

3/3/93

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# United States Department of the Interior



## BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

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

IN REPLY REFER TO:

4130 CF  
(NV-03480)  
273001  
273016  
273027

Certified Mail (P 398 783 669)  
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Wild Horse Organized Assistance  
Attn. Dawn Lappin  
P.O. Box 555  
Reno, NV 89504

*pinud*

MAR 03 1993

Dear Interested Party:

Enclosed for your information are copies of the ~~Antelope Mountain~~ and the  
Lahontan Allotment Multiple Use Decisions (MUD). Thank you for your interest  
in Multiple Use Management.

Sincerely yours,

James M. Phillips  
Area Manager  
Lahontan Resource Area

Enclosures:

1. Antelope Mountain Allotment Multiple Use Decision.
2. Lahontan Allotment Multiple Use Decision.

TYPE-ERASE

25% COTTON FIBER USA



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



IN REPLY REFER TO:

4130 CF  
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CF-273001

Certified Mail (P 398 783 656)  
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Feather River Ranch  
C/O John Keithley  
P.O. Box 189  
Loyalton, CA 96118

MAR 03 1993

### Proposed Multiple Use Decision Antelope Mountain Allotment

Multiple use goals and objectives which guide management of the Public Lands on the Antelope Mountain Allotment began on July 2, 1969 with the completion and signing of the Antelope Mountain Allotment Management Plan (AMP). This plan included yearlong grazing using a 4-Pasture Rest Rotation System. On March 9, 1976, a Range Use Agreement was signed limiting use in the Petersen Mountain Pasture and splitting the use by a North and South Pasture Rotation from 06/01 to 08/31 and 07/15 to 08/31 each year. On July 2, 1981, the Antelope Mountain Allotment Management Plan was revised and signed which changed the grazing use from yearlong to 04/15 through 10/31 on a 3-Pasture Rest Rotation System and resting the Petersen Mountain Pasture 2 out of 3 years. The Record of Decision for the Final Reno Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and the Reno Resource Management Plan was completed December 21, 1982. These documents, in addition to the AMP, established the multiple use goals and objectives on public land in the Antelope Mountain Allotment. The Rangeland Program Summary (RPS) was issued in October of 1985, and updated in 1989, which further specifically identified the allotment specific objectives for the Antelope Mountain Allotment. On April 9, 1987, a Final Decision was issued with limits of 55% utilization of key species and if the use exceeded 55%, all cattle will be moved or removed from the pasture. On June 6, 1988, a Final Decision was issued removing the Red Rock Pasture from the Antelope Mountain Allotment and making it the Red Rock Allotment with 454 AUM's preference. The remaining 7,996 AUM's were attached to the Antelope Mountain Allotment. The Antelope Mountain Allotment Evaluation was completed on April 10, 1992. On June 15, 1992, a Grazing Use Agreement was signed adjusting the Active Preference from 7,996 AUM's to 6,362 AUM's and placing the remaining 1,634 AUM's in suspended non-use.

Monitoring data has been collected since 1968. Additional monitoring, as identified in the RPS, was established on Antelope Mountain Allotment to determine if existing multiple uses on the allotment were consistent with attainment of the objectives established by the RPS.

The data was analyzed in 1992, through the allotment evaluation process, to; (1.) Determine progress in meeting multiple use objectives for the Antelope Mountain Allotment, and (2.) Determine what changes in existing management are required in order to meet specific multiple use objectives for this allotment. Through the consultation, coordination and cooperation process (CCC), input from affected interests was considered in the Antelope Mountain Allotment Evaluation. It was determined through this evaluation that the following

changes in existing management are necessary in order to meet multiple use objectives for this allotment.

Wildlife management objectives were developed in the Reno RMP and are summarized in the 1989 Lahontan Rangeland Program Summary Update and in Appendix I of this decision.

The specific multiple use objectives of the Reno RMP, Rangeland Program Summary and the Antelope Mountain AMP are found in Appendix I.

