

FY08 WFO Field Trip HMA Briefing

April 7, 2008

North Stillwater HMA (NV-229)**HMA Description**

The North Stillwater HMA straddles the Churchill/Pershing County line as well as the Winnemucca/Carson City BLM District boundary line. Of the 178,935 total HMA acres, 133,164 acres are located within the Winnemucca District and 45,771 acres are located in the Carson City District. Of this, 2,081 acres (1.2%) are private lands and 176,854 acres (98.8%) are public lands administered by the BLM. The Winnemucca Field Office has management responsibilities for the entire North Stillwater HMA.

Vegetation

Vegetation types range from pinyon-juniper and juniper-sage types in the higher elevations, to sagebrush-grass types at moderate elevations to shadscale-scrub and greasewood types in the valley bottoms.

Livestock Grazing

- Permitted Numbers: 466 cattle, 2000 sheep
- Use: 2007 billed use, 273 cattle, 2000 sheep
- Pleasant Valley Livestock ran full allotted use - 44 cows in Rochester and 40 in Rawhide. Season of use is 04/01-12/31.
- Vesco Ranch ran full allotted use in the Rawhide Allotment which is 30 cows from 04/01-11/30.
- Jim Estill is permitted for 166 cows year round in the S. Rochester Allotment. Estill is the primary permittee in the area of wild horse concentrations. He has been herding his cattle since early this summer to keep them out of the HMA. With numerous field visits over the summer, I usually counted only 60-80 head of cattle in the HMA.

Neither John Ologaray nor Shining K LLC's livestock grazed within the North Stillwater HMA during the 2007 grazing season, but here is their information:

- John Ologaray runs sheep in both allotments running the total amount he is allowed. 700 in Rochester from 04/01-04/24, and 1300 in Rawhide at the same time.
- Shining K LLC decided on their own, without the HMA in mind, to take non-use in the Rochester Allotment where they are authorized 138 head. They also are not running at full numbers for the Rawhide Allotment, running 159 out of 214 allowed. The season of use is 03/15-01/12.

Wild Horse Population

AML: 138 to 205 wild horses

Population Estimate: 459 horses, 1 burro (projected 2008 post-foaling population)

Annul Recruitment Rate: 19% (based on an average of the last three aerial census counts)

Last Gather

Only one partial gather of the HMA has occurred. In February 2003, 191 wild horses were captured and removed. Following the February gather, an estimate of 255 horses remained on the range within this HMA.

Utilization Objectives

Upland utilization not to exceed 50% on key species by 2/28.

Riparian utilization on key species not to exceed 50% use by 2/28.

Habitat Condition

- Water: flows OK now, but potential become weak again this summer.
- Forage: Grass - few perennial grass species present – moderate to heavy use; annuals abundant – moderate use. Heavy/severe use in riparian areas.
- Shrubs – moderate to heavy use on budsage and ephedra. Some use on greasewood.

Tobin Range HMA (NV-231)

HMA Description

The Tobin Range Herd Management Area (HMA) is located close to the eastern edge of the Winnemucca Field Office area. It is bordered on the west by Pleasant and Grass Valleys, on the north by Buffalo Mountain, on the east by Buffalo Valley, and on the south by Jersey Valley. The elevation ranges from 9,775 feet to 4,371 feet. The area is comprised of approximately 195,136 acres: 7,702 acres private land, 187,434 acres public land (of which 1,882 acres are fenced). Summer climate is characterized by warm, dry days and cool nights. Low yearly precipitation ranges from 4 to 6 inches at lower elevations. Winters are typically cold and dry.

Vegetation

The vegetation in the HMA is characterized by big sagebrush, saltbush, bud sage, low sage, Utah juniper, rabbitbrush, horsebrush, Sandberg bluegrass, cheat grass, bottlebrush, squirreltail, needlegrass, buckwheat, filaree, halogeton, Russian thistle, tumble mustard, and tansy mustard.

Livestock Grazing

• Permitted Numbers:

Johnson-120 cattle from 10/12 to 5/8

Doby George LLC-3788 sheep from 10/1 to 6/30

Rosasco- 212 cattle from 11/11 to 5/8

Chester Dawson Trust- 58 cattle from 12/ to 9/30

• Use:

Johnson- 160 cattle from 10/12 to 3/17

Doby George LLC- approximately 500 sheep date turn out TBD.

Rosasco- 212 cattle from 11/11 to 5/8

Chester Dawson Trust- 58 cattle from 12/ to 9/30

The Pumpernickel Allotment is a common allotment with both sheep and cattle interests. Doby George has been taking non-use, but starting in 2008 they have applied for their sheep permit to be activated. Exact turn out dates has yet to be determined.

Wild Horse Population

AML: 22-42 wild horses

Population Estimate: 357 horses (projected 2008 post-foaling population)

Annul Recruitment Rate: 24% (based on an average of the last three aerial census counts)

Last Gather

This HMA has never been gathered.

Utilization Objectives

Upland utilization not to exceed 50% on key species by 2/28.

Riparian utilization on key species not to exceed 50% use by 2/28.

Habitat Condition

- Water: OK
 - Forage: Grass - perennial grass species present – light/moderate use; annuals abundant – moderate use. Moderate/heavy use in riparian areas.
 - Shrubs – moderate to heavy use on browse species.
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