



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Winnemucca District Office
705 East 4th Street
Winnemucca, Nevada 89445

✓ 12/10/93
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4160
(NV-026.1)

December 10, 1993

CERTIFIED MAIL NO. P374306735

RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

NOTICE OF PROPOSED FULL FORCE AND EFFECT MULTIPLE USE DECISION SOLDIER MEADOWS ALLOTMENT

R.C. Roberts
801 A Street
San Rafael, CA 94901

Dear Mr. Roberts:

The Record of Decision for the Sonoma/Gerlach Environmental Impact Statement and the Management Framework Plan - Land Use Plan - was issued on September 9, 1982. These documents established the multiple use goals and objectives which guide management of the public lands in the Soldier Meadows Allotment.

In 1988, the Soldier Meadows Allotment was evaluated using monitoring data to determine whether or not the Land Use Plan's (LUP) objectives were being met. As a result of that evaluation an agreement was negotiated with the permittee which specified a grazing system, established a livestock grazing preference, and site specific objectives.

Monitoring has been conducted to determine if livestock grazing, wild horse and burros use, and wildlife use are within the objective parameters established in the LUP. These objectives were carried forward in the Soldier Meadows Allotment Agreement and Management Plan, and the Fox Mountain, Mahogany Creek and Soldier Meadows Desert Dace Habitat Management Plans. Since the 1988 evaluation, additional monitoring has been collected and analyzed to determine whether or not progress is being made in meeting the multiple use objectives for the Soldier Meadows Allotment. In addition, this information will direct changes, if any are required, in management actions to meet those objectives.

Through the allotment re-evaluation process the Bureau of Land Management determined that changes in existing management are required to achieve the multiple use objectives for the allotment. Analysis of the monitoring data indicates that the existing numbers of wild horses and management of livestock is contributing to the failure in meeting parameters of the LUP and the 1988 Allotment Agreement multiple use objectives. Analysis of wildlife and burro monitoring data does not indicate a need for change in the existing management even though wildlife species are impacting their habitat. Therefore, this decision changes livestock management and numbers, the grazing system,

establishes new or modifies objectives, and establishes an Appropriate Management Level (AML) for wild horses and burros resulting in a thriving natural ecological balance.

The draft re-evaluation was sent to interested parties which initiated the consultation, coordination, and cooperation process. Twelve individuals or groups submitted comments that were incorporated into the document.

As a result of this process, and in consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service under section 7 of the Endangered Species Act my proposed decisions are:

ALLOTMENT WIDE MULTIPLE USE OBJECTIVES

These objectives will be monitored and evaluated to ascertain the success of the grazing system and management actions:

A. RIPARIAN OBJECTIVES

Requantify short term objective 1. and long term objectives 1. and 2. to the following:

1. Do not exceed 30% utilization of current years growth on the key riparian trees and shrubs on all reaches, which includes: Aspen (Populus tremuloides) and Willows (Salix spp.). For Mahogany, Summer Camp, and Snow Creeks grasses and grass-like plants will have a minimum stubble height* of 6 inches. 4 inch stubble height will apply for Coleman, Slumgullion, and Donnelly Creeks when the cows leave the pasture for the following: Nevada Bluegrass (Poa nevadensis), Sedges (Carex spp.), Rushes (Juncus spp.), Intermediate Wheatgrass (Agropyron intermedium), and Tufted Hairgrass (Deschampsia cespitosa).

* The height of standing herbaceous vegetation in the flood plain. This residual vegetation protects stream bank soils during high flows and filters out sediment to build stream banks. The vegetation adjacent to the water line is the most important place to consider stubble height and secondarily within the riparian area. The cross section of the riparian area will be measured.

2. Improve the riparian condition class on six (6) miles of Mahogany Creek to 70% (from 1992 baseline data of 68%) within the short term (2001) and maintain excellent riparian stream condition (70% of optimum or better) to the year 2017.
3. Improve the riparian condition class on 2 miles of Summer Camp Creek to 70% (from 1990 baseline data of 60%) within the short term (by 2001) and maintain excellent riparian stream condition (70% of optimum or better) to the year 2017.

4. Improve the riparian condition class on 3 miles of Snow Creek to 70% (from 1990 baseline data of 60%) within the short term (by 2001) and maintain excellent riparian stream condition (70% of optimum or better) to the year 2017.
5. Improve the riparian condition class on 8 miles of Donnelly Creek to 62% (from baseline 1989 data of 52%) within the short term (by 2001) and achieve excellent riparian stream condition (70% of optimum or better) to the year 2017.
6. Improve the riparian condition class on 8 miles of Coleman Creek to 66% (from baseline 1991 data of 44%) within the short term (by 2001) and achieve excellent riparian stream habitat condition (70% of optimum or better) to the year 2017.
7. Improve the riparian condition class on 8 miles of Slumgullion Creek to 63% (from baseline 1990 data of 48%) within the short term (by 2001) and achieve excellent riparian stream habitat condition (70% of optimum or better) to the year 2017.

B. Retain long term objective number 6:

Protect known sage grouse strutting and nesting habitat and improve brooding habitat by: (WL-1.11)

1. Following NDOW's guidelines for Vegetal Control Programs in Sage Grouse Habitat in Nevada.
2. Maintain sagebrush canopy at 30% in sage grouse nesting areas where sagebrush does not exceed three (3) feet in height.

C. Retain Long Term Objectives 12, 13 and 14:

12. Improve or maintain Mahogany Creek to Class A water standards.
13. Improve or maintain the water quality of the following streams to the State criteria set for livestock drinking water, cold water aquatic life, water contact recreation (wading), and wildlife propagation:

Summer Camp Creek
 Snow Creek
 Donnelly Creek
 Slumgullion Creek
 Soldiers Creek

14. Maintain water quality standards for Desert Dace habitat in the springs where they occur to the following:

temperature - 32-38°C/90-100°F
 nitrates - 90 mg/L
 turbidity - 50 NTU

pH - 6.5-9.0
D.O. - 5.0 mg/L

D. Allotment Objectives for Uplands and Meadows:

Redefine long term objectives 5,7,8, and 9 by combining them into resource objectives to manage for desired plant communities.

RATIONALE: The limiting factor for wildlife is forage vigor, quality, and cover, therefore, the objectives need to be vegetative ones. Livestock and wild horse objectives are for a sustainable yield of forage, which desired plant communities would account for.

The following lists by pasture the resource objectives, the management actions to meet those objectives, and the procedures to be used to monitor the attainment of the objectives.

Objectives for this allotment were based on ecological status inventory data. The seral stage of each vegetative community and it's potential was considered in conjunction with the wildlife, wild horse, and livestock use to develop desired plant community objectives. Short term objectives will be used to determine the progress each community is making toward it's desired stage.

Summit Lake Pasture

Resource Objectives

Key areas will be established by an interdisciplinary team in key Ecological Sites based on the desired plant community objective.

Objective 1 Short Term

Increase the composition by weight the overall percentage of the following perennial grasses: AGSP, FEID, STTH2, ELCI2, POA++, STCO4, and SIHY from 28% to 35% on Ecological Site 023XY007 (Loamy 14-16") in Site Write-up Area (SWA) U044 by the year 2001. The aggregate of ELCI2, POA++, SIHY, and STCO4 can only make up 10% of the total composition.

Long Term

Within Ecological Site 023XY007 (Loamy 14-16") manage for the following percent composition by weight:

Percent Composition By Weight			
Lifeform	Existing	Desired	Potential
Perennial Grasses	28%	45%	60%
Forbs	7%	10%	10%
Shrubs	65%	45%	30%

This objective should be achieved by the year 2017. The shrub component still maximizes the potential of the site to provide quality mule deer habitat as described in BLM's 6630 Manual.

Objective 2 **Short Term**

Maintain or increase perennial grasses at 45% composition by weight on Ecological Site 023XY017 (Claypan 14-16") in SWA U044 by the year 2001. These perennial grasses are FEID, AGSP, STH2, POA++, SIHY, and ELCI2 with the aggregate of the latter three making up no more than 10% of the total composition.

Long Term

Within Ecological Site 023XY017 (Claypan 14-16") manage for a desired plant community with the following percent composition by weight:

Percent Composition By Weight			
Lifeform	Existing	Desired	Potential
Perennial Grasses	45%	55%	65%
Forbs	11%	10%	10%
Shrubs	44%	35%	25%

This objective should be accomplished by the year 2017.

Objective 3 **Short Term**

Increase FEID and AGSP each from 2% to 6% composition by weight on Ecological Site 023XY026 (Mahogany Savanna) in SWA U044 by the year 2001. Maintain PUTR2 above 10% and CELE3 at 22% composition by weight.

Long Term

Within Ecological Site 023XY026 (Mahogany Savanna) manage for a desired plant community with the following percent composition by weight:

Percent Composition By Weight			
Lifeform	Existing	Desired	Potential
Perennial Grasses	23%	30%	40%
Forbs	Trace	8%	10%
Shrubs	77%	62% *	50%

* At least 25% must be CELE3 and 10% PUTR2.

This objective should be accomplished by the year 2017. The shrub component still maximizes the potential of the site to provide quality mule deer habitat as described in BLM's 6630 Manual.

Objective 4 Short Term

Maintain the existing plant community with 61% perennial grasses, 22% forbs, and 17% shrubs in Ecological Site 023XY013 (dry meadows) in SWA U044 by the year 2001.

Long Term

Within Ecological Site 023XY013 (dry meadows) in SWA U044 manage for the desired plant community with the following percent composition by weight:

Percent Composition by Weight			
Lifeform	Existing	Desired	Potential
Perennial Grasses	61	65	80
Forbs	22	22	20
Shrubs	17	13	0

Decrease the percent composition by weight of JUBA by increasing the percent composition by weight of PONE3 and HOBR.

This objective should be achieved by 2017.

Objective 5 Short Term

Maintain the existing plant community with 89% perennial grasses, 11% forbs, and 0% shrubs in Ecological Site 023XY025 (wet meadows) in SWA U202 by the year 2001.

Long Term

Within Ecological Site 023X025 (wet meadows) in SWA U202 manage for the desired plant community with the following percent composition by weight:

Percent Composition by Weight			
Lifeform	Existing	Desired	Potential
Perennial Grasses	89	85	80
Forbs	11	15	20
Shrubs	0	0	0

Decrease the percent composition by weight of Carex by increasing the percent composition by weight of DECE.

This objective should be achieved by 2017.

Rationale: The Summit Lake Pasture has been identified as yearlong bighorn sheep range (BRBY-2, BRBY-4), mule deer summer range (BRDS-8), as well as a sage grouse strutting ground and brood use area. It is also used yearlong by wild horses and by cattle for 3 months. By achieving these objectives the vegetative

communities would be meeting the needs of the mentioned wildlife, wild horses, and livestock.

Warm Springs Pasture

Resource Objectives:

Key areas will be established by an interdisciplinary team in key Ecological Sites based on the desired plant community objective.

Objective 1 Short Term

Increase perennial grasses from 34% to 41% composition by weight on Ecological Site 023XY017 (Claypan 14-16") in SWA U125 by the year 2001. These perennial grasses are: AGSP, STH2, POA++, SIHY, and FEID.

Long Term

Increase FEID from a trace to 7% composition by weight while managing for a desired plant community with the following percent composition by weight.

Percent Composition By Weight			
Lifeform	Existing	Desired	Potential
Perennial grasses	34%	50%	65%
Forbs	8%	10%	10%
Shrubs	56%	40%	25%

This objective should be completed by the year 2017. The shrub component still maximizes the potential of the site to provide quality mule deer habitat as described in BLM's 6630 Manual.

Objective 2 Short Term

Maintain the following perennial grasses: STH2, SIHY, and POA++ at 46% composition by weight through the year 2001 on Ecological Site 023XY031 (Claypan 10-14") in SWA U174. Also try to get AGSP established on the site.

Long Term

Increase AGSP to 5% composition by weight, as it's potential on the site is 20 to 50% composition by weight. Establish a desired plant community consisting of the following vegetation:

Percent Composition By Weight			
Lifeform	Existing	Desired	Potential
Perennial Grasses	46%	55%	65%
Forbs	12%	12%	10%
Shrubs	42%	33%	25%

This objective should be achieved by the year 2017. The shrub component still maximizes the potential of the site to provide quality mule deer habitat as described in BLM's 6630 Manual.

Objective 3 **Short Term**

Increase AGSP from 9% to 13% and STH2 from 8% to 12% composition by weight on Ecological Site 023XY039 (Loamy Slope 10-14") in SWA U125 by the year 2001.

