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CLOVER MOUNTAINS AND CLOVER CREEK HERD MANAGEMENT AREAS
EMERGENCY GATHER PLAN

PREPARED BY
Alan B. Shepherd
Wild Horse and Burro Specialist

Caliente Field Station
Ely Field Office
September 2000

I. Purpose and Need

Resource conditions and animal health are currently being adversely affected by severe drought conditions and grasshopper infestations in the southern portion of the Ely District, in Lincoln County, Nevada. The drought conditions prevent the Herd Management Area (HMA) from producing adequate forage to sustain those animals currently occupying the area through the remainder of the year and especially the coming winter. To prevent resource degradation and animal stress, an emergency gather will be initiated.

The Ely Field Office Manager has determined that a Full Force and Effect Decision is necessary to accomplish an emergency gather to prevent resource degradation. Field observations of forage and water availability have indicated that wild horses and their habitat are being negatively impacted. The following conditions exist in the Clover Mountains and Clover Creek HMAs and adjacent non-HMA areas:

- Forage Condition: Current year's growth is extremely limited. Growth on native grasses (Indian ricegrass, small galleta) and seeded crested wheatgrass averaged less than 4 inches. The establishment of forage on the Head Chaining Prescribed Burn project (implemented in 1999) has been severely impacted by the drought and wild horses.
- Forage Utilization: Moderate to severe utilization on herbaceous forage has been documented throughout the emergency gather area due to infestations of grasshoppers, yearlong use by wild horses and seasonal use by livestock.
- Precipitation: Precipitation for the year has averaged 40-50% of normal, with the majority of this precipitation coming in the month of February.
- Water Availability: Water is limited to troughs being filled by the livestock permittee and 2-3 very small spring sources. All reservoirs within the emergency gather area are dry. Following removal of the permittee's livestock, water will no longer be supplied to the troughs in the emergency area.
- Animal Condition: Lact./mares = condition classes 2-5
Studs = condition class 3-5
- Capture Method: Helicopter trapping and/or roping will be the primary method of capture. Water and/or bait trapping will be used in the Cottonwood Allotment as the permittee is gathering his livestock through the use of water trapping and we can remove the wild horses that are captured through this process as these animals are using the same critical water source.
- Number of Animals: Horses: capture 50, remove 40 within the HMA
capture 60, remove 60 outside the HMA
- Age Criterion: All horses

II. Area of Concern

The proposed emergency gather area is located on public lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) Ely Field Office, in Lincoln County, Nevada. The areas of concern are within the Sheep Flat, Mustang Flat, and Cottonwood Allotments within the Clover Mountains and Clover Creek HMAs and the Crossroads and Barclay Allotments (non-HMA), approximately 20 miles east of Caliente, Nevada (refer to Map 1

& 2). No other portions of the Clover Mountains and Clover Creek HMAs will be gathered in conjunction with this emergency gather.

III. Time Frame

The animals will be removed from the HMAs beginning approximately September 10, 2000 and continuing until the emergency gather is completed.

IV. Gather Methods

The animals will be gathered through the use of helicopter trapping and/or roping as well as baiting trapping (water) where feasible. The gather operation will adhere to the "Nevada Wild Horse and Burro Gather Contract" Number 1422-N660-C96-3004.

V. Administration of the Contract

The BLM will be responsible, through the above-cited contract (1422-N660-C96-3004), for all capture, care, and temporary holding of animals until release. The Contracting Officers Representative (COR) will be the Wild Horse and Burro Specialist from the Caliente Field Station, who will be directly responsible for conducting the emergency gather.

VI. Disposal of Removed Animals

All wild horses gathered will be sent to the Ridgecrest Adoption Facility at Ridgecrest, California to be prepared for adoption.

VII. Branded and Claimed Animals

A notice of intent to impound to gather wild horses will be issued concurrently by BLM, prior to any gathering operations in this area. The Nevada Department of Agriculture and the District Brand Inspector will receive copies of these notices, as well as the Notice of Public Sale, if issued. The COR or Project Inspector (PI) will contact the District Brand Inspector and arrange dates and times if brand inspections are needed. Impounded privately owned animals will be handled in accordance with BLM, Nevada State Office Instruction Memoranda NV-84-116 and NV-85-416.

