



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
WINNEMUCCA DISTRICT OFFICE
705 East 4th Street
Winnemucca, Nevada 89445

G 4/8/86
IN REPLY REFER TO:

4700
(NV-023.5)

4/14/86

April 8, 1986

Dawn Lappin

Wild Horse Organized Assistance
P.O. Box 555
Reno, NV 89504

Dear ~~Sirs~~ *Dawn* :

In a continuing effort to implement the Winnemucca District's Land Use Plans (LUPs), we have scheduled two wild horse and burro removal contracts this year.

The first contract is scheduled to start about July 1 with the removal of 1,924 animals from eight Herd Areas (HAs). These animals will be removed from HAs which are located near Gerlach, Nevada. The Appropriate Management Levels (APLs) for these 8 HUAs total 2,212 wild horses and 11 burros. The second contract will begin about October 1, and 1,270 animals will be removed from another eight HAs. These HAs are all located within a 30 mile radius of Winnemucca, Nevada. This is checkerboard land and all horses are to be removed. Enclosed are copies of the final Environmental Assessment (EA) and Removal Plans (RP) for these 16 HAs.

Following the drafting of future wild horse and burro plans there will be a 30 day public comment period to obtain as much input as possible. You or your organization will automatically receive copies of our draft wild horse and burro plans. Your suggestions/comments will be incorporated into our final plans to the extent possible.

We invite you to view our removal operations. Further, if there are aspects of our district wild horse and burro program you wish to discuss please let us know. My staff and I will be glad to meet with you. For follow-up, please write or call Dick Wheeler, District Wild Horse and Burro program leader, at 702-623-3676.

Sincerely yours,

Frank C. Shields
Frank C. Shields
District Manager

Enclosures

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Winnemucca District Office

WILD HORSE/BURRO MANAGEMENT

4740

Paradise-Denio Resource Area

JACKSON MOUNTAIN HERD USE AREA

GATHERING PLAN

I. Introduction

The intent of this gathering plan is to outline the methods and procedures to be used in removing approximately 65 wild horses from the Jackson Mountain Herd Use Area (HUA). The gathering operation is scheduled to take place between July 1 and September 30, 1985, and should take approximately one week to complete.

II. General Area Description-Background Data

The Jackson Mountains are located approximately 40 air miles west of Winnemucca, Nevada (see Attachment #1). The range has a north-south orientation. The HUA is approximately 40 miles long and 12 miles wide. Elevations range from a high of 8,910 feet at King Lear Peak to a low of 4,000 feet at Buckbrush Springs on the west side of the Jackson Mountains.

The vegetation at the lower elevations includes greasewood, shadscale-budsage changing to big sagebrush-grass, low sagebrush-grass, and grass at the higher elevations.

The area to be considered for the wild horse gathering consists of parts of the Jackson Mountain, Deer Creek, Happy Creek, and Desert Valley Allotments. The allotments are located in the Denio Planning Unit of the Paradise-Denio Resource Area (see Attachment #2).

Land status is as follows:

TABLE 1.

