4/1/85

IN REPLY REFER TO:

United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
CARSON CITY DISTRICT OFFICE
1050 E. William St., Suite 335
Carson City, Nevada 89701

4700
(NV-033)

APR 1 1985

Dawn Y. Lappin, Director
Wild Horse Organized Assistance
P.O. Box 555
Reno, NV 89504

Dear Mrs. Lappin:

The following information is provided regarding your Freedom of Information Act Request dated February 11, 1985.

1. Complaint for Mandamus - Sweetwater Ranch Company v. Clark, et. al.
2. Letter to BLM Manager, from Benny Romero (August 2, 1983).
3. Letter to Benny Romero, from BLM Manager (August 9, 1983).
4. Letter to BLM Manager, from Julian C. Smith, Jr. (September 21, 1983).
5. Letter to Julian C. Smith, Jr. from BLM Manager (October 20, 1983).
6. Letter to BLM Manager, from Julian C. Smith, Jr. (February 22, 1984).
7. Letter to Julian C. Smith, Jr., from BLM Manager (April 12, 1984).
8. Letter to Public, from BLM Manager (November 21, 1984).
9. Letter to BLM Manager, from Benny Romero (December 3, 1984).
10. Letter to BLM Manager, from Resource Concepts, Inc. (January 7, 1985).
11. Letter to Benny Romero, from BLM Manager (January 23, 1985).
12. Draft Walker Resource Management Plan.
13. Draft Garfield Flat Wild Horse Interim Removal Plan (November 21, 1984).
14. Draft Environmental Assessment, Garfield Flat Wild Horse Interim Removal (November 21, 1984).
15. Record of Decision and Finding of No Significant Impact, Garfield Flat Wild Horse Interim Removal.
16. Garfield Flat Allotment Management Plan (November 27, 1982).
17. Environmental Assessment, Garfield Flat Wild Horse Removal (January 22, 1977).
18. Garfield Flat Allotment Management Plan (December 16, 1970).

Sincerely yours,

Thomas J. Owen
District Manager

Enclosures: as stated above

cc: Nevada State Office (NV-930, NV-950)

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Garfield Flat Wild Horse Removal

Decision

Impacts associated with implementation of the proposed action are not of a significant nature, therefore, an Environmental Statement is not required.

The proposed action of removing 425 wild horses, leaving approximately 230 wild horses in the Garfield Flat Wild Horse Herd Area as an interim action and the recommended mitigating measures shall be adopted.

Rationale

Based on the environmental assessment, a net beneficial impact would result from implementing the proposed action. With reduction of wild horses, their habitat and the vegetation resource will benefit.

Overall public interest was low. Those parties who did comment supported a reduction in the numbers of wild horses. Two respondents supported a greater reduction. Their comments, however, were directed at setting a management level for wild horses. That question is being considered in the development of the Final Walker Resource Management Plan. The removal plan and Environmental Asssessment here simply deal with an interim measure to restore an ecological balance in the area while the land use planning process comes to a close. Accordingly, the comments of the two respondents advocating a management level for wild horses will be considered in the level of the Final Walker Resource Management Plan.

Approved:

J. Matthiessen

John Matthiessen
Area Manager
Walker Resource Area

JAN 2 4 1985
Date

Concurred:

Tom Owen

Thomas J. Owen
District Manager
Carson City District

JAN 2 4 1985
Date

DRAFT

GARFIELD FLAT WILD HORSE INTERIM REMOVAL PLAN

I. Objective

The objective of this plan is to discuss the implementation of the proposed action presented in the accompanying Environmental Assessment. Land use planning has not been completed for this area; therefore, to prevent further wild horse habitat deterioration this interim action is necessary.

II. Area of Concern

The Garfield Flat Wild Horse Herd Use Area is located approximately 10 miles southeast of Hawthorne, Nevada.

III. Numbers of Wild Horses

It is estimated that 655 head of wild horses inhabit the Herd Use Area (HUA).

It is proposed to reduce this population down to 230 head of wild horses (see the analysis in the accompanying Environmental Assessment) and let them build to 364 head. A removal of approximately 425 head is necessary to implement this proposal.

IV. Capture Operations

Capture of the wild horses will be through the use of a helicopter and temporary capture corrals. A BLM employee will make careful determination of boundary lines to serve as an outer limit, within which attempts will be made to herd horses to a given trap. Topography, distance and current condition of the horses are factors that will be considered in setting the limits 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, etc.). The helicopter will carry a BLM employee only when necessary, and should the horses become unnecessarily stressed during herding, the BLM employee or the pilot will break off the pursuit, so that the animals may rest and recover. All attempts will be made to move and keep bands together.

Trap sites 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 ways, and all sites will receive cultural resource clearance prior to use. If significant cultural values are found, the trap will be moved.

The temporary capture corrals (traps) will be constructed from portable panels (height 6 to 7 feet). Extending from the capture corral will be wings (up to 1/4 mile in length) also constructed from portable panels. The entire trap may be camouflaged with sagebrush, juniper or pinyon. The helicopter will direct the horses toward the trap. When

the horses enter the wings, riders on horseback will fall in behind the animals driving them into the trap. Once the horses enter the trap, the gate will be closed by hand. Should a horse turn back at the trap, it would be roped, if possible, by the riders.

After capture, the animals may be placed in a central holding corral in or near the capture area. If held overnight or longer, prior to transportation to the Palomino Valley Wild Horse and Burro Adoption Facility, the horses will be fed and watered. If the horses are held overnight in the trap, they will be fed and watered.

Because the capture area and the Palomino Valley Facility are located in the same Nevada State Brand Inspection District, the animals will be transported prior to brand inspection.

V. Impounded, privately-owned animals will be processed as outlined in Bureau of Land Management, Nevada State Office Instruction Memorandum NV-83-26. A copy of this Instruction Memorandum may be obtained at the Carson City District Office.

VI. It will be the responsibility of the contractor, who has entered into a contract with the BLM for the purpose of removing the wild horses from the Garfield Flat Herd Use Area, to locate the trap sites (with concurrence from a BLM employee), provide humane treatment to the horses during capture, holding and transportation, and to observe the guidelines set forth in the contract specifications.

The Carson City District Wild Horse and Burro Specialist (designated as the Contracting Officer's Authorized Representative, COAR) will have the responsibility to assure that the capture, holding and transportation of the wild horses is being conducted in accordance with applicable regulations, BLM policy, this capture plan and the contract specifications. He will also have the responsibility to determine if destruction of any sick or lame animals is necessary prior to transportation. If the COAR is not at the site, the alternate COAR or a Project Inspector (P.I.), a BLM employee, will act in his absence.

VII. Destruction of Injured or Sick Animals

Any severely injured or seriously sick animal shall be destroyed in accordance with 43 CFR 4740.3-1. Such animals shall be destroyed only when a definite act of mercy is needed to alleviate pain and suffering. When the COAR or P.I. is unsure as to the severity of an injury or sickness, a veterinarian will be summoned to to make a final determination.

Destruction shall be done in the most humane method available.

VIII. Injuries and Disease

For injuries and disease not requiring destruction, the COAR or P.I. will determine if the animal can be transported to Palomino Valley Corrals (PVC) without further injury, harm or undue pain to the animal. If the animal can be transported, the veterinarian will treat

the animal upon arrival at PVC. If the animal cannot be transported, or if the COAR or P.I. is uncertain, a veterinarian will examine the injured or sick animal at the trap site.

IX. Safety

All capturing and handling of the horses shall be done in the safest manner possible for the wild horses, personnel and saddle horses. Some guidance may be obtained from "Safety Guidelines for Handling Wild Horses", prepared by the BLM.

X. Longevity of the Removal Plan

This plan will remain in effect until the gathering of approximately 425 head of wild horses has been completed.

XI. Signatures

Prepared by:

Timothy B. Reuwsaat — 11-21-84

Timothy B. Reuwsaat
Wild Horse and Burro Specialist

Date

Reviewed by:

Norman L Murray — 11-21-84

Norman L. Murray
Chief, Division of Resources

Date

Approved by:

J. Matthiessen — 11/21/84

John Matthiessen
Area Manager
Walker Resource Area

Date

Thomas J. Owen (signature) — 11/21/84

Thomas J. Owen
District Manager
Carson City District Office

Date

DRAFT

Environmental Assessment
Garfield Flat Wild Horse Interim Removal

The purpose of this Environmental Assessment is to analyze the effects of wild horse removal from the Garfield Flat Wild Horse Herd Use Area and other alternatives.

I. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES

The proposed action is to remove approximately 425 wild horses from the Garfield Flat Wild Horse Herd Use Area (HUA). Approximately 230 head of horses would remain within the herd use area. The horses will be captured in wing traps with the aid of a helicopter. The animals will be transported to Palomino Valley Wild Horse and Burro Adoption Center, where they will be made available for adoption to the public.

Reduction is only an interim measure until management population levels can be determined through Land Use Planning. Monitoring of both horse and livestock use will continue.

Alternatives to this proposed action are: Alternative No. 1 would suspend all livestock use in the Garfield Flat Wild Horse HUA. The wild horse population would be allowed to remain and would not be reduced.

Alternative No. 2 would eliminate all wild horses from the Garfield Flat Wild Horse HUA.

Alternative No. 3 is "no action". Wild horses would not be reduced and livestock use would remain at the current level.

II. DESCRIPTION OF THE EXISTING SITUATION

The Garfield Flat Wild Horse HUA is located approximately 10 to 15 miles southeast of Hawthorne, Nevada (see attached map). The herd use area is in the Garfield Hills and the northern edge of the Excelsior Mountains.

The major plant species in the area are Indian ricegrass, galleta grass, winterfat, Bailey greasewood, shadscale, sagebrush, pinyon pine, rabbitbrush and spiny menadora. The major wildlife species present are rabbits, coyotes, chukar and deer. There is both key deer winter range and yearlong deer range in the Excelsior Mountains. There is some overlap between wild horse use and deer use, but it is slight.

Although the HUA takes in part of the Marietta and Candelaria allotments (see attached map), the major use area is within the Garfield Flat allotment. The livestock permittee in Garfield Flat is the Sweetwater Ranch. They are authorized to graze the allotment from November 1 to April 15. The total livestock grazing preference for the allotment is 771 head. The livestock use within the allotment for the last four years has averaged 63% of preference. The cattle and wild horse grazing use overlap somewhat, but the permittee has kept this to a minimum by grazing his cattle away from the horse use areas as much as possible.

Population estimates of the wild horses in the area and removal data is shown below:

Date	No. of horses
1975	253
1977	(Removed 182)
1979	245
1983	585

Using the above population figures through use of a regression analysis, at a 95% confidence level, it is estimated that the population has increased 12% annually. Therefore, using the 12% from the 1983 census estimate the current (1984) population estimate is 655 head of wild horses.

