



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

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



IN REPLY REFER TO:  
4700  
(NV-026.8)

MAY 26 1993

Commission for the Preservation of Wild Horses  
Ms. Cathy Barcomb  
Stewart Facility  
5500 Snider Ave.  
Carson City, NV 89710

Dear Ms. Barcomb:

Enclosed for your records is a copy of the environmental assessment (EA) for the re-location of approximately 15 head of wild horses into the Kamma Mountains Herd Management Area, per your phone conversation with Tom Seley on May 25, 1993.

As outlined in Information Bulletin No. NV-93-276, public participation in the EA process is normally not required but is encouraged whenever it may be helpful. We will make the Finding Of No Significant Impact (FONSI) available for a 30 day public review (40 CFR 1501.4 (e)(2)) if the action proposed is, or closely resembles, one which normally requires an Environmental Impact Statement or the proposed action is without precedent.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Tom Seley at (702) 623-1500.

Sincerely yours,

Bud Cribley, Area Manager  
Sonoma-Gerlach Resource Area

Enclosure

5/25/93

ACTIVITY: 4700

United States Department  
of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management

# EA FACE SHEET

OFFICE: Winnemucca (NV-020)      FY & REPORT #: FY 93 NV-020-03-31

ACTION: Wild Horse Relocation      NO. OF PAGES: 6  
Kamma Mtns. HMA

LOCATION: Kamma Mtns. HMA      SERIAL NO. NV-020-3-  
T34N R29E sec 1

TEAM SIGNATURES	TITLE	RESOURCE VALUES ASSIGNED	HOURS
<u>T Selley</u>	Range Conservationist	Author/WH&B	6
<u>Rich Adams</u>	Suprv. Range Conservationist	Range	
<u>Ralph K Redick</u>	Range Conservationist	T & E Plants	
<u>David Venturi</u>	Archaeologist	Cultural	
<u>Lawrence Coats</u>	Wildlife Biologist	Wildlife/T & E	
<u>Michael J. Fisher</u>	District Soil Scientist	Soil/Water/Air	

ENVIRONMENTAL COORDINATOR: *Gerald Smith*      24 May 93  
(Signature)      (Date)

COMPLIANCE OFFICER: Tom Selley  
(Title or Name)

DISTRICT/AREA MANAGER: *[Signature]*  
(Signature)

MAY 25 1993  
(Date)



## Kamma Mountains Wild Horse Relocation

### I. Introduction

#### A. Background Information

The Kamma Mountains Herd Management Area (HMA) is located in the northern end of the Seven Troughs Allotment, near Sulphur, Nevada. The Blue Wing/Seven Troughs HMAP approved March 4, 1987 called for an Appropriate Management Level (AML) of 50 wild horses within the HMA. Following a removal of wild horses from the area in the fall of 1987 the number of wild horses utilizing the HMA has varied from 11 horses in 1989 to 16 horses in 1992. The Blue Wing/Seven Troughs Allotment re-evaluation is in progress and upon issuance of the final allotment re-evaluation and multiple use decision a new AML will be established. The allotment re-evaluation will re-establish the AML within the HMA as specified in the June 7, 1989 Interior Board of Land Appeals decision IBLA 88-591.

#### B. Purpose and Need

The purpose of this document is to assess the environmental impacts resulting from the re-location of approximately 15 wild horses from the Humboldt and Trinity Range Herd Areas (HA) into the Kamma Mountains HMA.

The Wild Free-Roaming Horse and Burro Act of 1971 (Public Law 92-195) Section 4 states, "if wild free-roaming horses or burros stray onto privately owned land, the owner of such land may inform the nearest Federal marshal or agent of the Secretary, who shall arrange to have the animals removed". Private land owners within the Humboldt and Trinity Range HA's have requested removal of wild horses from their private lands, which resulted in the issuance of the Checkerboard Wild Horse and Burro Removal Plan on April 27, 1992.