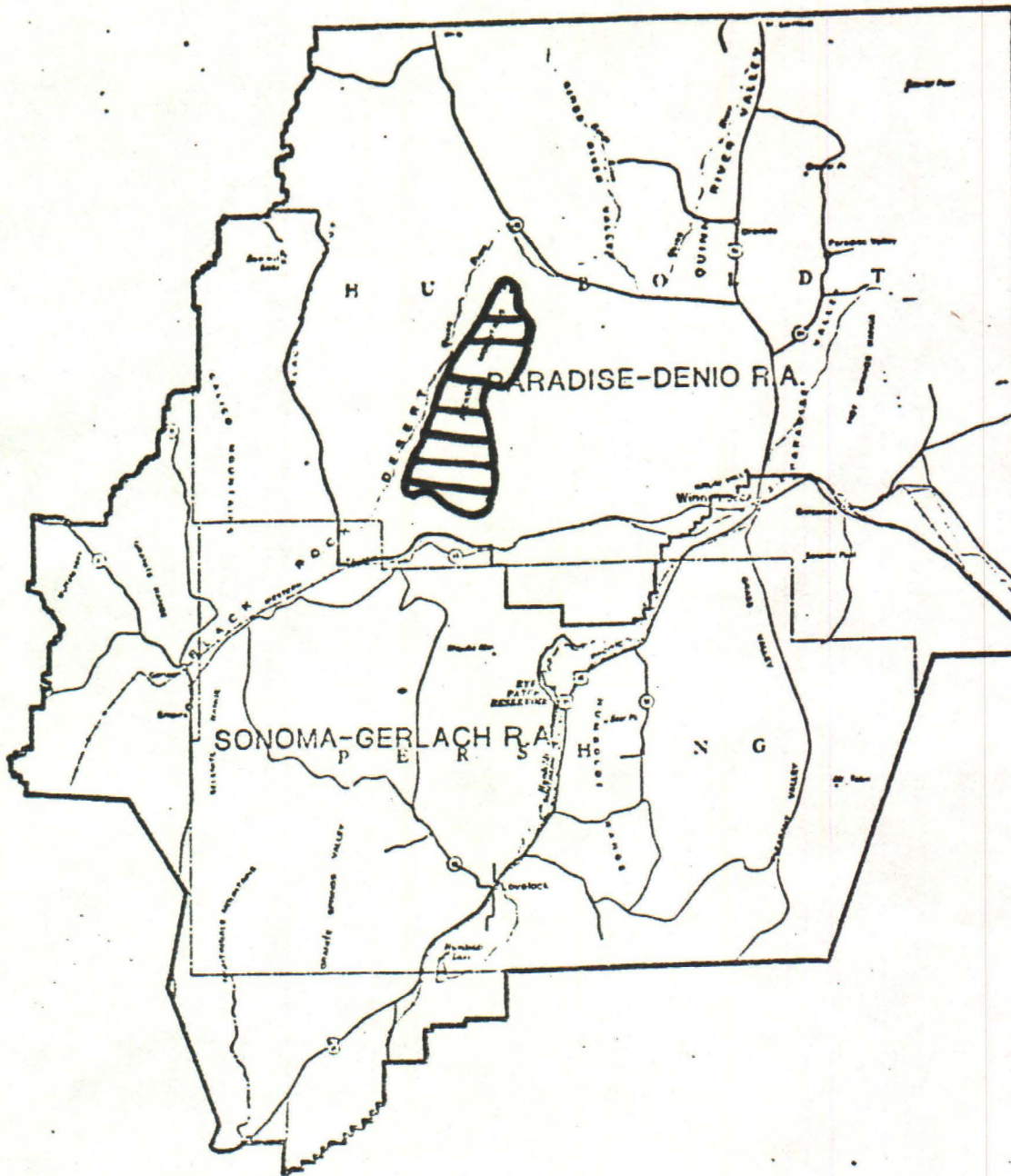
<u>Allotment</u>	<u>Public Land (%)</u>	<u>Private Land (%)</u>	<u>Total Acres</u>
Jackson Mountain	485,207 Acres (98)	11,620 Acres (2)	496,827
Deer Creek	30,396 Acres (99)	306 Acres (1)	30,702
Happy Creek	95,566 Acres (99)	897 Acres (1)	96,463
Desert Valley	56,830 Acres (98)	1,005 Acres (2)	57,835

In 1980 the area was inventoried with a Bell 47G3B-1 helicopter in a grid pattern. a total of 166 horses were counted, with the following breakdown in each allotment, in 1980, estimated current population, number to be removed, and the appropriate management level (AML) or number to remain.

TABLE 2.

<u>Allotment</u>	<u>Inventoried Numbers (1980)</u>	<u>Estimated Population</u>	<u>Number To Remove</u>	<u>AML Number To Remain</u>
Jackson Mountain	123	208	48	160
Deer Creek	15	25	5	20
Happy Creek	28	47	12	35
Desert Valley	Incidental numbers	-	-	-
TOTAL	166	280	65	215

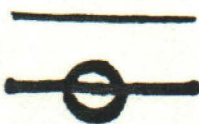
The area supports a population of mule deer, antelope, bighorn sheep, and a low density population of chukar, sage grouse, mourning dove, and valley quail, based on figures supplied by the Nevada Department of Wildlife.



