6/29/95

United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Winnemucca District Office
705 East 4th Street
Winnemucca, Nevada 89445

In Reply Refer To:
(NV-026.12)
4400.3

June 29, 1995

Dear Interested Party:

Enclosed is a draft copy of the Pumpernickel Allotment evaluation. The Pumpernickel Working Group, which included an interdisciplinary BLM team, the permittees, a NDOW biologist, and other interested people analyzed monitoring data to determine if resource objectives have been achieved. Based upon the data analysis the working group developed, through consensus, technical recommendations designed to attain resource objectives throughout the allotment.

Please review the Draft document and provide comments by August 1, 1995. There will be a facilitated meeting scheduled for August 1, 1995, at 6:30 p.m. at the Golconda School in Golconda, Nevada, to address all interest, answer any questions, and discuss management alternatives. After reviewing the comments, the Pumpernickel Working Group will work on development of the Final document and the group's recommendations to the Area Manager. The working group is an inclusive group, which is open to newcomers coming and participating in the process. If you have not been to a working group meeting, I strongly encourage you to come and participate in the process.

If you have any questions, please contact Peggy Redick at (702) 623-1500.

Sincerely yours,

David A. Murphy (ACTING)

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

Enclosure

CC: Ms. Cathy Barcomb
Mrs. Dawn Lappin
Mr. Craig Downer
Ms Cindy DeWeese
Ms. Ann Kerstin

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Allotment Name: Pumpernickel
Allotment Number: 00116

B. Permittee(s): Agri Beef Co.
Rock Creek Ranches
Roger Johnson
Arnold Ginsberg

C. Evaluation Period: 1989 - 1993

D. Selective Management Category: C
Priority: 4

E. Allotment Description

Land Status				
Public Land Acres		Other Land Acres		Total Acres
124,934	85%	21,475	15%	146,409

II. INITIAL STOCKING RATE

A. Livestock Use:

Permittee	Livestock Number	Kind	Grazing Period Begin	End	% PL	Preference Active	Suspended	Total
	4555	S	03/01	06/30				
Agri Beef CO.	4555	S	10/01	02/28	83	6801	1017	7818
	212	C	03/01	05/08				
Rock Creek RA.	212	C	11/11	02/28	97	1209	113	1322
	120	C	03/01	05/08				
Roger Johnson	120	C	10/12	02/28	100	825	125	950
	57	C	03/01	09/30				
Arnold Ginsberg	57	C	12/01	02/28	100	582	90	672

B. Wildlife Use:

1. Reasonable Numbers (from Sonoma- Gerlach MFP-III - 1982)

Mule Deer - (Odocoileus hemionus) 222 AUMs
Big Horn Sheep - (Ovis canadensis nelsoni) 28 AUMs

2. Key or Critical Management Areas within the allotment.

No critical wildlife areas have been identified within the allotment, however, the following mule deer habitat has been identified: Edna Mountain DY-5; Buffalo Mountains DY-6; Tobin Range DY-4 and DS-4; and Sonoma Range DS-5 and DW-1.

C. Wild Horse Use:

The 1982 Sonoma-Gerlach MFP-III established an initial stocking level for wild horses in the Pumpernickel Allotment of:

	Wild Horses	
	Number	AUMs
Sonoma Range HA*	0	0
Tobin Range HMA**	17	204

* 16 % of the Sonoma Range Herd Area (HA) is contained within the Pumpernickel Allotment. The HA is made up of checkerboard lands.

** 4% of the Tobin Range Herd Management Area (HMA) is contained within the Pumpernickel Allotment. The number of horses shown above is for that part of the HMA within the Allotment.

III. ALLOTMENT OBJECTIVES

No activity plans have been written for the Pumpernickel Allotment. The only objectives that currently exist are the Long Term Land Use Plan objectives that provide direction for management. These objectives can also be found in the Rangeland Program Summary (RPS) Update 1992.

