

**U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management**

**Preliminary
Environmental Assessment**

**DOI-BLM-NV-045-200-0023-EA
July 23, 2009**

McGuffy Corral on the McGuffy Allotment

Lincoln County, Nevada

U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Caliente Field Office
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1.0 Introduction: Need for Action

The need for the proposal is to provide for a means for Orren Nash, permittee on the McGuffy Allotment, to gather, brand, ship and properly manage his cattle when grazing on the public lands. He would use the corral to capture his cattle, brand calves during June, July and August, and gather and ship calves in September, October, and November. This would benefit the BLM and resources managed by the BLM by improving grazing management on the McGuffy Allotment.

The legal locations of the proposed corral are as follows:

SE corner of the NW corner of Sec 4, T 2S, R 70E

1.0.1 Background

This Environmental Assessment (EA) addresses the impacts to public land resources associated with the proposal to install a panel corral on the McGuffy Allotment. It is tiered to and incorporates by reference the Ely District Record of Decision and Approved Resource Management Plan (August 2008) which disclosed the cumulative impacts of grazing actions in the Caliente Field Office. This EA fulfills the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirement for site-specific analysis of resource impacts. The proposed action and alternatives to the proposed action are considered.

1.1 Introduction of the Proposed Action.

A corral can be authorized under 43 CFR 4120.3-3 Range improvement permits. The permittee will construct a corral on the McGuffy Allotment near Kiln Spring. The corral will be constructed using 12 foot by 6 foot metal panels. The corral will be 26 feet wide on the south end, 60 feet long on the east, 15 feet wide on the north end, and 80 feet long along the west side. Eight juniper posts will be set as follows: four posts for a loading alley, two posts for snubbing and two posts along the west side to brace the panels. The corral will encompass less than 2,080 square feet (.05 acres). The corral will be constructed on a previously disturbed site. Presently, a small trough captures water outside the existing riparian enclosure fence (the fence was installed by the BLM to protect vegetation at the spring source). The corral will encompass the area and the small trough allowing the permittee to capture cattle as they come in for water.

1.2 Need for the Proposed Action.

Cattle use on the McGuffy Allotment is year round. The cattle have little to no interaction with humans throughout the year and as a result avoid humans. The cattle used on this allotment also have tendency to range farther from water sources and valley bottoms where typically cattle would loiter. Their use is well dispersed across the allotment without the usual areas of concentrated use. Ground disturbance and grazing use is inconspicuous.

The ecological condition of the allotment has departed from the natural range of variability according to Ecological Site Descriptions with the encroachment of piñon/juniper species. The increase in tree canopy provides cover for the cattle and makes usual gather methods difficult, time consuming and costly.

Trapping cattle when they come in to water is the most effective and preferred method for gathering cattle of this type on the McGuffy Allotment and a corral is needed to perform this operation. This would benefit the BLM by helping meet objectives LG-1 and LG-4 of the Ely RMP (2008). Resources managed by the BLM would benefit by providing a more efficient means for the permittee to maintain stocking rates and the marking of cattle, which would aid the BLM in meeting The Standards for Rangeland Health and the monitoring of cattle and grazing on the McGuffy Allotment.

1.3 Objectives for the Proposed Action.

1.3.1. To provide an effective means for gathering, tagging, branding, counting, and removing cattle and maintaining the appropriate stocking rate on the McGuffy Allotment.

1.3.2. To allow continued use of the water source by wildlife and wild horses.

1.4 Relationship to Planning

The Proposed Action is in conformance with the Ely District Record of Decision and Approved Resource Management Plan (RMP) signed August 20, 2008, which states, “Manage livestock grazing on public lands to provide for a level of livestock grazing consistent with multiple use, sustained yield, and watershed function and health.” In addition, “To allow livestock grazing to occur in a manner and at levels consistent with multiple use, sustained yield, and the standards for rangeland health (p. 85-86).” Specifically the Proposed Action is in conformance with LG-1 which states “Make approximately 11,246,900 acres and 545,267 animal unit months available for livestock grazing on a long-term basis.” Conformance is also found within LG-4 of the Ely RMP, which states, “Changes, such as improved livestock management, new range improvement projects, and changes in the amount and kinds of forage permanently available for livestock use, can lead to changes in preference, authorized season-of-use, or kind of livestock. Such changes will continue to meet the RMP goals and objectives, including the standards for rangeland health.”

1.4.1 Relationship to Other Plans

The proposed action has been analyzed within the scope of other relevant plans, statutes, and regulations, listed below and found to be in compliance:

- State Protocol Agreement between the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Nevada and

the Nevada State Historic Preservation Office (1999)

- Lincoln County Elk Management Plan – Approved July, 1999 (Revised 2006)
- Migratory Bird Treaty Act (1918 as amended) and Executive Order (1/11/01)
- The Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act of 1971 (Public Law 92-195)

The proposed action is also consistent with the Lincoln County Public Land and Natural Resource Management Plan (December 5, 1997) which states,

“Lincoln County supports multiple use of the public lands, grazing is a part of this system. Grazing shall be managed to support a healthy range resource, resource utilization must be monitored according to standard accepted range monitoring standards” (page 15).

1.4.2 Tiering

The Proposed Action is tiered to, and incorporates by reference, the Ely District Record of Decision and Approved Resource Management Plan (August 2008) which disclosed the cumulative impacts of grazing actions in the Caliente Field Office.

