



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

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

IN REPLY REFER TO:

4120

(NV-026.11)

JUL 08 1994

Dear Interested Reader:

Enclosed is a revised copy of the Technical Recommendation section of the Draft Blue Wing/Seven Troughs Allotment Re-evaluation. The revisions to the original document includes two additional alternatives to the Grazing System section, (pages 14 & 15) and another stocking level alternative for wild horses/burros in the Carrying Capacity section, (page 5). These additions are a result of comments received on the Draft Blue Wing/Seven Troughs Re-evaluation dated May 20, 1994.

Please review this revised Draft document and provide comments by July 25, 1994. I realize this is a short time frame, but in order to implement management actions your comments are needed as soon as possible. After reviewing the comments the interdisciplinary team will work on development of the Final document.

If you have any questions, please contact Ron Pearson or Rich Adams at (702) 623-1500.

Sincerely yours,

Bud Cribley, Area Manager
Sonoma-Gerlach Resource Area

Enclosure

VII. TECHNICAL RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Establish Carrying Capacity

a. Livestock

There are no proposed changes to the Active Preference, sheep numbers or season of use for Dufurrena and Espils' winter sheep permits in the Seven Troughs Allotment and Cooks' winter sheep operations in the Blue Wing Allotment for the following reasons:

- * Monitoring data collected within the sheep use areas does not indicate there is a need to change the existing management practices.

- * The sheep operators constantly herd the sheep while in the allotments to prevent over utilization within their respective use areas.

- * The sheep operations are predominately winter permits grazing within the allotments when most of the vegetation is dormant.

- * The utilization monitoring data was collected on key species that consist primarily of perennial grasses whereas the sheep graze predominately on the native shrubs.

NOTE: The sheep use areas could change if a grazing alternative is selected that would increase the cow numbers or extend the season of use by cows within the existing sheep use areas.

There are no proposed changes to the Active Preference, livestock numbers or season of use for Tim DeLong's winter cow operations for the following reasons:

- * The cattle graze in the allotment on a winter permit when most of the vegetation is dormant.

- * The proposed fence between the Seven Troughs and Majuba allotments would relocate this permit into the Majuba allotments.

- * Monitoring data collected within the winter livestock use area does not indicate there is a need to change the existing management practices.

C-Punch (Cows):

The following data displays four different stocking level options for comparison of the livestock operation of C-Punch. The first using the Total Active Preference from the 1966 adjudication, the second using the AMP Grazing System implemented in 1986, the third using the Actual Use Average during the evaluation period from 1989 to 1992 and the fourth using the Carrying Capacity Calculation using the data in Appendix 15.

Change From: **TOTAL ACTIVE PREFERENCE**

BLUE WING ALLOTMENT

<u>Total</u>	<u>Active</u>	<u>Suspended</u>	<u>Period of</u>	<u>Livestock</u>
<u>Preference</u>	<u>Preference</u>	<u>Preference</u>	<u>Use</u>	<u>Numbers</u>
21,460	21,460	0	03/01 - 02/28	2229**

SEVEN TROUGHS ALLOTMENT

<u>Total</u>	<u>Active</u>	<u>Suspended</u>	<u>Period of</u>	<u>Livestock</u>
<u>Preference</u>	<u>Preference</u>	<u>Preference</u>	<u>Use</u>	<u>Numbers</u>
4,404	4,404	0	03/01 - 02/28	398**

Change To: **STOCKING LEVEL - AMP GRAZING SYSTEM IMPLEMENTED 1986**

Reduce the active preference from 21,460 AUMS to (15,600 - 18,000*) AUMS in the Blue Wing Allotment and from 4,404 AUMS to (4,200 - 4,800*) AUMS in the Seven Troughs Allotment.

* The AMP proposed a range in the numbers of livestock using the summer, winter and yearlong use areas. For this case the lower numbers will be used, refer to the Appendix 14 - Existing Grazing System for additional information.