A. Range - long term

1. Manage, maintain, and improve public rangeland conditions to provide forage on a sustained yield basis with an initial stocking level of 9,437 AUMs.

2. Maintain an acceptable allowable use level on key forage species that will provide a sustained yield.

3. Improve range/ecological condition from fair to good on 15,491 acres and from good to excellent on 950 acres.

B. Wildlife - long term

1. Manage, maintain, and improve public rangeland habitat condition to provide forage on a sustained yield basis, with an initial forage demand for big game of 222 AUMs for mule deer and 28 AUMs for bighorn sheep, by:

   Improving or maintaining mule deer habitats in Edna Mountain DT-5, Buffalo Mountain DY-6, Tobin Range DY-4 and DS-4 and Sonoma Range DS-5 and DW-1.

2. Protect sage grouse strutting and nesting habitats and improve brooding habitat.

3. Wildlife habitat management objectives for vegetation utilization shall be as follows except where adjusted by an approved HMP, AMP, and HMAP.

   a. Terrestrial: will not exceed levels established in the Sonoma Gerlach EIS Table 1-3 for key species.

   b. Wetland Riparian: shall not exceed 50% for key species.

4. Develop a Habitat Management Plan (HMP) for the Tobin Range

WHA-T-* in cooperation with NV-060.

C. Wild Horse - long term

1. Manage, maintain and improve public rangeland conditions to provide for an initial stocking level of 204 AUMs of forage on a sustained yield basis for 17 wild horses in that part of the Tobin Range HMA contained within the Pumpernickel Allotment. (WH&B 1.1)

2. Remove wild horses from checkerboard land HA's unless a cooperative agreement providing for the retention and protection of wild horses is consummated with the affected land owner(s). (WH&B 1.3)

3. Maintain and improve the free-roaming behavior of wild horses by:

   a. protecting their home range

   b. assuring free access to water

IV. MANAGEMENT EVALUATION

Summary of Studies Data

A. Actual Use

1. Livestock

Table #1. Livestock Actual Use from Licensed Use.

Permittee	Grazing Year	Livestock Number	Kind	Grazing Period Begin	End	% PL	AUMs
	1989						
Agri Beef CO.		3000	S	11/04	11/04	83	16
		6000	S	11/05	12/04	83	982
		7500	S	12/05	01/04	83	1269
		7500	S	01/05	01/20	83	655
		6000	S	01/21	01/31	83	360
		6725	S	02/01	02/01	83	37
		7450	S	02/02	02/02	83	41
		8150	S	02/03	02/05	83	134
		6000	S	02/06	02/28	83	753
						Total	**4247**
Rock Creek RA.		208	C	03/01	05/08	97	458
		208	C	11/11	02/28	97	730
						Total	**1188**
Roger Johnson		120	C	11/18	02/28	100	406
						Total	**406**
Arnold Ginsberg							
						Total	
						Allotment Total	**5841**
	1990						
Agri Beef CO.		1500	S	03/01	03/07	83	57
		1050	S	03/01	03/09	83	52
		2150	S	03/04	03/08	83	59
		700	S	04/16	06/30	83	290
		1600	S	11/13	11/15	83	26
		1600	S	11/20	11/20	83	9
		3200	S	11/21	11/21	83	18
		4500	S	11/22	11/22	83	25
		6300	S	11/23	11/30	83	275
		6700	S	12/01	12/15	83	549
		9300	S	12/16	12/17	83	102
		7800	S	12/18	01/04	83	766
		4600	S	01/05	02/28	83	1381
						Total	**3609**
Rock Creek RA.		208	C	03/01	05/08	97	458
		208	C	11/11	02/28	97	730
						Total	**1188**
Roger Johnson		85	C	03/01	04/30	100	170