Implementation of the Strategic Plan for Management of Wild Horses and Burros in fiscal year 1993 requires that adjustments in populations will be made by removing only those animals that can be placed in private care through the adoption program (W.O. IM No. 93-30). Effective September 30, 1992 it is Bureau policy in areas where all animals must be removed such as from private lands, animals 9 years of age and younger may be removed and placed in the adoption program. All unadoptable animals (non life threatening physical defects/injuries) and those 10 years or older will be returned to a HMA.

#### C. Proposed Action

The proposed action is to relocate approximately 15 head of wild horses from the Humboldt and Trinity Range HA's into the Kamma Mountains HMA at Wild Rose Spring (T. 34 N., R. 29 E., section 1).

The animals would be transported in a gooseneck stock trailer from the contractors holding site to the release site at the completion



of the removal.

D. Alternatives to the Proposed Action

1. Released on Site

Horses 10 years and older would be released back into the area where they were captured. This alternative was rejected since it would leave wild horses occupying an area where the Bureau is required by the Wild Free-Roaming Horse and Burro Act of 1971 to remove all animals upon written request from the private land owner(s).

2. No Action

The removal of wild horses from the Humboldt and Trinity Range HA's would not be undertaken, and the existing population of wild horses would continue to increase within the HA's. This alternative was rejected since the Bureau is required by the Wild Free-Roaming Horse and Burro Act of 1971 to remove all animals upon written request from the private land owner(s).

II. Environmental Impacts

A. Vegetation

The ecological site inventory shows the dominant vegetation in the vicinity of the proposed release area is made up of 2 Lahontan sagebrush/bunch grass ecological sites; 027XY079NV gravelly claypan 8-10" P.Z. and 027XY070NV droughty claypan 8-10" P.Z.. Ecological status of the sites is late seral except for one area of mid-seral ecological status. Ecological status write ups for the area show that grasses make up 12 to 31% by weight of the vegetative communities.

An inspection of the area on May 18, 1993 found good perennial grass densities and that indian rice grass, squirrel tail and sandbergs bluegrass were in the soft dough stage of seed production. Leaf production on indian rice grass was 8-10 inches, 4-5 inches on squirrel tail and 3 inches on sandbergs bluegrass. There was no apparent use on this years production.

The release of 15 horses would increase the annual AUM demand by wild horses in the Kamma Mountains HMA by 180 AUM's. Based on the current condition of the vegetative communities in the vicinity of the release site, an adverse impact is not anticipated this year. If the number of the wild horses in the area are not maintained within a reasonable number in the future, there is potential for a decrease in the ecological status of the vegetative communities and a subsequent decrease in the amount of perennial grasses and palatable forb and browse species that are found on those sites.



B. Water Resources

The proposed release site is located at Wild Rose Spring which has an old spring development consisting of a 12' by 12' by 2' concrete trough and head box. Estimated flow into the trough is 1/4 gallon per minute, and the trough was full when inspected on May 18, 1993. The trough is fenced except for a 4 foot opening which should prevent most large animals from getting into the trough.

It is not anticipated that there would be any adverse impact to water resources as a result of the proposed release.

C. Wildlife

Several species of wildlife occur in the area surrounding the propose release site. Game species that may be affected by the release of horses into the area include low density mule deer and pronghorn antelope, chukar, and cottontail rabbits. There are no threatened or endangered species in the area.

There may be competition for forage, space, water and cover with the release of approximately 15 head of wild horses, however there should not be a significant impact to wildlife species.

D. Wild Horses

The wild horse population in the vicinity of the proposed release site has ranged from 2 horses in April 1989 to 9 horses on May 18, 1993. Examination of the proposed release site found no recent use by wild horses around Wild Rose spring. Release of horses from the Humboldt and Trinity Range HA's into the Kamma Mountains HMA can potentially increase the genetic diversity of the small resident population currently inhabiting the area. Once released, there is no guarantee that the horses would stay at the release site. It is possible that the animals may attempt to find their way back to the areas that they were removed from.

E. Cultural Resources

The Nevada BLM/State Historic Preservation Office Programatic Agreement does not require a cultural resources inventory for the re-introduction of endemic species into historic habitat, as long as there are no surface disturbance.