Using the above planning documents and activity plans and in consideration of the current condition of the rangeland resources on the Antelope Mountain Allotment, my proposed decision is as follows:

#### LIVESTOCK GRAZING MANAGEMENT DECISION

Livestock use in this allotment was adjusted on June 15, 1992 by agreement. The Active Preference is recognized as being 6,362 AUM's. The normal operation is 967 cattle from 04/15 to 10/31 on the allotment. No additional adjustment is necessary at this time.

#### WILD HORSE MANAGEMENT DECISION

##### Granite Peak Herd Management Area:

It has been determined through monitoring and the allotment evaluation process that a thriving natural ecological balance can be obtained through an Appropriate Management Level (AML) of 15 wild horses for the Granite Peak Herd Management Area (HMA) in the Antelope Mountain Allotment.

**RATIONALE:** Monitoring information shows that approximately 216 AUM's or 18 wild horses is the maximum proper stocking level for the Granite Peak HMA within the Antelope Mountain Allotment. Based on actual numbers of wild horses, wildlife and livestock during the evaluation period it was determined that a range of 11 to 18 wild horses would be supported along with other uses of the Public Land and therefore an AML of 15 wild horses will be set.

By maintaining the wild horses and livestock AUM's at this level it is anticipated that Land Use Plan objectives will be met including maintaining or improving current ecological condition and maintaining utilization at 55 percent or less on key species on upland areas.

In order to prevent resource damage, horse numbers will be limited to a maximum of 18 animals. To avoid annual removals and to minimize stresses and band disturbances associated with removals, removals will be conducted every three years. To avoid excessive vegetation utilization horses will be managed within a range from 11 to 18 animals. This will allow for a 18 percent annual rate of increase to a maximum of 18 head.

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

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

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

4720.1: "Upon examination of current information and a determination by the authorized officer that an excess of wild horses or burros exists, the authorized officer shall remove the excess animals immediately..."

**PROTEST/APPEAL:**

In accordance with 43 CFR 4770.3 which states in part:

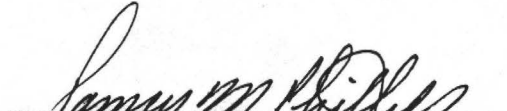
"Any person who is adversely affected by a decision of the authorized officer in the administration of these regulations may file an appeal in accordance with 43 CFR 4.4 within 30 days of receipt of the written decision."

Although these regulations allow for an appeal with no mention of a protest, for the purpose of consistency the multiple use decision will be initially sent as a "Proposed" decision. If no protests are received within fifteen days, the proposed decision shall constitute the final decision, which may then be appealed.

Should you wish to appeal this decision as it pertains to wild horses to the Interior Board of Land Appeals, you are required to appeal in accordance with 43 CFR 4.400. An appeal should specify the reasons, clearly and concisely, as to why you think the decision is in error and a statement of standing, if necessary as per 43 CFR 4.400.

**WILDLIFE DECISION**

Wildlife use in this allotment has been adjudicated in accordance with Reno RMP - 1982, Antelope Mountain Allotment final decision dated April 9, 1987, which states 2,500 AUM's will be provided for mule deer. Additionally, livestock and if necessary wild horses will be removed from the south end of the Sandhills when bitterbrush utilization reaches 35%.

  
James M. Phillips, Area Manager  
Lanontan Resource Area

Special Interest(Certified Mail No.)