		35	C	03/06	04/30	100	64
		120	C	05/01	05/08	100	32
		120	C	10/11	02/28	100	512
						Total	**780**
Arnold Ginsberg		57	C	07/01	09/30	100	172
		57	C	12/01	02/28	100	169
						Total	**341**
						Allotment Total	**5918**
Agri Beef CO.	1991	4600	S	03/01	03/15	83	377
		4600	S	03/16	03/22	83	176
		4500	S	03/23	04/15	83	590
		3250	S	04/16	05/31	83	816
		1500	S	05/02	05/31	83	246
		4750	S	06/01	06/15	83	389
		3250	S	06/16	06/30	83	266
		3000	S	11/09	11/30	83	360
		3000	S	12/01	12/03	83	49
		4500	S	12/04	12/04	83	25
		6000	S	12/05	12/06	83	66
		7500	S	12/07	12/07	83	41
		9000	S	12/08	12/17	83	491
		10500	S	12/18	12/31	83	802
		10500	S	01/01	01/14	83	802
		7500	S	01/15	02/07	83	1179
						Total	**6675**
Rock Creek RA.		208	C	03/01	05/08	97	458
		208	C	11/11	02/29	97	736
						Total	1194
Roger Johnson		120	C	03/01	05/08	100	272
		120	C	10/13	02/29	100	552
						Total	**824**
Arnold Ginsberg		57	C	03/01	09/30	100	401
		57	C	12/01	02/29	100	171
						Total	**572**
						Allotment Total	**9265**
Agri Beef CO.	1992	1500	S	03/01	03/03	83	25
		3850	S	03/04	03/04	83	21
		5500	S	03/05	03/05	83	30
		7000	S	03/06	03/06	83	38
		8500	S	03/07	03/07	83	46
		10500	S	03/08	03/13	83	344
		5000	S	03/14	04/30	83	1310
		3000	S	05/01	06/05	83	590
		5000	S	06/06	06/30	83	682
		500	S	07/01	09/30	83	251
		4500	S	10/23	12/31	83	1719
		4500	S	10/24	12/12	83	1228
		3975	S	12/13	12/13	83	22
		3450	S	12/14	12/14	83	19
		2925	S	12/15	12/31	83	271
		3730	S	01/01	01/10	83	204
						Total	**6800**

Rock Creek RA.		208	C	03/01	05/08	97	458
		100	C	11/15	01/13	97	191
						Total	**649**
Roger Johnson		120	C	03/01	05/08	100	272
		120	C	09/07	01/14	100	513
						Total	**785**
Arnold Ginsberg		57	C	03/01	09/30	100	401
		57	C	12/01	01/08	100	73
		45	C	02/15	02/28	100	21
						Total	**495**
						Allotment Total	**8729**
	1993						
Agri Beef CO.		1400	S	03/04	03/06	83	23
		6350	S	03/07	03/15	83	312
		4500	S	03/16	04/30	83	1130
		3200	S	05/01	06/30	83	1065
		500	S	07/01	07/31	83	85
		4000	S	12/12	12/31	83	437
		3750	S	12/22	01/02	83	246
		4000	S	01/01	01/02	83	44
		658	S	12/28	12/28	83	4
		1316	S	12/29	12/29	83	7
		1974	S	12/30	01/02	83	43
		9750	S	01/03	01/17	83	798
		12150	S	01/18	01/29	83	796
		10275	S	01/30	01/31	83	112
		1250	S	02/01	02/28	83	191
						Total	**5293**
Rock Creek RA.		100	C	03/01	05/08	97	220
		100	C	11/11	02/28	97	351
		112	C	11/19	02/28	97	364
						Total	**935**
Roger Johnson		120	C	03/01	04/03	100	134
		120	C	10/12	02/28	100	552
						Total	**686**
Arnold Ginsberg		57	C	03/01	09/30	100	401
		57	C	12/01	02/28	100	169
						Total	**570**
						Allotment Total	**7484**

EVALUATION OF TABLE #1

The actual use has been stable for Rock Creek Ranch, Roger Johnson, and Arnold Ginsberg throughout the evaluation period. Agri Beef's actual use has fluctuated from 3609 AUMs in 1990 to 6800 in 1992.

