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NOTICE OF PROPOSED MULTIPLE USE DECISION
FOR THE
NORTH BUTTE ALLOTMENT PORTION OF THE
BUTTE WILD HORSE HERD MANAGEMENT AREA
AND BUCK AND BALD WILD HORSE HERD MANAGEMENT AREA

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

This decision addresses the establishment of an appropriate management level (AML) for wild horses within the North Butte Allotment portions of the Butte Wild Horse Herd Management Area (HMA) and the Buck and Bald Wild Horse HMA.

The majority of the Butte HMA and the Buck and Bald HMA have established AMLs. Census and field observations indicate a small number of wild horses occasionally utilizing that portion of the North Butte Allotment within the Butte HMA. There are no perennial waters within the North Butte Allotment. The bands of wild horses that are observed utilizing the allotment normally only forage there for short periods of time as they pass through to better habitat. They are not residents of the allotment. Wild horses have been only rarely observed within that portion of the North Butte Allotment within the Buck and Bald HMA. The Buck and Bald portion of the allotment is steep and rocky terrain containing very little available forage. Because of this, forage will not be apportioned within the Buck and Bald HMA. Forage will be apportioned within the Butte HMA. Census data for the Butte HMA conducted since 1987 (17 counts) indicate that forage for only two to three wild horses is needed annually.

Not apportioning forage for wild horses within the Buck and Bald HMA at this time does not exclude wild horses from using those portions of the HMA. The Buck and Bald HMA and Butte HMA will continue to be monitored and censused. Appropriate management levels can be adjusted if wild horses expand into these areas in the future, or if monitoring data indicate adjustments in forage utilization are necessary.

Livestock numbers have previously been adjusted through a grazing transfer completed in 1995. Permitted use was adjusted from 698 AUMs to 180 AUMs. Stocking levels were calculated for the transfer. An allotment evaluation was not initiated prior to the transfer and has not been initiated since. Stocking levels were set based on 1993 and 1995 monitoring data. Wild horses were not included in the transfer calculations. The North Butte Allotment has not been grazed by livestock the last four years.

This decision proposes to establish the wild horse AML for the North Butte Allotment portions of the Butte HMA and the Buck and Bald HMA, but does not propose to make changes to livestock permitted use.

WILD HORSE AND BURRO MANAGEMENT DECISION

It has been determined through monitoring that a thriving natural ecological balance will be obtained by establishing and maintaining wild horse use at the appropriate management level of three wild horses year-long for the North Butte Allotment portion of the Butte HMA, and at zero wild horses for the North Butte Allotment portion of the Buck and Bald HMA. For the Butte HMA, the AMLs for the Cherry Creek Allotment and Thirty Mile Allotment portions of the HMA remain to be established. The current established AML for the Butte HMA, including the North Butte Allotment, is 77 wild horses year-long. For the Buck and Bald HMA, the AML for the Thirty Mile Allotment and Maverick Springs Allotment portions of the HMA remain to be established. The current established AML for the Buck and Bald HMA, including the North Butte Allotment, is 340 wild horses year-long. The setting of wild horse numbers by allotment will eventually provide for an overall herd management area wild horse appropriate management level.

Removals will occur on an HMA basis and numbers will be maintained at or near the total AML. Numbers within use areas and/or allotments may be higher or lower than the numbers identified above because of seasonal movements but the total AMLs for the HMAs will be maintained.

In accordance with 43 CFR 4700.0-6 (a), wild horse use on the North Butte Allotment portion of the Buck and Bald HMA shall be managed at zero AUMs for wild horses; wild horse use for the North Butte Allotment portion of the Butte HMA shall be managed at three wild horses year-long (36 AUMs).

In accordance with 43 CFR 4720.1, in the future, all wild horses in excess of the total appropriate management levels established for the entire Buck and Bald HMA and Butte HMA will be removed.

Monitoring will continue to ensure that the AMLs are maintaining a thriving natural ecological balance. Adjustments in wild horse numbers will be made by future Buck and Bald HMA and Butte HMA gathers based on continued monitoring, in order to achieve and maintain the established AMLs.

