



United States Department of the Interior  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
NEVADA STATE OFFICE

850 Harvard Way  
P.O. Box 12000  
Reno, Nevada 89520

G 7/17/87  
IN REPLY REFER TO:

4700  
(NV-931.3)

Commission for the Preservation of  
Wild Horses  
c/o Terri Jay, Executive Director  
625 Fairway, Suite 111  
Carson City, NV 89701

JUL 17 1987

Dear Madam:

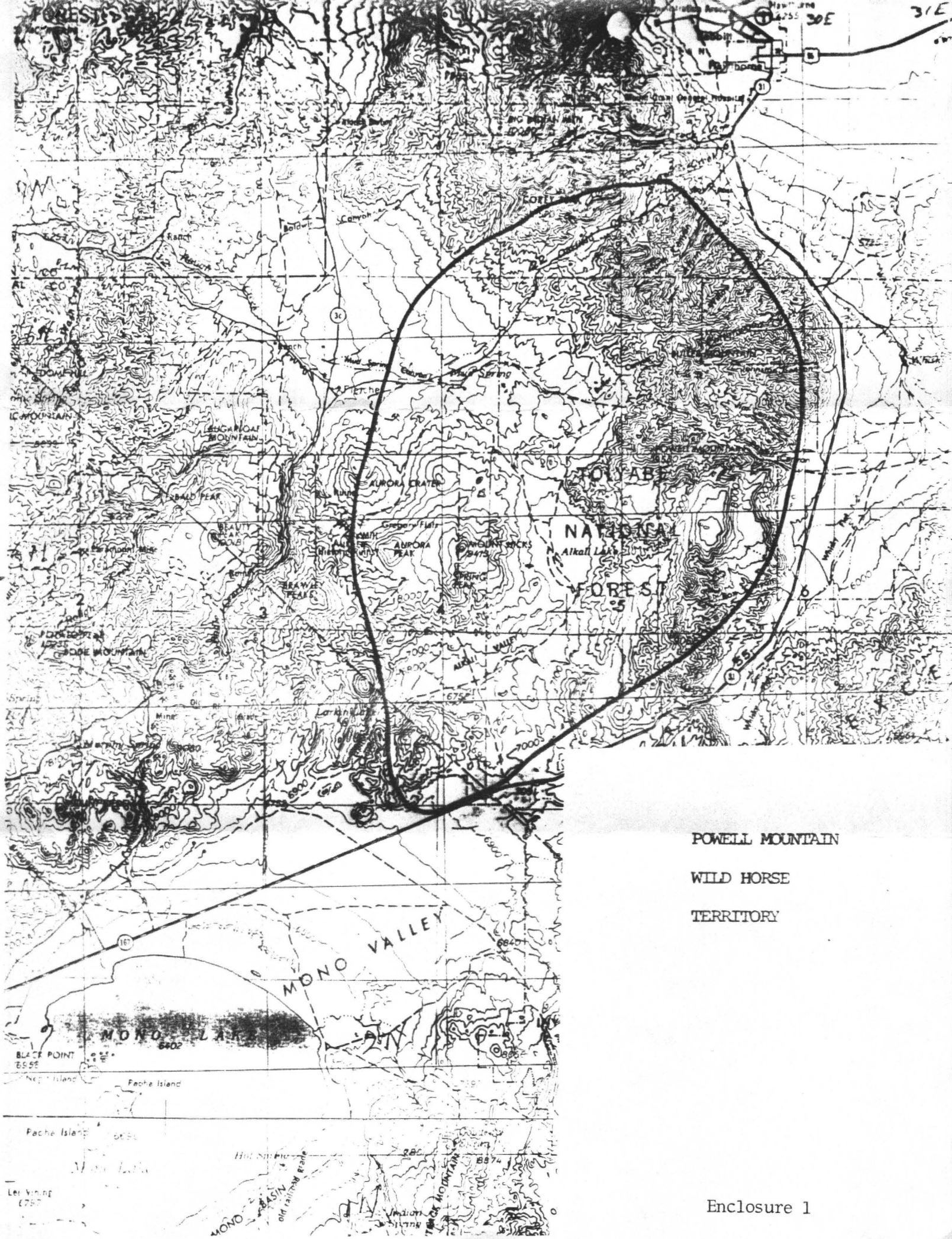
The U.S. Forest Service proposes to gather excess wild horses from the Powell Mountain Wild Horse Territory which includes public lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management in the State of Nevada, no sooner than 28 days from the day of this letter. The proposed gathering will be conducted partially within the Carson City District in the areas shown on the enclosed map and as described below.

