



IN REPLY REFER TO:

United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Ely District Office
HC 33 Box 33500
Ely, Nevada 89301-9408



IN REPLY REFER TO:

4400 (NV-046)

JUN 30 1995

Ms. Cathy Barcomb
255 W. Moana, Suite 207A
Reno, NV 89509

Dear Ms. Barcomb:

We would like to hold another consultation meeting concerning the Seaman Evaluation area on July 11, 1995, at the Ely District Office at 10:00 a.m.

Enclosed are the minutes from the last meeting on June 20, 1995.

If you cannot attend, please write down your comments and mail them to the Ely District Office by June 20, 1995. If you have any questions, call Jay D'Ewart or Bill Coulloudon of my Range staff at (702) 289-1800.

July

Sincerely,

Gerald M. Smith

Gerald M. Smith, Manager
Schell Resource Area

- 1 Enclosure
1. Meeting minutes

Seaman Evaluation Meeting

June 20, 1995

Introduction: The following information contains the minutes of the second consultation meeting. The following individuals were in attendance at this meeting.

In Attendance:

Tom Steele	Permittee, Middle Coal Valley, Oreana Springs, North Hiko Six-Mile, Bird Springs Allotments.
Robert Steel	Permittee
Orren Nash	Permittee, Bird Springs Allotment.
Bert Paris	Permittee, Crescent, Needles Allotments.
Gracian Uhalde	Permittee, Worthington Mountain, Timber Mountain Uhalde Coal Valley Allotments.
Jerry Smith	Area Manager
Bill Coulloudon	Supervisory Rangeland Management Specialist
Jay D'Ewart	Rangeland Management Specialist
Sheree Luttrell	Wild Horse & Burro Specialist
Paul Podborny	Wildlife Biologist

Jay D'Ewart read issue number 1, "unfenced allotment boundary". The idea of combining the Needles Allotment with the Dry Farm Allotment was discussed. Bert Paris should then be able to convert sheep AUMs to cattle AUMs. Bert thought a fence to the north of the new Dry Farm Allotment may not be necessary. Gracian Uhalde agreed with south fence because cattle do drift south onto the Batterman Wash Allotment.

Gracian expressed concern that wild horses are controlling or driving the decision instead of livestock which "Pay their way". Jerry Smith said if we don't consider horses, horse groups will appeal any decisions and nothing will get done. The idea is to achieve a consensus among all permittees and affected interests for future management.

Robert Steele thought the Horse Herd Management Area (HMA) has been enlarged. Sheree Luttrell said it hasn't. It is the same as originally set in the Land Use Plan (LUP). To change the boundary would require a LUP amendment which Jerry is not prepared, or willing to do at this point.

Tom Steele said there were fewer horses years ago, and the numbers have been going up. Sheree said the number will be based on monitoring, and this is why we are doing this evaluation so we can set the number of horses as well as livestock.

Gracian did not have a problem with Bert running west of the Golden Gate Range in combination with Batterman Wash allotment. Also a possibility exists for trading AUMs. If this occurs the boundary fence would be moved slightly to split the well in Garden Valley.

Briefly mentioned the Fox Mountain, Timber Mountain, and Wilson Creek Allotment boundary adjustments. Since the permittees on these allotments were not at this meeting, there was no reason to discuss the details.

Jay discussed proposed Coal Valley Lake Allotment. Tom and Robert asked about the trade of AUMs between them and the Higbees. They were not shown because we didn't know if there would be any adjustments and whether the trade would be made before or after any possible adjustments. The Bureau does not want anyone feeling like they got the short end of the deal by trading now.

Bert was very concerned about the proposed 20:1 conversion. He asked what is the difference between Charles Wadsworths' range on the Dry Farm Allotment compared to his Needles Allotment west of the Golden Gate Range. Bill explained it needs to be looked at closer and we can utilize the 1979 Range Survey.

Orren Nash and Bert Paris stated the area on the Crescent Allotment is good white sage.

The conversion rate will vary depending on the area and vegetation present. It may be a higher or lower rate from one area to the next.

Gracian expressed concern that we are proposing major changes in allotment boundaries, and it will be hard to recommend adjustments because grazing patterns will be different.

The possibility of implementing management verses adjustments to correct the problems out there were discussed, but everyone on an allotment will have to agree.

Jerry reminded everyone that we have to adjust all users based on monitoring data not just horse use and none to livestock. He has to be fair to all users.

Robert was wondering why seismic crews can drive anywhere and create new roads when they have trouble getting permission to blade an existing road. Jerry responded that seismic exploration is non discretionary, and we are limited as to what we can require.

Discussed sharing of water rights and developing water for livestock in an HMA.

Regarding the south portion of Seaman Spring Allotment, Gracian

does not have a problem trading out his 262 AUMs in the proposed Weepah Allotment and having all his AUMs in the South Coal Valley Allotment.

Tom and Robert feel we will need to fence the reservoirs and add additional water haul sites to rotate livestock properly.

Discussed who would do what under different cost share proposals: BLM buys materials, Permittee build fence and/or BLM builds fences, Permittee develop water haul sites.

Also discussed the need to identify all of the projects needed and prioritized them because of money constraints (i.e., BLM budget, permittee funds).

A interim grazing system will need to be followed until necessary projects are installed.

There was concern with combining all the allotments in South Coal Valley. Gracian does not use cattle AUMs in "Uhalde Coal Valley Allotment", (part of Worthington Mountain Preference). The possibility of trading with Bert on Needles Allotment west of the Golden Gate Range to coincide with the Batterman Wash Allotment.