1.5 Relevant Issues and Internal Scoping

The project was scoped by resource specialists on May 13, 2008. The pertinent issues raised included concerns about wild horses in the Herd Management Area (HMA), wildlife, weeds, and cultural resources.

2.0 Alternatives Including the Proposed Action

2.1 Proposed Action

The permittee would construct a corral on the McGuffy Allotment near Kiln Spring. The corral would be constructed using 12 foot by 6 foot metal panels. The corral would be 26 feet wide on the south end, 60 feet long on the east, 15 feet wide on the north end, and 80 feet long along the west side. Eight juniper posts would be set as follows: four posts for a loading alley, two posts for snubbing and two posts along the west side to brace the panels. The corral would encompass less than 2,080 square feet (.05 acres). The corral would be constructed on a previously disturbed site. Presently, a small trough captures water outside the existing riparian exclusion fence (the fence was installed by the BLM to protect vegetation at the spring source). The corral would encompass the area and the small trough allowing the permittee to capture cattle on an as needed basis. Normal use of the corral is expected to be for a few days two to three times per year. The panels would be left year round to accustom the cattle to seeing panels at the trough, but the trap would be disabled by removing a panel which would allow wildlife to access the trough.

The authorization of water trapping at Kiln Spring and on the McGuffy Allotment will be contingent upon the livestock management plan for the McGuffy Allotment and includes the following stipulations:

1. Water trapping will be conducted for the purpose of gathering cattle and to maintain the authorized stocking level of 25 cattle per year long grazing.
2. Water trapping will be conducted for branding and marking the cattle.
3. BLM will be notified before trapping is conducted.
4. Corral will be checked at no more than 12 hour intervals after setting the trap.
5. Finger gates will need to meet BLM specifications.
6. If wild horses are caught, BLM personnel will be notified immediately. The horse will be assessed for injuries and health and released by a BLM specialist within 24 hours of capture.
7. Cattle and wild horse trapping will be documented. This will include documenting the number of cattle and wild horses trapped and the dates trapped. This will also include whether cattle were released or shipped and the date wild horses are released.
8. Cattle will be branded or earmarked.
9. When 25 cattle have been gathered the remaining will be removed from the allotment.
10. Trap must be disabled when not in use by removing at least one panel and allow for wildlife and wild horse access.
11. Staking, flagging materials, equipment, temporary facilities, litter and all other project related materials will be removed by the proponent within 15 working days following the project. The proponent must notify the authorized officer by telephone, with written confirmation, immediately upon discovery of any hazardous or solid wastes as defined in 40 CFR Part 261.

Permittee must adhere to these stipulations at all times and violations of these stipulations may warrant removal of the trap. In addition to these stipulations, BLM may monitor water source use through the use of trail cameras or other monitoring methods.

2.2 No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, the corral would not be constructed. The management of livestock would not improve and the permittee would continue to have difficulty handling and removing livestock on the west side of the allotment.

2.3 Alternatives Considered but Eliminated from Further Analysis

An alternative to the proposed action involved placing the proposed corral 600 feet west to the Two Kilns Road. This alternative would involve hauling water from the spring or from another source to a trough in the corral. The permittee also voiced concerns that this could result in vandalism and theft to the corral as it increased the visibility of the project.

3.0 Description of the Affected Environment and Associated Environmental Consequences

3.1 Allotment Information

The location of the proposed action is within the McGuffy grazing allotment. The allotment occurs within the Escalante Desert Watershed, bordering the Nevada/Utah state line. The allotment is located 11 miles east of Panaca, Nevada and is located within 24 miles of the Tunnel Spring Wilderness. The allotment encompasses 22,115 acres of BLM managed public land. Permitted livestock use is 25 head of cattle year round. The allotment is part of the Eagle Herd Management Area.

One of the springs within the allotment is Kiln Springs, located in Kiln Wash. The flow of water from Kiln Spring is highly dependent on precipitation. In the spring, after snow melt the water will flow about a hundred yards down the wash. During the remainder of the year, the spring does not flow beyond the ex closure fence. A plastic pipe runs across the ground to a trough located outside the fence in the bottom of the wash. Animals including cattle, wild horses, and wildlife drink out of the trough.

3.2 Resources/Concerns Considered for Analysis - Proposed Action

The following items have been evaluated for the potential for significant impacts to occur, either directly, indirectly, or cumulatively, due to implementation of the Proposed Action.

Consideration of some of these items is to ensure compliance with laws, statutes or Executive Orders that impose certain requirements upon all Federal actions. Other items are relevant to the management of public lands in general and to the Ely BLM in particular.