<u>Area Name</u>	<u>EA Name</u>	<u>Reason for Gathering</u>	<u>Number to be Removed</u>	<u>Approximate No. to Remain</u>
Powell Mtn. Wild Horse Territory	Environmental Assessment for capturing wild horses on the Powell Mtn. Wild Horse Territory	To implement the Forest Service Powell Mtn. Wild Horse Territory Management Plan	20	29

Sincerely,

Edward F. Spang  
State Director, Nevada

1 Enclosure  
1. Proposed Wild Horse Gathering Map (1 p)



POWELL MOUNTAIN  
 WILD HORSE  
 TERRITORY



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
CARSON CITY DISTRICT OFFICE  
1535 Hot Springs Rd., Ste. 300  
Carson City, Nevada 89701

*respond* 7/17/87

IN REPLY REFER TO:

4700  
(NV-033)

JUL 17 1987

Dear Interested Party:

Enclosed is the Powell Mountain Wild Horse Territory Wild Horse Capture Plan and Environmental Assessment Decision Notice which has been prepared by the Toiyabe National Forest.

The Powell Mountain Wild Horse Territory is located on National Forest lands administered by the Toiyabe National Forest and Public Lands administered by the Carson City District, Bureau of Land Management. The two agencies have entered into agreement which assigns lead responsibility for management of the Territory to the Forest Service.

Therefore, if you have any questions or comments, you should contact John McGee, District Ranger, Bridgeport Ranger District, Bridgeport, California 93517.

Sincerely yours,

*James W. Elliott*  
James W. Elliott  
District Manager

Enclosure:  
As Stated Above

cc:  
Bridgeport Ranger District

7/14/87

POWELL MOUNTAIN WILD HORSE TERRITORY

WILD HORSE CAPTURE PLAN

I. OBJECTIVE

The objective of this plan is to discuss the implementation of the proposed action in the accompanying decision notice. The proposed action is to remove excess numbers of wild horses to bring the population down to the appropriate management level of 29 wild horses identified in the Powell Mountain Wild Horse Territory Plan which was developed by the Forest Service and approved in 1979.

II. AREA OF CONCERN

The area of concern is the Powell Mountain Wild Horse Territory, located on the south end of the Wassuk Range between Anchorite Pass and Buller Mountain on the Bridgeport District of the Toiyabe National Forest and on Public Domain lands administered by the Carson City District Bureau of Land Management. Figure A shows the location of the Powell Mountain Wild Horse Territory.

III. NUMBERS OF WILD HORSES

Aerial censusing conducted between June, 1986 and June, 1987 resulted in 20-49 horses being counted. The most recent census, conducted on June 19, 1986 resulted in 49 wild horses being counted on the Powell Mountain Wild Horse Territory, including 43 adults, 2 yearlings, and 4 foals. Of this total number, 11 adults were spotted in the Larkin Lake area and the remaining 32 adults, 2 yearlings and 4 foals were counted near Powell Mountain. The removal of 20 wild horses will bring the wild horse population to 29, which is the management level prescribed in the approved plan for the territory. Additional censuses will be conducted within the territory prior to and after the capture to insure that a minimum of 29 wild horses remain in the territory after the removal operations are completed.

IV. CLAIMING - A NOTICE OF INTENT TO IMPOUND

When the public is given notice of the proposed removal operation, a Notice of Intent to Impound shall be posted in local post offices and courthouses and published in local newspapers. The Notice of Intent to Impound is issued in the case domestic horses are captured in the process of capturing wild horses. Notices will be placed in Bridgeport, Lee Vining, Hawthorne and various other surrounding communities.

In addition, the Flying "M" Ranch will be notified at least one week before removal operations are to take place, in order to remove permitted cattle from the area of operations.