Bert was concerned with sharing waters.

Constructing a fence to separate Gracian and Bert from the rest of the proposed South Coal Valley Allotment. This fence would not be within the Horse Herd Management Area. Gracian and Bert have spent their money to build the Murphy Gap pipeline and are hesitant sharing their water investments with other users.

Jerry suggested providing everyone maps of the areas and letting them draw their boundary lines with agreement amongst themselves. Bert was concerned about dividing costs of the fence between permittees.

Bert reminded the group he has use south of the existing fence on the Irish Mountain Allotment which will allow for a possible rotation system.

Gracian said cattle use on the South Coal Valley and Bird Spring Allotments could be controlled by water with minimal use on Seaman Spring Allotment. BLM would still like to call it one allotment without administrative lines on a map.

Discussed the boundary fence along West Timber Mountain allotment and the problem of horses breaking through the fence. Additional gates could be left open when cows are not on the proposed Coal Valley Lake Allotment might help. Gracian feels that when horse numbers are reduced that will help correct the problem.

Orren feels there needs to be three gap fences within the Bird Springs Allotment (one has already been identified in the Hiko

Narrows). Orren wants to fence along the west side of Bird Springs on the existing boundary line, not along the ridge because cows will continue to drift over the ridge. The proposed fences in the Bird Springs Allotment are not within the Horse Herd Management Area. Orren would allow drift from the proposed South Coal Valley Allotment until he can afford to fence the boundary himself.

According to Tom and Robert, Oreana Spring Pipeline is working. The valve to the end of the pipeline has been turned off because they have not needed it. Tom would like to put another trough somewhere between the two existing troughs.

Bert felt a fence (4-5 miles long) on the northeast side of the Needles Allotment would stop drift onto the Sunnyside Allotment if cattle are allowed to graze on his allotment.

Bert would like to put a pipeline from his headquarters down into the Needles Allotment to the two existing troughs. However, because the Needles Allotment is in the HMA the BLM would be required to have a share of the water rights. Bert would not want to be pumping water when cows would not be there. Bert thought the pipeline may have already been cleared for cultural resources. BLM was going to put the pipeline in if Bert got water to the surface. There is a well and a 30,000 gallon storage tank on a section four permit that the pipelines could be attached to.

Jay discussed coordinating on/off dates on allotments and that all permittees on an allotment should have the same on/off dates generally between September 1st through February 28th. He further explained that some use may be extend into the spring if a grazing system is implemented and rest is provided during the critical spring growing period (March through May). Implementing a grazing system may allow us to set a higher allowable use level (AUL) also. More flexibility may be allowed with more intensive management.

The preferred date for next meeting is July 11, 1995.

There was a question as to whether Charles Wadsworth or Nolan Shumway holds the grazing permit for the Coal Valley Allotment. Some thought Charles is only leasing the base property from Nolan Shumway and that Nolan should be involved in these meetings.

Jay will Meet with the permittees in Alamo on 6/29/95 at 6 PM to discuss:

- Bird Springs Trade
- Fence in South Coal Valley
- Weepah\Oreana Trade

W H O A

WILD HORSE ORGANIZED ASSISTANCE
P.O. BOX 555
RENO, NEVADA 89504

6-13-95



... a note from

Dawn Y. Lappin

June 13, 1995

Gerald Smith, Manager
Schell Resource Area
BLM-Ely District Office
HC33 Box 33500
Ely, Nevada 89301-9408

RE: Seaman Evaluation Meeting, June 20, 1995

Dear Jerry,

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the Seaman Evaluation Meeting of June 20, 1995.

Without being there it is somewhat difficult from Reno to grasp the feelings for the wild horses except for the negative comments by the permittees and the positive from yourself and Sheree regarding management for multiple uses. I feel confident that where horses or livestock are causing the damage that your monitoring will reflect those causes and we will support the need to reduce the horses as well as livestock if that's the case. Our goal is to strive to obtain a healthy habitat for all users.

Not having the whole picture I am a little concerned with the mention of water developments in HMA's that will draw in more livestock to those locations causing more competition for the horses. In addition I saw the mention that the permittee would not want water available to horses and wildlife when his livestock were not in the area. I believe that under the regulations and with shared ownership of the water rights that the water should be available for all users yearly.

Construction of a fence in a HMA is of great concern to us as well as the proposed conversions of sheep AUM's to livestock AUM's. This type of conversion will create competition to wild horses where the forage overlap was not there with sheep.

Gerald Smith, Manager
June 13, 1995
Page 2

As I stated previously, it is very difficult to read a meeting synopsis and fully grasp what direction is intended. With all of the concerns I have just mentioned we will wait for the allotment evaluation to evaluate just how serious our concerns are. I am more than willing to look at any proposed changes in management for the benefit of livestock that wouldn't adversely affect wild horses.

Sincerely,

DAWN Y. LAPPIN
Director

Commission

June 13, 1995

Gerald Smith, Manager
Schell Resource Area
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On another note, we received budget approval to hire a "wildlife/wild horse ecologist. This is the term for a combination wildlife biologist/habitat specialist that will be hired and on board October 1, 1995. This person must also have working knowledge of wild horse habitat requirements as well as the laws governing management of the program. Now we will go from "one of me" to "two of us." This should greatly increase our ability to be able to attend these meetings and become more involved in on the ground management. Hope to be over that way soon.

Sincerely,

CATHERINE BARCOMB
Executive Director