Long Term

Manage for a desired plant community consisting of the following percent composition by weight within Ecological Site 023XY039 (Loamy Slope 10-14"):

Percent Composition By Weight			
Lifeform	Existing	Desired	Potential
Perennial Grasses	35%	50%	65%
Forbs	6%	10%	10%
Shrubs	52%	40%	25%

This objective should be reached by the year 2017. The shrub component still maximizes the potential of the site to provide quality mule deer habitat as described in BLM's 6630 Manual.

Objective 4 **Short Term**

Increase AGSP, FEID, and STH2 collectively, from 27% to 36% composition by weight on Ecological Site 023XY066 (Ashy Loam 12-14") in SWA U162 by the year 2001 while maintaining PUTR2 above 20% composition by weight.

Long Term

Within Ecological Site 023XY066 (Ashy Loam 12-14") manage for the following percent composition by weight:

Percent Composition By Weight			
Lifeform	Existing	Desired	Potential
Perennial Grasses	33%	43% *	60%
Forbs	2%	8%	10%
Shrubs	65 %	49% **	30%

* Must be at least 20 % FEID.

** Must be at least 20% PUTR2.

This objective should be achieved by the year 2017. The shrub component still maximizes the potential of the site to provide quality mule deer habitat as described in BLM's 6630 Manual.

Objective 5 Short Term

Maintain or increase FEID at 12% and increase AGSP from 2% to 5% composition by weight. Maintain PUTR2 at 9% composition; increase CELE3 from 3% to 6% composition by weight on Ecological Site 023XY026 (Mahogany Savanna) in SWA U161 by the year 2001.

Long Term

Manage for the following percent composition by weight on Ecological Site 023XY026 (Mahogany Savanna):

Percent Composition By Weight			
Lifeform	Existing	Desired	Potential
Perennial Grasses	35%	40% *	40%
Forbs	3%	10%	10%
Shrubs	54%	50% **	50%

* Must be at least 15% FEID, 10% AGSP.

** Must be at least 9% CELE3, and 9% PUTR2.

This objective should be achieved by the year 2017. The shrub component still maximizes the potential of the site to provide quality mule deer habitat as described in BLM's 6630 Manual.

Objective 6 Short Term

Maintain PONE3 at 12% and increase composition by weight for forbs from 8% to 11% with LUPIN making up no more than 5% composition by weight of the forbs in SWA U199 on Ecological Site 023XY013 (dry meadows) by the year 2001.

Long Term

Within Ecological Site 023xy013 (dry meadows) in SWA U199 manage for the desired plant community with the following percent composition by weight:

Percent Composition by Weight			
Lifeform	Existing	Desired	Potential
Perennial Grasses	92	85	80
Forbs	8	15	20
Shrubs	0	0	0

Increase composition by weight PONE3 from 12% to 15% in SWA U199 on Ecological Site 023XY013 (dry meadows) by the year 2017.

Rationale: This Warm Springs Pasture has been identified as pronghorn yearlong (BRPY-7) and summer range (BRPS-1, BRPS-8); mule deer yearlong (BRDY-3) and winter range (BRDW-4); and as a sage grouse brood use area. It is also used yearlong by wild horses/burros and by cows for three months a year.

Calico Pasture

Resource Objectives:

Key areas will be established by an interdisciplinary team in key Ecological Sites based on the desired plant community objective.

Objective 1 Short Term

Increase STH2 from 9% to 12% composition by weight on Ecological Site 027XY079 (Gravelly Claypan 8-10") in SWA U063 by the year 2001.

Long Term

Within Ecological Site 027XY079 (Gravelly Claypan 8-10") manage for the following percent composition by weight:

Percent Composition By Weight			
Lifeform	Existing	Desired	Potential
Perennial Grasses	25%	32%	45%
Forbs	8%	8%	5%
Shrubs	67%	60%	50%

This objective should be achieved by the year 2017. The shrub component still maximizes the potential of the site to provide quality antelope habitat as described in BLM's 6630 Manual.

Objective 2 Short Term

Increase AGSP from 2% to 5% composition by weight on Ecological Site 023XY037 (Clay Slope 8-12") in SWA U109 by the year 2001.

Long Term

Manage for a desired plant community with the following percent composition by weight on Ecological Site 023XY037 (Clay Slope 8-12"):

Percent Composition By Weight			
Lifeform	Existing	Desired	Potential
Perennial Grasses	26%	36%	70%
Forbs	25%	22%	10%
Shrubs	42%	42%	20%

Perennial grasses may include: AGSP- must be at least 8%, STH2, POA++, SIHY, FEID. This objective should be achieved by the year 2017. The shrub component still maximizes the potential of the site to provide quality antelope habitat as described in BLM's 6630 Manual.

Objective 3 Short Term

Increase FEID from 2% to 6% composition by weight while trying to establish AGSP on Ecological Site 023XY017 (Claypan 14-16") in SWA U042 by the year 2001.

Long Term

Manage for a desired plant community with the following percent composition by weight:

Percent Composition By Weight			
Lifeform	Existing	Desired	Potential
Perennial Grasses	34%	46%	65%
Forbs	28%	20%	10%
Shrubs	38%	34%	25%

Perennial grasses include FEID, AGSP, POA++, STH2, SIHY and other perennial grasses. This objective should be accomplished by 2017. The shrub component still maximizes the potential of the site to provide quality antelope habitat as described in BLM's 6630 Manual.

Rationale: The Calico Pasture has been identified as pronghorn antelope winter range (BRPW-1). Wild horses use this pasture yearlong and cows use it for one month (April 1 - April 30) for two years and then rest it for two years.

Soldier Meadows Pasture

Resource Objectives:

Key areas will be established by an interdisciplinary team in key Ecological Sites based on the desired plant community objective.

Objective 1 Short Term

Increase composition by weight of AGSP from 31% to 36% on Ecological Site 023XY039 (loamy slope 10-14") in SWA U159 by the year 2001.

Long Term

Within Ecological Site 023XY039 (loamy slope 10-14") manage for the following percent composition by weight:

Percent Composition by Weight			
Lifeform	Existing	Desired	Potential
Perennial Grasses	35	44	65
Forbs	7	10	10
Shrubs	58	46	25

This objective should be achieved by the year 2017. The shrub component still maximizes the potential of the site to provide quality mule deer and antelope habitat as described in BLM's 6630 Manual.

Objective 2 **Short Term**

Increase FEID and STH2 collectively from 12% to 18% composition by weight on Ecological Site 023XY017 (claypan 14-16") in SWA U229 by the year 2001.

Long Term

Within Ecological Site 023XY017 (claypan 14-16") in SWA U229 manage for the following percent composition by weight:

<u>Percent Composition by Weight</u>			
<u>Lifeform</u>	<u>Existing</u>	<u>Desired</u>	<u>Potential</u>
<u>Perennial Grasses</u>	23	35	65
<u>Forbs</u>	8	10	10
<u>Shrubs</u>	69	55	25

This objective should be achieved by the year 2017.

Objective 3 **Short Term**

Increase the composition by weight STH2 from 1% to 6% on Ecological Site 024XY005 (loamy 8-10") in SWA U181 by the year 2001.

Long Term

Within Ecological Site 024XY005 (loamy 8-10") in SWA 181 manage for the following percent composition by weight:

<u>Percent Composition by Weight</u>			
<u>Lifeform</u>	<u>Existing*</u>	<u>Desired</u>	<u>Potential</u>
<u>Perennial Grasses</u>	7	17	55
<u>Forbs</u>	3	5	5
<u>Shrubs</u>	87	78	40

This objective should be achieved by 2017.

* The remaining 3% is comprised of BRTE.

Objective 4 **Short Term**

Maintain or increase by weight the perennial grasses at 40% or higher on Ecological Site 023XY039 (loamy slope 10-14") in SWA U117 by 2001. The perennial grasses include AGSP and SIHY.

Long Term

Within Ecological Site 023XY039 (loamy slope 10-14") in SWA U117 manage for the following percent composition by weight:

Percent Composition by Weight			
Lifeform	Existing*	Desired	Potential
Perennial Grasses	40	45	65
Forbs	7	10	10
Shrubs	48	45	25

This objective should be achieved by 2017.

* The remaining 5% is comprised of BRTE.

Objective 5 Short Term

Increase by weight the following perennial grasses: SIHY, STH2, and POA++ collectively from 12% to 18% on Ecological Site 023XY037 (clay slope 8-12") in SWA U187 by 2001. Also try to establish AGSP on the site from the adjacent range sites.

Long Term

Within Ecological Site 023XY037 (clay slope 8-12") manage for the following Desired Plant Community while trying to establish AGSP on the site:

Percent Composition by Weight			
Lifeform	Existing	Desired	Potential
Perennial Grasses	12	25	70
Forbs	2	7	10
Shrubs	86	68	20

This objective should be achieved by 2017.

Objective 6 Short Term

Increase by weight the perennial grasses from 5% to 8% and increase ARSPS5 from 4% to 10% on Ecological Site 024XY025 (loamy slope 5-8") in SWA U114 manage for the following Desired Plant Community:

Percent Composition by Weight			
Lifeform	Existing*	Desired	Potential
Perennial Grasses	5	10	20
Forbs	Trace	5	5
Shrubs	92	85	75

This objective should be achieved by 2017.

* The remaining 3% is comprised of BRTE.

Objective 7 Short Term

Maintain the existing plant community with 61% perennial grasses, 22% forbs, and 17% shrubs in Ecological Site 023XY013 (dry meadows) in SWA U201 by the year 2001.

Long Term

Within Ecological Site 023XY013 (dry meadows) in SWA U201 manage for the desired plant community with the following percent composition by weight:

Percent Composition by Weight			
<u>Lifeform</u>	<u>Existing</u>	<u>Desired</u>	<u>Potential</u>
Perennial Grasses	61	65	80
Forbs	22	22	20
Shrubs	17	13	0

Increase the percent by weight of the perennial grasses by 4%, while maintaining or decreasing the percent JUBA at 24%.

Rationale: The Soldier Meadows Pasture has been identified as pronghorn yearlong (BRPY-5) and winter (BRPW-6, BRPW-7); mule deer summer (BRDS-7, BRDS-5) and winter (BRDW-4); and bighorn sheep yearlong (BRBY-1, BRBY-2). It is also used yearlong by wild horses and burros and cows for one month a year (April 1- April 30).

Black Rock Pasture

Resource Objectives:

Key areas will be established by an interdisciplinary team in key Ecological Sites based on the desired plant community objective.

Objective 1 Short Term

Increase ORHY, SIHY, and STSP3 from a trace to 3% composition by weight on Ecological Site 027XY018 (Gravelly Loam 4-8") in SWA U005 by the year 2001.

Long Term

Manage for a desired plant community with the following percent composition by weight on Ecological Site 027XY018 (Gravelly Loam 4-8").

Percent Composition By Weight

<u>Lifeform</u>	<u>Existing</u>	<u>Desired</u>	<u>Potential</u>
Perennial Grasses	Trace	9%	25%
Forbs	Trace	3%	5%
Shrubs	100%	88%	70%

The perennial grasses may include ORHY, POSE, SIHY, and STSP3. This objective should be achieved by 2017.

Objective 2 Short Term

Increase ORHY from 6% to 9% composition by weight on Ecological Site O27XY016 (Sodic Dunes) in SWA U004.

Long Term

Within Ecological Site O23XY016 (Sodic Dunes) manage for a plant community with the following percent composition by weight:

Percent Composition By Weight

<u>Lifeform</u>	<u>Existing</u>	<u>Desired</u>	<u>Potential</u>
Perennial Grasses	16%	20%	35%
Forbs	Trace	3%	5%
Shrubs	84%	77%	65%

Perennial grasses may include : ORHY- must be at least 12% composition, DISP3, ELCI2, and SIHY. This objective should be accomplished by the year 2017.

Rationale: The Black Rock Pasture has been identified as yearlong pronghorn antelope range (BRPY-5). It is used as a winter pasture by cattle (Jan. 1 - March 30) and it has wild horse use.

Hot Springs Pasture

Resource Objectives

- 1) Resource objectives, including livestock will be established in the Desert Dace Habitat Management Plan. These objectives will be incorporated into the re-evaluation/AMP.

CARRYING CAPACITY

The combined carrying capacity for livestock and wild horses/burros to achieve these objectives are:

Livestock	12,168 AUMs
Wild Horse and Burros	<u>5,034 AUMs</u>
	17,202 AUMs

The carrying capacity between livestock and wild horses/burros is based on the LUP ratios in accordance with MFP Decisions - Range 1.1 and Wild Horse and Burro 1.1. An exception was made on the southern end of the Black Rock Range - West Herd Management Area (HMA) where winter habitat is the limiting factor for the wild horses.