V. METHODS FOR REMOVAL AND SAFETY

Bureau of Land Management employees from the Susanville District, Susanville, California will conduct the removal operations through a reimbursable work project authorization between the Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management. The methods employed during this removal operation will be herding horses with a helicopter and horseback riders into a temporary trap built from portable pipe corrals. An adjoining holding corral will be constructed to hold the horses after capture. Extending from the capture corral will be "wings" also constructed from portable panels. The entire trap will be camouflaged with sagebrush or juniper. The helicopter will drive the horses toward the wings of the trap. When the horses are about to enter the wings, riders on horseback will then flank the animals and drive them into the trap.

An attempt will be made to capture as many of the horses as possible. The horses will then be sorted and the best horses will be returned to the range. A Forest Service employee will be supervising removal operations at all times. The following stipulations will be followed during the capture to ensure the welfare, safety and humane treatment of the wild horses.

1. The helicopter shall be used in such a manner that bands or herds will tend to remain together, this includes small foals.
2. The rate of movement of wild horses shall not exceed limitations set by the Forest Service Officer in charge, who shall consider terrain, weather, distance to be travelled and condition of the animals.
3. When refueling, the helicopter must remain a distance of at least 1,000 feet or more from the temporary holding facility, vehicles other than the fuel truck and personnel not involved in refueling.
4. All vehicles used to transport wild horses shall be inspected by the Forest Officer in charge. Vehicles shall be in good repair with adequate rated capacity and operated so as to insure that captured animals are transported without undue risk or injury. All such transportation shall be in compliance with appropriate State and Federal laws and regulations applicable to the humane transportation of horses and burros.
5. Only stocktrailers (minimum height 6'6") will be allowed to transport wild horses from traps to temporary holding facilities.
6. Only Bobtail trucks (minimum height 6'6"), stocktrailers (minimum height 6'6") or single deck trucks (minimum height 6'6") can be used to haul horses from a temporary holding facility to adoption facilities. Single deck trucks with trailers 40 feet or longer are required to have two partition gates to separate horses. Trailers less than 40 feet need only one partition gate to separate horses.

7. All vehicles used to transport animals shall be equipped with doors at the rear end of the vehicle. At least one of these rear doors shall be capable of sliding either horizontally or vertically.
8. Floors of vehicles shall be provided with a non-skid surface such as sand, mineral soil or wood shavings in sufficient quantities to prevent the animals from slipping.
9. The number of animals to be loaded and transported in any vehicle shall be as directed by the Forest Service Officer in charge and may include limitations on numbers according to age, size, gender, temperament and animal condition.
10. The Forest Service Officer in charge shall be responsible for determining the need and providing for the treatment of sick or injured animals. The officer shall also determine if injured, sick, lame or old animals must be destroyed and provide for destruction of such animals. Such animals shall be destroyed only when a definite act of mercy is needed to alleviate pain and suffering. Destruction shall be done in the most humane method available. Carcass will be adequately disposed of.
11. Topography, distance and current condition of the horses are factors that will be considered to avoid undue stress on the horses while they are being herded. Each area will be flown prior to the start of trapping to locate any hazards to the horses while being herded ( fences, cliffs, dangerous barriers, etc.)
12. All traps, wings and holding facilities shall be constructed to handle the wild horses in a safe and humane manner. Traps, wings and temporary holding facilities shall be constructed of portable panels, the top of which shall not be less than 72 inches high and the bottom rail of which shall not be more than 12 inches from ground level. All traps and holding facilities shall be oval or round in design. All loading chute sides and runway panels shall be covered with plywood or like material. The runway shall be a minimum of 36' long and a minimum of 6' high. The loading chute shall also be a minimum of 6' high.
13. All capture attempts shall be accomplished by the helicopter and horseback riders. Roping will be done only when necessary, as determined by the Forest Officer in charge. Under no circumstances will wild horses be tied down for more than one hour.
14. Where required by the Forest Officer in charge, animals shall be sorted as to age, number size, temperament, gender and physical condition when in holding corrals so as to minimize, to the extent possible, injury due to fighting and trampling. Alternate corrals shall be furnished to separate mares and small foals, and stray animals from the other horses. If any burros are captured with the Powell Mountain horses, they will all be removed from the territory.