F. Sensitive Plants

No on the ground search for sensitive plants was conducted, but the Nevada Threatened and Endangered Plant Map Book (Nevada State Museum, 1988) located in the Winnemucca Office shows that Astragalus pterocarpus and Caulanthus barnebyi (listed as other rare) have been identified within the Kamma Mountains HMA, approximately 4 miles south of the proposed release site. It is anticipated that there would be no adverse impacts to either of these species.



G. Other

Implementation of the proposed action would not have any impact on wilderness, visual resources, floodplains or wetlands, air quality, areas of critical environmental concern or paleontological resources.

For a more detailed description of the environment refer to the Sonoma-Gerlach Grazing EIS.

III. Mitigation

Prior to release, the tail of each horse shall have approximately 12 inches of hair removed by a horizontal cut so animals can be easily identified after release by observers on the ground.

On the ground monitoring of released horses shall be conducted within 3 days following release to determine if the animals have adapted to their new environment.

If released horses are not found during on the ground monitoring, a fixed wing aircraft flight may be scheduled to locate animals and assess their condition.

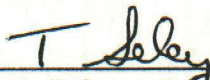
IV. Coordination

The following individuals were consulted prior to the preparation of this document.

Dawn Lappin	Wild Horse Organized Assistance
Buster Dufferrena	Permittee - Seven Troughs Allot.
Tim DeLong	Permittee - Seven Troughs Allot.
Abigah Duncan	Permittee - Coal Canyon/Poker Allot.
Tom Pogacnik	Nevada State Office WH&B Program Leader

V. Recommendation

I recommend that the proposed action be implemented.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Tom Seley, Range Conservationist - WH&B



Decision Record/Finding of No Significant Impacts (FONSI)

Decision Record

Based on the Environmental Assessment (EA), the proposed action, to relocated wild horses from the Humboldt and Trinity Range HA's to the Kamma Mountains HMA is adopted in its entirety.

Rationale for Recommendation

Impacts to the environment and natural resources would be minor.

The proposal is consistent with existing Bureau policy for the removal of wild horses from private lands.

Mitigating Measures and Stipulations

The following mitigating measures, which were identified in the EA, will be adopted as stipulations.

Prior to release, the tail of each horse shall have approximately 12 inches of hair removed by a horizontal cut so animals can be easily identified after release by observers on the ground.


On the ground monitoring of released horses shall be conducted within 3 days following release to determine if the animals have adapted to their new environment.

If released horses are not found during on the ground monitoring, a fixed wing aircraft flight may be scheduled to locate animals and assess their condition.

FONSI

Based on the analysis in the environmental assessment, the relocation of wild horses from the Humboldt and Trinity Range HA's to the Kamma Mountains HMA would have no significant environmental impacts, therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement is not necessary according to section 102(2)(c) of NEPA.

The proposed action is in conformance with the Sonoma-Gerlach MFP. The proposed action would not cause any undue or unnecessary environmental degradation.

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

5-25-93  
Date



6/2/93

BOB MILLER  
Governor

STATE OF NEVADA



CATHERINE BARCOMB  
Executive Director

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Reno, Nevada

COMMISSION FOR THE  
PRESERVATION OF WILD HORSES

Stewart Facility

Capitol Complex

Carson City, Nevada 89710

(702) 687-5589

June 2, 1993

Mr. Tom Seley, Wild Horse Specialist  
Sonoma/Gerlach Resource Area  
Bureau of Land Management  
705 E. Fourth St.  
Winnemucca, NV 89445

Dear Tom:

Thank you very much for your environmental assessment which we have had the opportunity to review. We are reassured that the relocation of the older animals into another herd area has sufficient water and forage.

Please understand our caution and request for your assessment but we are genuinely concerned that in addition to our concern for sufficient water and forage are available; but we also want the reassurance that the placement of those additional animals into another herd area will not adversely affect another herd area.

Thank you again for your consideration.

Most sincerely,

*Catherine Barcomb*

Catherine Barcomb, Executive Director

*Dawn Lappin, Commissioner*