LIVESTOCK MANAGEMENT DECISION

Based upon the evaluation of monitoring data for the Soldier Meadow Allotment, consultation with the permittee, and other affected interests it is my proposed decision to change the livestock management:

From:

1. **Grazing Preference (AUMs)**
 - a. Total Preference 16,070
 - b. Suspended Preference 4,017
 - c. Active Preference 12,053
 - d. Not Scheduled
 - e. Exchange of Use
 - f. Scheduled Use 12,053
2. Season of Use 1/10 - 5/20
5/21 - 10/30
3. Number and Class of Livestock 1500, cow/calf
500, cow/calf
4. Percent Federal Range 100%

To:

1. **Grazing Preference (AUMs)**
 - a. Total Preference 16,070
 - b. Suspended Preference 3,902
 - c. Active Preference 12,168
 - d. Not Scheduled
 - e. Exchange of Use
 - f. Scheduled Use 7,687

2. Number of Livestock and Season of Use by pasture

Pasture	Lvt Num	Season	AUMs
Black Rk	500	1/01 - 3/31	1480
Calico	1117	4/01 - 4/30	1102
Soldier M	1117	4/01 - 4/30	1102
Summit Lk	1117	7/15 - 10/14	3379
Warm Spr.	1117	7/15 - 10/14	3379
Hot Spr.	1117	11/16- 12/31	1726

The carrying capacity was determined on a pasture basis. The livestock AUMs associated with the rest pasture will not be allocated to any user (livestock, wild horse/burros, or wildlife) during the rest year in order to maintain a thriving natural ecological balance in the allotment. Therefore, on any given year approximately 7,687 AUMs will be used by livestock. The livestock stocking rate per pasture will not exceed the pastures' livestock carrying capacity.

3. Class of Livestock cow/calf

4. Percent Federal Range 100%

GRAZING SYSTEM

From:

	Black Rock	Calico	Soldier M.	Warm Spring	Summit Lake
yr 1	11/16-4/15	4/16-6/15	rested	6/16-11/15	rested
yr 2	11/16-4/15	4/16-6/15	rested	6/16-11/15	rested
yr 3	11/16-4/15	rested	4/16-6/15	rested	6/16-11/15
yr 4	11/16-4/15	rested	4/16-6/15	rested	6/16-11/15

To:

	Black Rock	Calico	Soldier M.	Warm Spring	Summit Lake	Hot Springs
yr 1	1/1-3/31	4/1-4/30	rested	7/15-10/14	rested	11/16-12/31
yr 2	1/1-3/31	rested	4/1-4/30	rested	7/15-10/14	11/16-12/31
yr 3	1/1-3/31	rested	4/1-4/30	rested	7/15-10/14	11/16-12/31
yr 4	1/1-3/31	4/1-4/30	rested	7/15-10/14	rested	11/16-12/31
yr 5	1/1-3/31	4/1-4/30	rested	7/15-10/14	rested	11/16-12/31
yr 6	1/1-3/31	rested	4/1-4/3	rested	7/15-10/14	11/16-12/31

The grazing system was changed from a two year deferred/rest rotation system under a four year cycle with five pastures (refer to existing system map overlay) to a two year deferred/rest rotation system with six pastures under a four year cycle (refer to proposed system map overlay). By restricting livestock grazing, the grazing system allows for the key species to meet physiological requirements and assures that spawning of LCT activities will not be impacted by livestock grazing. Riding and

herding is required for all pastures and in particular the Summit Lake Pasture.

Late Winter-January 1 to March 31: Livestock will graze the Black Rock Pasture.

Spring-April 1 to April 30: The two spring pastures are the Calico and Soldier Meadows Pastures. The Calico Pasture will be used for two consecutive years and then rested for two years while the Soldier Meadows Pasture is grazed.

Summer-July 15 to October 14: The two summer pastures are Summit Lake and Warm Springs. Livestock will graze each of the pastures on a two year alternate cycle. When the Summit Lake Pasture is grazed for two consecutive years the Warm Springs Pasture is rested for two consecutive years.

The Summit Lake Pasture will be divided into three separate use areas by the proposed riparian pasture fences; Idaho Canyon-north, Stanley Camp-middle (riparian), and Coleman Creek-south.

Livestock grazing in the Stanley Camp use area will not be allowed until riparian vegetation and stream bank conditions meet the objectives set in this re-evaluation. When the LCT Recovery Plan is approved, BLM will adopt those objectives. In the interim cattle will be allowed to trail through the pasture for three (3) days or less. The proposed trailing route runs along the ridge above the various creeks headwaters. The intent is to move groups of cows, 300 to 400 head at a time, over the three day period and not take three entire days to move the herd from one sub-pasture to the other. At times the entire herd may be moved instead of the smaller groups.

Based on the above, when cattle graze in Summit Lake Pasture, they will start in the Coleman Creek use area and graze for four (4) weeks, move north into the Stanley Camp use area for two (2) weeks, then move into the Idaho Canyon use area to graze for six (6) to eight (8) weeks. When the proposed AMP is completed the Stanley Camp use area will be grazed late (between 7/15-10/14) until the next re-evaluation. The re-evaluation will analyze if the season of use should be modified. The time frames for livestock movements are estimated. The livestock will be moved from one sub-pasture to the next as the utilization levels on key riparian plants approaches use criteria (see pg. 57).

The Stanley Camp use area fence will provide controlled livestock grazing for Summer Camp and Snow Creeks for two (2) out of four (4) years. Under the proposed system the Summit Lake Pasture will be grazed for three (3) months for two (2) years then rested for two (2) years for a total use period of six (6) months out of forty-eight (48) months. The riparian pasture will be grazed a total of one (1) month out of forty-eight (48) months. There will be no authorized grazing within the Mahogany Creek Enclosure.

Late Fall/Early Winter-November 16 to December 31: Cattle will graze the Hot Springs Pasture.

An interim plan will not be developed to cover the next six years -- which is two gather cycles.

Rationale: Livestock management was identified as having the most potential in achieving allotment multiple use objectives. Proposed range projects and changing the grazing dates in the Summit Lake and Hot Springs Pastures are designed to enhance riparian vegetation and LCT/Desert Dace habitat. This grazing system also meets the upland and meadow complex vegetation requirements in the other pastures.

LIVESTOCK DECISION ACTIONS

1) Livestock Management

Require permittees to herd livestock so the short term utilization objectives for stream bank riparian, wetland riparian, and upland habitats are achieved.

For adjacent pastures, where utilization or residual vegetation heights have not been exceeded, the gates could be opened a week before the move dates. This would allow cattle to drift into the new pasture. Within a week after the move date the remaining cows would be moved and the gate shut.

If livestock have to be moved due to utilization or residual height requirements, all livestock shall be removed from that area within a week or less and kept out of that area for the remaining grazing period.

Trailing will be allowed for no longer than three days across any pasture that is not scheduled to be used during that time period - for example: crossing the Hot Spring Pasture when moving from the Calico Pasture to the Summit Lake Pasture.

Livestock will not graze the Summit Lake Pastures until range projects are completed. In addition, livestock will not graze the Stanley Camp sub-pasture until vegetation and stream bank conditions meet the criteria described in the Re-evaluation or those adopted by BLM from the approved LCT Recovery Plan.

Actual use billing will be considered once an AMP is written. the operator will have to submit accurate livestock numbers and dates along with submitting the information within specified time frames.

- 2) Limit utilization on stream riparian, wetland riparian, and upland vegetation

Do not exceed 30% utilization of current years growth on aspen and willows for all reaches when the cattle leave the pasture.

For Mahogany; Summer Camp; and Snow Creeks, and the spring complex associated with the Desert Dace, grasses and grass-like plants will have a minimum stubble height of 6 inches when the livestock leave the pasture; even if wild horse numbers have not reached AML.

A minimum 4 inch stubble height requirement for grass and grass-like plants will apply to Coleman, Slungullion, and Donnelly Creeks when the cattle leave the pasture.

Combined wild horse/burro and livestock utilization objective on upland grass and grass-like species is 50% at the end of the livestock use period (either a scheduled pasture or the end of the grazing season). If the 50% utilization level is not being met and livestock are moved sooner than scheduled, the grazing preference will be evaluated to determine if a downward adjustment is required. The evaluation will include wild horse, wildlife, and climatic factors.

If monitoring indicates that utilization levels cannot be kept at the recommended stubble heights and browse utilization along the creeks during the combined use periods (livestock and wild horses), after the AML is reached, then the streams, or geographic area, will be excluded from livestock and wild horses.

- 3) Conduct a re-evaluation in 2001 analyzing resource objectives. If significant resource problems are identified sooner then a re-evaluation will be completed at that time.
- 4) Conduct a re-evaluation in 2017 to determine if long term desired plant community objectives have been achieved.
- 5) Write an AMP by FY 95 incorporating the Wall Canyon Allotment into the Soldier Meadows Allotment.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

The below mentioned terms and conditions will be incorporated into the term permit (which will expire in 2001 to correspond with the next re-evaluation) and their annual authorization via the grazing bill:

Grazing use will be in accordance with this grazing decision.

Salt and/or mineral blocks shall not be placed within one quarter (1/4) mile of springs, streams, meadows, riparian zones, or aspen stands. The

area immediate to the Desert Dace habitat blocks shall not be placed within 1/2 mile of those springs.

The permittee is required to perform normal maintenance on the range projects which have been assigned maintenance responsibility.

Livestock will be moved as the key riparian species approach the 6 inch stubble height level and 30% utilization levels for Summer Camp, Mahogany, and Snow Creeks; and the Desert Dace spring complexes and 4 inches for Coleman, Slumgullian, and Donnelly Creeks.

When livestock use the Stanley Camp use area a herder and BLM resource specialist shall be present. If a herder is not present or a BLM resource specialist is not available, the livestock can not be turned out; or if during the grazing period neither are no longer available then the livestock shall be removed.

AUTHORITY

The authority for this decision is contained in Title 43 of the Code of Federal Regulations; pertinent citations are cited:

4100.0-8 Land use plans - The authorized officer shall manage livestock grazing on public lands under the principle of multiple use and sustained yield, and in accordance with applicable land use plans. Land use plans shall establish allowable resources uses (either singly or in combination), related levels of production or use to be maintained, areas of use, and resource condition goals and objectives to be obtained. The plans also set forth program constraints and general management practices needed to achieve management objectives. Livestock grazing activities and management actions approved by the authorized officer shall be in conformance with the land use plan as defined at 43 CRF 1601.0-5(b).

4110.3 Changes in grazing preference status - The authorized officer shall periodically review the grazing preference specified in a grazing permit or grazing lease and may make changes in the grazing preference status. these changes shall be supported by monitoring, as evidenced by rangeland studies conducted over time, unless the change is either specified in an applicable land use plan or necessary to manage, maintain or improve rangeland productivity.

4120.3-1(a) Conditions for range improvements - Range improvements shall be installed, use, maintained, and/or modified on the public lands, or removed from these lands, in a manner consistent with multiple-use management.

4130.6-1(a) Mandatory terms and conditions - The authorized officer shall specify the kind and number of livestock, the period(s) of use, the allotment(s) to be used, and the amount of use, in animal unit months, for every grazing permit or lease. The authorized shall not exceed the livestock carrying capacity as determined through monitoring and adjusted as necessary.

4130.6-2 **Other terms and conditions** - The authorized officer may specify in grazing permits or leases other terms and conditions which will assist in achieving management objectives, provide for proper range management or assist in the orderly administration of the public rangelands

4130.6-3 **Modification** - Following careful and considered consultation, cooperation and coordination with the lessees, permittees, and other affected interests, the authorized officer may modify terms and conditions of the lease or permit if monitoring data show that present grazing use is not meeting the land use plan or management objectives.

WILD HORSE/BURRO MANAGEMENT DECISION

Based on the evaluation of the monitoring data for the Soldier Meadows Allotment, consultations with the permittee, and affected interests my proposed decision for wild horses and burros is:

WILD HORSE/BURRO APPROPRIATE MANAGEMENT LEVELS

The following wild horse and burro AMLs are based on monitoring and should result in a thriving natural ecological balance for the three herd management areas:

<u>Herd Management Area</u>	<u>Number-AML</u>	<u>AUMs</u>
Black Rock Range-West		
N. of Slumgullion	70	845
S. of Slumgullion	85	1020
Subtotals	155	1865
Warm Springs Canyon	199	2389*
Calico Mountains **	65	780
Grand Totals	419	5034

* The breakdown between wild horses and burros is: 175 wild horses
 24 burros

** 30% of the Calico Mountains HMA is within the Soldier Meadows Allotment.

Once AML is reached - which should take two gather cycles - in about six years, the wild horse and burro population will be maintained within the following ranges in order to ensure that the carrying capacity is not exceeded. About 1,300 wild horses and burros will have to gathered to reach AML (500 from Black Rock Range - West, 550 from Warm Springs Canyon, and 250 from Calico Mountains). These ranges are based on gathering horses every three years. If gathering schedules change, these ranges may change.