15. Horses held for 10 hours or more in the traps or holding facilities shall be provided fresh clean water in an amount of at least 10 gallons per horse per day and shall be provided good quality grass or grass-alfalfa hay at the rate of not less than two pounds of hay per 100 pounds of body weight per day.
16. If the Forest Officer in charge determines that dust conditions are such that the horses could be endangered during transportation, vehicles drivers will be instructed to reduce speed. There are approximately 20 miles of dirt road from the center of the territory to the nearest blacktop highway, Nevada State Highway #359.

VI. TRAP SITES

One to three trap sites will probably be needed to gather the horses from the territory. Each site will be selected after determining the habits of the animals and observing the topography of the area. In general, all sites will be located to cause as little damage to the natural resources of the area as possible. Sites will be located on or near existing roads and trails; all sites will receive cultural survey prior to construction of the trap. If significant archaeological values are found, a new location for the trap site will be selected.

VII. BRAND INSPECTION

Brand inspection of wild horses removed from the range will be done at the temporary corrals, or other locations as agreed upon by the Nevada State Brand Inspection agency.

VIII. DATES OF THE REMOVAL

This removal is planned to begin in late August, 1987; the total operation should take about 5 days to complete. Should the removal not occur by the end of September 1987, a modification of the Capture Plan would be required.

IX. DISPOSITION OF REMOVED WILD HORSES

The wild horses removed will be sent to an authorized adoption and placement facility to be processed for adoption. Some wild horses may be shipped to a contract holding facility to await processing at an adoption facility.

X. SIGNATURES

Prepared by: Jane Schmidt  
*for* Barbara S. Blackstun  
Range Conservationist  
Bridgeport Ranger District  
Toiyabe National Forest

Date: 9 July, 1987

Approved by: Ronald K. Humphrey  
*for* R.M. "Jim" Nelson  
Forest Supervisor  
Toiyabe National Forest