Resource/Concern Considered	Issue(s) Analyzed	Rationale for Dismissal from Analysis or Issue(s) Requiring Detailed Analysis
Air Quality	No	No long term impacts
Cultural Resources	Yes	Cultural Needs Assessment completed
Paleontological Resources	No	Does not affect
Native American Religious Concerns and other concerns	No	None present
Noxious and Invasive Weed Management	Yes	Potential for the introduction of weeds.
Vegetative Resources (Forest or Seed Products)	No	Impacts from livestock grazing on Vegetation Resources were analyzed on page 4.5-9 in the Ely Proposed Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement (November 2007). Beneficial impacts to vegetative resources are consistent with the need and objectives for the Proposed Action. No further analysis is needed.
Rangeland Standards and Health	No	In accordance with LG-1 and LG-4 of the Ely RMP.
Forest Health	Yes	May affect resource
Wastes, Hazardous or Solid	No	No known hazardous or solid wastes occur at or within the vicinity of the Proposed Action area. Waste materials including human waste, trash, garbage, petroleum products, etc., would be disposed of promptly at an appropriate waste disposal site. Accidental fuel/oil spills would be cleaned up immediately, removed from the Proposed Action area, and disposed of at an approved site. No hazardous material would be improperly used, produced, transported, or stored on or within the Proposed Action area or during drilling operations. No impacts would occur from hazardous or solid wastes.
Wilderness	No	None present
Special Designations other than Designated Wilderness	No	There are no special designations within the allotment boundaries.

Resource/Concern Considered	Issue(s) Analyzed	Rationale for Dismissal from Analysis or Issue(s) Requiring Detailed Analysis
Wetlands/Riparian Zones	Yes	The project is downstream of a small spring source.
Water Quality, Drinking/Ground	No	No drinking water sources affected. Would not affect ground water as no subsurface impacts would occur.
Water Resources (Water Rights)	No	Does not affect. There is no right filed for this water.
Floodplains	No	The project would not hinder the overland flows due to runoff events.
Migratory Birds	No	The project would not affect water/perching opportunities which would remain available year round. No nests would be disturbed.
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Listed or proposed for listing Threatened or Endangered Species or critical habitat.*	No	None present
Special Status Plant Species, other than those listed or proposed by the UFWS as Threatened or Endangered	No	None present
Special Status Animal Species, other than those listed or proposed by the UFWS as Threatened or Endangered	No	None present
Fish and Wildlife	Yes	Elk and deer utilize the adjacent spring.
Wild Horses	Yes	Occurs in the Eagle Herd Management Area
Vegetation/Soils/Watershed	No	Soil compaction is currently occurring around the trough from cattle, wild horse and wildlife use.
Mineral Resources	No	Does not affect
VRM	No	Occurs in Class III VRM area with low visibility.
Recreation Uses	No	Does not affect
Grazing Uses	No	The project would improve livestock management and handling.
Land Uses	No	Does not affect
Environmental Justice	No	No populations affected

Potentially Affected Elements of the Human Environment

Based on the review of existing information BLM specialists have identified the following as potentially affected elements of the human environment:

- Forest and Rangeland Health
- Noxious Weeds, Invasive, Non-Native Species
- Wetlands/Riparian
- Wild Horses and Burros
- Livestock Grazing

- Soils/Vegetation/Watersheds
- Wildlife
- Cultural

3.2.1 Forest and Rangeland Health

The project occurs in a dry wash near the Kiln Burn and reseeded area. The small spring source attracts animals to the area which utilize the reseeded vegetation. The surrounding hills are heavily invaded by juniper and piñon and would be classified as Class III of the Fire regime condition class

3.2.2 Noxious and Non-native, Invasive Weeds

No field surveys were conducted for this project. Instead the Ely District weed inventory data was consulted for this project. There are currently no documented weed infestations in the Kiln Springs area. The following species are found along roads and drainages leading to the project area:

<i>Carduus nutans</i>	Musk thistle
<i>Centaurea stoebe</i>	Spotted knapweed
<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>	Bull thistle
<i>Lepidium draba</i>	Hoary cress
<i>Lepidium latifolium</i>	Tall whitetop
<i>Linaria dalmatica</i>	Dalmatian toadflax
<i>Onopordum acanthium</i>	Scotch thistle
<i>Tamarix spp.</i>	Salt cedar

While not officially inventoried the following weeds probably occur in or around the allotment: cheat grass (*Bromus tectorum*), field bindweed (*Convolvulus arvensis*), halogeton (*Halogeton glomeratus*), Russian thistle (*Salsola kali*), puncturevine (*Tribulus terrestris*), and woolly mullein (*Verbascum thapsus*). This area was last inventoried for noxious weed in 2003.

3.2.3 Wetlands and Riparian

One of the springs within the allotment is Kiln Springs, located in Kiln Wash. The flow of water from Kiln Spring is highly dependent on precipitation. In the spring, after snow melt the water will flow about a hundred yards down the wash. During the remainder of the year, the spring does not flow beyond the ex closure fence. A plastic pipe runs across the ground to a trough located outside the fence in the bottom of the wash. Animals including cattle, wild horses, and wildlife drink out of the trough.

The riparian exclosure and spring are currently being impacted by elk despite available water outside of the exclosure. This is due to elk seeking riparian vegetation located inside the exclosure.

During trapping other water sources are available within a couple miles of Kiln Spring.

3.2.4 Wild Horses and Burros

The McGuffy allotment is within the Eagle Herd Management Area which has an appropriate management level (AML) of 100-210 horses. Wild horses use the McGuffy allotment seasonally. Wild horses are normally encountered in the allotment when snow accumulation in the higher elevations causes them to move into the lower elevations of the herd management area.

3.2.5 Livestock Grazing

The McGuffy allotment is located 11 miles east of Panaca, Nevada. The allotment encompasses 22,115 acres of BLM managed public land. Permitted livestock use is 25 head of cattle year round. The cattle graze the allotment in small groups. When pressured they scatter into the thick trees and brush. They prefer to graze in areas with escape cover nearby. These cattle cannot be gathered and worked like most other cattle. They must be roped individually or water trapped. It is easier and safer to water trap the cattle. In other areas of the allotment, the permittee uses water traps to manage his cattle effectively.