WINNEMUCCA DISTRICT



HERD USE AREA



ALLOTMENT BOUNDARY

HERD USE AREA BOUNDARY

1

JACKSON MOUNTAIN ALLOTMENT

2

DEER CREEK ALLOTMENT

3

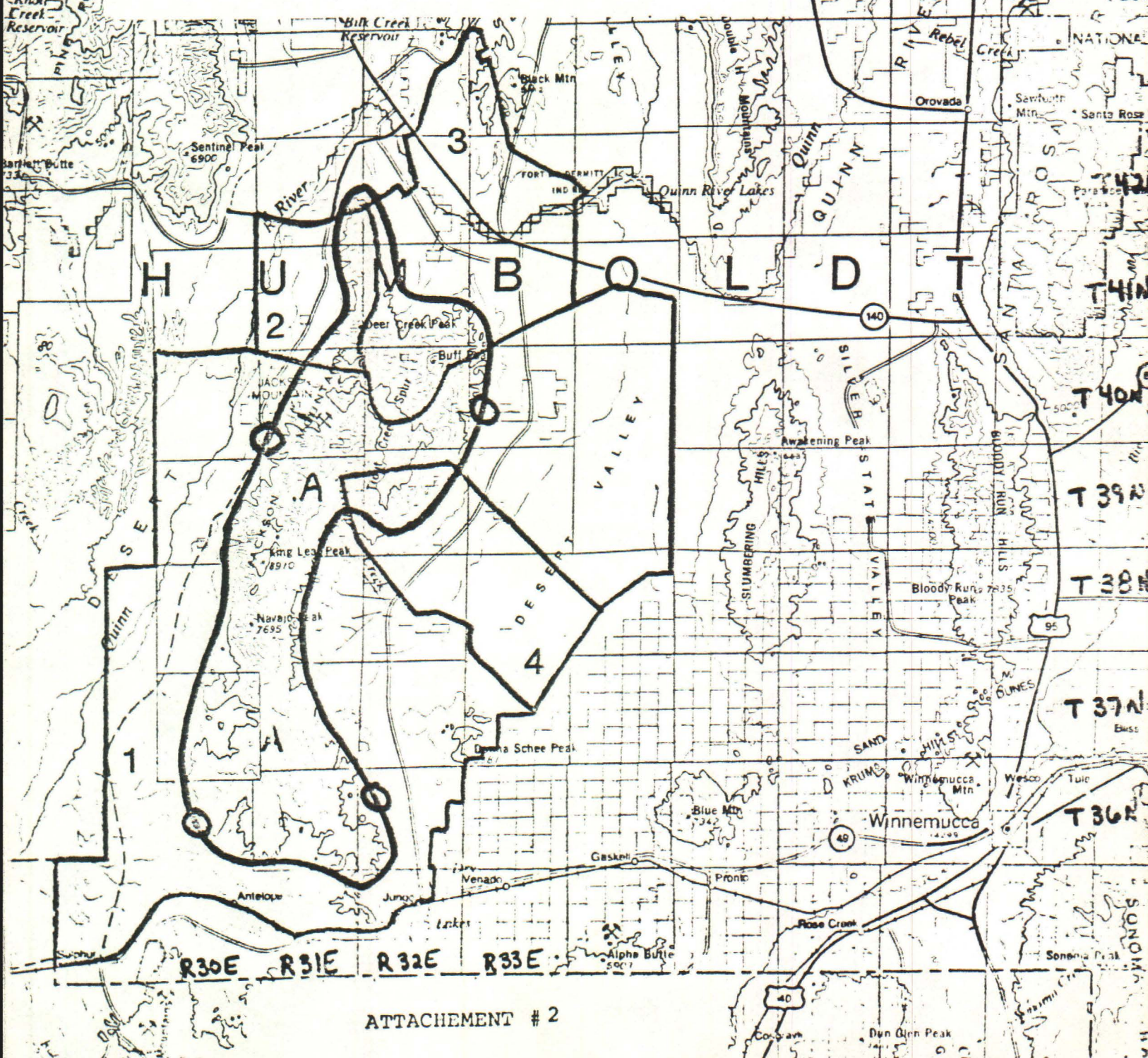
HAPPY CREEK ALLOTMENT

4

DESERT VALLEY ALLOTMENT

A

JACKSON MOUNTAIN H U A



ATTACHEMENT # 2

II. Justification

Section 14 of Public Law 95-514, the "Public Rangelands Improvement Act of 1978," states that the Secretaries of Interior and Agriculture shall "determine appropriate management levels of wild free-roaming horses and burros on areas of public lands; and determine whether appropriate management levels should be achieved by the removal or destruction of excess animals, or other options (such as sterilization or natural controls on population levels)."

A land use plan has recently been developed for the Paradise-Denio Resource Area. A major portion of this plan was the preparation and publication of the Grazing Environmental Impact Statements which analyzed five different alternatives to manage public lands: (1) distribute available vegetation to livestock, wildlife, and wild horses/burros; (2) no action; (3) no livestock grazing, (4) maximize livestock; and (5) maximize wild horses/burros. The final analysis culminated with the issuance of the Winnemucca District Manager's Management Framework Plan (MFP) Step III Decisions on June 30, 1982. The decisions received the State Director's concurrence on July 9, 1982.