Date: 7/14/87



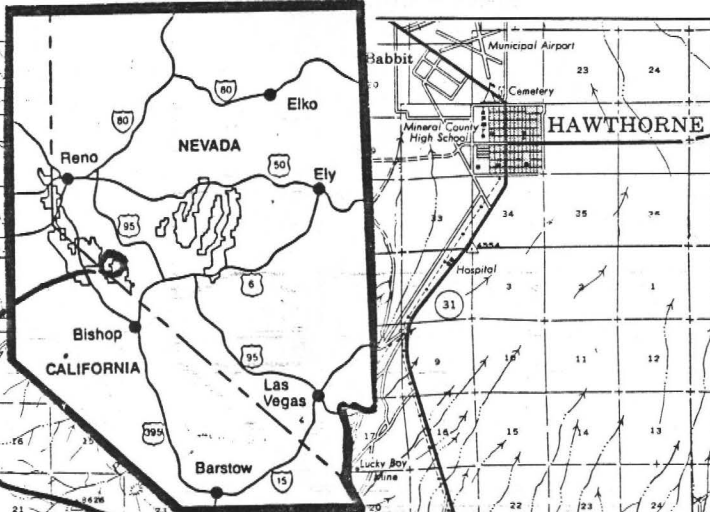




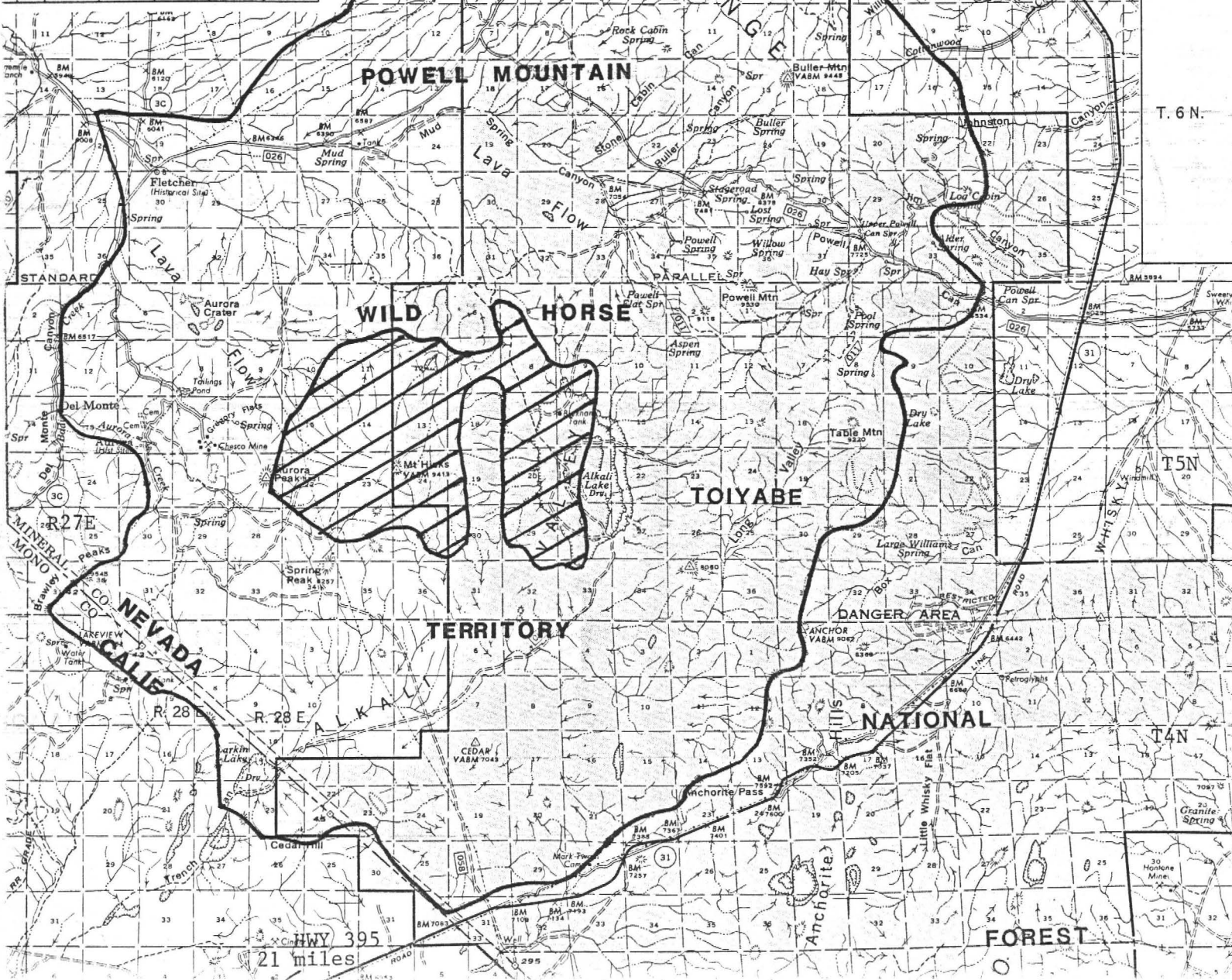
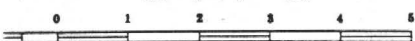
FIGURE A

Powell Mountain Wild Horse Territory

-  Territory boundary
-  Key wild horse area

J.Schmidt 7/87

SCALE:



HWY 395  
21 miles

ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT  
SUPERVISORY SERVICE

2260  
1950

JUL 15 1 18 PM '87

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT  
DECISION NOTICE  
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

POWELL MOUNTAIN WILDHORSE TERRITORY  
WILDHORSE CAPTURE

Mineral County, Nevada  
Toiyabe National Forest, Bridgeport Ranger District

Responsible Agency:

USDA - Forest Service  
Toiyabe National Forest  
Bridgeport Ranger District

Responsible Official:

R.M. "Jim" Nelson  
Forest Supervisor  
Toiyabe National Forest

For Further Information  
Contact:

John McGee  
District Ranger  
Bridgeport Ranger District  
Bridgeport, California 93517

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT  
DECISION NOTICE  
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Powell Mountain Wild Horse Territory  
Wild Horse Capture Plan

The Bridgeport Ranger District of the Toiyabe National Forest proposes to remove the excess wild horses from the Powell Mountain Wild Horse Territory in Management Area #6 of the Forest Plan, specifically, on the south end of the Wassuk Range between Anchorite Pass and Buller Mountain. See Figure A.