3.2.6 Soils

Soils are Itca-Rock outcrop association. It is about 60 percent Itca very stony loam and 25 percent Rock outcrop. Runoff is medium or rapid, and the hazard of erosion is slight to moderate. The Itca series consists of shallow, well-drained soils that formed in residuum weathered from rhyodacitic ignimbrite. They are on steep foothills and mountains. Slopes are 2 – 50 percent. This soil association is not assigned to a range site. (1971 USDA)

3.2.7 Wildlife

Wildlife in the McGuffy allotment includes mule deer (*Odocoileus hemionus*), elk (*Cervus canadensis*), pronghorn antelope (*Antilocapra americana*), coyotes, gray fox, bobcats, and mountain lions, as well as many species of small mammals. The following data reflect survey blocks and/or incidental sightings of bird species within the allotment boundaries from the Atlas of the Breeding Birds of Nevada (Floyd et al. 2007). These data represent birds that were confirmed, probably, or possibly breeding within the allotment boundaries. These data are not comprehensive, and additional species not listed here may be present within the allotment boundary. Bird species recorded in a survey block that included Kiln Spring included turkey vulture (*Cathartes aura*), red-tailed hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*), mourning dove (*Zenaidura macroura*), broad-tailed hummingbird (*Selasphorus platycercus*), **Lewis's woodpecker** (*Melanerpes lewis*), northern flicker (*Colaptes auratus*), gray flycatcher (*Empidonax wrightii*), ash-throated flycatcher (*Myiarchus cinerascens*), western scrub-jay (*Aphelocoma californica*), **pinyon jay** (*Gymnorhinus cyanocephalus*), common raven (*Corvus corax*), mountain chickadee (*Poecile gambeli*), rock wren (*Salpinctes obsoletus*), Bewick's wren (*Thryomanes bewickii*), blue-gray gnatcatcher (*Polioptila caerulea*), western bluebird (*Sialia mexicana*), mountain bluebird (*Sialia currucoides*), northern mockingbird (*Mimus polyglottos*), yellow-rumped warbler (*Dendroica coronata*), black-throated gray warbler (*Dendroica nigrescens*), **yellow-breasted chat** (*Icteria virens*), green-tailed towhee (*Pipilo chlorurus*), spotted towhee (*Pipilo*

maculatus), chipping sparrow (*Spizella passerine*), lark sparrow (*Chondestes grammacus*). Of these bird species, Lewis's woodpecker, pinyon jay, and yellow-breasted chat are BLM sensitive species.

Reptiles within the allotment include many species of lizards and both poisonous (rattlesnakes) and non-poisonous snakes. Water for wildlife is available within the adjacent riparian enclosure. Wildlife use the area inside the enclosure presently as evidenced by their tracks and droppings. There are presently no known wildlife species unable to use the water in the enclosure.

3.2.8 Vegetation

Vegetation is pinyon pine, Utah juniper, Wyoming sagebrush, black sagebrush, bitter brush, and various grasses. Vegetation at the proposed site includes rabbit brush, perennial grasses, , and wood's rose.

3.2.9 Cultural

There have been three inventories that have recorded five sites within one mile of the project area. The sites that have been recorded include; two isolated artifacts of the prehistoric time period, two sites of the prehistoric time period, and one site of the historic time period. Of the five recorded sites there is one historic property that has been listed on the National Register of Historic Places. A historic property is a property that has been listed or is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) or a property that has been designated as historic under a statute of the appropriate State or local government body.

4.0 Environmental Effects

4.1 Noxious Weeds, Invasive, Non-Native Species

Concentrated cattle use in and around the corral could increase the opportunity for the introduction of undesirable weeds. The use of the corral site for handling and loading of livestock could provide opportunities for weeds to become established. The site would be monitored especially after the construction of the corral to ensure construction activities do not introduce weed species. The site already receives use from cattle, elk, deer, and wild horses. It is not expected that the corral would greatly increase the occurrences of weeds on the site. BLM personnel and the permittee would monitor the corral for noxious and invasive weeds when doing vegetation monitoring on the allotment. Any noxious weeds that infest the project area would be treated by the permittee according to BLM policy. Refer to the Noxious and Invasive Weed Risk Assessment in the appendix II.

No Action:

The existing vegetation is already impacted by animals utilizing the spring and the wash for forage and cover. This condition is would remain unchanged by not constructing the corral.

4.2 Wetlands and Riparian

Proposed Action:

The corral would be located in the bottom of Kiln Springs wash, downstream from Kiln Spring. For much of the year the only water outside the ex closure is the water that has been piped to the trough. Cattle, wild horses and wildlife already concentrate use in the wash due to the presence of water. Wildlife use occurs in the ex closure built by the BLM as they can jump over the fence. Cattle occasionally enter the ex closure when wires become loose. The corral would not affect the riparian area which is fenced presently.

No Action:

Wildlife, wild horses, and livestock would continue to congregate in the wash to drink.