The MFP III WH/B decision number 1.1 provides for the retention and management of wild horses/burros on non-checkerboard lands in the resource area. The decision stated that existing/current numbers (as of July 1, 1982) would be used as a starting point for monitoring purposes except where one of the following conditions exist:

1. Numbers are established by adequate and supportable resource data.
2. Numbers are established through the CRMP process as documented in CRMP recommendations and agreed to by the District Manager.
3. Numbers are established by formal signed agreement between affected interests.
4. Numbers are established through previously developed interim capture/management plans. Plans are still supportable by parties consulted in the original plan. EAs (EARs) were prepared and are still valid).
5. Numbers are established by court order.

At the present time none of the five above-mentioned conditions exist for the Jackson Mountain HUA. Therefore, the appropriate management level for this area will be the estimated population numbers as of July 1, 1982, which is 280 wild horses.

Capture Plan and Methods

Wild horses will be rounded up through the use of a helicopter. The horses will be directed toward temporary capture corrals by means of a helicopter. Wings (from 1/8 to 1/4 mile) will be constructed leading into the corral. When the horses have been driven to within 1/4 to 1/2 mile of the trap, riders on horseback will then flank the animals and guide them into the trap. Once the horses are in the trap the gate will

be closed by hand. Should a horse break back at the trap, it will be roped, if possible, by the riders.

It is expected that the number of animals that are driven into the traps will vary from one to 35 horses at a time.

The capture corrals will generally be circular (100' in diameter) and constructed of approximately 90 to 100 portable panels (height 6' to 7'). Each trap will have in addition a small holding corral (100' in diameter) adjoining the trap. This corral will also be circular and constructed from portable panels. The trap will be camouflaged with sagebrush or juniper.

Captured horses will be loaded into stock trailers to be transported from the traps to the holding facilities.

Wings constructed or meant for restraint will be made from portable panels (6' to 7' high), but other devices used to turn horses will be made from white rope or ribbon stretched on 6 1/2' steel fence posts. The fence posts will be spaced from 50' to 100' apart, depending upon the terrain.

The helicopter will carry a Bureau employee when necessary and, should the horses become unnecessarily stressed, the BLM employee will instruct the pilot to break off the pursuit so that the animals may rest and recover. All attempts will be made to move and keep bands together.

A Bureau of Land Management employee will make careful determination of boundary lines to serve as an outer limit within which attempts will be made to herd horses to a given trap. Topography, distance, and current condition of the horses are factors that will be considered in setting the limits to avoid undue stress on the horses while they are being herded. Each area will be flown prior to the start of trapping to locate any hazards to the horses while being herded (fences, cliffs, etc.).

More than one trap site will be needed in the capture area. Each site will be located after the habits of the horses in that area are determined. In general, all sites will be located to cause as little damage to the natural resources of the area as possible. Sites will be located close to existing roads when possible, and all sites will be approved by a qualified Bureau employee.

As the horses are captured at the trap sites they will be loaded onto gooseneck trailers or stock trucks and shipped to Palomino Valley or to temporary holding corrals in the area.

Branded or privately-owned animals whose owners are known will be impounded by BLM, and if not redeemed by payment of trespass and capture fees, will be sold at public auction. If owners are not known, the private animals will be turned over to the State for processing under Nevada estray laws.

The area adjacent to each trap site will be thoroughly worked by the helicopter until the authorized officer determines the trap should be moved to another location.

Captured horses that are obviously lame, deformed, or sick will be humanely disposed of at the trap site. If an animal has to be destroyed the carcasses will be placed in as inconspicuous a location as possible to minimize the visual impact. The carcasses will not be placed in the bottoms of drainages and will be scattered so as not to concentrate them in one area.

Any horses that have been moved to the temporary holding corrals will be shipped by single deck trucks only, as transportation is available, to the Bureau's Palomino Valley corral facility.

The sole responsibility of the gathering crew is to capture the wild horses/burros in the safest and most humane manner. The district authorized officer will make the determination as to which horses will be shipped to the Palomino Valley corral facility and which horses will be released for study purposes or humanely destroyed at the trap site by a qualified Bureau employee.