<u>Herd Management Area</u>	<u>Wild Horse/Burro</u> <u>75% of AML to AML</u>	<u>AUMS</u>
Black Rock Range-West		
N. of Slumgullion	53 to 70	636 to 845
S. of Slumgullion	64 to 85	768 to 1020
Subtotals	117 to 155	1404 to 1865
Warm Springs Canyon	149 to 199	1788 to 2389
Calico Mountains	49 to 65	588 to 780
Grand Totals	315 to 419	3780 to 5034

Rationale: During the evaluation period wild horse and burro numbers have exceeded the initial stocking level of 10,140 AUMs (in 1991 by almost 7,000 AUMs). Wild horses and burros have made disproportionate use of the forage resource during the evaluation period, especially in the Black Rock Range - West and Calico Mountains HMAs. Wild horses have adversely impacted the headwaters of Coleman, Snow, and Summer Camp Creeks by overgrazing the vegetation and trampling the spring areas. Wild horses have damaged water projects in the Warm Springs Pasture by flattening stock water tanks and pipelines.

WILD HORSE DECISION ACTIONS

- 1) The utilization level on upland vegetation key species by wild horses and burros, once AML is reached, is limited to 20% by July 15 on livestock rest years. If the utilization levels are not being met after the second year of rest, then the AML will be adjusted.
- 2) By February 28, or the start of the new grazing season, utilization on upland grass key species shall not exceed 60%. For upland browse and meadows, utilization shall not exceed 50% (utilization on grass species from 50 to 60% by wild horses and burros will occur during the dormant season and should not have a detrimental impact to plant health and vigor)
- 3) Maintain the wild horse and burro population within the recommended range to prevent numbers from exceeding AML. This should keep utilization levels on key species at acceptable levels, thereby, achieving a Thriving Natural Ecological Balance and provide for a healthy and thriving wild horse/burro population. If livestock or wild horses/burros exceed the calculated carrying capacity it would not be possible to meet utilization goals and to maintain a functioning vegetation community.
- 4) Combine the Black Rock Range - West and East HMA's into the Black Rock Mountain HMA

Manage the wild horse populations of the Black Rock Range- West (Soldier Meadows Allotment, Sonoma-Gerlach R.A.) and the Black Rock Range- East (Paiute Meadows Allotment, Paradise-Denio R.A.) Herd Management Areas (HMAs) as one population. There are no

topographic barriers or impediments to limit or restrict the free movement and interaction of wild horses between the two HMAs. Monitoring data indicates that horses move between the two HMAs. The combined AML will be based on the carrying capacities and thriving natural ecological balances within the use areas of each allotment as shown below:

<u>HMA/Allotment</u>	<u>Wild Horse Numbers</u>	<u>AUMs</u>
<u>BLACK ROCK WEST</u>		
Soldier Meadows		
N. of Slungullian	70	845
<u>S. of Slungullian</u>	<u>85</u>	<u>1020</u>
Total	155	1865
<u>BLACK ROCK EAST</u>		
Paiute Meadows	<u>31</u>	<u>372</u>
Total	186	2237

Census and distribution flights conducted from 1969 to present indicate the historical distribution of wild horses on the Black Rock Range has been approximately fifty percent respectively between the two HMAs. It is unknown at this time what the distribution and number of horses will be between the two allotments at the recommended AML of 186 since the historic distribution patterns were for a typical age structured population, the specific distribution of the horses in the Black Rock Range will not be known until additional monitoring data is collected.

5) **Change the Black Rock Mountain and Warm Springs HMA boundaries**

The original HMA boundaries were developed along vegetative community lines, the District and Resource Area boundaries, and the Summit Lake Indian Reservation. Black Rock Range-West HMA (NV-227) and Warm Springs Canyon (NV-226) lie adjacent to one another and share a common boundary from Sheldon Antelope Range/District boundary fence to a point approximately ¼ mile southwest of Antelope Spring. The proposed changes in the boundaries of the Black Rock West HMA and the Warm Springs Canyon HMA are being proposed to reflect the actual use areas of the wild horses.

There are two proposed changes to the common boundary between the Black Rock Range-West and the Warm Springs Canyon HMA's.

1. **Soldier Creek:** Addition of 4188 acres from the Black Rock Range-West HMA from Soldier Creek through Dry Canyon to Warm Springs Canyon HMA.

The new boundary would run from Soldier Meadows Ranch northeast along Soldier Creek and tie in with the original boundary of the Black Rock Range-West HMA north of Coleman Creek.

RATIONALE: Soldier Creek acts as a natural break between the two HMAs. Distribution data and on the ground observations show horses in this area interact with the horse populations from the Warm Springs Canyon HMA when disturbed and not with the horses from the Black Rock Range-West HMA.

2. **Five Mile Flat:** Due to a proposed fence to manage livestock movement running north to south through section 6 and 7 of T.42N, R.26E, 4105 acres would be removed from the Black Rock Range-West HMA and added to the Warm Springs Canyon HMA.

RATIONALE: The horses found utilizing this area west of the proposed fence tend to interact with the horse populations from the Warm Springs Canyon HMA when disturbed by aircraft and the horses east of the fence tend to interact with the horse populations from the Black Rock Range-West showing that they are part of that population. The proposed fence line would act as a break and keep the horses in their respective HMAs.

A total of 8293 acres would be transferred from the Black Rock Range- West HMA to the Warm Springs HMA.

AUTHORITY

The authority for this decision is contained in Sec. 3(a), 3(b)(1), and 3(b)(2) 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:

4700.0-6(a) Policy - Wild horses and burros shall be managed as self-sustaining populations of health animals in balance with other uses and the productive capacity of their habitat.

4710.4 **Constraints on Management** - 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 areas plans.

4720.1 **Removal of Excess Animals from Public Lands** - 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...

WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT

Based on the interpretation and analysis of monitoring data and consultation with affected interest I will implement the following:

- 1) Continue with the management of wildlife as outlined in the Land Use Plan, Soldier Meadows Desert Dace, Fox Mountain, and Mahogany Creek Habitat Management Plans.
- 2) Manage Mahogany, Summer Camp, and Snow Creeks for Lahontan cutthroat trout.
- 3) Manage the hot spring complex in the Hot Springs Pasture for Desert Dace and Soldier Meadows cinquefoil.

Rationale: The analysis of monitoring data indicates the multiple use objectives for the allotment are not being met. Use pattern mapping and field observations have documented that livestock and wild horses are the primary factor in not meeting objectives. Wildlife are impacting their associated habitat, but not to the extent that warrants changes in the existing management.

FUTURE MONITORING AND GRAZING ADJUSTMENTS

The Sonoma-Gerlach Resource Area will continue to monitor the Soldier Meadows Allotment. Monitoring data will continue to be collected in the future to provide the necessary information to determine if the allotment specific objectives are being met under the new grazing management strategy. Subsequent evaluations will determine if adjustments are required to meet the established allotment specific objectives. The allotment is scheduled for re-evaluation in 2001.

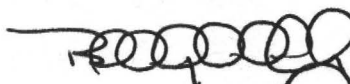
PROTEST RIGHTS

If you wish to protest the Proposed Multiple Use Decision in accordance with 43 CFR 4160.2, you are allowed fifteen (15) days from receipt of this notice within which to file such protest in person or in writing with the Area Manager. The protest should state clearly and concisely why you think the proposed decision is in error. Protests should be sent to:

Area Manager
Sonoma-Gerlach Resource Area
Bureau of Land Management, Winnemucca District
705 East 4th Street
Winnemucca, NV 89445

At the end of the protest period, I will issue a final full force and effect decision.

Sincerely Yours,



Bud Cribley, Area Manager
Sonoma-Gerlach Resource Area

cc (The Proposed Decision was mailed certified to the following individuals and groups):

NV Dept. of Wildlife P111849813
Mrs. Dawn Lappin, WHOA P111849814
Ms. Rose Strickland, Sierra Club P111849815
Ms. Cathy Barcomb Commission for the Preservation of Wild Horses P111849816
Mr. Craig Downer P111849817
Dr. Gary Vineyard, UNR P111849818
Ms. Deborah Allard P111849819
Trout Unlimited, Sagebrush Chapter P111849820
Mr. Demar Dahl, NV Land Action Assn. P111849821
Ms. Johanna H. Wald, NRDC P111849822
Mr. Mike Hornbarger P111849823
Ms. Barbara Spolter, Wilderness Society P111849824
Mr. Martin Larraneta P111849825
Paiute Meadow Ranch P111849826
NV Woolgrowers Assn. P111849827
NV Cattlemans Assn. P111849828
Mr. Thomas Van Horne P111849829
Intermtn Fed. Landbank Assoc. P111849830
WH&B Comm, Nat'l Academy of Science P111849831
Ms. Paula Jewell, Humane Soc. of U.S. P111849832
Mr. Jack Piccolo, Summit Lake Paiute Tribe P111849833
The Nature Conservancy P111849834
William Brigham NV Bighorns Unlimited, Reno Chapter P111849835
Mr. Scott Tomsen P111849836
Ms. Julian Smith P111849837
Mr. Dick Stump P111849838
Mr. Jack Horning P111849839
Mr. Andy Johas P111849840
Mr. William C. Cummings P111849841
Ms. Karen Sussman, ISPM&B P111849842
Messrs. Paul Holcher and Don Stix P111849865
Mr. Donald Molde, Humane Soc. of South NV P111849866
Mr. Derrel Fulwider P111849867
American Horse Protection Assn. P111849868
Ms. Nancy Whitaker, API P111849869
Mr. Robert Sam, Summit Lake Paiute Tribe P111849870

The Proposed Decision was mailed to the following individuals and groups:

USDI, Sheldon Wildlife Refugee	Mr. Craig Plummer
Honorable Richard Bryan	Mr. Scott Bell, USFS
USDI, BLM Susanville/Carson City	USDI, FWS Reno/Portland
Mr. John Marvel	Honorable Harry Reid
Div. of State Lands	State Multiple Use Advis
Mr. Jerry Townsend, BIA-Western NV Agency	Desert Research Inst, UNR
Div. of Conservation Districts, NV	Chairman NV Conservation Dist.
Mr. Tom Ballow, NV Dept. of Ag.	Honorable James H. Bilbray
Mr. Hillary Winebarger	Honorable Barbara Vucanovich
USDI, BLM Portland/Sacramento	

12-10-93



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Winnemucca District Office
705 East 4th Street
Winnemucca, Nevada 89445

IN REPLY REFER TO:
4160
(NV-0260)

*Send cc
to BOO office
Paula Steinbauer
5670*

MFP 88

*in back of
notifies
when HMAP's
will be done*

December 10, 1993

Dear Interested Party:

Enclosed is the Final Re-Evaluation of the Soldier Meadows Allotment and the Proposed Full Force and Effect Multiple Use Decision that implements the recommendations of that re-evaluation.

This marks the culmination of two years of intensive work on the part of the BLM and interested parties in developing these documents. The re-evaluation was started in 1992 and the "Draft Re-Evaluation of the Soldier Meadows Allotment" was issued on January 12, 1993 to 56 affected interests. We received comments from 12 affected interests on that draft. The comments were considered in the development of the final re-evaluation. Throughout the re-evaluation process formal meetings and numerous informal personal contacts with the affected interests were made to coordinate the preparation of these documents.

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from LUP
life*

On July 28, 1993 we completed the Final Re-Evaluation of the Soldier Meadows Allotment and Proposed Multiple Use Decision. On August 17, 1993 we entered into formal consultation with the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service under section 7 of the Endangered Species Act. The consultation was for consideration of impacts of the proposed action on the threatened Lahanton Cutthroat Trout and Desert Dace. A biological opinion was issued by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on December 2, 1993. All of the terms and conditions required by the biological opinion were included in the Proposed Multiple Use Decision. This exempted the Bureau from the prohibitions of section 9 of the Endangered Species Act. Anyone wanting to review the biological opinion may do so by contacting Arn Berglund, Fisheries Biologists, at this office.