DECISION NOTICE

It is my decision to implement the wild horse removal project described in Alternative A. This alternative would allow for the removal of excess horses, while leaving a minimum of 29 wild horses on the territory, and would be in compliance with the direction outlined in the Powell Mountain Wildhorse Management Plan approved 8/6/79 by Frank J. Farrarelli, Forest Supervisor, Toiyabe National Forest.

The reasons for selecting this action are:

1. This alternative meets the specified direction of the Toiyabe National Forest Management Plan.
2. This action has the best potential for maintaining the wild horse herd, while insuring the continued health of the wildlife, soils and vegetative resources.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

An Environmental Assessment Report prepared in 1983 for a Capture Plan on the Powell Mountain Wild Horse Territory discusses in detail the Affected Environment and Environmental Consequence of the alternatives.

Purpose and Need for Action

The Powell Mountain Wild Horse Territory Management Plan established a management level of 29 wild horses. Recent inventories indicate that the present population of wild horses is approximately 49 animals. The planned forage allocation is for only 29 head, therefore it is necessary to remove approximately 20 wild horses to be in compliance with the management plan.

Alternatives, Including Proposed Action

Alternative A- Reduce the population of wild horses on the Powell Mountain Wild Horse Territory to 29 as specified in the Territory Plan by using helicopters and horseback riders to herd the wild horses into a temporary trap built from portable pipe corrals. The excess captured horses will then be transported to either the Susanville Corrals in California or other authorized wild horse facilities, and be made available for adoption under the Bureau of Land Management Adoption Program.

Alternative B- Under this alternative, there would be no capture of the excess wild horses. Population growth would be restricted by the capacity of the ecosystem.

#### ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

Alternative A- After a successful capture a minimum of 29 wild horses would remain on the territory. The wild horses will experience stress during the actual removal operations, but will be properly cared for following capture, both in the corrals and when adopted. Some wild horses may be injured or killed in the process of capture or while being transported to the adoption center. Based on similar wild horse captures, the number of horses injured or killed would not exceed 1 or 2 percent.

There will be some disturbance to the vegetation and soils within the territory due to the removal operation, especially in the area of the temporary traps. Resource conditions will improve after the removal of the excess wild horses as the forage requirement of the remaining grazing animals is brought into line with the available forage produced on the territory.

Alternative B- The wild horses would not experience the stress of the removal operations. Their population would likely increase over time, stressing the existing ecological balance. As numbers increase, the wild horses may experience an increasing stress on their health as their nutritional requirements are not met by a deteriorating forage resource.

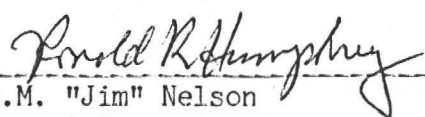
There would be no disturbance to the vegetation and soils due to removal operations. Vegetation would be subject to increased utilization and soil subject to increased compaction. The competition for forage and water would increase among livestock, wildlife and wild horses.

#### FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

I have determined through the Environmental Assessment that this is not a major federal action that would significantly affect the quality of the human environment; therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement is not needed. This determination is based on the following:

1. There are no irreversible or irretrievable commitments of any resource.
2. This project is within the scope of the Toiyabe National Forest Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Land and Resource Management Plan.
3. No known threatened or endangered species are affected.
4. There are no impacts on floodplains or wetlands.
5. Through the analysis process, it has been determined that there will be no effects on long-term productivity on the area, minority groups, civil rights, prime farmland, rangeland, forestlands, urban quality, or cultural resources.

This decision is subject to appeal pursuant to 36 CFR 211.18. A Notice of Appeal filed pursuant to 36 CFR 211.18 must be filed with this office within 45 days from the date of this decision.