Any transportation of captured animals will be subject to the following humane procedures as outlined in CFR section 4740.2(b) (1-5) and 4740.2(c):

- (1) All such transportation shall be in compliance with appropriate State and Federal laws and regulations applicable to the humane transportation of horses and burros.
 - (2) Vehicles shall be in good repair, of adequate rated capacity, and carefully operated so as to insure that captured animals are transported without undue risk of injury.
 - (3) Vehicles shall be inspected and approved by an authorized officer prior to use.
 - (4) Where necessary and practical, animals shall be sorted as to age, size, temperament, sex, and condition when transporting them so as to minimize, to the extent possible, injury due to fighting and trampling.
 - (5) The authorized officer shall consider the condition of the animals, weather conditions, type of vehicles, and distance to be transported when planning for the movement of captured animals.
- (c) The transportation of wild free-roaming horses and burros shall be under humane conditions. Unless otherwise approved by the authorized officer, transportation shall be limited, in sequence, to a maximum of 24 hours followed by a minimum of five hours of on-the-ground rest with adequate feed and water.

Stipulations For Gathering


1. Archeological clearance will be done on all trap sites prior to their construction. If archeological values are present, trap sites will be moved. Traps will not be placed near any of the identified historic sites. The Nevada Division of Historic Preservation and Archeology will be notified before any action is taken.

2. All corral panels will be from 72" to 84" high in order to prevent horses from jumping out of traps.
3. Brutality to horses in any form will not be tolerated. Any person who mistreats any horse will be dismissed immediately from the roundup operation.
4. The helicopter shall be under the direct supervision of a duly authorized BLM employee. He must be able to communicate with the pilot and be able to direct the use of the helicopter so as to observe the effects on the well being of the animals.
5. Only experienced horseback riders will be used in the gathering operations.
6. All saddle horses will be properly shod and over three years in age. All saddles and tack will be in good repair.
7. Only experienced drivers will be used to transport the horses to the holding facilities.
8. The helicopter will have radio communication with the Authorized Officer or his designated representative at all times.
9. The United States Fish and Wildlife Service and the Nevada Department of Wildlife will be notified before any action is taken.
10. Disturbed ground around each trap site will be rehabilitated in such a manner that is determined feasible by the District Specialist.
11. A qualified Bureau employee will clear all sites prior to construction, to insure that a trap will not significantly impact any Federal or State listed or proposed threatened or endangered sensitive plant species. If significant disturbance is anticipated, the trap site will be moved.
12. A veterinarian will be on call at all times during the roundup operation. The veterinarian will never be more than 100 miles from the roundup operation. In an emergency, the veterinarian could be helicoptered in, arriving in one to one and a half hours.
13. Every effort will be made to locate a trap near existing horse trails so that once the animals are started towards the capture area they will be able to pick a natural route and proceed at their own pace.
14. Allowance are made for high temperatures so that horses are not driven long distances in hot conditions.
15. Generally, captured animals shall not be held in traps or temporary holding facilities more than 24 hours prior to transportation to Palomino Valley. Horses held for 10 hours or more in the traps and/or holding facilities will be provided fresh clean water and good quality hay.

16. Roping will be done only at the direction of the authorized officer. Under no circumstances will horses be tied down for more than one hour.
17. No activity will be allowed in areas where sensitive, threatened, or endangered plants or animal species occur.
18. All activities within WSAs will be in compliance with the Interim Management Policy. Traps within the WSA will be placed on roads or ways and allowed to extend no more than 50 feet on either side of the road or way. Cross-country travel would be allowed so long as it does not cause impacts inconsistent with the requirements of the nonimpairment criteria outlined in the IMP.

VI. Signatures

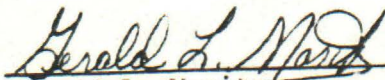
Lead responsibility:



Robert L. Smith
Range Conservationist


3/21/85
Date

Reviewed by:



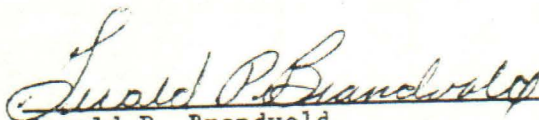
Gerald L. Moritz
Environmental Coordinator

26 March 85
Date



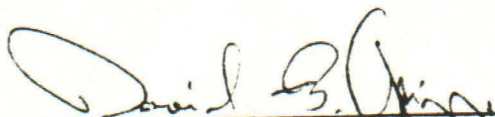
Richard D. Wheeler
District Wild Horse/Burro Specialist

3-21-85
Date



Gerald P. Brandvold
Sonoma-Geirlach Resource Area Manager

3/26/85
Date



David B. Griggs
Paradise-Denio Resource Area Manager

3-26-85
Date

Submitted to State Director by:

For Robert J. Neery
Frank C. Shields
District Manager, Winnemucca

3/26/85
Date

Approved by:

Edward F. Spang
Edward F. Spang
State Director

1/28/86
Date