The forage utilization studies which have been completed in the Herd Use Area indicate a 90% utilization level in the key spring-summer horse use area. This area was utilized by only wild horses as the utilization studies were conducted prior to livestock turnout. Range Studies Task Group recommends a 50% allowable degree of use during the spring and summer. Therefore, using the Proper Utilization Stocking Rate Formula,

$$\frac{\text{655 horses}}{\text{90\% Utilization}} = \frac{\text{"X" horses}}{\text{50\% Utilization}}$$

proper utilization should be achieved with a population of 364 horses. To ensure that proper utilization is not exceeded due to annual population increase, a further management action is necessary. Using the estimated 12% annual population increase and allowing for four years between horse gathers in the herd area it is necessary to reduce the wild horse population to 230 head of horses. This will allow for the population to increase naturally, without capture operations taking place, for four years to the point where the degree of allowable use on the forage plants is reached again. This will ensure that the key forage species have time to recover their vigor and allow for seedling establishment. Reducing the population to 230 horses will require the removal of 425 head from the estimated population of 655 horses.

III. ANALYSIS OF THE PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVE

A. Proposed Action

Impacts

The social structure of the wild horses may be disrupted during capture attempts.

The horses may experience stress during capture operations but would eventually benefit when adopted and given proper care. Some of the horses may be injured or killed in the process of capture or being transported to the adoption center.

The horses that are left in Garfield Flat will have better habitat as a result, as the competition for food and water by their own kind will be greatly reduced.

The vegetative resource in the area will probably recover from the severe overuse that is occurring. The grasses would have a chance to recover their vigor and reestablish themselves once they are allowed to go to seed. Amount of vegetation recovery depends on future climatic conditions.

The reduction of the wild horses would make the area more desirable for wildlife due to better forage conditions. The reduction of the horses would also reduce the horse use from the deer winter range in the Excelsior Mountains.

The reduction of the wild horses will also lessen the occurance of horses on private lands.

Soil and vegetation disturbance may result as a result of capture operations.

Injury to saddle horses and capture personnel may occur during capture operations.

Possible Mitigating or Enhancing Measures

a. Horses, when roped, should not be tied down longer than 1 hour. This is to reduce the possibility of laming a horse.

b. Wings on the corrals or traps will be constructed of materials and in such a manner as to minimize injury to the horses.

c. The roundup will be conducted following the Bureau's safety guidelines for capture operations.

d. No new roads, trails or permanent structures will be constructed in the area.

e. The roundup will be conducted to the extent possible that only whole bands be removed so band structure would not be disturbed.

Recommendations for Mitigation or Enhancement

All the possible mitigating or enhancing measures should be adopted.

Residual Impacts

A very small disturbance to the soil and to vegetation cannot be avoided under the proposed action. Natural revegetation will reduce the severity of the disturbance over a period of time.

Injury and death of some wild horses may occur despite safety and humane precautions.

Injury to personnel may occur even though safety precautions will be taken.

Relationship Between Short-Term Use and Long-Term Productivity

The removal of horses from the area would alleviate current severe use of the area, but over a long-term period, the wild horse population will probably rebuild. The wild horse population will have to be reduced periodically, or the long-term productivity of the area will be affected.

Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitments of Resources

None.

B. Alternative No. 1

1. Impacts

Elimination of livestock use in the HUA could present a hardship to the permittee. He would have to attempt to make arrangements to graze his livestock on alternative areas.

The vegetation in the livestock use area would benefit slightly, but horses would continue to forage within the heavy-severe utilization area. Some forage plants would disappear from the continued constant use. The basic vegetation community would change with encroachment of invader species, therefore, causing deterioration of the horse habitat. The loss of suitable habitat would have an adverse effect on the animals themselves. Migration to new areas may affect animal behavior and social interactions. As the horses expand their range, they would again compete for forage with livestock use.

No stress would be placed on the wild horses due to capture operations, but there would be additional stress from the horses having to search for available forage and water sources in areas away from their historical use area.

Possible Mitigating or Enhancing Measures

a. Transfer livestock grazing preference to other areas.

b. Develop new sources of water for the horses.

Recommendation for Enhancement as Mitigation

a. Other areas are not available within close proximity, therefore not recommended.
b. Development of new water sources would only be a short term mitigation. In the long term, the key forage species would

continue to be overgrazed, resulting in the deterioration of the horse's habitat.

Residual Impacts

All impacts would occur as stated.

Relationship Between Short-Term Use and Long-Term Productivity

With removal of livestock, the utilization would be decreased in the livestock use area for 1 to 2 years, but over the long term, forage utilization would cause change in the plant communities.

Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitments of Resources

The constant utilization of the forage plants may eliminate those species from the area. At that time, some horses may die of starvation if they remain in the historical use area and do not range to other areas in search of available forage.

C. Alternative No. 2

1. Impacts

This alternative would eliminate the horse population that now occurs in the area. The public would lose the opportunity to observe wild horses in this herd use area.

The vegetation resource would benefit from this action. The forage plant species would increase in vigor and seedling reestablishment would occur. The time period and amount of increased plant vigor and seedling reestablishment would depend on the amount of livestock use and future climatic conditions.

Competition with wildlife and livestock for mutual habitat requirements would be eliminated.

Possible Enhancing or Mitigating Measures

All measures identified under the Proposed Action with the exception of Measure "e" should be considered.

Recommendation for Enhancement and Mitigation

All presented above.

Residual Impacts

A small amount of soil and vegetation disturbance would be associated with the temporary trap sites. Natural revegetation would reduce or eliminate this disturbance over time.

Injury or death to some wild horses may occur despite safety and humane precautions.

2. Relationship Between Short-Term and Long-Term Productivity

The complete removal of all the horses from the area would eliminate the long-term population productivity of the horses.

The complete removal would also have a short-term large increase in vegetation in the area and over a long-term, the productivity would level off.

3. Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitments of Resources

None.

D. Alternative No. 3

1. Impacts

Impacts would be similar to those in Alternative No. 1, with the exception that the livestock permittee would still be allowed to graze in the HUA. The livestock use area would be subject to increased utilization.

Possible Mitigating and Enhancing Measures

Same as Alternative No. 1.

Recommendations for Mitigation and Enhancement

Same as Alternative No. 1.

Residual Impacts

All impacts as stated.

2. Relationship Between Short-Term Use and Long-Term Productivity

Utilization would continue as is in the short term, with eventual vegetation change and species disappearance in the long term.

3. Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitments of Resources

Same as Alternative No. 1.

IV. Persons, Groups and Government Agencies Consulted

This Environmental Assessment was sent to the following persons, groups and agencies for review and comment:

American Horse Protection Association
American Humane Association
Animal Protection Institute
U.S. Humane Society

International Society for the Protection
of Wild Horses and Burros
Funds for Animals
National Mustang Association
National Wild Horse Association
Nevada Farm Bureau Federation
Tina Nappe
Sierra Club
Nevada Cattlemen's Assn.
Nevada Wildlife Federation
Nevada Humane Society
State Clearinghouse
Wild Horse Organized Assistance
Save the Mustang
Nevada State Department of Agriculture
American Bashkir Curley Register
Humane Society of Southern Nevada
Toiyabe National Forest
The Center for Wild Horse and Burro Research
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Harris Brothers
Mervin McKay
Sweetwater Ranch Company

V. INTENSITY OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Public interest is anticipated to be low to moderate.

VI. PARTICIPATING AND REVIEWING STAFF

Prepared by:

Richard L. Jacobsen — 11-21-84
Richard L. Jacobsen — Date
Range Conservationist
Walker Resource Area

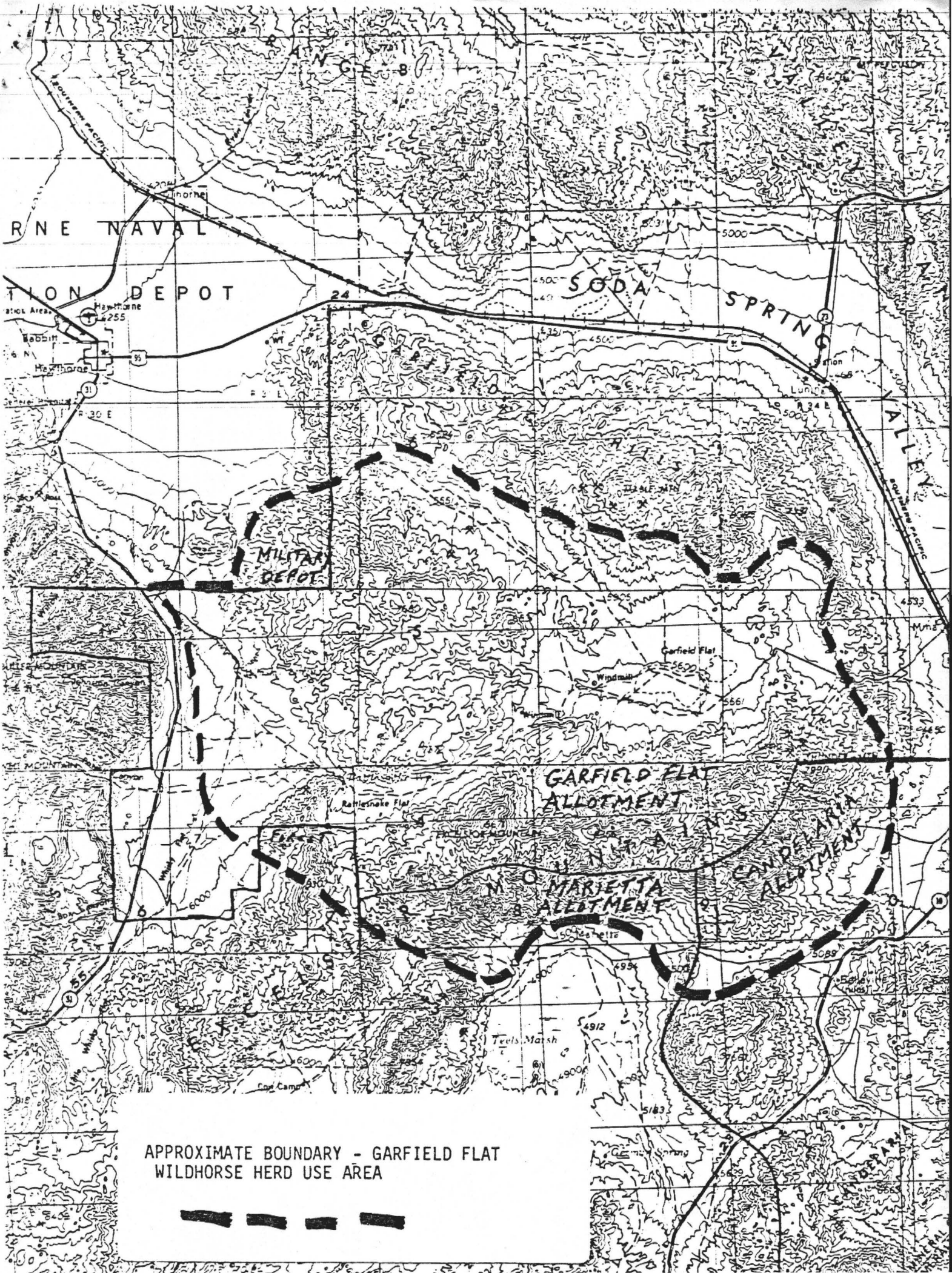
Reviewed by:

Timothy B. Reuwsaat — 11-21-84
Timothy B. Reuwsaat — Date
Wild Horse and Burro Specialist

Norman L Murray — 11-21-84
Norman L. Murray — Date
Chief, Division of Resources

Stephen A. Weiss — 11-21-84
Stephen A. Weiss — Date
Environmental Coordinator

J. Matthiessen — 11/21/84
J. Matthiessen — Date
Area Manager
Walker Resource Area


MILITARY DEPOT
GARFIELD FLAT ALLOTMENT
MARIETTA ALLOTMENT
CANDELARIA ALLOTMENT
SODA SPRINGS
Hawthorne
Luning
Mina
Garfield Flat
Windmill
Rattlesnake Flat
Teels Marsh
Coal Camp
APPROXIMATE BOUNDARY - GARFIELD FLAT
WILDHORSE HERD USE AREA

1982

GARFIELD FLAT ALLOTMENT

MANAGEMENT PLAN

GARFIELD FLAT ALLOTMENT
MANAGEMENT PLAN

I. General Information

A. Map

A one-half inch to the mile scale map of the allotment is attached. The land status and existing improvements shown on the map are current as of August 30, 1982 (see attachment #1).