cc: U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service	(P 398 783 657)
American Horse Protection Association	(P 398 783 658)
National Mustang Association	(P 398 783 659)
Fund for Animals	(P 398 783 660)
International Society for the Protection of Mustangs and Burros	(P 398 783 661)
U.S. Humane Society	(P 398 783 662)
Animal Protection Institute	(P 398 783 663)
L.I.F.E. Foundation	(P 398 783 664)
C. Jean Richards	(P 398 783 665)
American Bashkir Curley Register	(P 398 783 666)
Humane Society of Southern Nevada	(P 398 783 667)
Nevada Humane Society	(P 398 783 668)
Wild Horse Organized Assistance	(P 398 783 669)
Dan Keiserman	(P 398 783 670)
Commission for the Preservation of Wild Horses/Stewart Facility	(P 398 783 671)
Craig Downer	(P 398 783 672)
Nevada Department of Wildlife	(P 398 783 673)
Sierra Club - Toiyabe Chapter	(P 398 783 674)
Natural Resources Defense Council Inc.	(P 398 783 675)
Clearing House for the State of Nevada	(P 398 783 676)
The Nature Conservancy	(P 398 783 677)
Nevada Cattlemen's Association	(P 398 783 678)
Resource Concepts Inc.	(P 398 783 679)
Nevada Land Action Association	(P 398 783 680)
N-3 Grazing Board	(P 398 783 681)
Carson City District Grazing Advisory Board	(P 398 783 682)
U.S.D.A. Soil Conservation Service	(P 398 783 683)
U.S.D.A. Soil Conservation Service	(P 398 783 684)
Nevada Woolgrowers Association	(P 398 783 685)
Buhel R. Heckathorn	(P 398 783 686)
Steven Fulstone	(P 398 783 687)
The Wilderness Society (Cal-Nev Reg. Coordinator)	(P 398 783 688)
Nevada Wilderness Association	(P 398 783 689)
Nevada Wildlife Federation	(P 398 783 690)
Honorable James H. Bilbray	(P 398 783 691)
Honorable Barbara Vucanovich	(P 398 783 692)
Honorable Richard Bryan	(P 398 783 693)
Honorable Harry M. Reid	(P 398 783 694)
Nevada Wildlife Federation	(P 398 783 695)
Board of County Commissioners (Nye County)	(P 398 783 696)
Michael Kirk, D.V.M.	(P 398 783 697)
Ms. Deborah Allard	(P 398 783 698)
Ms. Kathy McCovey	(P 398 783 699)
Ms. Rebecca Kunow	(P 398 783 700)
Nevada State Department of Agriculture	(P 398 783 701)
Paula S. Askew	(P 398 783 702)
U.S. Wild Horse & Burro Foundation	(P 398 783 703)
Bobbi Royle	(P 398 783 704)
Ms. Ann Earle	(P 398 783 705)
Ms. Susan Alder	(P 398 783 706)
Ms. Nancy K. Lusk	(P 398 783 714)

APPENDIX I.

Antelope Mountain Allotment Specific Objectives:

1. Land Use Plan Objectives - Reno RMP - 1982.

A. Long Term:

1. Possible adjustments in period of use.
2. Continued adjustments in livestock use levels based on utilization studies where applicable.
3. Adjustments in wild horse use levels.
4. Manage mule deer habitat and provide forage for reasonable numbers.
5. Implement Allotment Management Plans (AMPs) and use grazing treatments to develop grazing systems that would improve ecological condition and provide additional forage.
6. Develop land treatments to provide desired vegetation for livestock, mule deer, and wild horses.

B. Short Term:

1. Develop range improvements to protect mule deer habitat and to improve livestock and wild horse distribution and vegetation utilization.
2. Continue to monitor and/or inventory to quantify the degree of conflicts and identify opportunity for future developments. Initial livestock, wild horse and mule deer use would be at existing levels.
3. Allotment Managements Plans (AMP's) will also be developed as required.

2. Lassen-Washoe Wildlife Habitat Area (HMP) - June 1988.

A. Populations Objectives - Mule deer:

Manage Mule deer for 2,500 AUM's reasonable numbers.

B. Forage Objectives - Mule deer:

1. Recognize bitterbrush as a key species within all key mule deer habitat areas. It is/will be a key species in all livestock grazing systems and AMP's in Category I Allotments, either on a pasture or allotment-wide basis, depending on where it and the key deer areas coincide.
2. Maintain the level of use of bitterbrush by all classes of large herbivores not to exceed 45 percent of current year's growth, based on monitoring.