4.3 Wild Horses and Burros

Proposed Action:

Wild horses would be unable to drink at the trough when the panels to the corral are closed. This condition would only exist during trapping. The permittee will agree to stipulations that require checking the trap within 24 hours of it being set. Also, several other springs offer plenty of water to wild horses including Marchell Spring, two miles southeast, and Summit Spring four miles south. No fences presently impede the horses from traveling between these waters. When no trapping is occurring, the corral would be left open to allow animals to access the trough for water.

No Action:

Wild horses would continue to drink at the trough.

4.4 Livestock Grazing, Range Management, and Standards for Rangeland Health

Proposed Action:

Construction of the corral would allow the permittee to water trap his cattle. This would reduce stress on the cattle. Construction of the corral would also allow the permittee to brand his calves and remove individuals for marketing in a timely manner. Improved livestock management and handling could indirectly cause improvements to rangeland health overall. Removal of the permittee's cattle is problematic due to their wild nature. Capturing them at a fenced water source (corral with trough) is the most effective manner to do this. The corral would be a useful tool for removing cattle during times of drought and after wildfire to protect or improve rangeland conditions.

No Action:

With no corral available, the permittee would continue to rope individual animals to brand and remove to market. It would be difficult to manage cattle in a timely manner.

4.5 Soils

Proposed Action:

Soil compaction associated with the use of the corral could occur. The soils under the corral are sandy textured. These do not compact, but soils adjacent to the corral are loamy and are presently compacted. This condition would continue.

No Action:

Soil compaction would continue to occur as animal use is concentrated around the trough.

4.6 Wildlife

Proposed Action:

Most wildlife species would not be impacted due to the presence of livestock in the corral. Water is available for wildlife within the existing riparian enclosure. Therefore, a closed corral around the existing trough would not hinder wildlife use. Noise and activity related to the construction of the corral would initially inhibit wildlife from accessing the spring. This would subside quickly. Periodic use of the corral for trapping and handling livestock would again disrupt wildlife use of the spring. This is not expected to last for more than a few days two or three times per year. Other waters are available within two miles of the site. No birds would be prevented from water access and no nests would be disturbed from this project.

No Action:

Wildlife would continue to drink at the trough or within the riparian enclosure

4.7 Vegetation

Proposed Action:

Vegetation would be impacted by livestock with or without the corral. This impact could lead to an increase of rabbit brush, wild rose and annual grasses such as cheat grass.

No Action:

Vegetation would continue to be impacted around the trough by animals drinking and grazing near the enclosure

4.8 Cultural Impacts

Proposed Action

The proposed action would not impact the known cultural resources in the area. There have been three inventories that have recorded five sites within one mile of the project area. The sites that have been recorded include; two isolated artifacts of the prehistoric time period, two sites of the prehistoric time period, and one site of the historic time period. Of the five recorded sites there is one historic property that has been listed on the National Register of Historic Places. A historic property is a property that has been listed or is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) or a property that has been designated as historic under a statute of the appropriate State or local government body.

There is no historic General Land Office Survey Plat for this section nor is there anything to suggest historic use of the area on the Master Title Plats. It is safe to say that this area was used extensively in the past due to the Charcoal Kilns that are present. The time and energy expended in the construction of these kilns suggests that this area was heavily used for an extensive period of time.

No Action:

There would be no impacts to cultural resources

4.9 Cumulative Impacts

Past Actions:

Kiln Spring was fenced circa 1990.

A portion of the McGuffy allotment burned during the Two-Kiln fire in 1995. The burned portion was reseeded successfully. An older burn to the south of the Two-Kiln burn was also reseeded. The age of the burn is not known.

The two charcoal kilns occur just north of the spring and the site of the corrals. The historic kiln site was fenced following the Two-Kiln Fire.

The Level 3 Fiber Optic project was installed near the Highway 319 Right of Way several years ago which occurred on the southern border of the allotment.

Present Actions:

There are no known projects being planned in the immediate vicinity of the project.

Reasonably Foreseeable Actions

The present actions would continue. No other known projects are planned.

Cumulative Impacts Summary

Soils, weeds and vegetation are the resources most likely to experience cumulative impacts from the proposed action. There would be some soil compaction associated with the use of the corral. Presently there is very little vegetation on the proposed corral site, but any vegetation within the corral would be trampled. Over time this might lead to less vegetation or different vegetation within the corral or allow the establishment of weed species within the corral.

Most past and all present and reasonably foreseeable future actions have noxious and invasive weed prevention stipulations and required weed treatment requirements associated with each project. This in combination with the active BLM Ely District Weed Management Program will minimize the spread of weeds throughout the watershed.

5.0 Proposed Mitigation and Monitoring

5.1 Proposed Mitigation

Concerns about wild horses becoming trapped by utilizing the trough in the corral would be minimized by terms and conditions for use by the permittee. The permittee would not be allowed to set the trap without first notifying the Caliente BLM. The trap must be checked in no more than 12 hour intervals after setting the trap. Unmonitored trapping would be a violation of the agreement and could result in the removal of the project upon detection.

If Cultural Resources are discovered during the ground disturbing activities the proponent shall ensure that all activities within 100 meters associated with the undertaking are halted, the discovery is appropriately protected, and appropriate BLM officials are contacted. The proponent shall not continue with the project until the BLM Authorized Officer issues a Notice to Proceed. This is in accordance with the State Protocol Agreement between the Bureau of Land Management, Nevada and the Nevada State Historic Preservation Office.