B. Location and Data

The Garfield Flat Allotment is situated in Mineral County ten miles south of Hawthorne, Nevada.

The small communities of Mina and Luning are located on Highway U.S. 95 which is the northern and eastern boundary of the allotment along with the Hawthorne Army Ammunition Depot. The southern boundary is formed by the Excelsior Mountains and the western by the Toiyabe National Forest.

Soda Springs Valley drains the allotment to the north and east, Whiskey and Rattlesnake Flats drain to Walker Lake with the remainder of the allotment draining into Garfield Flat.

The base ranch that supports the Garfield Flat Allotment privileges is located approximately 25 miles south of Wellington, Nevada and is known as the Sweetwater Ranch. The base ranch is 40 miles from this allotment.

Acreage Statistics for the allotment are:

Sweetwater Ranch Lands		3,160
Public Lands		234,499
Private Lands (Other)		4,016
	TOTAL	241,675

The private land consists of the towns of Mina and Luning, Sweetwater Ranches, Whiskey Flat Unit, and scattered tracts patented under agricultural, mineral or private exchange laws.

The Sweetwater Ranch private lands are used in conjunction with the public lands for grazing.

C. Resource Data

1. Vegetative Types

An occular reconnaissance range survey was completed in Mina Unit in 1953. The broad vegetative types are shown on the vegetative type overlay of the Mina URA. The acreage and carrying capacity by type for the allotment are as follows:

Type	Acres (PD)	AUMs	Sweetwater Private Land AUMs
4 Sagebrush (Artr-Arar)	45,257	1199	52
9 Pinon-Juniper	1,702	72	
13 Shadscale	41,589	832	
14 Greasewood	89,754	2402	36
15 Winterflat (Eula)	7,179	620	8
16 Desert Shrub	3,561	85	
7-W Waste	44,912	0	
8-B Barren	545	0	
TOTAL	234,499	5210	96

2. Range Studies

The 1960 District Office condition and trend maps indicate the following:

Public Domain

Condition	Acres
Excellent	50,292
Good	91,910
Fair	43,840
Poor	3,000
Unuseable	45,457
TOTAL	234,499

Trend	Acres
Improving	18,880
Static	156,892
Declining	13,270
Unuseable	45,457
TOTAL	234,499

The condition and trend for the allotment was determined by the Deming Two-Phase Method.

Trend studies conducted in 1979 indicated a static trend over most of the allotment.

Utilization studies conducted since 1976 show that the allotment receives generally moderate use with areas of concentrated heavy use.

3. Climate

The average annual preceipitation recorded at Mina and based on a 35-year period is 3.6 inches. The average temperature, also recorded at Mina, is 55 degrees F. with a recorded low of minus 9 degrees F. and a high of 106 degrees. The average growing season is 160 days. The heaviest amounts of precipitation occur

during the winter months with the effective moisture occurring in April and May. Any precipitation that occurs during the summer months will generally come as violent localized thunderstorms. Prevailing wind direction is west-southwest. No records are available for wind velocity but newspaper articles indicate 80+ mph during severe storms.

4. Soils and Topography

The soils range from sandy to silt-loams with varying amounts of intermixed gravels and rocks. The central portion of the allotment has an alkali flat (Garfield Flat) while Whiskey Flat in its lower reaches exhibits some alkaline soils.

The topography varies from a low elevation of 5600 feet to a high of 8600 feet. It is rolling mountainous country with numerous open valleys.

D. Existing Projects

The existing range development and/or improvements are shown on the base map and are listed in Appendix No. 1.

E. Grazing Preference

Allotment boundaries, Federal Range Demand and adjusted privileges were established by a 1964 adjudication. The preference attached to the Sweetwater Ranch is 4242 AUMs which is used in the Garfield Flat Allotment November 1 to April 15. The base property requirement for the area is three (3) months which is more than adequately met.

On April 15 the cattle are taken to private meadows at Sweetwater and Bridgeport. The ranch also has a summer permit on the Forest Service On November 1 the cattle are moved back to the Garfield Flat Allotment.

F. Coordination

There are no serious problems which require coordination at this time. If mineral exploration develops further into actual large scale mining then coordination would definitely be necessary with the mining interests.

The communities of Mina and Luning are on the edge of the allotment and could require additional land for growth but this would be minimal.

Coordination with the wildlife demand is not expected to be a problem, in fact, past and probably future water developments have increased the chukar and dove habitats. There is a low density population of resident Mule Deer and it is expected that the improved range condition through livestock management should improve the deer herd correspondingly. During severe winters a heavy deer population could occur from the Mono Lake-East Walker deer herd. All new range projects will consider wildlife needs.

A limited amount of rock-hounding and other recreational activities occur within the area. But no rapid increase is expected in this use due to the remoteness of the area. There are several archeological sites in the allotment but knowledge of their location is not generally known.

G. Grazing Management Problems

Overgrazing by wild horses has been a problem on the south side of Pasture 1 since approximately 1974. In 1975, 253 horses were aerial counted in the allotment. In 1977, 182 horses were removed from the south side of Pasture 1. In 1979, 245 were again counted in the allotment. Until these wild horse numbers are reduced significantly in Pasture 1, there will continue to be an overgrazing problem in

this area. (See utilization studies for wild horses only on file at District Office.)

The lack of good water distribution in the allotment has caused areas of livestock concentration. This problem has been eased somewhat by the pipeline in the southern end of Whiskey Flat and the Pepper Springs pipeline. The proposed pipeline projects should help even more in the distribution of livestock throughout the allotment.

II. Objectives

A. General

The overall objective of this plan is to protect and manage the range resource to its full capacity.

B. Livestock Forage

1. Produce and maintain on a continuing basis a sufficient amount of useable forage to satisfy the grazing preference of the Sweetwater Ranch Company (4242 AUMs).
2. Strive for uniform distribution throughout the allotment thus reducing heavy concentrated use on selected areas.
3. To maintain the current vigor and increase reproduction of the key species Indian Ricegrass (Oryzopsis hymenoides) and Winterfat (Eurotia lanata).
4. Reduce wild horse populations to a level where they are not in direct competition to livestock.

C. Wildlife Habitat

a. Provide forage and other habitat requirements for the low density resident population of mule deer.

b. Provide for additional permanent water sources to enhance and increase the chukar partridge and mourning dove populations.

III. Grazing Management

A. Grazing System

There will be two grazing systems within the allotment. Pasture I, the fall and winter use area, can be grazed all season long. Pastures II and III are grazed late winter and early spring and will be grazed in alternate years with one pasture being grazed each year.

The 1953 Range Survey shows that there are 3653 AUMs in Pasture I (Garfield and Douglas Flat areas), 782 AUMs in Pasture II (northern portion of Whiskey Falt) and 775 AUMs in Pasture III (southern portion of Whiskey Falt). The calculations for each pasture are shown in Appendix 3.

The 1964 adjudication limited the number of AUMs to 4242. To balance the use in each pasture a maximum of 771 cows should be turned out (771 cows x 5.5 months = 4241 AUMs).

Pasture I

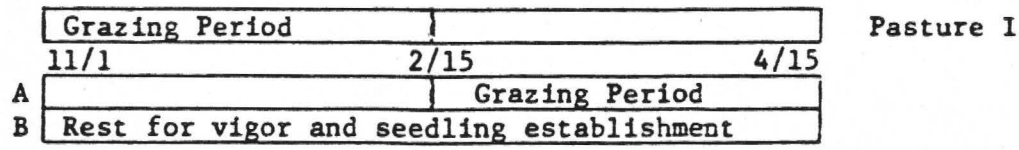
The grazing season for Pasture I starts November 1 and normally extends until February 15. The AUMs are used as follows:

771 cattle - 11/1 to 2/15 - 2699 AUMs

Pasture II and III

These two pastures will be grazed in alternate years from February 16 to April 15. A maximum of 771 cattle can be run on either pasture.

Planned Treatments



The full system will be as follows:

Pastures	I	II	III
1984	Graze	A	B
1985	Graze	B	A
1986	Graze	A	B

Until the division fence between Pasture II and Pasture III is completed and the system is in effect, the allotment will normally be used as follows:

Pasture I - 771 cattle - 11/1 to 2/15

Pasture II & III - 771 cattle - 2/16 to 4/15

B. Flexibility

Flexibility in the number of cattle and days of use for a combination of up to 2699 AUMs will be allowed in Pasture I. Flexibility in the number of cattle and days of use for a combination of up to 1542 AUMs will be allowed in Pasture II and III.

Variations in the on and off dates of up to 15 days will be allowed in each pasture. The only exception is that there will be no flexibility in the off date of April 15.

Any change of sequence in the use of pastures as defined in this plan is unauthorized. If the operator wishes to change the sequence in the use of the pastures or vary from the normal operation more than that which is provided in the flexibility, he shall apply and secure prior approval for the change.

C. Billing Procedures

No annual application will be required unless grazing use outside the limits of flexibility is desired.

The range user(s) shall keep accurate actual grazing use records each year and submit these records to the Area Manager no later than May 1.

A fee notice will be issued upon termination of the grazing period authorized. The fee notice will reflect the actual grazing use made within the limits of flexibility and/or additional approval and will be payable within 30 days of the date of issuance (43 CFR 4130.5-1(e)). The billing notice will reflect any non use that is taken.

Any use in excess of established active use qualifications is definitely considered supplemental non-renewable and in no way does it establish any additional priority preference.

IV. Evaluation

A. Range Studies

Range studies will be conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of the grazing system in meeting the objectives of the plan. The livestock operator will be encouraged to participate in these studies which will include:

1. Actual Use

The livestock operator will keep records of the number and dates of the movements of livestock between pastures. Forms for this will be available from the Bureau of Land Management. They should be received in the District Office within fifteen (15) days of the close of each grazing season or by May 1st of each year.