2. Wildlife

These data provided by Philip Benolkin, NDOW wildlife biologist.

a. Mule Deer

Table #2 Mule Deer Population and Trend Estimate and Use on the Sonoma Range

ALLOTMENT	YEAR	Deer Population Estimate	AUMs	Mule Deer Ratios Fawns/100 Adults Spring	Fall
Pumpernickel (046 Hunt Unit)	1989	40	120	ND 1/	54.0
	1990	75	225	59.0	ND
	1991	75	225	ND	57.5
	1992	87	261	23.3	34.9
	1993	79	237	25.0	21.0

1/ No Data

Evaluation of Table #2

These data indicates an increasing population of mule deer during the evaluation period on the Sonoma Range. Our objective is to have an initial forage demand for mule deer of 222 AUMs and that has been exceeded in every year except for in 1989. These data however also indicate a significant decrease in the number of fawns per 100 adults for the evaluation period. Spring and fall fawn ratios less than 35 per 100 adults indicates a declining deer herd especially over a long period of time. The adult deer population estimate indicates a more of a stable deer population, however this is only an estimate and is not indicative of the recruitment data and the weather and habitat variables may affect the final estimate.

b. Sage Grouse

Sage grouse strutting ground survey by helicopter in 1992 by NDOW.

Number of Male Sage Grouse	Location
1	Tobin Range-T32N, R40E, Section 27, NW,SW

Evaluation of Sage Grouse Data

During the 1992 survey, one male sage grouse was seen on a strutting ground. A follow up survey may be necessary to determine viability and trend of this population.

3. Wild Horse

The 1991 and 1992 population estimates and AUM demand are from census data collected in August 1991, and an aerial distribution flight conducted September 1992. The 1993 population estimate and AUM demand is based on an 11 %

increase of the 1992 population estimate.

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Table #3 Wild Horse Population Estimate and AUM Demand in the Pumpernickel Allotment

Year	Population - head	AUM's
1989	ND/	ND/
1990	ND/	ND/
1991	27	324
1992	42	504
1993	47	564