We wish to express our appreciation for the time and effort that you as an affected interest have put into this process and if you have any question regarding these enclosed documents, please feel free to contact Rich Adams, Supervisory Range Conservationist, at this office at 702-623-1500.

*1) not using data
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averaging
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about disclos
#15*
*2) didn't just by
using LUP #15
& ratios
arbitrarily set them
and now
Enclosures*

Sincerely yours,

Bud C. Cribley, Area Manager
Sonoma-Gerlach Resource Area

*blatant mismanagement
undue suffering*
*took away objectives for
upland wetland
50% utility
is critical to
h/v*

*if implementation of
strategic plan
will restructure herd
didn't do as EA
on that*

*what will you do
in interim for excess
AUM's*

*FOIA at same
time*

4. Improve the riparian condition class on 3 miles of Snow Creek to 70% (from 1990 baseline data of 60%) within the short term (by 2001) and maintain excellent riparian stream condition (70% of optimum or better) to the year 2017.
5. Improve the riparian condition class on 8 miles of Donnelly Creek to 62% (from baseline 1989 data of 52%) within the short term (by 2001) and achieve excellent riparian stream condition (70% of optimum or better) to the year 2017.
6. Improve the riparian condition class on 8 miles of Coleman Creek to 66% (from baseline 1991 data of 44%) within the short term (by 2001) and achieve excellent riparian stream habitat condition (70% of optimum or better) to the year 2017.
7. Improve the riparian condition class on 8 miles of Slumgullion Creek to 63% (from baseline 1990 data of 48%) within the short term (by 2001) and achieve excellent riparian stream habitat condition (70% of optimum or better) to the year 2017.

B. Retain long term objective number 6:

Protect known sage grouse strutting and nesting habitat and improve brooding habitat by: (WL-1.11)

1. Following NDOW's guidelines for Vegetal Control Programs in Sage Grouse Habitat in Nevada.
2. Maintain sagebrush canopy at 30% in sage grouse nesting areas where sagebrush does not exceed three (3) feet in height.

C. Retain Long Term Objectives 12, 13 and 14:

12. Improve or maintain Mahogany Creek to Class A water standards.
13. Improve or maintain the water quality of the following streams to the State criteria set for livestock drinking water, cold water aquatic life, water contact recreation (wading), and wildlife propagation:

Summer Camp Creek
Snow Creek
Donnelly Creek
Slumgullion Creek
Soldiers Creek

14. Maintain water quality standards for Desert Dace habitat in the springs where they occur to the following:

temperature - 32-38°C/90-100°F
nitrates - 90 mg/L
turbidity - 50 NTU

pH - 6.5-9.0
D.O. - 5.0 mg/L

D. Allotment Objectives for Uplands and Meadows:

Redefine long term objectives 5,7,8, and 9 by combining them into resource objectives to manage for desired plant communities.

RATIONALE: The limiting factor for wildlife is forage vigor, quality, and cover, therefore, the objectives need to be vegetative ones. Livestock and wild horse objectives are for a sustainable yield of forage, which desired plant communities would account for.

The following lists by pasture the resource objectives, the management actions to meet those objectives, and the procedures to be used to monitor the attainment of the objectives.

Objectives for this allotment were based on ecological status inventory data. The seral stage of each vegetative community and it's potential was considered in conjunction with the wildlife, wild horse, and livestock use to develop desired plant community objectives. Short term objectives will be used to determine the progress each community is making toward it's desired stage.

Summit Lake Pasture

Resource Objectives

Key areas will be established by an interdisciplinary team in key Ecological Sites based on the desired plant community objective.

Objective 1 Short Term

Increase the composition by weight the overall percentage of the following perennial grasses: AGSP, FEID, STH2, ELCI2, POA++, STCO4, and SIHY from 28% to 35% on Ecological Site 023XY007 (Loamy 14-16") in Site Write-up Area (SWA) U044 by the year 2001. The aggregate of ELCI2, POA++, SIHY, and STCO4 can only make up 10% of the total composition.

Long Term

Within Ecological Site 023XY007 (Loamy 14-16") manage for the following percent composition by weight:

Percent Composition By Weight			
Lifeform	Existing	Desired	Potential
Perennial Grasses	28%	45%	60%
Forbs	7%	10%	10%
Shrubs	65%	45%	30%

This objective should be achieved by the year 2017. The shrub component still maximizes the potential of the site to provide quality mule deer habitat as described in BLM's 6630 Manual.

Objective 2 **Short Term**

Maintain or increase perennial grasses at 45% composition by weight on Ecological Site 023XY017 (Claypan 14-16") in SWA U044 by the year 2001. These perennial grasses are FEID, AGSP, STH2, POA++, SIHY, and ELCI2 with the aggregate of the latter three making up no more than 10% of the total composition.

Long Term

Within Ecological Site 023XY017 (Claypan 14-16") manage for a desired plant community with the following percent composition by weight:

Percent Composition By Weight			
<u>Lifeform</u>	<u>Existing</u>	<u>Desired</u>	<u>Potential</u>
Perennial Grasses	45%	55%	65%
Forbs	11%	10%	10%
Shrubs	44%	35%	25%

This objective should be accomplished by the year 2017.

Objective 3 **Short Term**

Increase FEID and AGSP each from 2% to 6% composition by weight on Ecological Site 023XY026 (Mahogany Savanna) in SWA U044 by the year 2001. Maintain PUTR2 above 10% and CELE3 at 22% composition by weight.

Long Term

Within Ecological Site 023XY026 (Mahogany Savanna) manage for a desired plant community with the following percent composition by weight:

Percent Composition By Weight			
<u>Lifeform</u>	<u>Existing</u>	<u>Desired</u>	<u>Potential</u>
Perennial Grasses	23%	30%	40%
Forbs	Trace	8%	10%
Shrubs	77%	62% *	50%

* At least 25% must be CELE3 and 10% PUTR2.

This objective should be accomplished by the year 2017. The shrub component still maximizes the potential of the site to provide quality mule deer habitat as described in BLM's 6630 Manual.

Objective 4 Short Term

Maintain the existing plant community with 61% perennial grasses, 22% forbs, and 17% shrubs in Ecological Site 023XY013 (dry meadows) in SWA U044 by the year 2001.

Long Term

Within Ecological Site 023XY013 (dry meadows) in SWA U044 manage for the desired plant community with the following percent composition by weight:

Percent Composition by Weight			
<u>Lifeform</u>	<u>Existing</u>	<u>Desired</u>	<u>Potential</u>
Perennial Grasses	61	65	80
Forbs	22	22	20
Shrubs	17	13	0

Decrease the percent composition by weight of JUBA by increasing the percent composition by weight of PONE3 and HOBR.

This objective should be achieved by 2017.

Objective 5 Short Term

Maintain the existing plant community with 89% perennial grasses, 11% forbs, and 0% shrubs in Ecological Site 023XY025 (wet meadows) in SWA U202 by the year 2001.

Long Term

Within Ecological Site 023X025 (wet meadows) in SWA U202 manage for the desired plant community with the following percent composition by weight:

Percent Composition by Weight			
<u>Lifeform</u>	<u>Existing</u>	<u>Desired</u>	<u>Potential</u>
Perennial Grasses	89	85	80
Forbs	11	15	20
Shrubs	0	0	0

Decrease the percent composition by weight of Carex by increasing the percent composition by weight of DECE.

This objective should be achieved by 2017.

Rationale: The Summit Lake Pasture has been identified as yearlong bighorn sheep range (BRBY-2, BRBY-4), mule deer summer range (BRDS-8), as well as a sage grouse strutting ground and brood use area. It is also used yearlong by wild horses and by cattle for 3 months. By achieving these objectives the vegetative

communities would be meeting the needs of the mentioned wildlife, wild horses, and livestock.

Warm Springs Pasture

Resource Objectives:

Key areas will be established by an interdisciplinary team in key Ecological Sites based on the desired plant community objective.

Objective 1 Short Term

Increase perennial grasses from 34% to 41% composition by weight on Ecological Site 023XY017 (Claypan 14-16") in SWA U125 by the year 2001. These perennial grasses are: AGSP, STH2, POA++, SIHY, and FEID.

Long Term

Increase FEID from a trace to 7% composition by weight while managing for a desired plant community with the following percent composition by weight.

Percent Composition By Weight			
Lifeform	Existing	Desired	Potential
Perennial grasses	34%	50%	65%
Forbs	8%	10%	10%
Shrubs	56%	40%	25%

This objective should be completed by the year 2017. The shrub component still maximizes the potential of the site to provide quality mule deer habitat as described in BLM's 6630 Manual.

Objective 2 Short Term

Maintain the following perennial grasses: STH2, SIHY, and POA++ at 46% composition by weight through the year 2001 on Ecological Site 023XY031 (Claypan 10-14") in SWA U174. Also try to get AGSP established on the site.

Long Term

Increase AGSP to 5% composition by weight, as it's potential on the site is 20 to 50% composition by weight. Establish a desired plant community consisting of the following vegetation:

Percent Composition By Weight			
Lifeform	Existing	Desired	Potential
Perennial Grasses	46%	55%	65%
Forbs	12%	12%	10%
Shrubs	42%	33%	25%

This objective should be achieved by the year 2017. The shrub component still maximizes the potential of the site to provide quality mule deer habitat as described in BLM's 6630 Manual.

Objective 3 **Short Term**

Increase AGSP from 9% to 13% and STH2 from 8% to 12% composition by weight on Ecological Site 023XY039 (Loamy Slope 10-14") in SWA U125 by the year 2001.

Long Term

Manage for a desired plant community consisting of the following percent composition by weight within Ecological Site 023XY039 (Loamy Slope 10-14"):

Percent Composition By Weight			
Lifeform	Existing	Desired	Potential
Perennial Grasses	35%	50%	65%
Forbs	6%	10%	10%
Shrubs	52%	40%	25%

This objective should be reached by the year 2017. The shrub component still maximizes the potential of the site to provide quality mule deer habitat as described in BLM's 6630 Manual.

Objective 4 **Short Term**

Increase AGSP, FEID, and STH2 collectively, from 27% to 36% composition by weight on Ecological Site 023XY066 (Ashy Loam 12-14") in SWA U162 by the year 2001 while maintaining PUTR2 above 20% composition by weight.

Long Term

Within Ecological Site 023XY066 (Ashy Loam 12-14") manage for the following percent composition by weight:

Percent Composition By Weight			
Lifeform	Existing	Desired	Potential
Perennial Grasses	33%	43% *	60%
Forbs	2%	8%	10%
Shrubs	65 %	49% **	30%

* Must be at least 20 % FEID.

** Must be at least 20% PUTR2.

This objective should be achieved by the year 2017. The shrub component still maximizes the potential of the site to provide quality mule deer habitat as described in BLM's 6630 Manual.

Objective 5 Short Term

Maintain or increase FEID at 12% and increase AGSP from 2% to 5% composition by weight. Maintain PUTR2 at 9% composition; increase CELE3 from 3% to 6% composition by weight on Ecological Site 023XY026 (Mahogany Savanna) in SWA U161 by the year 2001.

Long Term

Manage for the following percent composition by weight on Ecological Site 023XY026 (Mahogany Savanna):

Percent Composition By Weight			
Lifeform	Existing	Desired	Potential
Perennial Grasses	35%	40% *	40%
Forbs	3%	10%	10%
Shrubs	54%	50% **	50%

* Must be at least 15% FEID, 10% AGSP.

** Must be at least 9% CELE3, and 9% PUTR2.

This objective should be achieved by the year 2017. The shrub component still maximizes the potential of the site to provide quality mule deer habitat as described in BLM's 6630 Manual.

Objective 6 Short Term

Maintain PONE3 at 12% and increase composition by weight for forbs from 8% to 11% with LUPIN making up no more than 5% composition by weight of the forbs in SWA U199 on Ecological Site 023XY013 (dry meadows) by the year 2001.

Long Term

Within Ecological Site 023xy013 (dry meadows) in SWA U199 manage for the desired plant community with the following percent composition by weight:

Percent Composition by Weight			
Lifeform	Existing	Desired	Potential
Perennial Grasses	92	85	80
Forbs	8	15	20
Shrubs	0	0	0

Increase composition by weight PONE3 from 12% to 15% in SWA U199 on Ecological Site 023XY013 (dry meadows) by the year 2017.

Rationale: This Warm Springs Pasture has been identified as pronghorn yearlong (BRPY-7) and summer range (BRPS-1, BRPS-8); mule deer yearlong (BRDY-3) and winter range (BRDW-4); and as a sage grouse brood use area. It is also used yearlong by wild horses/burros and by cows for three months a year.