2. Key Areas

Key areas will be located in each pasture. Utilization and trend studies will be made on these key areas.

Utilization

Studies will be carried out using the key forage plant method described in the Bureau of Land Management Physical Resources Studies manual. Utilization studies will be made in the key areas annually and over the entire allotment at least every third year to check distribution patterns.

Trend

Frequency transects will be established in key areas in accordance with procedures developed by the Nevada Range Studies Task Group. In the meantime, existing permanent photo trend studies will be monitered every three years.

3. Climate

Temperature and precipitation records collected for Hawthorne and Mina will be used for studying the climate.

V. Needed Range Improvements

Several range improvements are needed to properly operate this plan. These are listed in Appendix 2 and the approximate location is noted on the allotment map.

Their construction is dependent upon the availability of funds appropriated to the Bureau of Land Management and based on priorities established in the District's construction program.

The majority of the cost will be borne by the BLM. The range user contribution will be primarily maintenance.

If after beginning the plan, there is a need for additional improve-

ments, arrangements will be made for their construction. Any new projects will be maintained by the operator.

VI. Agreement and Modification

We, the undersigned parties, concur in the management objectives set forth in this plan and will to the best of our abilities restrict the livestock grazing as provided herein to meet these objectives.

This plan may be modified if data from range studies and operating experience indicates that change is necessary or desirable. Modifications will be made with the concurrence of the parties concerned, indicated by initialing and dating the pages revised.

This allotment management plan will be binding upon heirs, executors, assignees or successors in interest. All provisions of the Federal Range Code for Grazing Districts (43 CFR 4100-4170) apply to this plan.

Prepared by:

Richard Jackson — Range Conservationist — 9/27/82 — Date

Concurred by:

Bruce A. Jones — Sweetwater Ranch Company — 9/27/82 — Date

Approved by:

Verdy J. Tunold — Area Manager — 9-28-82 — Date

APPENDIX NO. 1

Existing Improvements

Projects	JDR Number
Rattlesnake Cattleguard	5134
East Rattlesnake Drift Fence	5088
West Rattlesnake Drift Fence	5092
Summit Spring Drift Fence	4165
Douglas Flat Pipeline	3521
Rattlesnake Flat Well	0384
Pepper Spring Pipeline	5199
Pamlico Fence and Cattleguard	5130
Whiskey Flat Pipeline	6035
Garfield Flat Reservoir #1	
Garfield Flat Reservoir #2	

All projects will be maintained by Sweetwater Ranch.

APPENDIX NO. 2

Proposed Projects

Projects	Number of Priority
Douglas Flat Pipeline Extension	1
North Whiskey Flat Boundary Fence	2
Whiskey Flat Pasture Fence	3 4
Whiskey Spring Pipeline	4 3
Pepper Spring Pipeline Extension	5

APPENDIX NO. 3

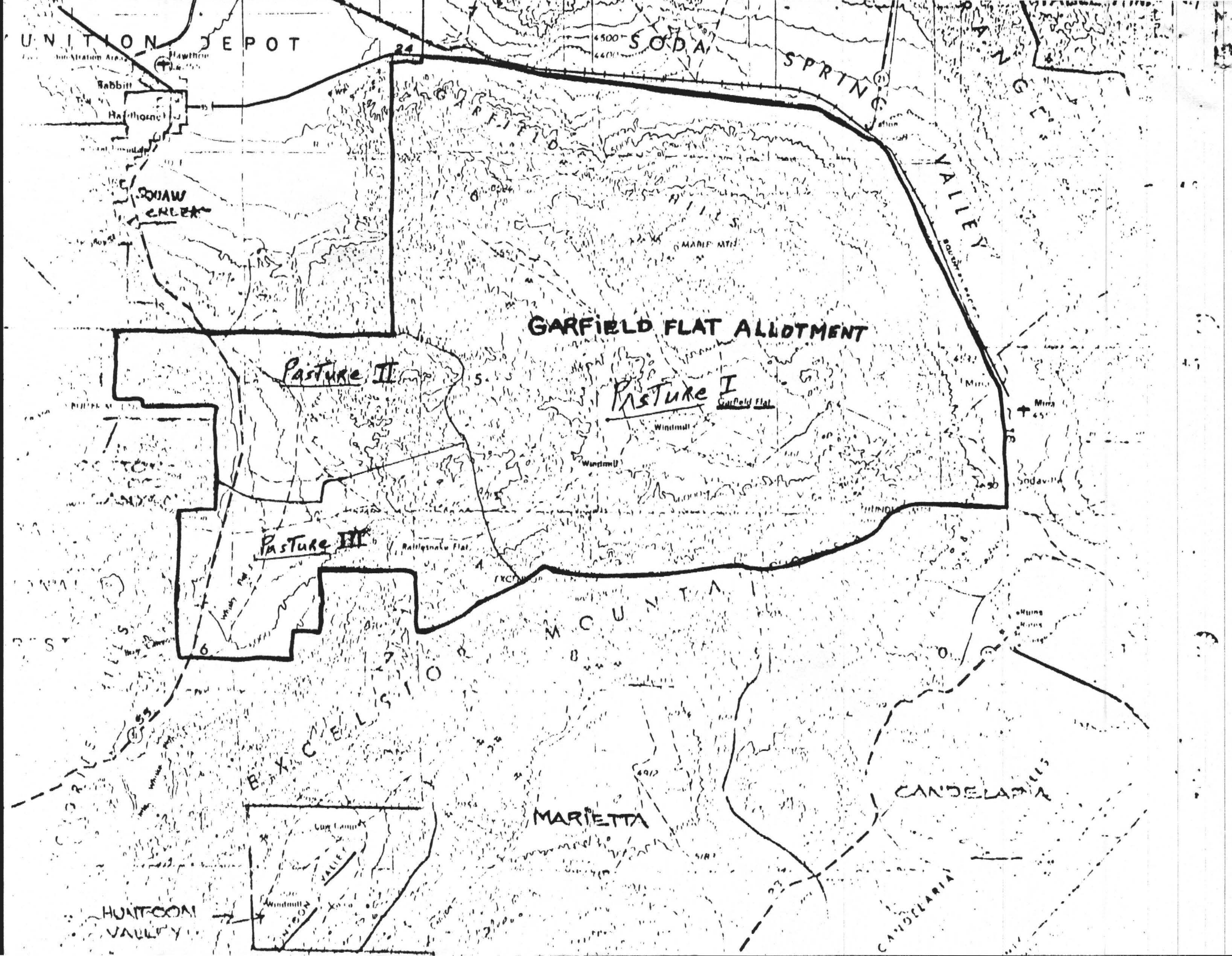
AUM CALCULATIONS

Pasture I	Acres	Rate	AUMs
S-L 10	60	37	2
S-L 11	2,695	87	31
S-L 12	2,928	68	43
S-L 13	705	43	16
S-L 15	34,797	59	590
S-L 16	46,370	30	1546
S-L 17	6,922	11	629
S-L 26	39,795	50	796
			3653

Pasture II	Acres	Rate	AUMs
S-L 1	3,106	23	135
S-L 2	2,620	45	58
S-L 3	1,073	42	26
S-L 5	1,352	17	80
S-L 6	2,535	53	48
S-L 7	3,947	20	197
S-L 14	10,351	47	220
S-L 15	1,042	59	18
			782

Pasture III	Acres	Rate	AUMs
S-L 1	3,851	23	167
S-L 2	6,980	45	155
S-L 3	2,917	42	70
S-L 4	459	50	9
S-L 7	709	20	35
S-L 8	632	9	70
S-L 9	1,565	21	75
S-L 10	5,008	37	135
S-L 12	2,305	68	34
S-L 13	41	43	1
S-L 14	83	47	2
S-L 15	1,317	59	22
			775

Total AUMs = 5210



GARFIELD FLAT ALLOTMENT
Pasture I
Pasture II
Pasture III
Garfield Flat
Windmill
Rattlesnake Flat
GARFIELD
HILLS
SODA SPRING VALLEY
RANGE
MUNITION DEPOT
Hawthorne
Babbitt
SQUAW CREEK
EXCELSIOR MOUNTAINS
MARIETTA
CANDELARIA
CANDELARIA HILLS
HUNTOON VALLEY
Windmills
Mina
Sodaville
Ruins
4500
4400

1977

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT RECORD

Garfield Flat Wild Horse Removal

The purpose of this Environmental Assessment Record is to analyze the effects of the wild horse roundup in the Garfield Flat area on the environment. The purpose of the wild horse removal is to alleviate some of the problems connected with a low water supply as a result of the drought conditions of the last two years. Some of the springs are dry and others have a reduced flow. The water situation was improved in the early part of May as a result of rains and snow received in the area. This has refilled some of the shallow catchments on Garfield Flat, but this only gives temporary relief until the hot weather arrives and the water evaporates, resulting in only the springs being available to supply the water for the wild horses.

The forage available in the area is also very low. The area received heavy to severe use the past year and with no precipitation until May, and as a result of the precipitation, the forage has begun growing and the wild horses are concentrating their use on the growth that is occurring.

The wild horse herd consists of approximately 360 horses, 7 mules and 6 burros. Of the total number, approximately 200 wild horses are to be removed from the area under the proposed action.

A. Description of Proposed Action and Alternatives

Proposed Action

The proposed action is to capture and remove wild horses from the Garfield Flat area as a result of the severe drought conditions. The drought has caused water sources to dry up or decrease the amount of available water, so the source is unusable. The forage conditions in the area are also very poor as a result of the drought. The area received heavy to severe use from winter use by livestock and year-long use by the wild horses and very little regrowth is occurring this spring. Removing the cattle from the area would not have an overall effect on the vegetation as their use occurs during the winter and the plants are dormant.

The proposed method of capture is by water-trapping. The three areas of trapping will be at Whiskey Spring, and at two water catchments on Garfield Flat Alkali lake bed. An alternative to these water trap sites would be to fence Whiskey Spring and pump water at Garfield Well and trap horses at the well. All the water sources except the one catchment on Garfield Flat are on private land and a cooperative agreement will be made with the land owner to insure the traps can be set around the water sources.

The water traps will be constructed out of pipe panels, which will be bolted together. The traps will be a temporary installation, which can be set up or removed in one day's time. The water traps will be of a circular design (see Illustration 1) with a gate which will be hooked to a trip wire that will be triggered by the horses when they enter into the corral to water.

The horses, once trapped, will be loaded into a horse trailer or into a stock truck. The horses will be transported to the holding facilities in Palomino Valley, north of Reno, Nevada. The wild horses or burros will then be put up for adoption under the Adopt-A-Horse program. If the horses cannot be disposed of under the Adopt-A-Horse program, they will be disposed of in a humane matter.

The livestock use in the area will be reduced during the 1977-78 winter grazing season also due to the drought conditions.

The proposed action is a emergency drought relief action and the action is a intermediate plan on the wild horse herd until a Management Framework Plan is completed for the area and a Wild Horse Management Plan is written.