ND/ No Data

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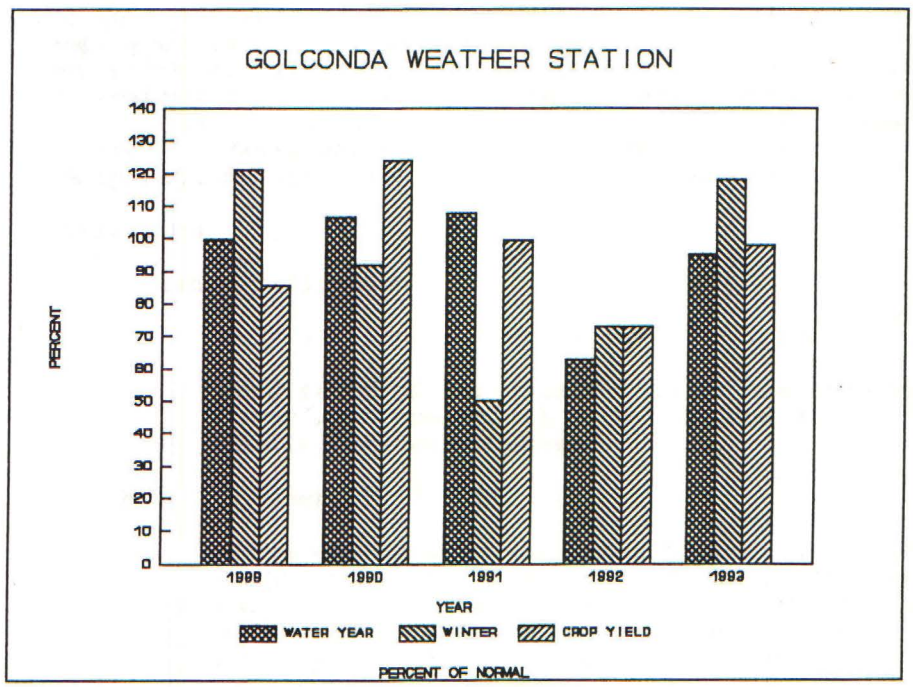
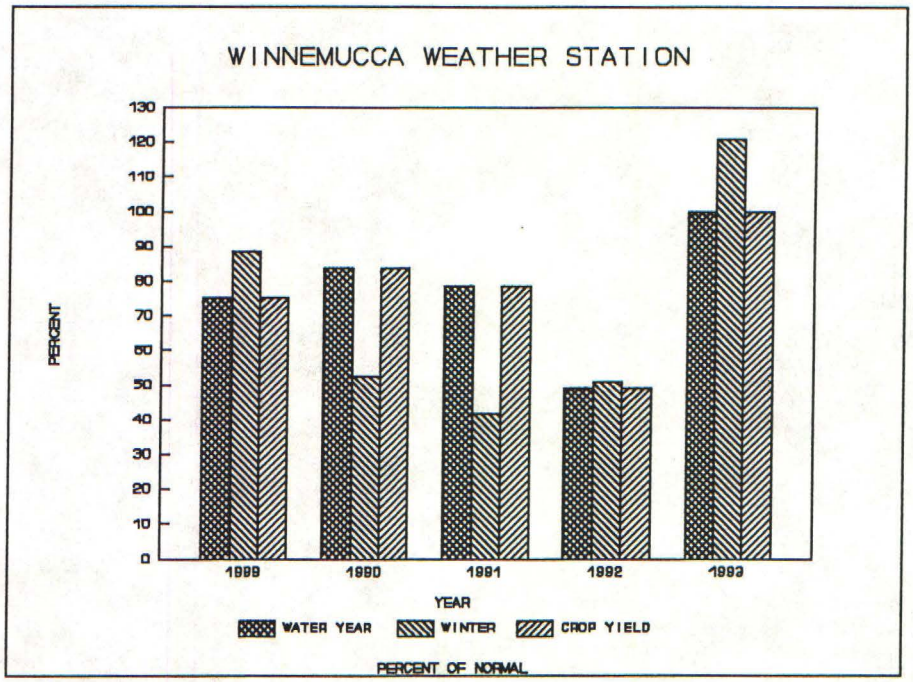
Evaluation of Table #3

Prior to Roger Johnson's report of horses in the Smelser Pass area in December 1990, there had been no known horses within the Pumpernickel Allotment since November 1986. Actual use has been increasing each year since 1991.

B. Climate

The following two figures illustrate the percent of normal precipitation for the water year (October - September); winter precipitation (November - February); and the crop yield (September - June) recorded at the Golconda and Winnemucca NOAA weather stations from 1989 through 1993.





Evaluation of Figures 1 and 2

The Golconda weather station has been at normal or close to normal every year except for in 1992. The Winnemucca weather station has been below normal every year except for in 1993. Although these two weather stations show different precipitation patterns, both stations depict the precipitation patterns of the Pumpernickel Allotment because parts of this allotment have received normal precipitation where as other parts of it have not.

C. Utilization

1. Upland Utilization

a. July 25, 1986 South end of Allotment:

Good stand of perennials with no use observed on the loamy 24-5 ecological site. A good stand of Thurbers needlegrass was observed.

b. October 15-17, 1988

Three use classes were used to map the allotment: Light Use (0-40%); Moderate Use (41-60%); and Heavy Use(61-100%). Light use was prevalent throughout the allotment. Moderate use was found in the Dixie Fire Area, along the fenced private lands, and near Lone Tree Mine. Heavy use was found from just south of Kent Spring north to just above Ragan Creek Ranch along Ragan Creek itself.

c. May 5,6,7, 1992 No apparent use - 11,884 acres (68%), No apparent use (Dixie Fire Area) - 3774 acres (21%), Slight use - 1415 (8%), Light use - 327 acres (2%), Moderate use - 0 acres (0%), Heavy use - 153 acres (1%), and Severe use - 0 acres (0%).