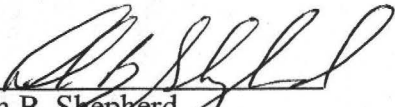
VIII. Destruction of Injured or Sick Animals

Any severely injured or seriously sick animals will be destroyed in accordance with 43 CFR 4730.1. Animals will be destroyed only when a definite act of mercy is needed to alleviate pain and suffering. The COR will make this determination; the advice of a veterinarian will be sought if the COR is uncertain about the severity or the injury or illness. Destruction will be done in the most humane method available.

IX. Responsibility

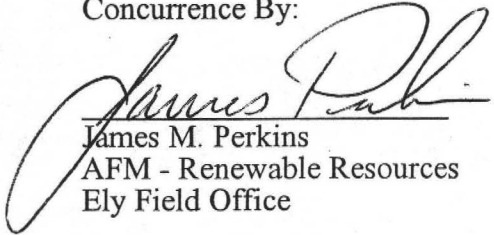
The Ely Field Office Manager is responsible for maintaining and protecting the health and welfare of wild horses. To ensure the contractor's compliance with contract stipulations, a COR from the Ely Field Office will be on site at all times during the emergency gather. The health and welfare of the animals will be the overriding concern of the Field Office Manager, COR and PI.

Prepared By:


Alan B. Shepherd
Wild Horse and Burro Specialist
Caliente Field Station
Ely Field Office

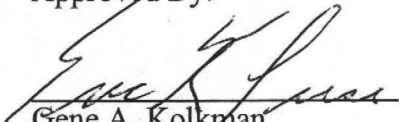
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Date

Concurrence By:


James M. Perkins
AFM - Renewable Resources
Ely Field Office

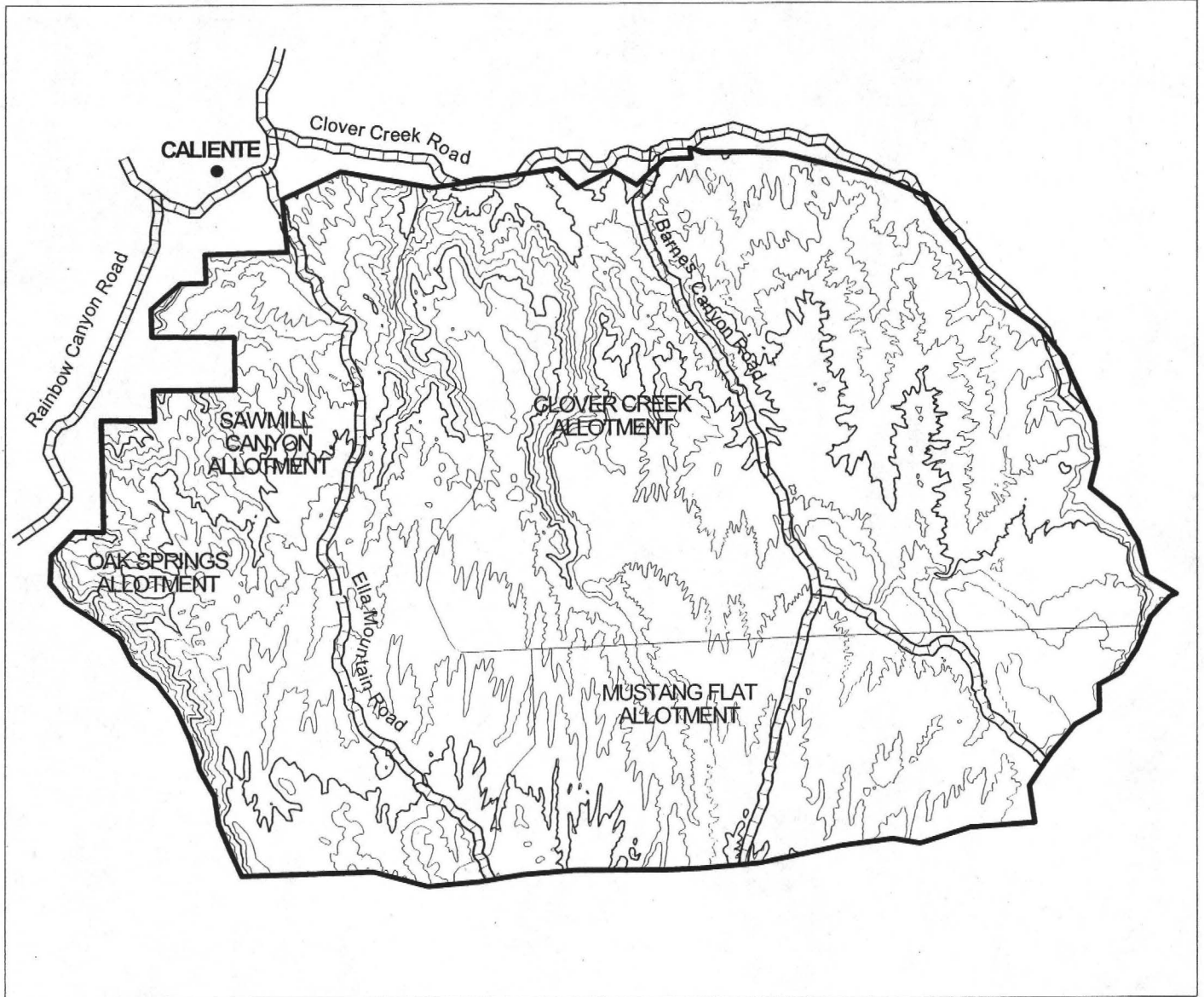
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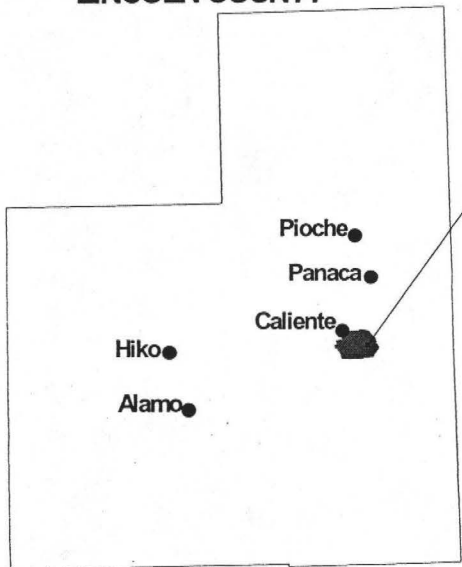