RATIONALE:

The analysis and evaluation of available monitoring data indicates that no change in management actions for wild horses are needed to meet multiple use management objectives on the North Butte Allotment. The data indicate that there are 36 AUMs available for wild horse grazing use.

The AML of three wild horses year-long has been determined to be the optimum level to maintain the thriving natural ecological balance on the North Butte Allotment. Additional wild horses found using the allotment are not necessarily considered excess animals for removal, since wild horses are managed on an HMA basis and not by allotment. Numbers within use areas, or allotments, may vary with seasonal movements. Wild horses will only be considered excess and be removed if the total AMLs for the HMAs are exceeded.

The AMLs may be modified based on future monitoring data. If future monitoring data show that an adjustment in grazing use (increase or decrease) is needed to meet the management objectives for the North Butte Allotment, wild horses will receive a proportional increase/decrease along with other users.

AUTHORITY:

The authority for this decision is contained in Sec. 3(a) and (b) of the Wild Free-Roaming Horse and Burro Act (P.L. 92-195) as amended and 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:

Although the 4700 regulations allow for an appeal with no mention of a protest, the entire multiple use decision is initially being sent as a "Proposed" decision. If you wish to protest this decision, in whole or in part, you are allowed fifteen (15) days from receipt of this notice within which to file a protest with James M. Perkins, Assistant Field Manager, Renewable Resources, BLM Ely Field Office, HC 33 Box 33500, Ely, Nevada 89301-9408. Subsequent to the protest period, a final decision will be issued, regardless of whether or not any protests were received. The final decision may be modified in light of pertinent information brought forth during the protest period.

James M. Perkins,
Assistant Field Manager
Renewable Resources

NOTICE OF PROPOSED MULTIPLE USE DECISION
FOR THE
DEEP CREEK ALLOTMENT PORTION OF THE
ANTELOPE WILD HORSE HERD MANAGEMENT AREA

DRAFT

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

This decision addresses the establishment of an appropriate management level (AML) for wild horses within the Deep Creek Allotment portion of the Antelope Wild Horse Herd Management Area (HMA).

The Deep Creek Allotment Proposed Multiple Use Decision (PMUD) was issued September 16, 1994. A Final Multiple Use Decision (FMUD) was never issued. The 1994 PMUD identified an AML of 48 wild horses year-long. This decision will establish the AML of 576 AUMs (48 wild horses year-long).

Changes in grazing management, to meet land use plan objectives and allotment specific objectives, were identified through the PMUD. The recommendation at that time was no change in stocking levels for the Nevada portion of the allotment, because short and long term objectives were being met under current management. The season of use was adjusted from year-long to October 1 through April 30. These changes were never implemented since the FMUD was not issued. Term permits were renewed and issued September 30, 1999. These term permits were issued until February 29, 2000 and reflected past authorized use. The grazing permits were issued only until the start of the next grazing year (March 2000) because, based on the 1994 PMUD, existing management practices were not achieving the standards. In addition, changes had not been made to management practices since that time.

Grazing management practices have been adjusted through a livestock agreement. The livestock agreement was prepared in consultation with the permittees, Kyle Bateman (Bates Permit), Kyle Bateman and Gail Parker. The livestock agreement was signed by the permittees during February and March 2000. The agreement modified the areas of use and addresses the uneven distribution of livestock grazing in the Deep Creek Allotment. The agreement includes the grazing management practices presented in the 1994 PMUD. The agreement will run concurrently with the term grazing permit. The term of the livestock agreement and the term grazing permit are for a three year period beginning March 1, 2000 and ending February 28, 2003. The agreed upon changes in livestock use were made in order to achieve the multiple use objectives and Northeastern Great Basin Area Standards and Guidelines for grazing administration specifically related to the authorized use on the Deep Creek Allotment.