Only the Tobin Mountains, South Pumpernickel Valley, and Dixie Fire area were mapped during the evaluation period. In the Tobin Mountain Area, slight use occurred northeast of China Creek and in Garden Canyon. No apparent use was found in the South Pumpernickel Area except for two areas. The area around Kent Springs had heavy use and the area along the boundary fence between Goldbanks and Pumpernickel Allotments had light use. No apparent use was mapped within the Dixie Fire area which is primarily annual species.

2. Riparian Utilization

a. Data found from July 25, 1986

1. Garden Creek:

Light use along the road. Meadows showed old signs of punching about two years old by cattle, but are healing very well. Signs of sheep prevalent, but little evidence of forage use. Heavy sheep and horse (probably domestic) near sheep corral near head of creek.

2. China Creek:

Very light use was observed. Riparian was in excellent condition.

3. Kent Spring:

Extreme cattle use was observed. Creek has a 15 foot cutbank and cattle have been trailing down the creek, so there is no vegetation on creek. Severe use goes directly into light use with a very little moderate zone. Moderate zone forms where Smelser road bisects Pumpernickel Road.

4. Manganese Spring:

The spring was dry and no use was observed in the area.

5. Ragan Creek between two reservoirs:

Cattle use was heavy. Hoof damage from extensive use. Wet areas heavily punched.

6. Heavy cattle use on dry stream bed and vicinity. Moderate use about 100 yards on side of streambed on bottlebrush squirreltail.

b. 11/18/93

1. Wilson Creek

Nevada bluegrass	- 70%
Sedge	- 11%
Horsetail	- 6%
Willow	- 2%
Wild Rose	- 46%

2. Spanish Basin

Crested Wheatgrass	- 0%
Basin wild rye	- 0%
Sedge	- 0%

D. Trend

Trend was determined in the Pumpernickel Allotment by reconditioning the allotment utilizing Ecological Site Inventory (ESI) to indicate whether the rangeland is moving toward or away from the potential natural community. In order to better describe the condition and trend of the Pumpernickel Allotment, the allotment was divided into eight different areas. The areas will referred to as Golconda, Edna Mountains, Buffalo Mountains, North Pumpernickel Valley, South Pumpernickel Valley, Spanish Basin, Dixie Fire, and the Tobins.

The Golconda area lies between the Edna Mountains, Rock Creek and the Diamond S Allotment Boundaries. The area is dominated by Ecological Sites 024XY002 loamy 5-8" and 024XY005 loamy 8-10", which are generally in mid seral condition. Two transects were done on this area on the 024XY002 loamy 5-8" sites indicating a static to upward trend. Budsage increased in percent composition by weight. Shadscale, the dominate species on this site at the lower seral conditions, decreased in percent composition by weight.

The Edna Mountains area includes the Edna Mountains. The area is dominated by ecological site 024XY030 shallow calcareous loam 8-10" with 024XY005 loamy 8-10", 024XY020 droughty loam 8-10", 024XY021 loamy slope 12-14" and 024XY028 south slope 8-12" sites usually occurring in the draws. The area is generally in mid seral condition. One transect was done on a 024XY030 site indicating an upward trend. Black sagebrush decreased by percent composition by weight with small increases in bottlebrush squirreltail, sandbergs bluegrass, and Thurbers needlegrass.

The Buffalo Mountains area includes the west side of the Buffalo Mountains. The area is dominated by ecological site 024XY002 loamy 5-8" with less amounts of 024XY030 shallow calcareous loam 8-10" and 024XY031 shallow calcareous loam 10-14". The 024XY002 site is in late seral condition and the 024XY030 and 024XY031 sites were generally in mid seral condition. No trend transects or re-conditioning transects were completed in this area.