Discrete Operations

1. Construction of the water trapping facilities.
2. Capture and removal of the wild horses or burros.
3. Disposal of the wild horses or burros.
4. Reduction of livestock use due to drought conditions.

Alternative 1 - No Action

The no action alternative is to take no action and allow whatever happens to the wild horses occur.

Alternative 2

The second alternative would be to remove all the wild horses from the area. This would remove the problem of maintaining the wild horses in the area and allow the forage to recover and not create a problem with water being available for use by wild horses. The other portions of the alternative would be the same as in the proposed action.

Discrete Actions

1. Construct water trapping facilities.
2. Capture and removal of wild horses.
3. Disposal of wild horses.

Alternative 3

The wild horses be rounded up by using helicopters to herd the horses into traps.

Discrete Actions

1. Construct trapping facilities.
2. Use of helicopter to capture and remove the wild horses.
3. Disposal of wild horses.

B. Description of the Existing Environment

1. Non-Living Components

a. Air

Air movement in the area is from the southwest. These winds often become gusty and strong during the spring and summer months. Topographic features play a large role in air movement patterns in the wild horse area.

The temperature in the area averages 50 degrees F. The summers are quite warm with temperatures often reaching 100 degrees and the nights reaching the 40's. The winter temperatures average around 32 degrees and very rarely fall as low as 0 degrees.

The main source of particulate matter is from the alkali lake bed or from the soil surface in the area, when the wind is strong and gusty. Otherwise, a problem with particulate matter does not exist.

b. Land

The area within the herd unit comprises 112,000 acres of land in Mineral County, Nevada. The area consists of 105,000 acres of national resource lands, 4,000 acres of lands administered by other federal agencies and 3,000 acres of private lands.

The wild horse herd area covers the north part of the Excelsior Mountains, all the Garfield Hills, all the Garfield Flat area and all the Rattlesnake Flat area. The elevation of the area is from 5600 feet in Garfield Flat to 8,000 feet in the Excelsior Mountains. All the drainages lead to a closed basin.

The area surrounding the herd unit is rural in nature with relatively small towns. The major community is Hawthorne, which is northwest of the wild horse area. The major income of the community is from the Navy Ammunition Depot and tourism. Two small communities are just east of the wild horse area. The two communities are Mina and Luning. The major income in these two communities is from mining. A small agricultural area exists in Whiskey Flat on which approximately 400 acres of alfalfa are being irrigated. All the national resource lands in the area are licensed to be used by cattle.

The soils in the area vary from a clay soil in Garfield Flat, a sandy soil around the flat and a medium textured soil on the hills with numerous small rocks intermixed. The hills and ridges have a very shallow soil and the drainages and alluvial fans have a deeper soil with numerous cobbles. The area around Garfield Flat is susceptible to wind erosion and water erosion because of the sandy type soil (Picture Plate #1.)

c. Water

The waters available for use by wild horses/burros, livestock and wildlife are either springs or water catchments on the Garfield Flat area. One catchment on the east side of the Garfield Hills (Picture Plate #2 - Photo #3) catches runoff from the Garfield Hills. It remains dry most of the time.

The catchments on Garfield Flat (Picture Plates 2, 3 and 4 - Photos 4, 5, 6 and 7) are shallow dugouts which hold

runoff. These catchments dry up fast when the weather gets hot and they are not a dependable water source for year around use. The catchment (Photo 6) in the southeast corner and the catchment (Photo 7) along the south edge of Garfield Flat are the most dependable of the catchments. These two catchments receive considerable use by the wild horses. The wild horses trail from the Excelsior Mountains and Garfield Hills to use these waters.

The area has three springs which normally supply water. Pepper Spring (Photos 8 and 9) and Whiskey Spring (Photo 10) are the only two springs that have water available at the source. The Garfield Spring (Photo 11) at this time, is dry. The other springs are also decreasing in flow due to the low amount of precipitation received these last few years.

The area receives very low precipitation varying from as low as 4 inches in the Garfield Flat area to as high as 16 inches on the crest of the Excelsior Mountains. The area occasionally receives very severe thunderstorms during the summer.

2. Living Components

a. Vegetation

Four vegetative communities are within the wild horse area. The four types are: Northern Desert Shrub, Salt Desert Shrub, Pinyon-Juniper and Winterfat. Following is a description of the vegetative communities:

Northern Desert Shrub Community

The Northern Desert Shrub type consists of the Big Sagebrush type and Low Sagebrush type. The Big Sagebrush type is found in Rattlesnake Flat area. The Low Sagebrush type is found in the foothills of the Excelsior Mountains and in the Garfield Hills area. The most dominant plants in the community are Big Sagebrush and Low Sagebrush. Other plants in the community are:

Grasses: Galleta, Indian Ricegrass, Sandberg Bluegrass and Cheatgrass.

Shrubs: Winterfat, Low Rabbitbrush, Shadscale and Squaw Tea.

Salt Desert Shrub Community

The Salt Desert Shrub Community is located on the north part of the Garfield Hills and along the northside of the Garfield Flat. This type is dominated by Desert Greasewood and Shadscale. Large spaces between plants are not uncommon. The large open spaces are covered by a coarse, gravelly soil mixture generally referred to as desert pavement. Other plants found in the community are:

Grasses: Indian Ricegrass, Bottlebrush Squirreltail and Saltgrass.

Shrubs: Fourwing Saltbrush, Dalea and Inkweed.

Pinyon-Juniper Community

The Pinyon-Juniper Community is located on the rocky slopes of the Excelsior Mountains. This type is dominated by pinyon and juniper trees. The type is not very important as far as use for the wild horses. The understory on the type consists of the following:

Grasses: Indian Ricegrass, Great Basin Wildrye, Squirreltail, Galleta and Nevada Bluegrass.

Shrubs: Big Sagebrush, Low Sagebrush, Low Rabbitbrush, Squaw Tea and Hopsage.

Winterfat Community

The Winterfat Community is located on the south side of Garfield Flat Alkali lakebed. This type is used very heavily, but does not cover a very large acreage. It is located on a sandy soil. The other plants in the community are as follows:

Grasses: Indian Ricegrass, Squirreltail, Galleta and Cheatgrass.

Shrubs: Big Sagebrush, Bud Sagebrush, Shadscale, Dry Land Greasewood, Low Sagebrush, Low Rabbitbrush and Four-Wing Saltbush.

The vegetation in all these types has received extremely heavy use (see Appendix b) this last year and without spring precipitation, no regrowth has occurred. The amount of forage available in the area is decreasing due to loss of vigor and heavy year-round use by the wild horse. The photos in the appendix will depict the heavy use in the area. The Photos Nos. 12 through 18 show the conditions in the area.

b. Animals

A diversity of animals are found in the wild horse area. The distribution and abundance of species is greatly influenced by the presence of the vegetative zones discussed earlier.

A small resident deer resides in the Excelsior Mountains. The remaining animals in the area range in size from as small as a shrew to as large as a wild horse.

The wild horse herd in the area was inventoried in February, 1973, and again in February, 1975. The count in 1973 was 184 horses in the area and the 1975 count showed 241 wild horses, 7 mules and 6 burros. Using the average increase per year and projecting back to 1971, the figure would be 140 horses present when the Wild Horse and Burro Act went into effect in December, 1971. At present, the projected number of wild horses in the area is 360, of which 200 are planned to be removed.

c. Birds

Over 250 species of birds are known to occupy this portion of Nevada during different seasons of the year. Two species of upland game can be expected, the chukar partridge and the mourning dove. The remaining birds are non-game species represented by raptors and song birds. No critical areas for endangered species have been identified.

d. Amphibians and Reptiles

Twenty-eight species of amphibians and reptiles are known to occur in the area. Amphibians identified are: one species each of the spadefoot toads, true toads and four species of true frogs. Among the reptiles, eight are lizards, one each are skinks and whiptails and eleven are snales. None of these mentioned are rare or endangered. It is doubtful that the amphibians are represented in the near proximity. The reptiles are probably found throughout the area.

e. Fish

No fish are located within the area.

f. Man

The public lands within the herd area are grazed by domestic livestock from November through April 15 each year. The area is frequented by mineral prospectors and recreationists. The Garfield Flat alkali lake bed is used by Aero-Jet testing explosives and artillery equipment occasionally. Water developments (wells, spring developments and water catchments) have been located primarily for the use of livestock, but wildlife and wild horses have benefited from them. A fence exists in the Rattlesnake Flat area, but it does not significantly affect the movement of wildlife or horses.

The wild horses are assumed to have originated from strays and ranch stock turned out. Prior to the Wild Horse and Burro Act, the population was held in check by "Mustangers" and local ranchers. Since the passage of the "Act", no horses are known to have been removed and no forage has been reserved for them.

3. Ecological Interrelationships

The Garfield Wild Horse area is within the cold desert biome. Historically, perennial grasses, such as Indian ricegrass, needle-and-thread, and Sandberg bluegrass made up a great part of the vegetation under and around the large shrub climax species. These shrubs exist today and are commonly big sagebrush, greasewood and shadscale.

a. Landscape Character

The landscape of the Garfield area is represented by pinyon-juniper trees on the slopes of the Excelsior Mountains, the sagebrush covered Garfield Hills and greasewood and shadscale around the barren Garfield Flat alkali lake bed. Man's presenc is evidenced by roads and trails, mining activity, wells, water catchments and reapers. Miners have left their tell-tale marks over all the area.

b. Sociocultural Interests

The Garfield herd area is unpopulated by permanent human residents. An archaeological site consisting of petroglyphs exists in Rattlesnake Canyon. A comprehensive archaeological survey has yet to be conducted of the area.

Recreation takes all forms within the herd area. Sightseeing, rock hunting, hunting, and off-road vehicles take up the majority of this activity.

All of the land within the herd area is licensed for cattle grazing by the Sweetwater Ranch.

Two areas in the vicinity may be put under the wilderness designation. These two areas will be studied in the future to insure they are properly qualified before being designated. The proposed action will not have any effect on the wilderness proposal.

C. Analysis of the Proposed Action and Alternatives

Proposed Action

Construct temporary water traps at Whiskey Spring, and at the two water catchments on Garfield Alkali lake bed. The proposed action is to reduce the wild horse population because of the low amount of available water and the poor forage condition. The proposed action would be to reduce the horse population to the 1971 level, that is, remove 200 horses. This would be an interim measure until such time as the management framework plan is completed and a wild horse plan is written. Disposition of the wild horses that are captured will be in accordance with Bureau policy.

1. Environmental Impacts of the Proposed Action

Construct temporary water traps and fence water sources.

a. Anticipated Impacts

(1) Air

A negligible impact by vehicle exhaust and by particulate matter. The vehicles will be used to transport the materials to construct the three water traps.

(2) Land

The trap sites have received intensive use in the past, because of the development as a permanent water source or by the intensive use by wild horses or livestock as a watering source. Therefore, the installation of the trapping facilities and fences will cause very little or no impact on the land.

(3) Water

No impact is anticipated.