No bird nests would be disturbed or destroyed during project implementation.

5.2 Proposed Monitoring

Noxious and invasive species are the main concern for the proposed action. Even so, there are few weed species occurring on the allotment outside of the Highway 319 Right of Way. Monitoring of the site and the road leading to the site would decrease the chance that noxious weeds could become established. Specific actions would depend on the species encountered.

6.0 Consultation and Coordination

Initial scoping was done with the Ely field office interdisciplinary team. This EA attempts to minimize concerns identified in scoping.

6.1 Public Interest and Record of Contacts

6.2 Internal District Review

Karen Prentice, Emergency Stabilization Rehabilitation Coordinator

Lynn Wulf; Archaeologist

Melanie Peterson: Environmental Protection Specialist, Haz/Mat/ Safety

Gordon Graves; Realty Technician

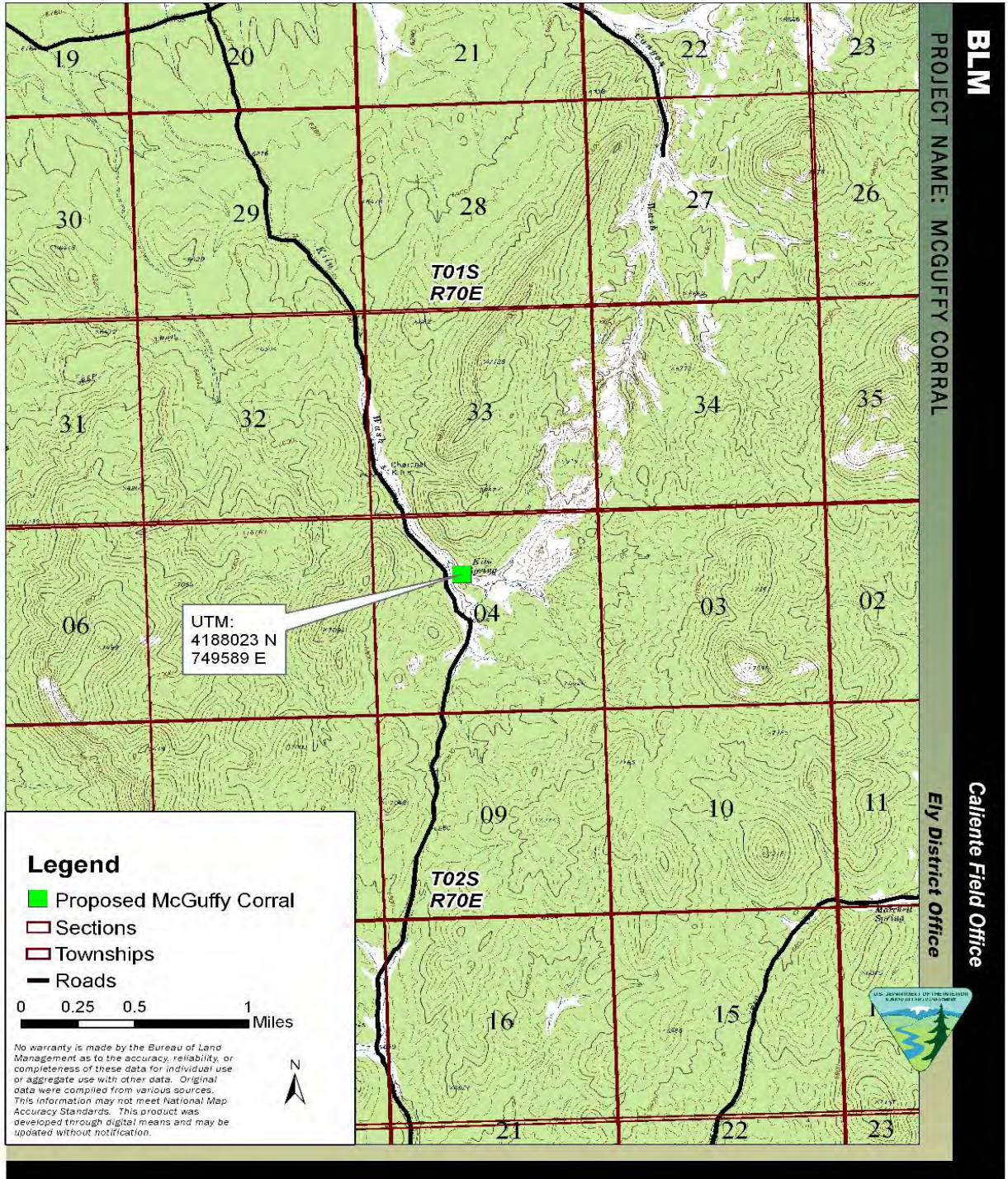
Shirley Johnson; Range Conservationist

Bonnie Million, Noxious and Invasive Weed Coordinator

Ben Noyes, Wild Horse and Burro Specialist

APPENDIX I

Map



APPENDIX II
(EA)
RISK ASSESSMENT FOR NOXIOUS & INVASIVE WEEDS
McGuffy Allotment Corral & Water Trough
Lincoln County, Nevada

On May 16th, 2008 a Noxious & Invasive Weed Risk Assessment was completed for a corral and water trough for the McGuffy Allotment. Permittee Orren Nash wishes to construct a corral on the McGuffy Allotment 80 feet north of the Kiln Springs enclosure. A water trough would be constructed within the corral and be supplied with a water line from Kiln Spring. The corral would be constructed of 12 ft x 6 ft metal panels. Corral dimensions would be 15 feet wide on the north, 60 feet long on the east side, 26 feet wide on the south end and 80 feet long on the west side. Mr. Nash wishes to construct the corral to manage his livestock. He would use the corral to water trap his livestock. He would use the corral to brand calves during the summer. Later in the fall he would use the corral to gather and ship calves.