Calico Pasture

Resource Objectives:

Key areas will be established by an interdisciplinary team in key Ecological Sites based on the desired plant community objective.

Objective 1 Short Term

Increase STH2 from 9% to 12% composition by weight on Ecological Site 027XY079 (Gravelly Claypan 8-10") in SWA U063 by the year 2001.

Long Term

Within Ecological Site 027XY079 (Gravelly Claypan 8-10") manage for the following percent composition by weight:

Percent Composition By Weight			
Lifeform	Existing	Desired	Potential
Perennial Grasses	25%	32%	45%
Forbs	8%	8%	5%
Shrubs	67%	60%	50%

This objective should be achieved by the year 2017. The shrub component still maximizes the potential of the site to provide quality antelope habitat as described in BLM's 6630 Manual.

Objective 2 Short Term

Increase AGSP from 2% to 5% composition by weight on Ecological Site 023XY037 (Clay Slope 8-12") in SWA U109 by the year 2001.

Long Term

Manage for a desired plant community with the following percent composition by weight on Ecological Site 023XY037 (Clay Slope 8-12"):

Percent Composition By Weight			
Lifeform	Existing	Desired	Potential
Perennial Grasses	26%	36%	70%
Forbs	25%	22%	10%
Shrubs	42%	42%	20%

Perennial grasses may include: AGSP- must be at least 8%, STH2, POA++, SIHY, FEID. This objective should be achieved by the year 2017. The shrub component still maximizes the potential of the site to provide quality antelope habitat as described in BLM's 6630 Manual.

Objective 3 Short Term

Increase FEID from 2% to 6% composition by weight while trying to establish AGSP on Ecological Site 023XY017 (Claypan 14-16") in SWA U042 by the year 2001.

Long Term

Manage for a desired plant community with the following percent composition by weight:

Percent Composition By Weight			
Lifeform	Existing	Desired	Potential
Perennial Grasses	34%	46%	65%
Forbs	28%	20%	10%
Shrubs	38%	34%	25%

Perennial grasses include FEID, AGSP, POA++, STH2, SIHY and other perennial grasses. This objective should be accomplished by 2017. The shrub component still maximizes the potential of the site to provide quality antelope habitat as described in BLM's 6630 Manual.

Rationale: The Calico Pasture has been identified as pronghorn antelope winter range (BRPW-1). Wild horses use this pasture yearlong and cows use it for one month (April 1 - April 30) for two years and then rest it for two years.

Soldier Meadows Pasture

Resource Objectives:

Key areas will be established by an interdisciplinary team in key Ecological Sites based on the desired plant community objective.

Objective 1 Short Term

Increase composition by weight of AGSP from 31% to 36% on Ecological Site 023XY039 (loamy slope 10-14") in SWA U159 by the year 2001.

Long Term

Within Ecological Site 023XY039 (loamy slope 10-14") manage for the following percent composition by weight:

Percent Composition by Weight			
Lifeform	Existing	Desired	Potential
Perennial Grasses	35	44	65
Forbs	7	10	10
Shrubs	58	46	25

This objective should be achieved by the year 2017. The shrub component still maximizes the potential of the site to provide quality mule deer and antelope habitat as described in BLM's 6630 Manual.

Objective 2 Short Term

Increase FEID and STH2 collectively from 12% to 18% composition by weight on Ecological Site 023XY017 (claypan 14-16") in SWA U229 by the year 2001.

Long Term

Within Ecological Site 023XY017 (claypan 14-16") in SWA U229 manage for the following percent composition by weight:

Percent Composition by Weight			
Lifeform	Existing	Desired	Potential
Perennial Grasses	23	35	65
Forbs	8	10	10
Shrubs	69	55	25

This objective should be achieved by the year 2017.

Objective 3 Short Term

Increase the composition by weight STH2 from 1% to 6% on Ecological Site 024XY005 (loamy 8-10") in SWA U181 by the year 2001.

Long Term

Within Ecological Site 024XY005 (loamy 8-10") in SWA 181 manage for the following percent composition by weight:

Percent Composition by Weight			
Lifeform	Existing*	Desired	Potential
Perennial Grasses	7	17	55
Forbs	3	5	5
Shrubs	87	78	40

This objective should be achieved by 2017.

* The remaining 3% is comprised of BRTE.

Objective 4 Short Term

Maintain or increase by weight the perennial grasses at 40% or higher on Ecological Site 023XY039 (loamy slope 10-14") in SWA U117 by 2001. The perennial grasses include AGSP and SIHY.

Long Term

Within Ecological Site 023XY039 (loamy slope 10-14") in SWA U117 manage for the following percent composition by weight:

Percent Composition by Weight			
Lifeform	Existing*	Desired	Potential
Perennial Grasses	40	45	65
Forbs	7	10	10
Shrubs	48	45	25

This objective should be achieved by 2017.

* The remaining 5% is comprised of BRTE.

Objective 5 Short Term

Increase by weight the following perennial grasses: SIHY, STTH2, and POA++ collectively from 12% to 18% on Ecological Site 023XY037 (clay slope 8-12") in SWA U187 by 2001. Also try to establish AGSP on the site from the adjacent range sites.

Long Term

Within Ecological Site 023XY037 (clay slope 8-12") manage for the following Desired Plant Community while trying to establish AGSP on the site:

Percent Composition by Weight			
Lifeform	Existing	Desired	Potential
Perennial Grasses	12	25	70
Forbs	2	7	10
Shrubs	86	68	20

This objective should be achieved by 2017.

Objective 6 Short Term

Increase by weight the perennial grasses from 5% to 8% and increase ARSPS5 from 4% to 10% on Ecological Site 024XY025 (loamy slope 5-8") in SWA U114 manage for the following Desired Plant Community:

Percent Composition by Weight			
Lifeform	Existing*	Desired	Potential
Perennial Grasses	5	10	20
Forbs	Trace	5	5
Shrubs	92	85	75

This objective should be achieved by 2017.

* The remaining 3% is comprised of BRTE.

Objective 7 Short Term

Maintain the existing plant community with 61% perennial grasses, 22% forbs, and 17% shrubs in Ecological Site 023XY013 (dry meadows) in SWA U201 by the year 2001.

Long Term

Within Ecological Site 023XY013 (dry meadows) in SWA U201 manage for the desired plant community with the following percent composition by weight:

Percent Composition by Weight			
Lifeform	Existing	Desired	Potential
Perennial Grasses	61	65	80
Forbs	22	22	20
Shrubs	17	13	0

Increase the percent by weight of the perennial grasses by 4%, while maintaining or decreasing the percent JUBA at 24%.

Rationale: The Soldier Meadows Pasture has been identified as pronghorn yearlong (BRPY-5) and winter (BRPW-6, BRPW-7); mule deer summer (BRDS-7, BRDS-5) and winter (BRDW-4); and bighorn sheep yearlong (BRBY-1, BRBY-2). It is also used yearlong by wild horses and burros and cows for one month a year (April 1- April 30).

Black Rock Pasture

Resource Objectives:

Key areas will be established by an interdisciplinary team in key Ecological Sites based on the desired plant community objective.

Objective 1 Short Term

Increase ORHY, SIHY, and STSP3 from a trace to 3% composition by weight on Ecological Site 027XY018 (Gravelly Loam 4-8") in SWA U005 by the year 2001.

Long Term

Manage for a desired plant community with the following percent composition by weight on Ecological Site 027XY018 (Gravelly Loam 4-8").

Percent Composition By Weight

<u>Lifeform</u>	<u>Existing</u>	<u>Desired</u>	<u>Potential</u>
<u>Perennial Grasses</u>	<u>Trace</u>	<u>9%</u>	<u>25%</u>
<u>Forbs</u>	<u>Trace</u>	<u>3%</u>	<u>5%</u>
<u>Shrubs</u>	<u>100%</u>	<u>88%</u>	<u>70%</u>

The perennial grasses may include ORHY, POSE, SIHY, and STSP3. This objective should be achieved by 2017.

Objective 2 **Short Term**

Increase ORHY from 6% to 9% composition by weight on Ecological Site 027XY016 (Sodic Dunes) in SWA U004.

Long Term

Within Ecological Site 023XY016 (Sodic Dunes) manage for a plant community with the following percent composition by weight:

Percent Composition By Weight

<u>Lifeform</u>	<u>Existing</u>	<u>Desired</u>	<u>Potential</u>
<u>Perennial Grasses</u>	<u>16%</u>	<u>20%</u>	<u>35%</u>
<u>Forbs</u>	<u>Trace</u>	<u>3%</u>	<u>5%</u>
<u>Shrubs</u>	<u>84%</u>	<u>77%</u>	<u>65%</u>

Perennial grasses may include : ORHY- must be at least 12% composition, DISP3, ELCI2, and SIHY. This objective should be accomplished by the year 2017.

Rationale: The Black Rock Pasture has been identified as yearlong pronghorn antelope range (BRPY-5). It is used as a winter pasture by cattle (Jan. 1 - March 30) and it has wild horse use.

Hot Springs Pasture

Resource Objectives

- 1) Resource objectives, including livestock will be established in the Desert Dace Habitat Management Plan. These objectives will be incorporated into the re-evaluation/AMP.

CARRYING CAPACITY

The combined carrying capacity for livestock and wild horses/burros to achieve these objectives are:

Livestock	12,168 AUMs
Wild Horse and Burros	5,034 AUMs
	17,202 AUMs

Handwritten calculations:

$$\sqrt[4]{5034} = 1258.5$$

$$\frac{5034}{10} = 503.4$$

$$\frac{5034}{3775} = 1.334$$

The carrying capacity between livestock and wild horses/burros is based on the LUP ratios in accordance with MFP Decisions - Range 1.1 and Wild Horse and Burro 1.1. An exception was made on the southern end of the Black Rock Range - West Herd Management Area (HMA) where winter habitat is the limiting factor for the wild horses.

LIVESTOCK MANAGEMENT DECISION

Based upon the evaluation of monitoring data for the Soldier Meadow Allotment, consultation with the permittee, and other affected interests it is my proposed decision to change the livestock management:

From:

1. Grazing Preference (AUMs)
 - a. Total Preference 16,070
 - b. Suspended Preference 4,017
 - c. Active Preference 12,053
 - d. Not Scheduled
 - e. Exchange of Use
 - f. Scheduled Use 12,053
2. Season of Use 1/10 - 5/20
5/21 - 10/30
3. Number and Class of Livestock 1500, cow/calf
500, cow/calf
4. Percent Federal Range 100%

To:

1. Grazing Preference (AUMs)
 - a. Total Preference 16,070
 - b. Suspended Preference 3,902
 - c. Active Preference 12,168
 - d. Not Scheduled
 - e. Exchange of Use
 - f. Scheduled Use 7,687

2. Number of Livestock and Season of Use by pasture

Pasture	Lvt Num	Season	AUMs
Black Rk	500	1/01 - 3/31	1480
Calico	1117	4/01 - 4/30	1102
Soldier M	1117	4/01 - 4/30	1102
Summit Lk	1117	7/15 - 10/14	3379
Warm Spr.	1117	7/15 - 10/14	3379
Hot Spr.	1117	11/16- 12/31	1726

The carrying capacity was determined on a pasture basis. The livestock AUMs associated with the rest pasture will not be allocated to any user (livestock, wild horse/burros, or wildlife) during the rest year in order to maintain a thriving natural ecological balance in the allotment. Therefore, on any given year approximately 7,687 AUMs will be used by livestock. The livestock stocking rate per pasture will not exceed the pastures' livestock carrying capacity.

3. Class of Livestock cow/calf
4. Percent Federal Range 100%

GRAZING SYSTEM

From:

	Black Rock	Calico	Soldier M.	Warm Spring	Summit Lake
yr 1	11/16-4/15	4/16-6/15	rested	6/16-11/15	rested
yr 2	11/16-4/15	4/16-6/15	rested	6/16-11/15	rested
yr 3	11/16-4/15	rested	4/16-6/15	rested	6/16-11/15
yr 4	11/16-4/15	rested	4/16-6/15	rested	6/16-11/15

To:

	Black Rock	Calico	Soldier M.	Warm Spring	Summit Lake	Hot Springs
yr 1	1/1-3/31	4/1-4/30	rested	7/15-10/14	rested	11/16-12/31
yr 2	1/1-3/31	rested	4/1-4/30	rested	7/15-10/14	11/16-12/31
yr 3	1/1-3/31	rested	4/1-4/30	rested	7/15-10/14	11/16-12/31
yr 4	1/1-3/31	4/1-4/30	rested	7/15-10/14	rested	11/16-12/31
yr 5	1/1-3/31	4/1-4/30	rested	7/15-10/14	rested	11/16-12/31
yr 6	1/1-3/31	rested	4/1-4/3	rested	7/15-10/14	11/16-12/31

The grazing system was changed from a two year deferred/rest rotation system under a four year cycle with five pastures (refer to existing system map overlay) to a two year deferred/rest rotation system with six pastures under a four year cycle (refer to proposed system map overlay). By restricting livestock grazing, the grazing system allows for the key species to meet physiological requirements and assures that spawning of LCT activities will not be impacted by livestock grazing. Riding and

herding is required for all pastures and in particular the Summit Lake Pasture.