Census and field observations conducted since issuance of the PMUD in 1994 indicate that the AML identified in that document is reasonable for the allotment. Forage will be apportioned for wild horses within the Deep Creek Allotment portion of the Antelope HMA. The majority of the Antelope HMA already has an established AML. This portion of the Antelope HMA has been censused three times

since issuance of the PMUD. Census data for the Deep Creek Allotment portion of the Antelope HMA since September 1994 is as follows:

| Census Date | Animals Counted |
|---------------|-----------------|
| December 1994 | 5 |
| June 1997 | 50 |
| July 1998 | 50 |

This decision proposes to establish the wild horse AML for the Deep Creek Allotment portion of the Antelope HMA, but does not propose to make changes to livestock permitted use.

WILD HORSE AND BURRO MANAGEMENT DECISION

It has been determined through monitoring that a thriving natural ecological balance will be obtained by establishing and maintaining wild horse use at the appropriate management level of 48 wild horses year-long for the Deep Creek Allotment portion of the Antelope HMA. For the Antelope HMA, the AMLs for the Becky Springs Allotment, Cherry Creek Allotment, and Tippet Pass Allotment portions of the HMA remain to be established. The current established AML for the Antelope HMA, including the Deep Creek Allotment portion, is now 287 wild horses year-long. The setting of wild horse numbers by allotment will eventually provide for an overall herd management area wild horse appropriate management level.

Removals will occur on an HMA basis and numbers will be maintained at or near the total AML. Numbers within use areas and/or allotments may be higher or lower than the numbers identified above because of seasonal movements, but the total AML for the HMA will be maintained. The Antelope HMA will continue to be monitored and censused. Appropriate management levels can be adjusted in the future if continued monitoring indicates that an increase or decrease in forage utilization is warranted.

In accordance with 43 CFR 4700.0-6 (a), wild horse use on the Deep Creek Allotment portion of the Antelope HMA shall be managed at 48 wild horses year-long (576 AUMs).

In accordance with 43 CFR 4720.1, in the future, all wild horses in excess of the appropriate management level for the entire Antelope HMA will be removed.

Monitoring will continue to ensure that the AML is maintaining a thriving natural ecological balance. Adjustments in wild horse numbers will be made by future Antelope HMA gathers based on continued monitoring, in order to achieve and maintain the established AML.

RATIONALE:

The analysis and evaluation of available monitoring data indicate that no change in management actions for wild horses are needed to meet multiple use management objectives on the Deep Creek Allotment. The data indicate that there are 576 AUMs available for wild horse grazing use.

The AML of 48 wild horses year-long has been determined to be the optimum level to maintain the thriving natural ecological balance. Additional wild horses found using the allotment are not necessarily considered excess animals for removal, since wild horses are managed on an HMA basis and not by allotment. Numbers within use areas, or allotments, may vary with seasonal movements. Wild horses will only be considered excess and be removed if the total AML for the HMA is exceeded.

The AML may be modified based on future monitoring data. If future monitoring data show that an adjustment in grazing use (increase or decrease) is needed to meet the management objectives for the Deep Creek Allotment, wild horses will receive a proportional increase/decrease along with the other users.

AUTHORITY:

The authority for this decision is contained in Sec. 3(a) and (b) of the Wild Free-Roaming Horse and Burro Act (P.L. 92-195) as amended and 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."