BLUE WING ALLOTMENT

<u>Total</u>	<u>Active</u>	<u>Suspended</u>	<u>Period of</u>	<u>Livestock</u>
<u>Preference</u>	<u>Preference</u>	<u>Preference</u>	<u>Use</u>	<u>Numbers</u>
21,460	15,600	5,860	03/01 - 02/28	1300**

SEVEN TROUGHS ALLOTMENT

<u>Total</u>	<u>Active</u>	<u>Suspended</u>	<u>Period of</u>	<u>Livestock</u>
<u>Preference</u>	<u>Preference</u>	<u>Preference</u>	<u>Use</u>	<u>Numbers</u>
4,404	4,200	204	03/01 - 02/28	350**

Change To: STOCKING LEVEL - ACTUAL USE AVERAGE 1989 - 1992

Weighted average utilization calculations were obtained using the moderate, heavy and severe use classes. This data was used to support the potential stocking levels by use areas within the allotments. Calculations are shown in Appendix 15.

Reduce the active preference from 21,460 AUMS to 9,954 AUMS in the Blue Wing Allotment and from 4,404 AUMS to 2,203 AUMS in the Seven Troughs Allotment.

BLUE WING ALLOTMENT

<u>Total</u>	<u>Active</u>	<u>Suspended</u>	<u>Period of</u>	<u>Livestock</u>
<u>Preference</u>	<u>Preference</u>	<u>Preference</u>	<u>Use</u>	<u>Numbers</u>
21,460	9,954	11,506	03/01 - 02/28	1034**

SEVEN TROUGHS ALLOTMENT

<u>Total</u>	<u>Active</u>	<u>Suspended</u>	<u>Period of</u>	<u>Livestock</u>
<u>Preference</u>	<u>Preference</u>	<u>Preference</u>	<u>Use</u>	<u>Numbers</u>
4,404	2,203	2,201	03/01 - 02/28	199**

Change To: STOCKING LEVEL - CARRYING CAPACITY CALCULATIONS

Reduce the active preference from 21,460 AUMS to 4,528 AUMS in the Blue Wing Allotment and from 4,404 AUMS to 1,358 AUMS in the Seven Troughs Allotment.

BLUE WING ALLOTMENT

<u>Total</u>	<u>Active</u>	<u>Suspended</u>	<u>Period of</u>	<u>Livestock</u>
<u>Preference</u>	<u>Preference</u>	<u>Preference</u>	<u>Use</u>	<u>Numbers</u>
21,460	4,528	16,932	03/01 - 02/28	559**

SEVEN TROUGHS ALLOTMENT

<u>Total</u>	<u>Active</u>	<u>Suspended</u>	<u>Period of</u>	<u>Livestock</u>
<u>Preference</u>	<u>Preference</u>	<u>Preference</u>	<u>Use</u>	<u>Numbers</u>
4,404	1,358	3,046	03/01 - 02/28	194**

** Total livestock numbers include those on railroad exchange of use lands. The livestock numbers within the Seven Troughs and Blue Wing Allotments could vary depending upon the grazing alternative selected.

DeLong Family Trust (Cows):

Maintain the existing active preference of 746 AUMS, the winter season of use and the livestock numbers within the Seven Troughs Allotment.

Dururrena (Sheep):

Maintain the existing active preference of 746 AUMS, the winter season of use and the livestock numbers within the Seven Troughs Allotment.

John Espil (Sheep):

Maintain the existing active preference of 3,627 AUMS, the winter season of use and the livestock numbers within the Seven Troughs Allotment.

Wes Cook (Sheep):

Maintain the existing active preference of 2,975 AUMS, the winter season of use and the livestock numbers within the Seven Troughs Allotment.

b. Wild Horses

The Strategic plan for the Management of Wild Horses on the Public Lands was signed on June 6, 1992. The policy states that unadoptable wild horses will remain on the public lands, and that other methods such as fertility control may be utilized for population management. It is Nevada BLM's policy to return wild horses six years of age or older to public lands. In order to achieve the Appropriate Management Level (AML) within the allotment two removals may be required.

The following data displays three different stocking level options for comparison of Wild Horse and Burro numbers. The first is Actual Use Average numbers during the evaluation period (1989 - 1992), the second is the HMAP Numbers and the third is using Carrying Capacity Calculation numbers from the data in Appendix 13.