Late Winter-January 1 to March 31: Livestock will graze the Black Rock Pasture.

Spring-April 1 to April 30: The two spring pastures are the Calico and Soldier Meadows Pastures. The Calico Pasture will be used for two consecutive years and then rested for two years while the Soldier Meadows Pasture is grazed.

Summer-July 15 to October 14: The two summer pastures are Summit Lake and Warm Springs. Livestock will graze each of the pastures on a two year alternate cycle. When the Summit Lake Pasture is grazed for two consecutive years the Warm Springs Pasture is rested for two consecutive years.

The Summit Lake Pasture will be divided into three separate use areas by the proposed riparian pasture fences; Idaho Canyon-north, Stanley Camp-middle (riparian), and Coleman Creek-south.

Livestock grazing in the Stanley Camp use area will not be allowed until riparian vegetation and stream bank conditions meet the objectives set in this re-evaluation. When the LCT Recovery Plan is approved, BLM will adopt those objectives. In the interim cattle will be allowed to trail through the pasture for three (3) days or less. The proposed trailing route runs along the ridge above the various creeks headwaters. The intent is to move groups of cows, 300 to 400 head at a time, over the three day period and not take three entire days to move the herd from one sub-pasture to the other. At times the entire herd may be moved instead of the smaller groups.

Based on the above, when cattle graze in Summit Lake Pasture, they will start in the Coleman Creek use area and graze for four (4) weeks, move north into the Stanley Camp use area for two (2) weeks, then move into the Idaho Canyon use area to graze for six (6) to eight (8) weeks. When the proposed AMP is completed the Stanley Camp use area will be grazed late (between 7/15-10/14) until the next re-evaluation. The re-evaluation will analyze if the season of use should be modified. The time frames for livestock movements are estimated. The livestock will be moved from one sub-pasture to the next as the utilization levels on key riparian plants approaches use criteria (see pg. 57).

The Stanley Camp use area fence will provide controlled livestock grazing for Summer Camp and Snow Creeks for two (2) out of four (4) years. Under the proposed system the Summit Lake Pasture will be grazed for three (3) months for two (2) years then rested for two (2) years for a total use period of six (6) months out of forty-eight (48) months. The riparian pasture will be grazed a total of one (1) month out of forty-eight (48) months. There will be no authorized grazing within the Mahogany Creek Enclosure.

Late Fall/Early Winter-November 16 to December 31: Cattle will graze the Hot Springs Pasture.

An interim plan will not be developed to cover the next six years -- which is two gather cycles.

Rationale: Livestock management was identified as having the most potential in achieving allotment multiple use objectives. Proposed range projects and changing the grazing dates in the Summit Lake and Hot Springs Pastures are designed to enhance riparian vegetation and LCT/Desert Dace habitat. This grazing system also meets the upland and meadow complex vegetation requirements in the other pastures.

LIVESTOCK DECISION ACTIONS

1) Livestock Management

Require permittee to herd livestock so the short term utilization objectives for stream bank riparian, wetland riparian, and upland habitats are achieved.

For adjacent pastures, where utilization or residual vegetation heights have not been exceeded, the gates could be opened a week before the move dates. This would allow cattle to drift into the new pasture. Within a week after the move date the remaining cows would be moved and the gate shut.

If livestock have to be moved due to utilization or residual height requirements, all livestock shall be removed from that area within a week or less and kept out of that area for the remaining grazing period.

Trailing will be allowed for no longer than three days across any pasture that is not scheduled to be used during that time period-- for example: crossing the Hot Spring Pasture when moving from the Calico Pasture to the Summit Lake Pasture.

Livestock will not graze the Summit Lake Pastures until range projects are completed. In addition, livestock will not graze the Stanley Camp sub-pasture until vegetation and stream bank conditions meet the criteria described in the Re-evaluation or those adopted by BLM from the approved LCT Recovery Plan.

Actual use billing will be considered once an AMP is written. the operator will have to submit accurate livestock numbers and dates along with submitting the information within specified time frames.

- 2) Limit utilization on stream riparian, wetland riparian, and upland vegetation

Do not exceed 30% utilization of current years growth on aspen and willows for all reaches when the cattle leave the pasture.

For Mahogany; Summer Camp; and Snow Creeks, and the spring complex associated with the Desert Dace, grasses and grass-like plants will have a minimum stubble height of 6 inches when the livestock leave the pasture; even if wild horse numbers have not reached AML.

A minimum 4 inch stubble height requirement for grass and grass-like plants will apply to Coleman, Slumgullion, and Donnelly Creeks when the cattle leave the pasture.

Combined wild horse/burro and livestock utilization objective on upland grass and grass-like species is 50% at the end of the livestock use period (either a scheduled pasture or the end of the grazing season). If the 50% utilization level is not being met and livestock are moved sooner than scheduled, the grazing preference will be evaluated to determine if a downward adjustment is required. The evaluation will include wild horse, wildlife, and climatic factors.

If monitoring indicates that utilization levels cannot be kept at the recommended stubble heights and browse utilization along the creeks during the combined use periods (livestock and wild horses), after the AML is reached, then the streams, or geographic area, will be excluded from livestock and wild horses.

- 3) Conduct a re-evaluation in 2001 analyzing resource objectives. If significant resource problems are identified sooner then a re-evaluation will be completed at that time.
- 4) Conduct a re-evaluation in 2017 to determine if long term desired plant community objectives have been achieved.
- 5) Write an AMP by FY 95 incorporating the Wall Canyon Allotment into the Soldier Meadows Allotment.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

The below mentioned terms and conditions will be incorporated into the term permit (which will expire in 2001 to correspond with the next re-evaluation) and their annual authorization via the grazing bill:

Grazing use will be in accordance with this grazing decision.

Salt and/or mineral blocks shall not be placed within one quarter (1/4) mile of springs, streams, meadows, riparian zones, or aspen stands. The

area immediate to the Desert Dace habitat blocks shall not be placed within 1/2 mile of those springs.

The permittee is required to perform normal maintenance on the range projects which have been assigned maintenance responsibility.

Livestock will be moved as the key riparian species approach the 6 inch stubble height level and 30% utilization levels for Summer Camp, Mahogany, and Snow Creeks; and the Desert Dace spring complexes and 4 inches for Coleman, Slungullian, and Donnelly Creeks.

When livestock use the Stanley Camp use area a herder and BLM resource specialist shall be present. If a herder is not present or a BLM resource specialist is not available, the livestock can not be turned out; or if during the grazing period neither are no longer available then the livestock shall be removed.

AUTHORITY

The authority for this decision is contained in Title 43 of the Code of Federal Regulations; pertinent citations are cited:

4100.0-8 Land use plans - The authorized officer shall manage livestock grazing on public lands under the principle of multiple use and sustained yield, and in accordance with applicable land use plans. Land use plans shall establish allowable resources uses (either singly or in combination), related levels of production or use to be maintained, areas of use, and resource condition goals and objectives to be obtained. The plans also set forth program constraints and general management practices needed to achieve management objectives. Livestock grazing activities and management actions approved by the authorized officer shall be in conformance with the land use plan as defined at 43 CFR 1601.0-5(b).

4110.3 Changes in grazing preference status - The authorized officer shall periodically review the grazing preference specified in a grazing permit or grazing lease and may make changes in the grazing preference status. these changes shall be supported by monitoring, as evidenced by rangeland studies conducted over time, unless the change is either specified in an applicable land use plan or necessary to manage, maintain or improve rangeland productivity.

4120.3-1(a) Conditions for range improvements - Range improvements shall be installed, use, maintained, and/or modified on the public lands, or removed from these lands, in a manner consistent with multiple-use management.

4130.6-1(a) Mandatory terms and conditions - The authorized officer shall specify the kind and number of livestock, the period(s) of use, the allotment(s) to be used, and the amount of use, in animal unit months, for every grazing permit or lease. The authorized shall not exceed the livestock carrying capacity as determined through monitoring and adjusted as necessary.

4130.6-2 **Other terms and conditions** - The authorized officer may specify in grazing permits or leases other terms and conditions which will assist in achieving management objectives, provide for proper range management or assist in the orderly administration of the public rangelands

4130.6-3 **Modification** - Following careful and considered consultation, cooperation and coordination with the lessees, permittees, and other affected interests, the authorized officer may modify terms and conditions of the lease or permit if monitoring data show that present grazing use is not meeting the land use plan or management objectives.

WILD HORSE/BURRO MANAGEMENT DECISION

Based on the evaluation of the monitoring data for the Soldier Meadows Allotment, consultations with the permittee, and affected interests my proposed decision for wild horses and burros is:

WILD HORSE/BURRO APPROPRIATE MANAGEMENT LEVELS

The following wild horse and burro AMLs are based on monitoring and should result in a thriving natural ecological balance for the three herd management areas:

<u>Wild Horse/Burro</u>		
<u>Herd Management Area</u>	<u>Number-AML</u>	<u>AUMs</u>
<u>Black Rock Range-West</u>		
N. of Slumgullion	70	845
S. of Slumgullion	85	1020
Subtotals	155	1865
Warm Springs Canyon	199	2389*
Calico Mountains **	65	780
Grand Totals	419	5034

* The breakdown between wild horses and burros is: 175 wild horses
 24 burros

** 30% of the Calico Mountains HMA is within the Soldier Meadows Allotment.

Once AML is reached - which should take two gather cycles - in about six years, the wild horse and burro population will be maintained within the following ranges in order to ensure that the carrying capacity is not exceeded. About 1,300 wild horses and burros will have to gathered to reach AML (500 from Black Rock Range - West, 550 from Warm Springs Canyon, and 250 from Calico Mountains). These ranges are based on gathering horses every three years. If gathering schedules change, these ranges may change.

Justify

<u>Herd Management Area</u>	<u>Wild Horse/Burro</u> <u>75% of AML to AML</u>	<u>AUMS</u>
Black Rock Range-West		
N. of Slumgullion	53 to 70	636 to 845
S. of Slumgullion	64 to 85	768 to 1020
Subtotals	117 to 155	1404 to 1865
Warm Springs Canyon	149 to 199	1788 to 2389
Calico Mountains	49 to 65	588 to 780
Grand Totals	315 to 419	3780 to 5034

Rationale: During the evaluation period wild horse and burro numbers have exceeded the initial stocking level of 10,140 AUMs (in 1991 by almost 7,000 AUMs). Wild horses and burros have made disproportionate use of the forage resource during the evaluation period, especially in the Black Rock Range - West and Calico Mountains HMAs. Wild horses have adversely impacted the headwaters of Coleman, Snow, and Summer Camp Creeks by overgrazing the vegetation and trampling the spring areas. Wild horses have damaged water projects in the Warm Springs Pasture by flattening stock water tanks and pipelines.

WILD HORSE DECISION ACTIONS

- 1) The utilization level on upland vegetation key species by wild horses and burros, once AML is reached, is limited to 20% by July 15 on livestock rest years. If the utilization levels are not being met after the second year of rest, then the AML will be adjusted.
- 2) By February 28, or the start of the new grazing season, utilization on upland grass key species shall not exceed 60%. For upland browse and meadows, utilization shall not exceed 50% (utilization on grass species from 50 to 60% by wild horses and burros will occur during the dormant season and should not have a detrimental impact to plant health and vigor)
- 3) Maintain the wild horse and burro population within the recommended range to prevent numbers from exceeding AML. This should keep utilization levels on key species at acceptable levels, thereby, achieving a Thriving Natural Ecological Balance and provide for a healthy and thriving wild horse/burro population. If livestock or wild horses/burros exceed the calculated carrying capacity it would not be possible to meet utilization goals and to maintain a functioning vegetation community.
- 4) **Combine the Black Rock Range - West and East HMA's into the Black Rock Mountain HMA**

Manage the wild horse populations of the Black Rock Range- West (Soldier Meadows Allotment, Sonoma-Gerlach R.A.) and the Black Rock Range- East (Paiute Meadows Allotment, Paradise-Denio R.A.) Herd Management Areas (HMAs) as one population. There are no

topographic barriers or impediments to limit or restrict the free movement and interaction of wild horses between the two HMA's. Monitoring data indicates that horses move between the two HMA's. The combined AML will be based on the carrying capacities and thriving natural ecological balances within the use areas of each allotment as shown below:

<u>HMA/Allotment</u>	<u>Wild Horse Numbers</u>	<u>AUMs</u>
<u>BLACK ROCK WEST</u>		
Soldier Meadows		
N. of Slumgullian	70	845
<u>S. of Slumgullian</u>	<u>85</u>	<u>1020</u>
Total	155	1865
<u>BLACK ROCK EAST</u>		
Paiute Meadows	<u>31</u>	<u>372</u>
Total	186	2237

Census and distribution flights conducted from 1969 to present indicate the historical distribution of wild horses on the Black Rock Range has been approximately fifty percent respectively between the two HMA's. It is unknown at this time what the distribution and number of horses will be between the two allotments at the recommended AML of 186 since the historic distribution patterns were for a typical age structured population, the specific distribution of the horses in the Black Rock Range will not be known until additional monitoring data is collected.