Gene A. Kolkman
District Manager
Ely Field Office

9/5/00
Date

CLOVER CREEK HMA



LINCOLN COUNTY

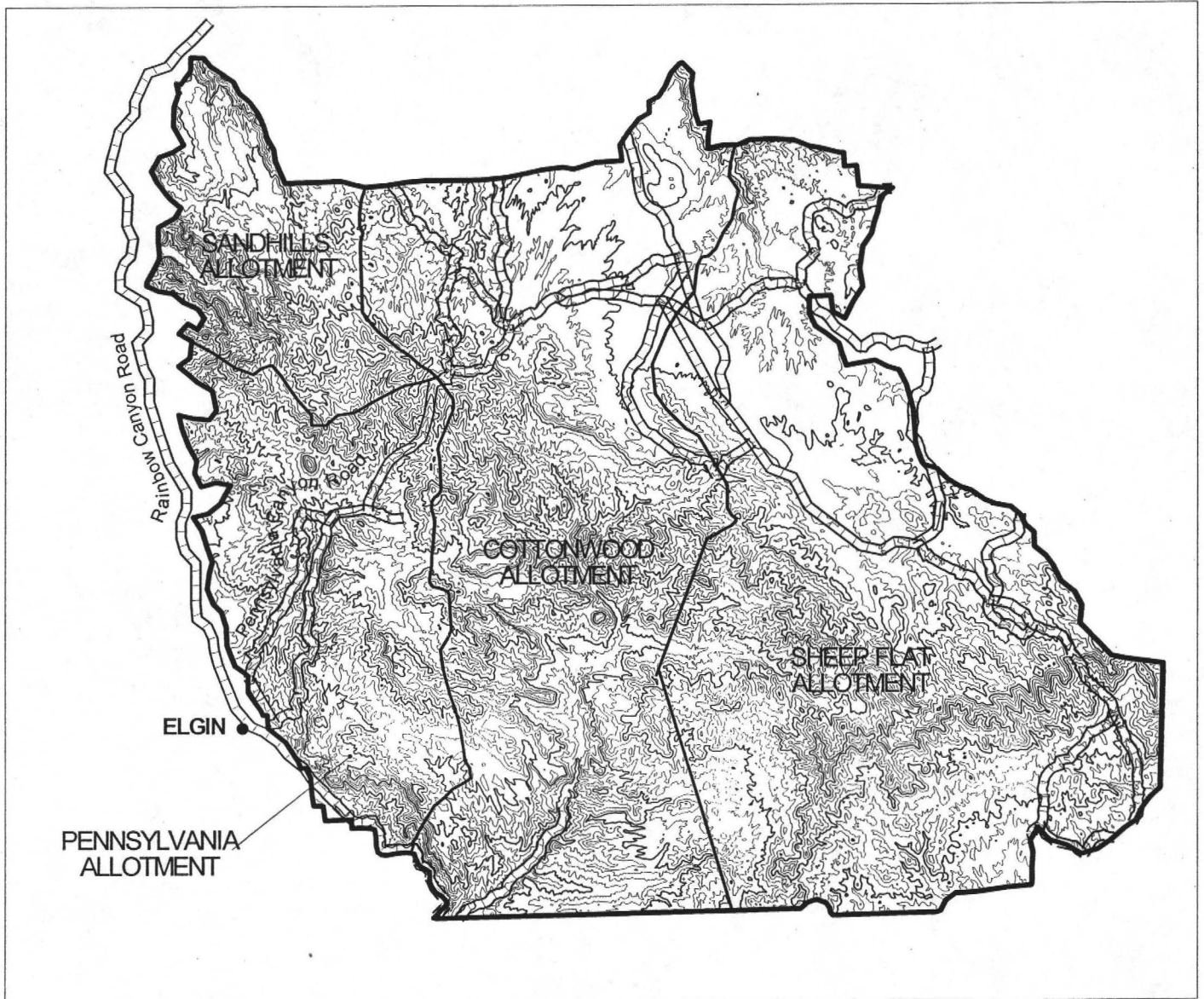


HMA

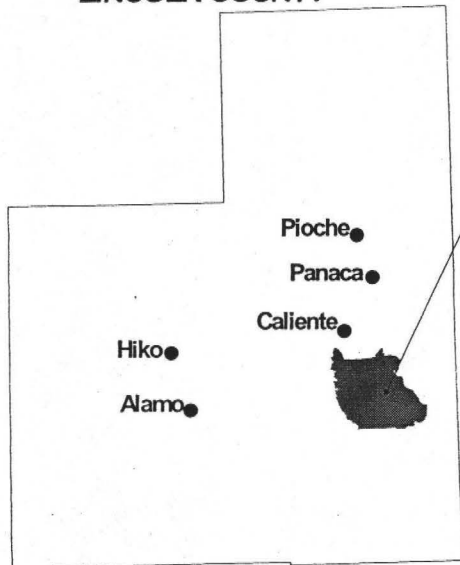
-  Roads
-  Allotment Boundaries
-  HMA Boundary



CLOVER MOUNTAINS HMA



LINCOLN COUNTY



HMA

-  Roads
-  Allotment Boundaries
-  HMA Boundary