ACTUAL USE AVERAGE 1989* - 1992*

<u>Herd Management Area</u>	<u>Wild Horses/Burros</u>	<u>AUM's</u>
Lava Beds**	350/56	4200/672
Seven Troughs***	269/76	3228/912
Blue Wing Mountain	34/25	408/300
Kamma Mountains	15/ 0	180/ 0
<u>Shawave-Nightingale</u>	<u>741/18</u>	<u>8892/216</u>
TOTALS	1409/175	16908/2100

* census was conducted in 1989 & 1992.

** a portion of this HMA is in the Seven Troughs Allotment.

*** a portion of this HMA is in the Blue Wing Allotment.

STOCKING LEVEL - HMAP

<u>Herd Management Area</u>	<u>Wild Horses/Burros</u> 75% of AML to AML	<u>AUM's</u>
Lava Beds*	281/30 to 375/40	3372/360 to 4500/480
Seven Troughs**	161/48 to 215/64	1932/576 to 2580/768
Blue Wing Mountain	38/29 to 50/39	456/348 to 600/468
Kamma Mountains	38/ 0 to 50/ 0	456/ 0 to 600/ 0
<u>Shawave-Nightingale</u>	<u>140/ 0 to 187/ 0</u>	<u>1680/ 0 to 2244/ 0</u>
TOTALS	658/107 877/143	7896/1284 10524/1716

* a portion of this HMA is in the Seven Troughs Allotment.

** a portion of this HMA is in the Blue Wing Allotment.

These numbers are based on a three year gathering cycle.
If the gathering cycle changes, the lower management
range of wild horse numbers may be adjusted.

STOCKING LEVEL - CARRYING CAPACITY CALCULATIONS

<u>Herd Management Area</u>	<u>WILD HORSES/BURROS</u>	<u>AUM's</u>
Lava Beds*	113/13	1356/156
Seven Troughs**	102/31	1224/372
Kamma Mountains***	0/ 0	0/ 0
Shawave-Nightingale-Bluewing Mtn.	176/ 0	2112/ 0
TOTALS	391/44	4692/528

* a portion of this HMA is in the Seven Troughs Allotment.

** a portion of this HMA is in the Blue Wing Allotment.

*** not included in the Carrying Capacity Calculations, HMAP = 50 WH/600 AUMS.

2. CHANGE GRAZING SYSTEM

Alternative 1:

C-Punch (Cows): Continue with the existing year round grazing system within the Blue Wing/Seven Troughs Allotments.

- * Maintain the existing summer (4/1 -10/31), winter (11/1 - 3/31) and yearlong (3/1 - 2/28) use areas.

Tim DeLong Family Trust (Cows): Continue with the existing winter grazing system, active preference and livestock numbers within the Seven Troughs Allotment.

Buster Dufurrena (Sheep): Continue with the existing winter grazing system, active preference and livestock numbers within the Seven Troughs Allotment.

John Espil (Sheep) Continue with the existing winter grazing system, active preference and livestock numbers within the Seven Troughs Allotment.

Wes Cook (Sheep): Continue with the existing winter grazing system, active preference and livestock numbers within the Blue Wing Allotment.

Rationale: Based upon the Stocking level option selected livestock numbers could be reduced in the use areas within the Blue Wing and Seven Troughs Allotments. This would reduce the utilization levels by livestock which should help achieve the allotments utilization objectives. Riparian areas would need to be protected from livestock and wild horses/burros. This system does not provide rest or deferment for vegetation in the spring and summer use areas so would not meet long term vegetative objectives. This system requires more extensive management and greater costs for C-Punch since cattle are distributed throughout the allotments.

Alternative 2:

C-Punch (Cows): Amend the existing year round grazing system within the Blue Wing/Seven Troughs Allotments as follows:

- * Change the existing summer use areas from 4/1 - 10/31 (7 mos.) to 5/1 - 10/31 (6 mos.), and the existing winter use areas from 11/1 - 3/31 (5 mos.) to 11/1 - 4/31 (6 mos.).
- * Convert the existing yearlong 3/1 - 2/28 use areas to summer use areas 5/1 - 10/31.

Tim DeLong Family Trust (Cows): Continue with the existing winter grazing system, active preference and livestock numbers within the Seven Troughs Allotment.

Buster Dufurrena (Sheep): Continue with the existing winter grazing system, active preference and livestock numbers within the Seven Troughs Allotment.