  
R.M. "Jim" Nelson  
Forest Supervisor

7/14/87  
Date

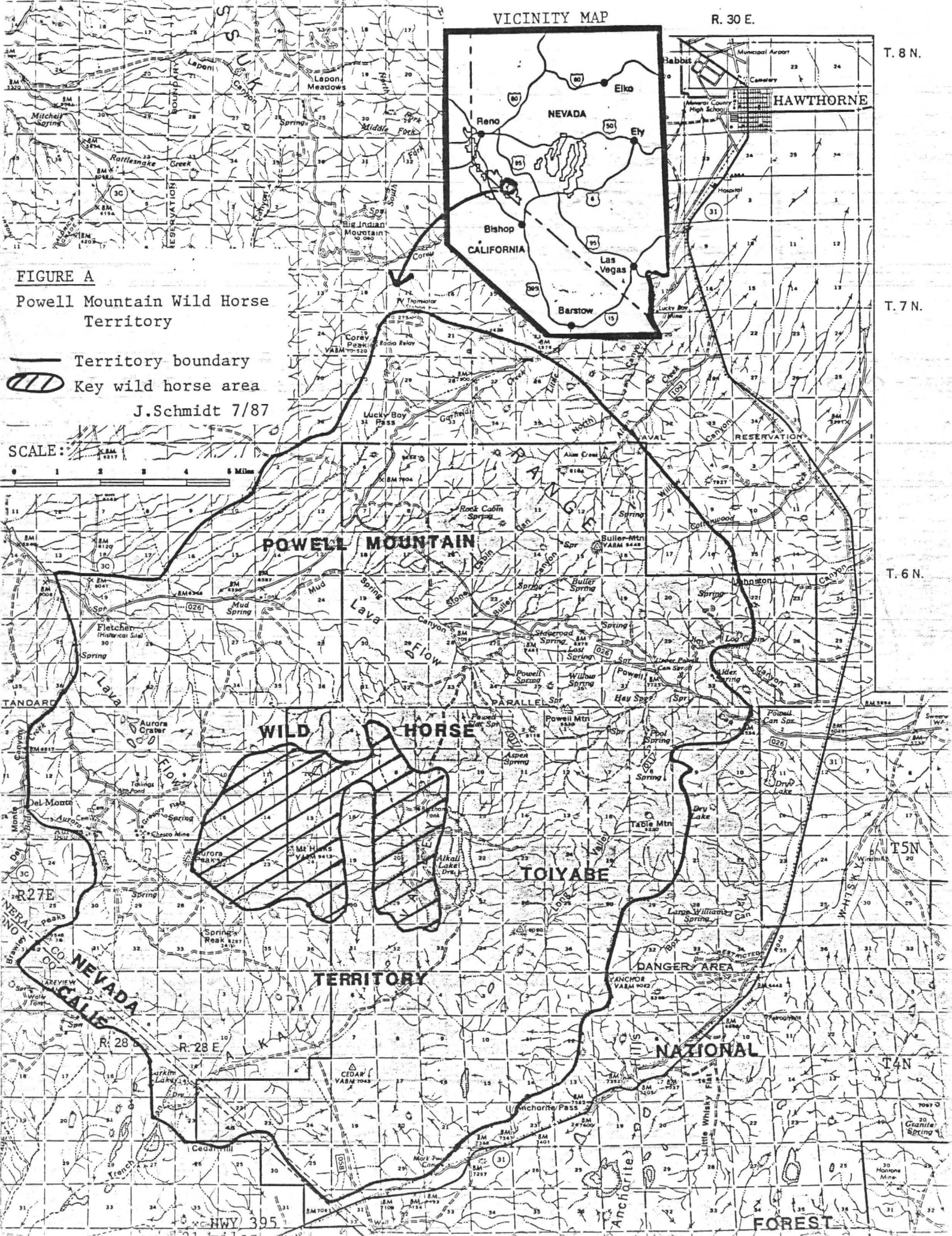


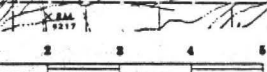
FIGURE A

Powell Mountain Wild Horse Territory

- Territory boundary
- ▨ Key wild horse area

J. Schmidt 7/87

SCALE:



POWELL MOUNTAIN

WILD HORSE

TERRITORY

TOIYABE

NATIONAL

FOREST