(4) Plants (Terrestrial)

The trap sites will be near an undeveloped spring or near water catchments. In either case, the area has been heavily disturbed by wild horse or livestock use and as a result, the vegetation has been denuded or very heavily utilized. Two of the water sources are on a barren alkali bed with no vegetation in existence. As a result of the construction of the water traps, no additional impacts on the vegetation are anticipated.

(5) Animals (Aquatic and Terrestrial)

No impact is anticipated.

(6) Ecological Interrelationships

No impact anticipated.

(7) Landscape Character

As brought out earlier, the site is already a localized disturbed area and the continued use will result in no additional impacts.

(8) Sociocultural Interests

Some of the equipment to be used is on hand and some of the equipment is being purchased and will become capitalized equipment.

Capture and removal of wild horses.

a. Anticipated Impacts

(1) Air

A negligible impact to the air is anticipated. Exhaust emissions and particulate matter from the vehicles used to transport the captured wild horse will be insignificant.

(2) Land

Minor impacts will result from the removal of the wild horses from the area. With a decrease in the horse population, the amount of ground cover will be increased by the reduced amount of forage being consumed. The increased ground cover will help decrease erosion. The amount of soil compaction will also be reduced by reducing the number of wild horses in the area.

(3) Water

Removing the wild horses might make slightly more water available to other animals, but total amounts available are very limited.

(4) Plants (Terrestrial)

The trap sites are receiving intensive use presently due to their being the only available waters in the area. The trap sites have some perennial grasses growing on them and the grasses may be trampled very heavily. As a result of the trapping, the grasses may be destroyed.

The impact on the vegetation in the area where the wild horses are to be reduced will be moderately positive. The vegetation has underground moderate to severe use in the wild horse area. The use can be accredited to cattle and wild horses, but the damage to vegetative resource is done after the cattle are removed. The wild horses concentrate on the area year-round and the plants are grazed heavily during the spring growing season. As a result of the heavy

use during the spring, the plants are not able to maintain vigor and as a result, the plants are dying out or are producing very little growth. This year, with the extreme drought, the vegetative resource is being used before it can obtain much growth, especially Indian ricegrass (Pictures 12-18).

The use on the area has been getting heavier each year due to the increase in the wild horse population. Livestock use has remained relatively the same each winter grazing season.

By removing approximately 200 wild horses from the area, the damage to the vegetative resource would be greatly reduced and it would allow more forage for wildlife and the remaining wild horses.

Reducing the size of the wild horse herd will reduce grazing pressure on the flats as smaller horse bands tend to graze on the slopes of the Excelsior Mountains and the Garfield Hills in the winter. There would not be as much direct competition for forage between the wild horses and cattle if there was more forage available in these areas. Presently, the wild horses are grazing more area every year in order to meet their vegetative needs.

As a result of lowering the wild horse numbers, the overall effect on the vegetative resource is anticipated to be moderately positive.

(5) Animals (Terrestrial)

The capturing and removal of wild horses will have an impact only on the wild horses or burros.

The impact of capturing and removing the wild horses from the area will have a highly negative impact directly on the wild horses captured. The wild horses captured will be immediately removed from the area and they will no longer be allowed to be free-roaming. They will be put into a confined situation in which they will be fed and watered. This will put a stress on the animals until such time as they become adapted to their new environment.

The wild horses presently are being put under a stress due to the drought situation. The amount of available usable forage is very low and this is causing the wild horses to graze a larger area to meet their daily requirements. Presently, water is available from 3 springs and 4 catchments. As soon as the weather becomes hot, the 4 catchments will dry up and the springs, which already have a low flow, will have further reduced flow, making very little water available for the approximately 360 wild horses. The two springs which will have water available during the summer are Pepper Spring and Whiskey Spring. These two springs will have to supply all the water needs for the horses. If these decrease in flow, there will not be enough water available for all the wild horses in the area. The problem with these two waters is that both are on private land, and the owners could possibly fence the wild horses away from the water at any time.

(6) Ecological Interrelationships

There will be a slight positive impact from the removal of some of the wild horses. The vegetative resource of perennials will remain unchanged with the removal of the wild horses. Without the reduction of wild horses, the perennials would be removed because of severe overutilization and annuals would replace them over a long period of time.

(7) Landscape Character

The landscape character would be improved by capturing and removing some of the wild horses. The impact would be of low positive significance by allowing the area to return to a typical desert vegetative setting instead of a barren one, instead of an area covered with annuals caused by severe overgrazing.

(8) Sociocultural Interests

The capturing and removal of wild horses is expected to create a low to moderate interest among preservationists, conservationists, wild horse interests, range

users and people desiring to adopt a wild horse. The interests will be either positive or negative depending on the interest of the people involved.

The capture and removal may meet with positive attitudes as the conditions in the area are severe as a result of the drought and the removal of some of the wild horses will insure the remaining horses a better habitat in which to survive.

Disposal of the captured wild horses and burros.

a. Anticipated Impacts

(1) Land

A small area will be disturbed other than the trap sites. This area will be a pit dug to dispose of horse carcasses. Wild horses or burros that are crippled, diseased, or old and undesirable will be disposed of in the trap area. The carcasses will be buried in pits that will be dug in areas that will have very little effect on the environment.

(2) Animals

The wild horses or burros will undergo a small impact in adjusting to their new environment in being confined and handled by man. This action will put a stress on the animals until they adapt to this new environment. Some old, crippled or sick horses will be destroyed in the trap area.

(3) Sociocultural Interests

The people who are adopting a wild horse/burro will be highly interested in obtaining a horse that will fit their requirements or desires.

Reduction of livestcck numbers.

a. Anticipated Impacts

(1) Plants

The reduction in livestock numbers will depend on how the drought conditions continue. The area will

be checked prior to cattle being turned in next November and according to what forage is available, the livestock numbers will be adjusted accordingly. As a result of the reduction, the plants in the area will not receive as heavy utilization and more forage will be available for the remaining wild horses.

(2) Sociocultural Interests

The livestock permittee will not be in favor of reducing livestock numbers, but he is aware of the situation and the reduction this year will be beneficial to his operation the following year.

Wild horse interests will be watching closely and will want a reduction in livestock numbers if a reduction in wild horses is to be made.

b. Possible Mitigating or Enhancing Measures to the Proposed Action

(1) The water trap sites and disposal pit on national resource lands should have an archaeological survey conducted. It is reasonable to assume that no evidence will exist on the alkali lake bed where most of the trapping will be conducted.

(2) A veterinarian should be available to be on call when the need arises.

(3) Educate all foster parents or maintenance cooperators to the potential dangers and problems involved with their charges.

(4) A public participation plan is necessary to inform the public of: the rationale of the proposed action and the drought situation; and, the need for foster homes for the excess animals.

(5) Use vehicles that are adequate to transport the wild horses from the capture sites to the holding facilities.

(6) The trapping facilities should be checked every day to insure wild horses are not left in the traps for over 24 hours.

(7) Cooperative agreements should be obtained from all private land owners in the area involved.

c. Recommendations for Mitigation or Enhancement of the Proposed Action

(1) An archaeological survey will be conducted of the trap sites and burial site.

(2) A verterinarian will be on call if the situation arises and one is needed.

(3) Educate foster parents of potential problems and dangers involved with maintenance of their wild horses.

(4) A public participation plan will be prepared.

(5) Only vehicles properly equipped to handle wild horses will be used to transport the wild horses.

(6) Water traps will be checked every day when in use.

(7) Cooperative agreements from private land owners will be obtained.

d. Residual Impacts of the Proposed Action

(1) Injury and death of some wild horses can be reasonably expected.

(2) Injury to personnel may occur.

2. Relationships Between Short-Term Use and Long-Term Productivity

The trap sites have been used extensively by livestock and wild horses, continued use will have little if any short term effect on the sites. A long-term benefit will result by maintaining fewer wild horses, therefore, reducing competition and increasing chances for plants to become more vigorous and productive and a better chance of the wild horses surviving the drought situation.

3. Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitments of Resources

Only one irreversible commitment can be anticipated. In cases where wild horses cannot be placed or where the horses are crippled, injured or old, they will be destroyed.

Alternative No. 1 - No Action

a. Environmental Impacts of Alternative No. 1

(1) Air

This alternative would have no impact upon the air.

(2) Land

The combined use by livestock and the large number of wild horses is anticipated to have a negative low effect on soil structure. To allow the same number of livestock and increasing number of wild horses would be increasing the soil compaction and increasing the amount of area which would be denuded of vegetation and this would increase the chance of wind erosion.

(3) Water

The low amount of water available in the area will put a stress on the wild horse and wildlife in the near future as the water holes are drying up. The increase in use around the remaining water holes will result in more soil disturbance in the immediate area of the water hole or spring and the water will become more turbid as a result.

(4) Plants (Terrestrial)

A moderately negative impact will result if no action is taken. The area has received moderate to severe use during the 1976-77 grazing season. The problem after the grazing season and heavy use is the drought situation. As a result of the drought, no regrowth is occurring and the remaining forage is being used very heavily by the wild horses and as the season progresses, the wild horses are travelling farther in order to meet their daily forage requirements. The heavy use on the forage is reducing plant vigor and reducing the plant production in the area. The continued heavy use will severely damage the vegetative resource in the area in the near future.

(5) Animals (Terrestrial)

No action will result in a low negative impact on wildlife in the area, but may have a high negative impact on

the wild horses in the area. The drought is creating a situation that will not supply the large number of horses with adequate water, so wild horses may die of thirst or come under a tremendous stress in search of water and only the strongest will survive.

(6) Ecological Processes

A low negative impact will result to the succession of plants. Heavy use under drought conditions will put a stress on the plants, some may die out and will be replaced by annuals. If the drought conditions continue another year, the effect on the heavily used plants will be very detrimental.

(7) Landscape Character

No action will have a low negative impact on the visual landscape. The typical landscape scene of desert shrubs and grasses will not exist due to the heavy utilization by the wild horses and the resulting landscape will be one of barren soil.

(8) Sociocultural Interests

The no action alternative will have a low to moderate negative impact on the livestock permittee and also the wild horse interest. The alternative of no action would mean no forage left for livestock use, so the permittee will not be able to run any cattle in the area. The wild horses' interest would be up in arms if a large die off of wild horses occurred due to no water being available to support the large number of wild horses in the area.

b. Possible Mitigating or Enhancing Measures

Under this alternative, no mitigation or enhancing measures are possible.

c. Recommendations for Mitigation or Enhancement

No action requires that no mitigating or enhancing measures be taken.

d. Residual Impacts

Residual impacts are those impacts remaining after the mitigating and enhancing measures are followed. With no action, no mitigating or enhancing measures will be taken and the impacts will be those discussed under Anticipated Impacts.

2. Relationship Between Short-Term Use and Long-Term Productivity

The no action alternative will have a moderate to high impact on the wild horses in the area. The short-term term effect on the large wild horse population may be very disasterous if the drought situation continues. The water sources are either dry or drying up and as the hot weather arrives, there will not be adequate water to support the large horse numbers and as a result, a large number of wild horses may die off.