John Espil (Sheep) Continue with the existing winter grazing system, active preference and livestock numbers within the Seven Troughs Allotment.

Wes Cook (Sheep): Continue with the existing winter grazing system, active preference and livestock numbers within the Blue Wing Allotment.

Rationale: Based upon the Stocking level option selected livestock numbers could be reduced in the use areas within the Blue Wing and Seven Troughs Allotments. This would reduce the utilization levels by livestock which should help achieve the allotments utilization objectives. Change the summer use areas from 4/1 -10/31 to 5/1 - 10/31 and the winter use areas from 11/1 - 3/31 to 11/1 - 4/31 which would provide some early season rest for the summer use areas. Eliminate the yearlong rotation areas of use by converting them to summer use 5/1 - 10/31 providing a seasonal rest period. Riparian areas would need to be protected from livestock and wild horses/burros. This system does not provide rest or deferment for vegetation in the spring and summer use areas so would not meet long term vegetative objectives. This system requires more extensive management and greater costs for C-Punch since cattle are distributed throughout the allotments.

Alternative 3:

C-Punch (Cows): Amend the existing year round grazing system within the Blue Wing/Seven Troughs Allotments as follows:

- * Divide the Blue Wing/Seven Troughs Allotments into four use areas; a NW 1/4, NE 1/4, SE 1/4 and a SW 1/4 quarters.
- * graze livestock within each area yearlong 3/1 - 2/28 for one year then rotate into the next quarter, resulting in one year of use and three years of rest.

Tim DeLong Family Trust (Cows): Continue with the existing winter grazing system, active preference and livestock numbers within the Seven Troughs Allotment.

Buster Dufurrena (Sheep): Continue with the existing winter grazing system, active preference and livestock numbers within the Seven Troughs Allotment.

John Espil (Sheep) Continue with the existing winter grazing system, active preference and livestock numbers within the Seven Troughs Allotment.

Wes Cook (Sheep): Continue with the existing winter grazing system, active preference and livestock numbers within the Blue Wing Allotment.

Rationale: Based upon the Stocking level option selected livestock numbers could be reduced in the use areas within the Blue Wing and Seven Troughs Allotments. Provides three years of rest and one year of use by livestock allowing an extended rest period. Riparian areas would need to be protected from livestock and wild horses/burros.

Alternative 4:

C-Punch (Cows): Amend the existing year round grazing system within the Blue Wing/Seven Troughs Allotments as follows:

- * Change the use period on the existing summer use areas from 4/1 - 10/31 to 6/1 - 10/31 and retain the winter use as 11/1 - 3/31.
- * Convert the Slough House/Granite Springs Valley area from an existing winter use area to a two month (4/1 - 5/31) use area to be treated as an off pasture since this area is the majority of the checkerboard (RR) private lands.
- * Remove all livestock (C-Punch cows) from the Blue Wing/Seven Troughs Allotments into the Slough House/Granite Springs winter pasture for two months (4/1 - 5/31).

Tim DeLong Family Trust (Cows): Continue with the existing winter grazing system, active preference and livestock numbers within the Seven Troughs Allotment.

Buster Dufurrena (Sheep): Continue with the existing winter grazing system, active preference and livestock numbers within the Seven Troughs Allotment.

John Espil (Sheep) Continue with the existing winter grazing system, active preference and livestock numbers within the Seven Troughs Allotment.

Wes Cook (Sheep): Continue with the existing winter grazing system, active preference and livestock numbers within the Blue Wing Allotment.

Rationale: Based upon the Stocking level option selected livestock numbers could be reduced in the use areas within the Blue Wing and Seven Troughs Allotments. Provides an annual early season rest in the use areas within the Blue Wing/Seven Troughs Allotments. This alternative could present a serious challenge to the livestock manager and displace wild horses/burros and wildlife each year when moving livestock into and out of the rest pasture. Riparian areas would need to be protected from livestock and wild horses/burros. This system would provide rest to most of the allotment, but the Slough House/Granite Springs Valley area would not receive rest or deferment during the critical growing season and not achieve the long term vegetative objectives.

