - juniper woodlands, the long term management of the woodlands in the Pine Nut Mountains should also be addressed in the land use plan amendment. At the time of this writing, an amendment team had been formed and letters had been sent out to the public soliciting comments.

7/20/95

BOB MILLER
Governor

STATE OF NEVADA

CATHERINE BARCOMB
Executive Director



COMMISSION FOR THE
PRESERVATION OF WILD HORSES

255 W. Moana Lane

Suite 207A

Reno, Nevada 89509

(702) 688-2626
July 20, 1995

Mr. John Matthiessen
Walker Resource Area Manager
Bureau of Land Manager
1535 Hot Springs Road
Carson City, Nevada 89701

Subject: Protest to Pine Nut Herd Management Area Wild Horse
Management Decision

Dear Mr. Matthiessen:

The Commission for the Preservation of Wild Horses formally protests the proposed decision for the Pine Nut Wild Horse Herd. Our detailed comments concerning the criteria and procedures to determine the appropriate management level were not answered to our satisfaction. We wish the following errors be fully addressed in the final decision:

Procedures and data use did not establish an appropriate management level that will result in a thriving natural ecological balance as required by the Wild Horse and Burro Act.

All allotment evaluations use one alternative of the Technical Manual 4400-7 that determined potential stocking rates for livestock and wild horses. Use of any alternative that allows for weight averaging use pattern mapping data assumes that even distribution of grazers will be accomplished throughout the allotment. Conclusions of these allotment evaluations found that even distribution cannot be achieved.

Monitoring data failed to distinguish livestock, wildlife and wild horse use of forage species. Some allotment evaluations exhibited just domestic sheep and wild horse, others exhibited cattle and wild horse; while, others exhibited just wild horse use. The District selectively chose mixed data and arbitrarily applied this data to determine the appropriate management level. These

John Matthiessen, Area Manager
June 20, 1995
Page 2

specific data points should have been used to present the best and most available data for the proposed decision.

Federal regulations do not clearly define a wild horse animal unit month. A definition is available from another Nevada land use plan that defines one AUM is equal to an adult horse for one month. No data was presented to explain the survey month, survival rate or population estimates that included foals as wild horse use in computations.

Implementing the necessary adjustments to livestock and wild horses will not achieve the area's carrying capacity. Out dated federal regulations and policies allowing for five year adjustments and phased reductions of wild horses will continue to degrade wild horse habitat. How will the District meet carrying capacity as required by Federal Regulation with the above phased in periods?

RELIEF

The Commission supports the management of wild horses to achieve healthy rangelands and ecosystems. As a fundamental of the Wild Horse and Burro Act, the Bureau must achieve a thriving natural ecological balance by adjusting uses to meet the needs of the natural resources of public lands. As stated in our comments to the allotment evaluations and this protest, the appropriate management level for the Pine Nut Wild Horse Herd is flawed based upon unfounded assumptions regarding livestock. Cattle, domestic sheep and wild horses do not use the range in the same manner. Therefore, the use of wild horse use pattern mapping data cannot be made to determine a change in livestock classification or adjustment in season of use. In many situations the protection of riparian habitat cannot be assured without fencing. Assumptions that the continuation of current livestock management, changes in livestock classification or completing future fence projects to mitigate the adverse affects of grazing are incorrect, due to the monitoring data of the allotment evaluations and future agency funding for range projects.

We encourage the District to revise its carrying capacity determinations and allocate forage to meet all allotment objectives to achieve a thriving natural ecological balance.

Sincerely,



CATHERINE BARCOMB
Executive Director

1) HMA Boundary/LUP Delineated
MODIFIED (give Am support for this)

How WAS THAT DONE

2) How DID you Determine AML within new HMA

Carrying cap (an allotment RAOZ Peak)
heavy use but no h's in survey

3) Why only one years data & how did you allocate forage
going from sheep to cattle
w/ no DATA to base on?

3) DIAPARTY Between 113 + 179

Are you going to recede AML in first gather

Restructuring herd not addressed in EA or gather
MWD

composition
longevity
viability

over AML / what are your provisions for over AML

letter from Singland committing to stipulations, we won't appeal

July 1993

189 h's - outside HMA

302 h's inside

43/448 = 9% reproduction

95 census
approx 700



W H O A

September 12, 1995

Mr. John Matthiessen
Walker Resource Area Manager
Bureau of Land Manager
1535 Hot Springs Road
Carson City, Nevada 89701

Subject: Protest to Pine Nut Herd Management Area Wild Horse
Management Decision

Dear Mr. Matthiessen:

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Monitoring data failed to distinguish livestock, wildlife and wild horse use of forage species. Some allotment evaluations exhibited just domestic sheep and wild horse use, others exhibited cattle and wild horse use; while, others exhibited just wild horse use. The District selectively chose mixed data and arbitrarily applied this data to determine the appropriate management level. These

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June 20, 1995
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RELIEF

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We encourage the District to revise its carrying capacity determinations and allocate forage to meet all allotment objectives to achieve a thriving natural ecological balance.

Sincerely,

DAWN LAPPIN
Director