C. Other Objectives for HMAP:

1. Acquire 7,400 acres to block up crucial mule deer winter and migration range.

2. Protect approximately 50 acres of identified riparian habitats on seven different allotments.
3. Continue seasonal closures for seasonally sensitive habitats.
4. Reduce wildlife harassment by adjusting timing of organized motorized and non-motorized events.
5. Protect crucial mule deer habitat from destruction by wildfire.
6. Continue monitoring existing mule deer habitat and add additional studies as needed for riparian habitat and sage grouse.
7. Determine through monitoring of the known sage grouse leks whether sage grouse still exist in the HMP area and whether the MFP recommendation (in Chapter 3 of the Reno DEIS) is still valid (increase sage grouse by 50 per cent).

3. Rangeland Program Summary Update (RPS) Objectives - December 1989.

A. Long Term:

1. Improve ecological condition in ten years by one class from: early seral to mid-seral 3,020 acres, mid-seral to late seral 3,967 acres, late seral to PNC 615 acres.
2. Manage identified mule deer habitat to maintain a fair (26-50 rating) or better condition to support 248 deer from 05/01 to 10/31 and 1,428 deer from 11/01 to 04/31, 2,500 AUM's reasonable numbers.
3. Improve habitat condition in burned areas in key deer winter range from poor (0-25 rating) to fair or better.
4. Manage identified pronghorn antelope habitat to maintain a fair (31-60 rating) or better condition. Limit utilization to 55% on identified key species in this habitat.
5. Manage riparian areas to achieve and maintain late-seral ecological condition.
6. Maintain or improve willow, chokecherry, and aspen stands to have at least 20% of all stems over 5 feet. Six (6) feet for aspen.
7. Maintain or improve wild horse habitat consistent with wildlife and livestock objectives.
8. Maintain or improve free-roaming behavior of wild horses by protecting or enhancing wild horse home ranges.

B. Short Term:

1. Maintain utilization not to exceed 55% on identified key species on upland key areas.
2. Initially allow 7,996 AUM's.

3. Limit livestock utilization to 45% on bitterbrush in habitat areas.
4. Provide forage for Mule Deer in the Sand Hills area by limiting livestock utilization to 35% of the current years growth of bitterbrush plants. To be measured from tagged twigs in key areas.
5. Limit utilization to 55% on identified key species in pronghorn habitat.
6. Limit utilization to 55% current year's growth in riparian areas.
7. Maintain or improve wild horse habitat.

C. In Addition:

As a result of the Area Managers Decision of April 9, 1987, the following management objectives were included as Terms and Conditions of the grazing authorization.

1. When 55% utilization of the key species occurs all cattle will be removed from the pasture.
2. When 35% utilization on bitterbrush is reached at the south end of the Sand Hills, (unburned area) the water will be turned off and the livestock moved to the other portions of the pasture until 55% utilization is reached.
3. When all scheduled pastures reach 55% utilization regardless of the remaining time licensed, all cattle will be removed from the entire allotment.
4. All range improvements must be properly maintained to maximize distribution.

All adjustments in livestock use will be based on rangeland monitoring. Monitoring information will be collected and evaluated on a yearly basis in accordance with the Nevada Rangeland and Monitoring Task Force Recommendations.

Computation of overall utilization will be calculated by pasture using the weighted average method, excluding areas where livestock would be unable to use.

Based on the utilization figure the stocking levels will be computed using the following formula:

$$\frac{\text{Actual Use}}{\text{Average/Weighted Average Utilization}} = \frac{\text{Potential Actual Use}}{\text{Desired Average Utilization}}$$

4. Antelope Mountain Allotment Management Plan Objectives - April 1987.

From the Antelope Mountain Allotment Management Plan established in 1981, and revised in 1984 plus the Notice of Proposed Decision issued April 9, 1987.



A. Long Term:

1. Improve the overall condition of the entire allotment by increasing vigor and reproduction of existing bunch grasses: Indian Ricegrass (Oryzopsis hymenoides), Needle and Thread Grass (Stipa comata) and Thurber's Needle Grass (Stipa thurberiana) by allowing adequate period of rest.
2. Increase key species by 3-5% within 10 years.
3. Improve ecological and range condition from fair to good condition.

B. Short Term:

Achieve overall utilization on key grass species of 55%.