Alternative 5:

C-Punch (Cows): Amend the existing year round grazing system within the Blue Wing/Seven Troughs Allotments as follows:

- * Construct a fence across the Blue Wing/Seven Troughs Allotments in an east to west direction that would divide the allotments into north and south use areas.
- * Eliminate the existing summer/winter/yearlong rotation use areas and graze all of the livestock (C-Punch cows) in the north use area for two years then graze in the south use area for two years.

Tim DeLong Family Trust (Cows): Continue with the existing winter grazing system, active preference and livestock numbers within the Seven Troughs Allotment.

Buster Dufurrena (Sheep): Continue with the existing winter grazing system, active preference and livestock numbers within the Seven Troughs Allotment.

John Espil (Sheep) Continue with the existing winter grazing system, active preference and livestock numbers within the Seven Troughs Allotment.

Wes Cook (Sheep): Continue with the existing winter grazing system, active preference and livestock numbers within the Blue Wing Allotment.

Rationale: Based upon the Stocking level option selected livestock numbers could be reduced in the use areas within the Blue Wing and Seven Troughs Allotments. Provides two years of rest in a four year cycle from C-Punch livestock in the use areas within the Blue Wing/Seven Troughs Allotments. This alternative could present a significant challenge to the livestock manager as well as displace wild horses/burros and wildlife every two years. The proposed fence could result in the disruption of seasonal movement by wild horses/burros. The proposed fence costs would be significant, estimates in the neighborhood of \$200,000. Riparian areas would need to be protected from livestock and wild horses/burros. This system would be beneficial to the cattle operator by restricting cows into $\frac{1}{2}$ of the allotment thus reducing management concerns. This alternative would provide rest from cattle grazing for two years allowing vegetation to recover from the two years of grazing which would improve vegetative conditions.

Alternative 5A:

This alternative would be the same as the above (Alt 5) with the following exceptions:

- * During the two years that the C-Punch livestock were grazing the north use area Wes Cook and Buster Dufurrenas' winter sheep operations would be allowed to graze in the southern use area.

- * During the two years that the C-Punch livestock were grazing the south use area John Espils' winter sheep operations would be allowed to graze in the northern use area.

Alternative 6:

C-Punch (Cows): Maintain the existing winter, summer and yearling rotation grazing system within the Blue Wing Allotment and amend the grazing system in the Seven Trough Allotment as follows:

- * Eliminate livestock (C-Punch) grazing within the Seven Troughs Allotment.
- * Construct a fence along the Blue Wing/Seven Troughs Allotments boundary in an north to south direction that would separate the allotments and create the boundary for the Seven Troughs Horse Range.
- * Convert the existing livestock (C-Punch) permit in the Seven Troughs allotment to AUMS to be utilized by wild horses/burros.

Tim DeLong Family Trust (Cows): Continue with the existing winter grazing system, active preference and livestock numbers within the Seven Troughs Allotment.

Buster Dufurrena (Sheep): Continue with the existing winter grazing system, active preference and livestock numbers within the Seven Troughs Allotment.

John Espil (Sheep) Continue with the existing winter grazing system, active preference and livestock numbers within the Seven Troughs Allotment.

Wes Cook (Sheep): Continue with the existing winter grazing system, active preference and livestock numbers within the Blue Wing Allotment.

Rationale: Based upon the Stocking level option selected livestock numbers could be reduced in the use areas within the Blue Wing and Seven Troughs Allotments. Eliminates the use by C-Punch livestock within the Seven Troughs Allotment. The proposed fence could result in the disruption of seasonal movement by wild horses/burros as well as fence off a portion of the Lava Beds HMA. The proposed fence costs would be significant, estimates in the neighborhood of \$200,000. Riparian areas would need to be protected from livestock and wild horses/burros. This system does not provide rest or deferment for vegetation in the spring and summer use areas so would not meet long term vegetative objectives. This system requires more extensive management and greater costs for C-Punch since cattle are distributed throughout the allotments.

Alternative 7:

C-Punch (Cows): Amend the existing year round grazing system within the Blue Wing/Seven Troughs Allotments as follows:

- * Divide the Blue Wing/Seven Troughs Allotments into three use areas; a NW 1/3, NE 1/3 and a S 1/3 use areas.
- * Graze livestock within each area yearlong 3/1 - 2/28 for one year then rotate into the next area, resulting in one year of use and two years of rest.