5) Change the Black Rock Mountain and Warm Springs HMA boundaries

The original HMA boundaries were developed along vegetative community lines, the District and Resource Area boundaries, and the Summit Lake Indian Reservation. Black Rock Range-West HMA (NV-227) and Warm Springs Canyon (NV-226) lie adjacent to one another and share a common boundary from Sheldon Antelope Range/District boundary fence to a point approximately 1/2 mile southwest of Antelope Spring. The proposed changes in the boundaries of the Black Rock West HMA and the Warm Springs Canyon HMA are being proposed to reflect the actual use areas of the wild horses.

There are two proposed changes to the common boundary between the Black Rock Range-West and the Warm Springs Canyon HMA's.


1. Soldier Creek: Addition of 4188 acres from the Black Rock Range-West HMA from Soldier Creek through Dry Canyon to Warm Springs Canyon HMA.

The new boundary would run from Soldier Meadows Ranch northeast along Soldier Creek and tie in with the original boundary of the Black Rock Range-West HMA north of Coleman Creek.

RATIONALE: Soldier Creek acts as a natural break between the two HMAs. Distribution data and on the ground observations show horses in this area interact with the horse populations from the Warm Springs Canyon HMA when disturbed and not with the horses from the Black Rock Range-West HMA.

2.

Five Mile Flat: Due to a proposed fence to manage livestock movement running north to south through section 6 and 7 of T.42N, R.26E, 4105 acres would be removed from the Black Rock Range-West HMA and added to the Warm Springs Canyon HMA.

RATIONALE: The horses found utilizing this area west of the proposed fence tend to interact with the horse populations from the Warm Springs Canyon HMA when disturbed by aircraft and the horses east of the fence tend to interact with the horse populations from the Black Rock Range-West showing that they are part of that population. The proposed fence line would act as a break and keep the horses in their respective HMAs. 

A total of 8293 acres would be transferred from the Black Rock Range- West HMA to the Warm Springs HMA.

AUTHORITY

The authority for this decision is contained in Sec. 3(a), 3(b)(1), and 3(b)(2) 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:

4700.0-6(a) **Policy** - Wild horses and burros shall be managed as self-sustaining populations of health animals in balance with other uses and the productive capacity of their habitat.

4710.4 **Constraints on Management** - 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 areas plans.

4720.1 **Removal of Excess Animals from Public Lands** - 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...

WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT

Based on the interpretation and analysis of monitoring data and consultation with affected interest I will implement the following:

- 1) **Continue with the management of wildlife as outlined in the Land Use Plan, Soldier Meadows Desert Dace, Fox Mountain, and Mahogany Creek Habitat Management Plans.**
- 2) **Manage Mahogany, Summer Camp, and Snow Creeks for Lahontan cutthroat trout.**
- 3) **Manage the hot spring complex in the Hot Springs Pasture for Desert Dace and Soldier Meadows cinquefoil.**

Rationale: The analysis of monitoring data indicates the multiple use objectives for the allotment are not being met. Use pattern mapping and field observations have documented that livestock and wild horses are the primary factor in not meeting objectives. Wildlife are impacting their associated habitat, but not to the extent that warrants changes in the existing management.

FUTURE MONITORING AND GRAZING ADJUSTMENTS

The Sonoma-Gerlach Resource Area will continue to monitor the Soldier Meadows Allotment. Monitoring data will continue to be collected in the future to provide the necessary information to determine if the allotment specific objectives are being met under the new grazing management strategy. Subsequent evaluations will determine if adjustments are required to meet the established allotment specific objectives. The allotment is scheduled for re-evaluation in 2001.

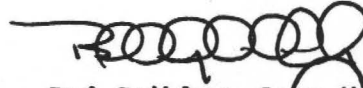
PROTEST RIGHTS

If you wish to protest the Proposed Multiple Use Decision in accordance with 43 CFR 4160.2, you are allowed fifteen (15) days from receipt of this notice within which to file such protest in person or in writing with the Area Manager. The protest should state clearly and concisely why you think the proposed decision is in error. Protests should be sent to:

Area Manager
Sonoma-Gerlach Resource Area
Bureau of Land Management, Winnemucca District
705 East 4th Street
Winnemucca, NV 89445

At the end of the protest period, I will issue a final full force and effect decision.

Sincerely Yours,



Bud Cribley, Area Manager
Sonoma-Gerlach Resource Area

cc (The Proposed Decision was mailed certified to the following individuals and groups):

NV Dept. of Wildlife P111849813
Mrs. Dawn Lappin, WHOA P111849814
Ms. Rose Strickland, Sierra Club P111849815
Ms. Cathy Barcomb Commission for the Preservation of Wild Horses P111849816
Mr. Craig Downer P111849817
Dr. Gary Vineyard, UNR P111849818
Ms. Deborah Allard P111849819
Trout Unlimited, Sagebrush Chapter P111849820
Mr. Demar Dahl, NV Land Action Assn. P111849821
Ms. Johanna H. Wald, NRDC P111849822
Mr. Mike Hornbarger P111849823
Ms. Barbara Spolter, Wilderness Society P111849824
Mr. Martin Larraneta P111849825
Paiute Meadow Ranch P111849826
NV Woolgrowers Assn. P111849827
NV Cattlemans Assn. P111849828
Mr. Thomas Van Horne P111849829
Intermtn Fed. Landbank Assoc. P111849830
WH&B Comm, Nat'l Academy of Science P111849831
Ms. Paula Jewell, Humane Soc. of U.S. P111849832
Mr. Jack Piccolo, Summit Lake Paiute Tribe P111849833
The Nature Conservancy P111849834
William Brigham NV Bighorns Unlimited, Reno Chapter P111849835
Mr. Scott Tomsen P111849836
Ms. Julian Smith P111849837
Mr. Dick Stump P111849838
Mr. Jack Horning P111849839
Mr. Andy Johas P111849840
Mr. William C. Cummings P111849841
Ms. Karen Sussman, ISPM&B P111849842
Messrs. Paul Holcher and Don Stix P111849865
Mr. Donald Molde, Humane Soc. of South NV P111849866
Mr. Derrel Fulwider P111849867
American Horse Protection Assn. P111849868
Ms. Nancy Whitaker, API P111849869
Mr. Robert Sam, Summit Lake Paiute Tribe P111849870

The Proposed Decision was mailed to the following individuals and groups:

USDI, Sheldon Wildlife Refugee	Mr. Craig Plummer
Honorable Richard Bryan	Mr. Scott Bell, USFS
USDI, BLM Susanville/Carson City	USDI, FWS Reno/Portland
Mr. John Marvel	Honorable Harry Reid
Div. of State Lands	State Multiple Use Advis
Mr. Jerry Townsend, BIA-Western NV Agency	Desert Research Inst, UNR
Div. of Conservation Districts, NV	Chairman NV Conservation Dist.
Mr. Tom Ballow, NV Dept. of Ag.	Honorable James H. Bilbray
Mr. Hillary Winebarger	Honorable Barbara Vucanovich
USDI, BLM Portland/Sacramento	

~~November 4, 1994~~

Dec 20, 1993

Mr. Bud Cribley
Sonoma-Gerlach Resource Area
Bureau of Land Management
705 East Street
Winnemucca, Nevada 89406

Subject: Protest - Notice of Proposed Full Force and Effect
Multiple Use Decision for the Soldier Meadows Allotment

Dear Mr. Cribley:

The Nevada Commission for the Preservation of Wild Horses has a great concern and interest in the implementation of the Sonoma-Gerlach Resource Area land use plan and its effects on wild horse herds and/or their habitats. We view multiple use decisions as the primary vehicle to set a carrying capacity for public rangelands and allocate available forage to wild horses, livestock and wildlife to achieve a thriving natural ecological balance. These decisions must be based upon sound rangeland monitoring data to support management actions necessary to protect natural resources.

It is our finding that the Notice of Proposed Full Force and Effect Multiple Use Decision for Soldier Meadows Allotment does not have supportive data and rationales in the Final Soldier Meadows Re-evaluation. We wish to convey the following issues to be addressed in the Final Decision:

The Proposed Decision will require a land use plan amendment.

The Proposed Decision extends the land use plan short term objectives in excess of 14 years. Range Management-Management Framework III Decision RM-1 set a five year schedule to accomplish wild horse herd management area plans, and other approved activity plans, to establish appropriate management levels to assure viable herds in balance with their habitat by 1987. Short term objectives

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of the Proposed Decision adjusts the land use plan short term objectives to the year 2001.

The Proposed Decision adjusts the wild horse herd boundaries for the Black Rock West, Warm Springs and Black Rock East Wild Horse Management Areas. These herd areas are delineated in the Sonoma-Gerlach Unit Resource Analysis and Final Grazing Environmental Impact Statement. Any modification or adjustment to these boundaries must be supported by herd delineation data in an environmental analysis to amend the current land use plan.

The Proposed Decision establishes carrying capacities that are arbitrary and contrary to the land use plan.

The Proposed Decision did not consider the allotment short term objective for upland wetland riparian habitat. Rangeland monitoring data found in Appendix 4 of the Final Soldier Meadows Allotment Re-evaluation consistently states "severe" utilization of this key habitat. Carrying capacity computations found in Appendix 6 presents no data to indicate the use of "severe" or 90 percent as the actual utilization or the allotment specific objective of 50 percent as the desire utilization level. Weight averaging of the use pattern mapping data further distracts from the allotment specific objective for wetland meadow habitats.

The Proposed Decision arbitrarily allocates available forage to wild horse and livestock. The land use plan ratio of initial stocking rates for livestock and wild horses were not at a thriving natural ecological balance in 1982. Data and analysis of the Final Environmental Impact Statement did not suggest or conclude that the existing conditions were protecting or restoring natural resources. Therefore, the allocation of available forage must be based upon monitoring data, wild horse herd population dynamics and forage preference of competing ungulates.

The Proposed Decision established an appropriate management level for the East Black Rock Wild Horse Herd of 31 horses. The Soldier Meadows Final Allotment Re-evaluation presents no data or analysis to support this appropriate management level.

Implementation of the policies of the Strategic Plan for the Management of Wild Horse and Burros on Public Lands can exceed the carrying capacity, adversely effect the genetic pool, impact the social behavior and jeopardize the viability of this wild horse herd.

The Proposed Decision is to set a carrying capacity that will meet all allotment objectives and protect natural resources. The

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capture and release of unadoptable horses to levels above the carrying capacity will cause over utilization to key habitats. Delaying wild horse and livestock adjustments for a minimum of six years is contrary to existing federal regulations that prohibits management actions causing significant resource damage.

The Proposed Decision endorses the broad policy to leave unadoptable horses within the herd area. The sex and age composition of the surviving horses is critical to the longevity and genetic viability of the herd. Wild horse inventory data collected in 1993 indicates the Warm Spring herd suffered over 50 percent mortality last winter. The recruitment rate for 1993 was only six percent. Depending upon the surviving herd's age composition, the Proposed Decision's re-structuring of this herd could jeopardize this herd within two or three years. Implementation of broad policy that effects the sex ratio and age structure of this herd requires an environmental assessment.

The Proposed Decision requires compliance to the National Environmental Protection Act.

The Proposed Decision adjust herd boundaries, restructures the age/sex composition of the herd and alters the genetic pool of the herd without assessing the welfare of this herd. These issues were not presented in the allotment re-evaluation or the land use plan environmental impact statement. Therefore, the Proposed Decision is not programmatic to the current land use plan.

Sincerely,

DAWN Y. LAPPIN
Director