No field surveys were conducted for this project. Instead the Ely District weed inventory data was consulted for this project. There are currently no documented weed infestations in the Kiln Springs area. The following species are found along roads and drainages leading to the project area:

<i>Carduus nutans</i>	Musk thistle
<i>Centaurea stoebe</i>	Spotted knapweed
<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>	Bull thistle
<i>Lepidium draba</i>	Hoary cress
<i>Lepidium latifolium</i>	Tall whitetop
<i>Linaria dalmatica</i>	Dalmatian toadflax
<i>Onopordum acanthium</i>	Scotch thistle
<i>Tamarix spp.</i>	Salt cedar

While not officially inventoried the following weeds probably occur in or around the allotment: cheatgrass (*Bromus tectorum*), field bindweed (*Convolvulus arvensis*), halogeton (*Halogeton glomeratus*), Russian thistle (*Salsola kali*), puncturevine (*Tribulus terrestris*), and woolly mullein (*Verbascum thapsus*). This area was last inventoried for noxious weed in 2003.

Factor 1 assesses the likelihood of noxious/invasive weed species spreading to the project area.

None (0)	Noxious/invasive weed species are not located within or adjacent to the project area. Project activity is not likely to result in the establishment of noxious/invasive weed species in the project area.
Low (1-3)	Noxious/invasive weed species are present in the areas adjacent to but not within the project area. Project activities can be implemented and prevent the spread of noxious/invasive weeds into the project area.
Moderate (4-7)	Noxious/invasive weed species located immediately adjacent to or within the project area. Project activities are likely to result in some areas becoming infested with noxious/invasive weed species even when preventative management actions are followed. Control measures are essential to prevent the spread of noxious/invasive weeds within the project area.
High (8-10)	Heavy infestations of noxious/invasive weeds are located within or immediately adjacent to the project area. Project activities, even with preventative management actions, are likely to result in the establishment and spread of noxious/invasive weeds on disturbed sites throughout much of the project area.

For this project, the factor rates as Moderate (4) at the present time. The ground disturbance created by the livestock congregating in the corral and around the water trough could lead to the introduction of new weed infestations to the project area.

Factor 2 assesses the consequences of noxious/invasive weed establishment in the project area.

Low to Nonexistent (1-3)	None. No cumulative effects expected.
Moderate (4-7)	Possible adverse effects on site and possible expansion of infestation within the project area. Cumulative effects on native plant communities are likely but limited.
High (8-10)	Obvious adverse effects within the project area and probable expansion of noxious/invasive weed infestations to areas outside the project area. Adverse cumulative effects on native plant communities are probable.

This project rates as High (8) at the present time. If new weed infestations establish within the project area this could have an adverse impact those native plant communities since the areas are currently considered to be weed-free. Also, any increase of cheatgrass could alter the fire regime in the area.

The Risk Rating is obtained by multiplying Factor 1 by Factor 2.

None (0)	Proceed as planned.
Low (1-10)	Proceed as planned. Initiate control treatment on noxious/invasive weed populations that get established in the area.
Moderate (11-49)	Develop preventative management measures for the proposed project to reduce the risk of introduction of spread of noxious/invasive weeds into the area. Preventative management measures should include modifying the project to include seeding the area to occupy disturbed sites with desirable species. Monitor the area for at least 3 consecutive years and provide for control of newly established populations of noxious/invasive weeds and follow-up treatment for previously treated infestations.
High (50-100)	Project must be modified to reduce risk level through preventative management measures, including seeding with desirable species to occupy disturbed site and controlling existing infestations of noxious/invasive weeds prior to project activity. Project must provide at least 5 consecutive years of monitoring. Projects must also provide for control of newly established populations of noxious/invasive weeds and follow-up treatment for previously treated infestations.

For this project, the Risk Rating is Moderate (32). This indicates that the project can proceed as planned as long as the following measures are followed:

- Prior to entering public lands, the BLM will provide information regarding noxious weed management and identification to the permit holders affiliated with the project. The

importance of preventing the spread of weeds to uninfested areas and importance of controlling existing populations of weeds will be explained. (The permittee will be asked to avoid if possible, the area with bull thistle and salt cedar present.)

- The range specialist for the allotments will include weed detection into project compliance inspection activities. Any newly established populations of noxious/invasive weeds discovered will be communicated to the Ely District Noxious and Invasive Weeds Coordinator for treatment. Any weed control procedures be in compliance with the appropriate BLM handbook sections and applicable laws and regulations.
- To eliminate the introduction of noxious weed seeds, roots, or rhizomes all interim and final seed mixes, hay, straw, hay/straw, or other organic products used for feed or bedding will be certified free of plant species listed on the Nevada noxious weed list or specifically identified by the BLM Ely Field Office.
- Grazing will be conducted in compliance with the Ely District BLM noxious weed schedules. The scheduled procedures can significantly and effectively reduce noxious weed spread or introduction into the project area.