Another short-term effect will be a heavy overuse of available forage due to the present short supply. The short-term effect of the heavy overuse will result in plants dying out and the long-term productivity will be decreased as a result.

The long-term effect of the drought on the wild horses is that it may take years for the wild horse population to recover from the drought situation, because no water and lower amounts of forage will be available in the future.

Alternative No. 2 - Remove all the Wild Horses and Burros from the Area

Discrete Operations

Construct water traps, capture and disposal.

a. Environmental Impacts of Alternative No. 2

(1) Air

Some exhaust emissions and particulate matter will result from the vehicles used to transport the wild horse water traps and to transport the wild horses from the traps to the wild horse holding facilities north of Reno, Nevada. The overall impact will be a very low negative impact.

(2) Land

A positive low impact would be expected from this action. A reduction in the number of large animals within the area would reduce soil compaction and reduce the amount of forage removed which would result in less probability of wind erosion.

(3) Water

No impacts upon waters in the area is expected.

(4) Plants (Terrestrial)

The alternative of capturing and removing all the wild horses from the area would benefit all terrestrial plants. This would allow the plants to grow each year without being overused and the plants would only be used during the winter grazing season and only when the plants are in a dormant stage.

The plants in the immediate area of the springs that have been heavily overused and trampled would be allowed to re-establish and be available for wildlife use.

(5) Animals (Terrestrial)

Capturing and removal of the wild horses/burros will have a direct impact only on the wild horses in the area. The impact will be highly negative on the wild horses. The wild horses would be completely removed from an area which they had inhabited for years and put in a domesticated situation where they will not be free-roaming.

The capturing and removal of all the wild horses from the area would have a low positive impact on the wildlife of the area as it would remove the competition for forage for most of the year. The complete removal would have a moderately positive impact on the livestock which use the area. It would result in all the forage being available for livestock use.

(6) Ecological Interrelationships

A positive low impact will result as the wild horses are removed. The complete removal will allow plant succession to continue and not go into a recession and change from desirable perennial plants to a community of annuals and undesirable perennials.

(7) Landscape Character

A low negative impact will result by removing the wild horses from the area. People going through the area

will not have a view of the wild west with wild horses grazing in their native setting.

(8) Sociocultural Interests

The removal of all the wild horses and burros from the area is expected to create a high interest among various groups. Wild horse enthusiasts, fighting to preserve the wild horses in the area they existed in at the time the Wild Horse and Burro Act was passed, will be quite negatively impacted. On the other side, the livestock operator will be quite positively impacted as competition for forage will be greatly reduced.

There are other groups interested in the public lands. Many of which are concerned more with proper management of the lands and not with what is using it.

b. Possible Mitigating or Enhancing Measures to Alternative No. 2

(1) An archaeological survey should be made on the water trap sites.

(2) A veterinarian should be available or on call as the need arises.

(3) People entering into cooperative agreements should be completely informed as to the dangers involved in caring for their horses.

(4) A public participation plan is necessary to inform the public of: the rationale of the alternative and its long-term benefits; and the need for foster homes for the wild horses.

(5) Use vehicles that are properly equipped to transport the wild horses from the trap sites to the holding facilities.

(6) The trapping facilities should be checked every day when trapping is occurring.

c. Recommendations for Mitigation or Enhancement of Alternative No. 2

(1) An archaeological survey will be conducted on the trap sites.

(2) A veterinarian will be on call when the need arises.

(3) People entering into cooperative agreements will be completely informed as to the dangers involved in caring for their horses.

(4) A public participation plan is necessary to inform the public of: the rationale of the alternative and its long-term effects; and the need for foster homes for the wild horses.

(5) Vehicles will be used that are adequate to handle and transport the wild horses from the capture area to the holding facilities north of Reno, Nevada.

(6) The trapping facilities will be checked every day when trapping is occurring.

d. Residual Impacts of Alternative No. 2

(1) Injury and death to some of the wild horses can be expected as a result of the action.

(2) Injury to personnel involved in the action may occur.

2. Relationship Between Short-Term Use and Long-Term Productivity

The water trap sites have been used quite extensively in the past. Use as a water trap site will have only a very short-term effect and, therefore, have no effect on long-term productivity.

Wild horses and burros will no longer be a resource in this area, however, the general productivity will be enhanced by the positive control of the remaining resources.

3. Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitments of Resources

When the wild horses are captured and a horse is identified as being sick, injured or an old horse that will not be adopted, it will be disposed of in a humane manner and buried in a pit in the area.

Wild horses placed in the holding facility and held for adoption will be destroyed and buried if after a reasonable length of time they cannot be adopted.

No loss to the habitat will occur by removing all the wild horses and burros.

a. Environmental Impacts of Alternative No. 3

Use helicopter to roundup wild horses.

(1) Air

Some exhaust emissions and particulate matter will result from the vehicles used to transport the wild horse traps to the area and to transport the wild horses from the traps to the holding facilities north of Reno, Nevada. Some exhaust emission would also result from the helicopter being used to roundup the horses. The overall impact will be a very low negative impact.

(2) Land

A positive low impact would be expected from this action. A reduction in the number of large animals within the area would reduce soil compaction and reduce the amount of forage removed which would result in less probability of wind erosion.

(3) Water

No impacts upon waters in the area is expected.

(4) Plants (Terrestrial)

The alternative of capturing the wild horses by the use of helicopter would have the same effect on the plants as the proposed action. (See Proposed Action for environmental effects.)

(5) Animals (Terrestrial)

The use of helicopters to roundup the wild horses will not have any more effect on the animals than the proposed action. The area in which the wild horses are in is open country with no steep country. The hazards to the wild horses by using the helicopter would be very minimal as the horses would be moved at a slow rate and only in areas that did not pose a problem to the wild horses.

(6) Ecological Interrelationships

There will be a slight positive impact from the removal of some of the wild horses. The overall impact would be the same as the proposed action.

(7) Landscape Character

The landscape character would be improved by capturing and removing some of the wild horses. The impact would be of low positive significance by allowing the area to return to a typical desert vegetative setting instead of a barren one, or instead of an area covered with annuals caused by severe overgrazing.

(8) Sociocultural Interests

The capturing and removal of wild horses is expected to create a low to moderate interest among preservationists, conservationists, wild horse interests, range users and people desiring to adopt a wild horse. The interests will be either positive or negative depending on the interest of the people involved.

The capture and removal may meet with positive attitudes as the conditions in the area are severe as a result of the drought and the removal of some of the wild horses will insure the remaining horses a better habitat in which to survive.

b. Possible Mitigating or Enhancing Measures to Alternative No. 3

(1) An archaeological survey should be made on the trap sites.

(2) A veterinarian should be available or on call as the need arises.

(3) People entering into cooperative agreements should be completely informed as to the dangers involved in caring for their horses.

(4) A public participation plan is necessary to inform the public of: the rationale of the alternative and its long-term benefits; and the need for foster homes for the wild horses.

(5) Use vehicles that are properly equipped to transport the wild horses from the trap sites to the holding facilities.

(6) The trapping facilities should be checked every day when trapping is occurring.

c. Recommendations for Mitigation or Enhancement of Alternative No. 3

(1) An archaeological survey will be conducted of the trap sites.

(2) A veterinarian will be on call when the need arises.

(3) People entering into cooperative agreements will be completely informed as to the dangers involved in caring for their horses.

(4) A public participation plan is necessary to inform the public of: the rationale of the alternative and its long-term effects; and the need for foster homes for the wild horses.

(5) Vehicles will be used that are adequate to handle and transport the wild horses from the capture area to the holding facilities north of Reno, Nevada.

(6) The trapping facilities will be checked every day when trapping is occurring.

d. Residual Impacts of Alternative No. 3

(1) Injury and death to some of the wild horses can be expected as a result of the action.

(2) Injury to personnel involved in the action may occur.

2. Relationship Between Short-Term Use and Long-Term Productivity

Wild horses and burros will no longer be a resource in this area, however, the general productivity will be enhanced by the positive control of the remaining resources.

3. Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitments of Resources

When the wild horses are captured and a horse is identified as being sick, injured or an old horse that will not be adopted, it will be disposed of in a humane manner and buried in a pit in the area.

Wild horses placed in the holding facility and held for adoption will be destroyed and buried if after a reasonable length of time they cannot be adopted.

D. Recordation of Persons, Groups and Governmental Agencies

Norman Smith, Manager, Sweetwater Ranch
Karl Rodi, Owner, Sweetwater Ranch
Al Rodi, Owner, Sweetwater Ranch
Aerojet General Corporation, Private Land Owner in Area
Max Chilcott, Mineral County Commissioner
Alan Conally, Mineral County Commissioner
Carole Gunn, Toiyabe National Forest
Fred Smith, Nevada Fish and Game
Sean Shehan, Nevada Fish and Game
Dawn Lappin, Wild Horse Organized Assistance

E. Intensity of Public Interest

The intensity of public interest in the wild horse gathering will be low. The area involved does not receive a lot of public use, so the horse gathering will receive very little recognition, except by wild horse interest groups.

F. Participating Staff

Robert A. Nelson, Natural Resource Specialist, Walker Resource Area
Archie Melancon, Staff Environmental Coordinator
Bill Stewart, Wild Horse Technician
Hal Bybee, Range Conservationist, Walker Resource Area
Rudy Reimold, Area Manager, Walker Resource Area
Dennis Zachman, Recreation Planner, Walker Resource Area
Eddie Mayo, Range Specialist
Donald Pomi, Chief of Resource Management

G. Signatures

Written by:

Robert a. Nelson — June 22, 1977
Robert A. Nelson — Date
Natural Resource Specialist

Reviewed by:

Rudy W. Reimold — 6-22-77
Rudy Reimold — Date
Walker Area Manager

Archie Melancon — 6-22-77
Archie Melancon — Date
Environmental Coordinator

Concurred by:

L. Paul Applegate — 6-24-77
L. Paul Applegate — Date
District Manager

1971

GARFIELD FLAT ALLOTMENT
MANAGEMENT PLAN

I. General Information

A. Map

A one-half inch to the mile scale map of the allotment is attached. The land status and existing improvements shown on the map are current as of October 28, 1970 (see attachment #1).

B. Location and Data

The Garfield Flat Allotment is situated in Mineral County ten miles south of Hawthorne, Nevada.

The small communities of Mina and Luning are located on Highway U.S. 95 which is the northern and eastern boundary of the allotment along with the Hawthorne Naval Ammunition Depot. The southern boundary is formed by the Excelsior Mountains and the western by the Toiyabe National Forest.

Soda Springs Valley drains the allotment to the north and east, Whiskey and Rattlesnake Flats drain to Walker Lake with the remainder of the allotment draining into Garfield Flat.

The base ranch that supports the Garfield Flat Allotment privileges is located approximately 25 miles south of Wellington, Nevada and is known as the Sweetwater Ranch. The base ranch is 40 miles from this allotment.

Acreage Statistics for the allotment are:

Sweetwater Ranch Lands		3,160
Public Lands		234,499
Private Lands (Other)		4,016
	TOTAL	241,675

The private land consists of the towns of Mina and Luning, Sweetwater Ranches, Whiskey Flat Unit, and scattered tracts patented under agricultural, mineral or private exchange laws.