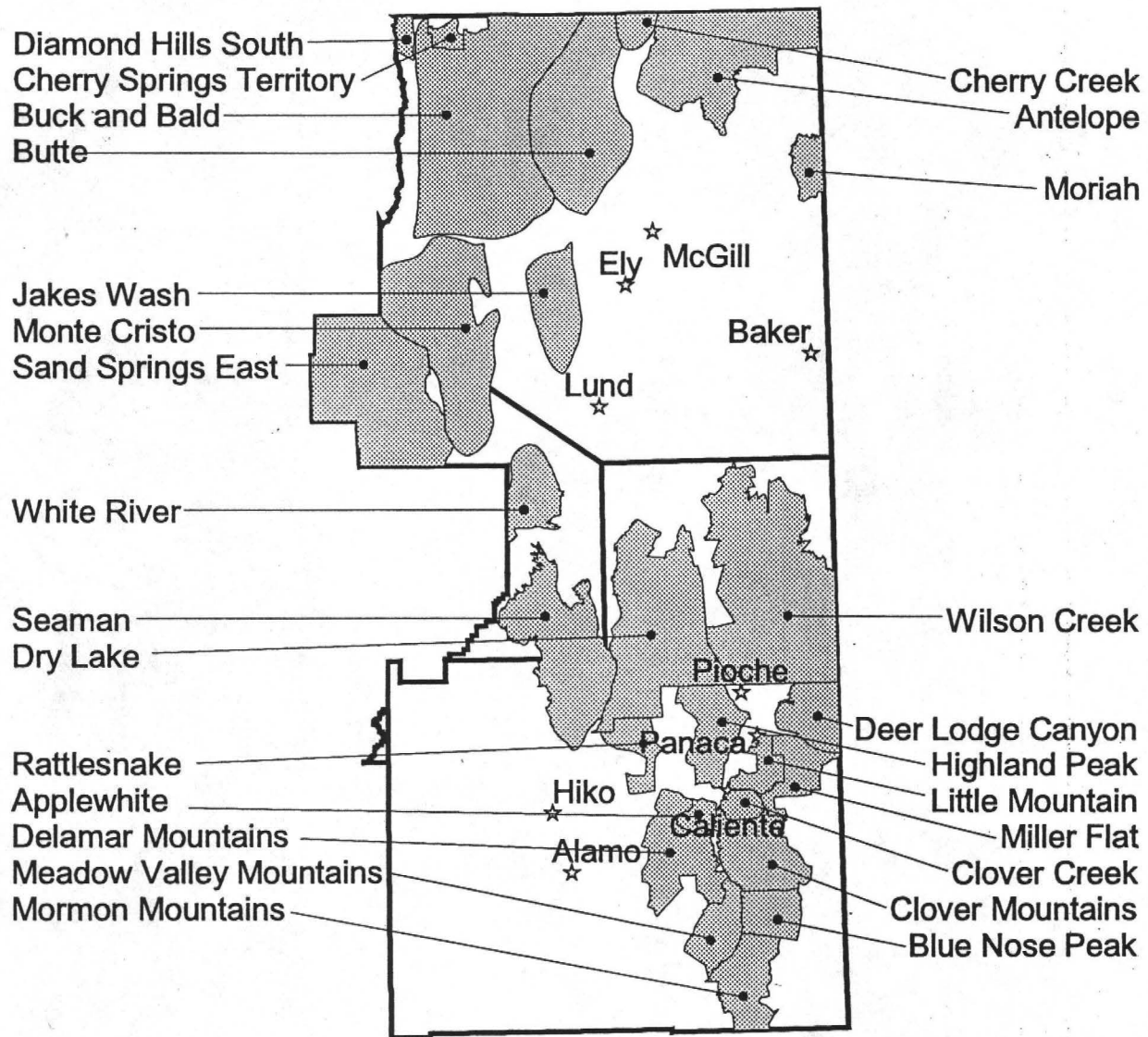
4720.1: "Upon examination of current information and a determination by the authorized officer that an excess of wild horses or burros exists, the authorized officer shall remove the excess animals immediately..."



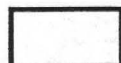
PROTEST:

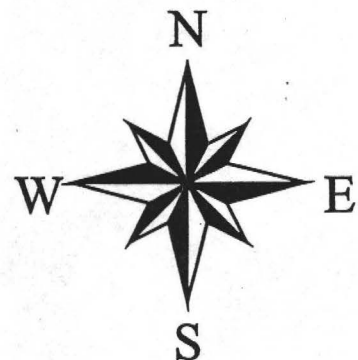
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James M. Perkins,
Assistant Field Manager
Renewable Resources