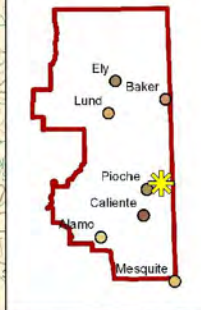
Reviewed by: _____
Bonnie M. Million
Ely District Noxious & Invasive Weeds Coordinator

5/16/2008
_____ Date

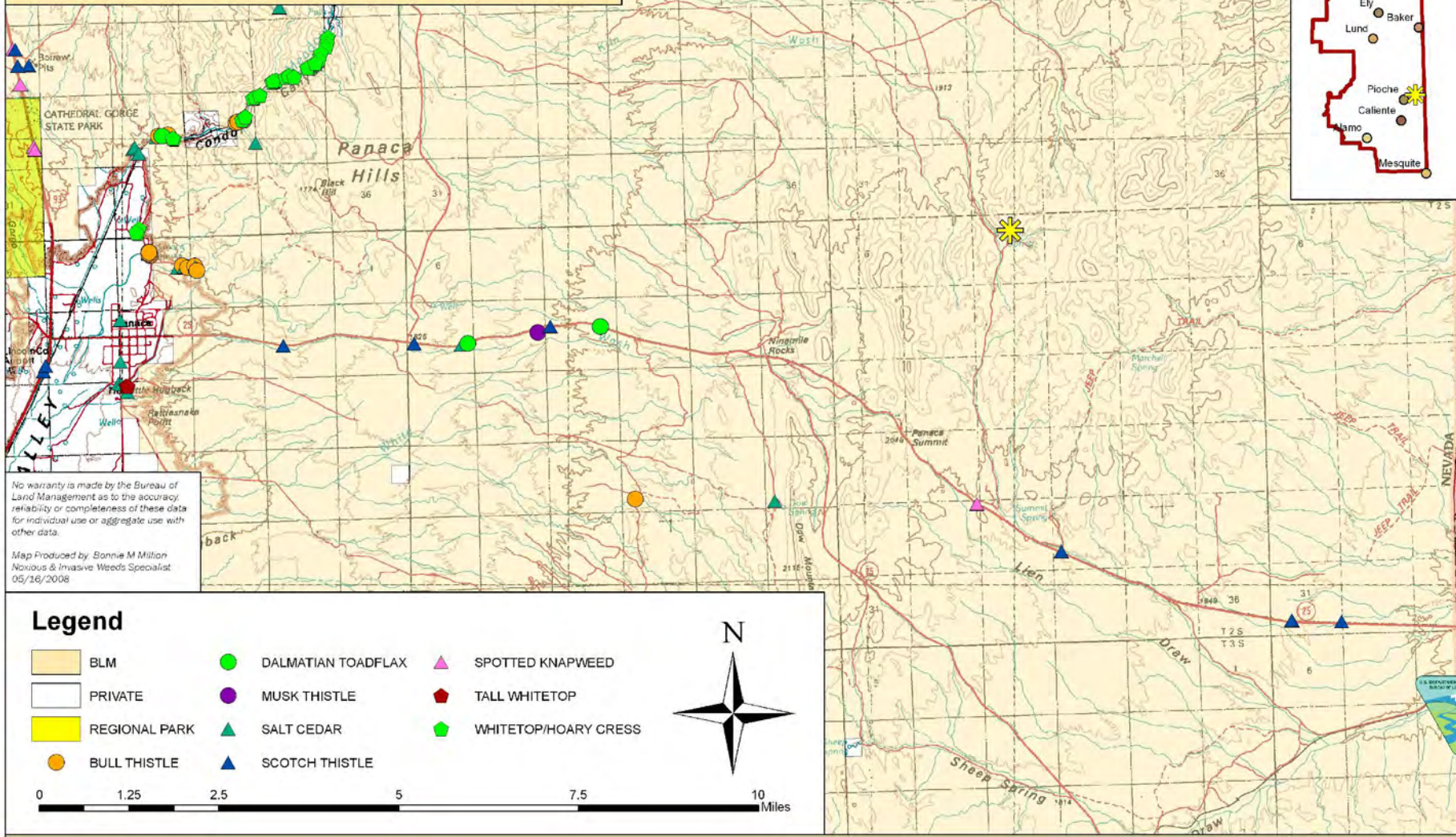
McGuffey Corral & Water Trough

Documented Noxious & Invasive Weed Infestations

Location within the Ely District boundary



BLM

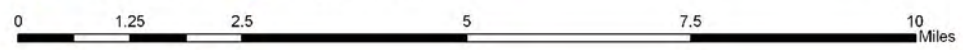


No warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management as to the accuracy, reliability or completeness of these data for individual use or aggregate use with other data.

Map Produced by: Bonnie M Million
Noxious & Invasive Weeds Specialist
05/16/2008

Legend

- | | | | | | |
|--|---------------|--|--------------------|--|----------------------|
| | BLM | | DALMATIAN TOADFLAX | | SPOTTED KNAPWEED |
| | PRIVATE | | MUSK THISTLE | | TALL WHITETOP |
| | REGIONAL PARK | | SALT CEDAR | | WHITETOP/HOARY CRESS |
| | BULL THISTLE | | SCOTCH THISTLE | | |



Ely District Office