The Sweetwater Ranch private lands are used in conjunction with the public lands for grazing.

C. Resource Data

1. Vegetative Types

An occular reconnaissance range survey was completed in Mina Unit in 1953. The broad vegetative types are shown on the vegetative type overlay of the Mina URA. The acreage and carrying capacity by type for the allotment are as follow:

Type	Acres (PD)	AUMs	Sweetwater Private Land AUMs
4 Sagebrush (Artr-Arar)	45257	1199	52
9 Pinon-Juniper	1702	72	
13 Shadscale	41589	832	
14 Greasewood	89754	2402	36
15 Winterflat (Eula)	7179	620	8
16 Desert Shrub	3561	85	
7-W Waste	44,912	0	
8-B Barren	545	0	
TOTAL	234,499	5210	96

2. Condition and Trend

The 1960 District Office condition and trend maps indicate the following:

Public Domain

Condition	Acres
Excellent	50,292
Good	91,910
Fair	43,840
Poor	3,000
Unuseable	45,457
TOTAL	234,499

Trend	Acres
Improving	18,880
Static	156,892
Declining	13,270
Unuseable	45,457
TOTAL	234,499

The condition and trend for the allotment was determined by the Deming Two-Phase Method.

3. Climate

The average annual precipitation recoreded at Mina and based on a 35 year period is 3.6 inches. The average temperature, also recorded at Mina is 55°F. with a recorded low of -9°F and a high of 106°. The average growing season is 160 days. The heaviest amounts of precipitation occur during the winter months with the effective moisture occuring in April and May. Any precipitation that occurs during the

summer months will generally come as violent localized thunderstorms. Prevailing wind direction is west-southwest. No records are available for wind valocity but newspaper articles indicate 80+ mph during severe storms.

4. Soils and Topography

The soils range from sandy to silt-loams with varying amounts of intermixed gravels and rocks. The central portion of the allotment has an alkali flat (Garfield Flat) while Whiskey Flat in its lower reaches exhibits some alkaline soils.

The topography varies from a low elevation of 5600 feet to a high of 8600 feet. It is rolling mountainous country with numerous open valleys.

5. Watershed

Rattlesnake, Douglas and Pamlico Canyons are subject to extreme runoff during the high intensity summer storm. These canyons contribute a considerable amount of debris to the valleys as well as extensive damage to roads. The drainage areas of these canyons are quite extensive.

D. Existing Projects

The existing range development and/or improvements are shown on the base map and are listed in Appendix No. 1.

scale mining then coordination would definitely be necessary with the mining interests.

The communities of Mina and Luning are on the edge of the allotment and could require additional land for growth but this would be minimal. In actuality, little or no coordination would be necessary here as the livestock are not allowed to graze on the hills sloping to these communities.

Coordination with the wildlife demand is not expected to be a problem in fact, past and probably future water developments have increased the chukar and dove habitats. There is a low density population of resident Mule Deer and it is expected that the improved range condition through livestock and management should improve the deer herd correspondingly. During severe winters a heavy deer population could occur from the Mono Lake-East Walker deer herd. All projects will consider wildlife.

There are some feral horses within the allotment but at present have not posed any problem. These animals should be watched, for if they increase substantially, forage will have to be allocated for them or else their numbers reduced to a non-competative level.

The number of horses is not positively known but is estimated to be 35 head. They run in the Garfield Hills above Whiskey Spring

and also in the hills north and south of Garfield Flat. About 50% of this area is considered inaccessible to domestic livestock.

A limited amount of rock-hounding and other recreational activities occur within the area. But no rapid increase is expected in this use due to the remoteness of the area. There are several acheological sites in the allotment but knowledge of their location is not generally known.

II. Management Objectives

The general objectives of this plan is to protect, manage, and regulate the use of the multiple resources in a combination that will meet the needs of the various resource users without impairment to the productivity of the range watershed.

A. Special Objectives

1. Livestock Forage

   Produce and maintain on a continuing basis a sufficient amount of useable forage to satisfy the class I demand of the Sweetwater Ranch Company (4242 AUMs).

   Strive for uniform distribution throughout the allotment thus reducing heavy concentrated use on selected areas.

2. To maintain the current vigor and increase reproduction of the key species Indian Ricegrass (Oryzopsis hymenoides).

3. Wildlife Habitat

   a. Provide forage and other habitat requirements for the low density resident population of mule deer.

   b. Provide for additional permanent water sources to enhance and increase the chukar partridge and mourning dove populations.

4. Watershed Stabilization

   Improve the balance between vegetation soil and water by increasing the vegetative cover. It is hoped to be

accomplished through a 10% increase in Indian Ricegrass, the key species.

Since the area is subject to extreme run-off from high intensity storms any increase in vegetative cover would be of great value.

5. Livestock Objectives

Maintain present percent of calf crop and strive to build herd up to 1000 head of mother cows.

III. Grazing Management

A. To accomplish the objectives listed above, the following must be considered.

1. Livestock Forage Production

The range survey information indicates that there is a surplus of forage 968 AUMs to meet the demand. Management must therefore maintain the production.

2. Wildlife Habitat

a. Adequate forage is presently available for the wildlife demand. If grazing management can improve general range conditions this should also help the game herds.

b. The proposed water developments listed in Appendix 2 will provide for wildlife watering to aid in distribution of the upland game species.

B. Grazing System

There will be two grazing systems within the allotment. Pasture I, the fall and winter use area, will be grazed season long. Pastures II and III are grazed late winter and early spring and will be grazed in an alternate year manner with one pasture being grazed each year.

1. Pasture One

This area is known as Garfield Flat, the statistics for it

are as follow:

3748 AUMs on Public Land Available
21 AUMs on Private Base
3769 (sub total)
-822 AUMs outside of effective use area at this time due to water, topography, etc.
2947 (total available)

Of the 2947 AUMs available at this time 2725 will be used as follows:

800 cattle 11/1 to 1/31
150 cattle 2/1 to 4/15 (calving)

2. Pasture II

This area is known as North Whiskey Flat; the statistics are:

822 AUMs on public lands
27 AUMs on private base
849 AUMs

The 812 AUMs will be made as follows on alternate years:

650 cattle 2/1 to 4/15 w/ 50% Supplement

3. Pasture III

This area is known as South Whiskey Flat; the statistics are:

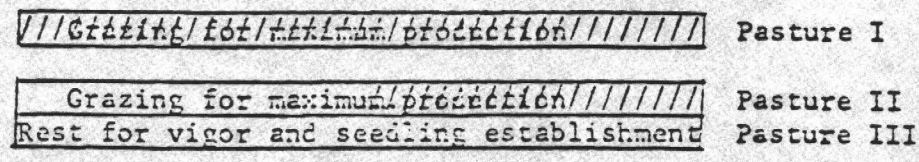
782 AUMs on public lands
48 AUMs on private base
820 AUMs

The use will be the same as Pasture II on alternate year.

There is also available 142 AUMs use on the Forest Service which is adjacent to this pasture.

Additional water will be developed in all areas to more effectively distribute the cattle.

Planned Treatments



The full system will be as follows:

Pastures	I	II	III
1975	Graze	A	B
1976	"	B	A
1977	"	A	B

Until all projects are completed and the system in effect the pasture will be used as follows:

Pasture I	800 cattle	11/1 to 1/31
II, III	800 cattle	2/1 to 4/15

C. Flexibility

The normal operation for the management area will be as follows:

800 cattle 10/1 to 4/15

In order to give the livestock operation a reasonable amount of management flexibility, a variation in active use of plus ten (10) percent will be allowed. Billings prior to each grazing

season will be made on the basis of the normal operation. Reconciliation will be made at the end of each grazing year based on actual use information that each operator will supply to this office.

The operator will keep actual use records for each pasture on an annual basis. Failure to supply this information will cancel the flexibility.

IV. Evaluation

A. Range Studies

Range studies will be conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of the grazing system in meeting the objectives of the plan. The livestock operator will be encouraged to participate in these studies which will include:

1. Actual Use

The livestock operator will keep records of the number and dates of the movements of livestock between pastures. Forms for this will be available from the Bureau of Land Management. They should be received in the District Office within fifteen (15) days of the close of each grazing season or by May 1st of each year.

2. Key Areas

Key areas have been located in each pasture and are shown on the attached allotment map. Utilization and trend studies will be made on these key areas.

Utilization

Studies will be carried out using the key forage plant method described in the Bureau of Land Management Physical Resources Studies manual.

Trend

Studies will be conducted in accordance with procedures prescribed in the Bureau Trend Manual.

3. Climate

Temperature and precipitation records collected for Hawthorne and Mina will be used for studying the climate.

V. Needed Range Improvements –

Several range improvements are needed to properly operate this plan. These are listed in Appendix 2 and the approximate location is noted on the allotment map. The list notes the improvement, the number of units, the proposed construction year, the maintenance responsibilities and contributions.

The proposed timetable for construction is dependent upon the availability of funds appropriated to the Bureau of Land Management and based on priorities established in the District's construction program.

The majority of the cost will be borne by the BLM. The range user contribution will be primarily maintenance.

If, after beginning the plan, there is a need for additional improvements, arrangements will be made for their construction and maintenance.

VI. Modification

This plan may be modified if data from range studies, Habitat Management studies, Watershed studies, and experience gained in plan operation indicate that changes are needed. Modification will be made after consultation of the parties concerned. They will be based on the results of range studies, inspections and/or livestock operational problems.

VII. Agreement

We the undersigned parties concur in the management objectives set forth in this plan and will to the best of our abilities restrict livestock grazing as provided herein to meet these objectives.

All provisions of the Grazing Regulations for the Public Lands (43 CFR) apply to this plan.

Prepared by: Rudy W. Reinhold — Area Manager — 12-16-76 — Date

Concurred by: _____ — Sweetwater Ranch Co. — 1-9-77 — Date

Approved: _____ — District Manager, Bureau of Land Management — _____ — Date

APPENDIX NO. I

Existing Improvements

Project	Number	Units	Maintenance Responsibility
East Rattlesnake D. Fence	131-541	1 mile	Sweetwater Ranch
West Rattlesnake D. Fence	131-542	3/4 mile	Sweetwater Ranch
Summit Spring D. Fence	131-644	3 miles	Sweetwater Ranch (M. McCay)
Douglas Flat Pipeline	N3-R-740	5 miles	Sweetwater Ranch
Rattlesnake Flat Well	119-638	126'	Sweetwater Ranch
Whiskey Flat Well	119-632		Sweetwater Ranch
Marble Mountain Reaper	4104	25,000 gal.	Sweetwater Ranch
Whiskey Flat Brush Control	N3-R-252	500 ac.	--
Whiskey Flat Seeding	N3-359	407 ac.	--
Whiskey Flat Seeding Fence	N3-362	3½ miles	Sweetwater Ranch
Garfield Flat Reservoir #1		1	Sweetwater Ranch
Garfield Flat Reservoir #2		1	Sweetwater Ranch