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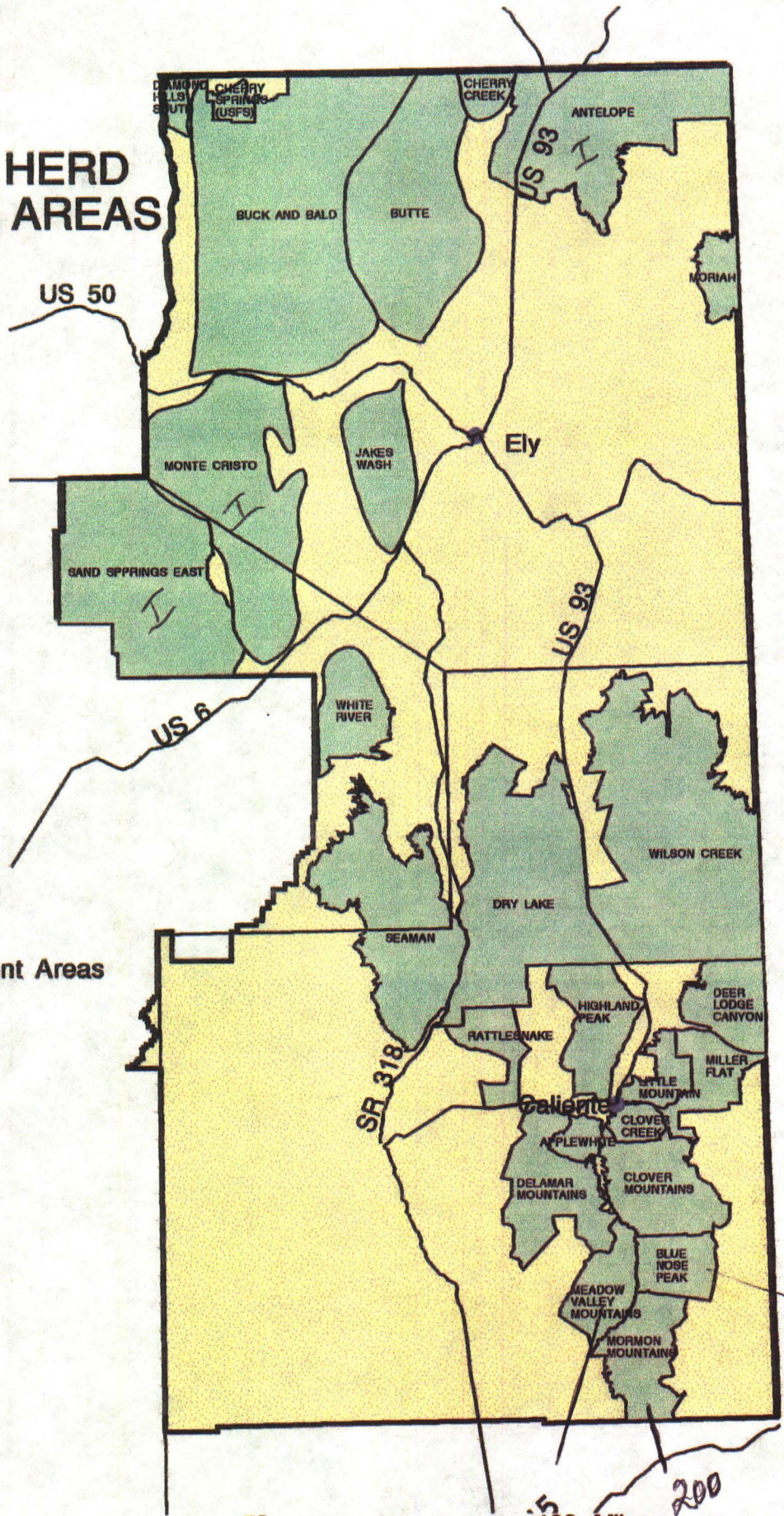


-  Herd Management Area
-  City
-  Ely District Boundary



ELY DISTRICT HERD MANAGEMENT AREAS

-  Herd Management Areas
-  Towns
-  Highways
-  Ely District



NEVADA