Tim DeLong Family Trust (Cows): Continue with the existing winter grazing system, active preference and livestock numbers within the Seven Troughs Allotment.

Buster Dufurrena (Sheep): Continue with the existing winter grazing system, active preference and livestock numbers within the Seven Troughs Allotment.

John Espil (Sheep) Continue with the existing winter grazing system, active preference and livestock numbers within the Seven Troughs Allotment.

Wes Cook (Sheep): Continue with the existing winter grazing system, active preference and livestock numbers within the Blue Wing Allotment.

Rationale: Based upon the Stocking level option selected livestock numbers could be reduced in the use areas within the Blue Wing and Seven Troughs Allotments. Provides two years of rest and one year of use by livestock allowing an extended rest period. Divides the allotments into smaller more manageably units requiring less labor and expense such as hauling water into smaller areas. Riparian areas would need to be protected from livestock and wild horses/burros. This alternative would provide more rest from cattle grazing than Alternative #5 allowing the long term vegetative objectives to be more quickly obtained. This alternative provides the opportunity to monitor utilization levels by wild horses/burros during years that cows are not using the area.

Alternative 8:

C-Punch (Cows): Amend the existing year round grazing system within the Blue Wing/Seven Troughs Allotments as follows:

- * Convert the existing yearlong grazing system to winter use throughout the allotments.
- * Change the existing yearlong 3/1 - 2/28 season of use to a 10/1 -3/31 season of use throughout the allotments.

Tim DeLong Family Trust (Cows): Continue with the existing winter grazing system, active preference and livestock numbers within the Seven Troughs Allotment.

Buster Dufurrena (Sheep): Continue with the existing winter grazing system, active preference and livestock numbers within the Seven Troughs Allotment.

John Espil (Sheep) Continue with the existing winter grazing system, active preference and livestock numbers within the Seven Troughs Allotment.

Wes Cook (Sheep): Continue with the existing winter grazing system, active preference and livestock numbers within the Blue Wing Allotment.

Rationale: Riparian areas would need to be protected from livestock and wild horses/burros. This alternative would provide total seasonal rest from cattle grazing and allow the greatest opportunity for vegetative recovery and allow the long term vegetative objectives to be more quickly obtained. This alternative would require the permittee (C-Punch) to adjust the operation and provide an area for the livestock when not on public lands. This alternative would somewhat alleviate the combined use by livestock and wild horses/burros on the limited water sources.



COMMISSION FOR THE
PRESERVATION OF WILD HORSES

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July 13, 1994

Bud Cribley, Area Manager
BLM-Sonoma-Gerlach Resource Area
705 East Fourth Street
Winnemucca, Nevada 89445

Subject: Blue Wing/Seven Troughs

Dear Mr. Cribley,

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the Copy of the Technical Recommendation section of the draft Blue Wing/Seven Troughs Allotment Re-evaluation.

We discussed the issues of the allotment re-evaluation at the June 28, 1994, and had previously commented on the re-evaluation in writing. We would expect that our issues, concerns, and suggestions which we provided would be considered and analyzed prior to the final.

The revised allotment evaluation Alternative 8 presents a feasible and practical livestock management system that should meet the allotment objectives and be cost effective. As we suggested with our comments both written and verbal, a carrying capacity should be determined and analyzed by excluding the summer range use pattern mapping data for livestock and wild horses. Computations should be included in the Appendix.

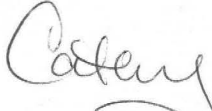
In addition, we would like to see a comparative analysis presented to document the conditions of the allotment prior to and after the removal of over 7,500 wild horses within a five year time frame from the allotment. Can you show significant improvement or lack of resource reaction to the removal of such a significant number of one species of animal?

It is our understanding that carrying capacities were adjusted but not amended to the revised allotment re-evaluation document. Specific recommendations for these computations have been provided

Bud Cribley, Area Manager
July 13, 1994
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by the Division. We encourage the Resource Area to consider comments and recommendations made during this lengthy and repetitive consultation process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Catherine", written in dark ink.

CATHERINE BARCOMB
Executive Director