The North Pumpernickel Valley area includes the valley between the Edna Mountains and the Buffalo Mountains from Interstate 80 south to Pumpernickel Valley Reservoir. The area is dominated by 024XY002 loamy 5-8" in the valley with a less amount of 024XY005 loamy 8-10" on the piedmont slopes. The 024XY002 site is mostly in late seral condition with some acreage in early, mid, and

potential. Three re-conditioning transects were conducted on the North Pumpernickel Valley Area. One showed a static trend and the other two showed a downward trend. On the two sites that showed a downward trend, the shadscale increased by percent composition by weight and budsage decreased by percent composition by weight. The grass species were static. The 024XY005 loamy 8-10" sites were generally in mid seral condition. No trend transects were done on a 024XY005 loamy 8-10" in this area.

The South Pumpernickel Valley area lies on the valley floor between the Sonomas and the Tobins south of Pumpernickel Reservoir. The area is dominated by ecological site 024XY005 loamy 8-10" with a less amount of 024XY020 droughty loam 8-10". The area is generally in mid seral condition with the 024XY020 droughty loam 8-10" coming out as late seral. A re-conditioning transect was conducted on the 024XY005 site and showed an upward trend. The Indian ricegrass increased in percent composition by weight and the Wyoming big sagebrush decreased in percent composition by weight.

The Spanish Basin area includes the Sonoma Range portion of the allotment. The area is dominated by ecological site 024XY028 south slope 8-12", 024XY027 claypan 12-16", and 024XY021 loamy slope 12-14". The 024XY028 south slope 8-12" and 024XY021 loamy slope 12-14" sites were generally in mid seral condition and the 024XY027 claypan 12-16" was generally in late seral conditio;n. One re-conditioning transect was completed on a 024XY021 loamy slope 12-14" site. The transect showed an upward trend. Idaho fescue, basin wildrye, and Wyoming big sagebrush increased by percent composition by weight. Sandbergs bluegrass and rabbitbrush decreased by percent composition by weight. A second transect was conducted on a 024XY028 south slope 8-12" site. The transect indicated an upward trend. Thurbers needlegrass and basin wildrye increased by percent composition by weight. Wyoming big sagebrush, rabbitbrush, and sandbergs bluegrass decreased by percent composition by weight.

The Dixie Fire includes the south end of the Buffalo Mountains and the north end of the Tobins that burned in 1985. The Dixie Fire is dominantly on the fan piedmonts and mountains of granite and siliceous rocks. The elevations for the fan piedmonts range from 5000-5600 feet and the mountains range from 5500 to 7000 feet. 38,278 acres burned in the Pumpernickel, North Buffalo, and South Buffalo Allotments. This portion of the Pumpernickel Allotment was closed from livestock use from January 29, 1986 to February 21, 1989. At that time, it was determined that the primary goals of the fire closure were accomplished. No recent trend studies has been done on this area.

The Tobins is that portion of the Tobin Mountains that lie within the Pumpernickel Allotment that did not burn in 1985. The area is dominated by ecological sites 024XY030 shallow calcareous loam 8-10" site and 024XY031 shallow calcareous loam 10-14" with less amounts of 024XY005 loamy 8-10" and 024XY021 loamy slope 12-14", which are generally in mid seral condition. No trend transects were done in this area during the evaluation period.

E. Ecological Site Inventory

An ecological status inventory was completed during the 1978 field season. The following lists the acres and percentage by

seral stage for the allotment.

Seral Stage	Acres	Percent
Early	963	1%
Mid	62886	45%
Late	61689	44%
Potential	13674	10%

The following paragraphs describe the plant community dynamics of the prevalent ecological sites within the Pumpernickel Allotment.

Ecological Site 024XY002

Ecological Site 024XY002 loamy 5-8" p.z. occurs on low hills, fan piedmonts, alluvial flats on all aspects. Elevations are 4000 to 6000 feet. The plant community is dominated by shadscale, budsage, and Indian ricegrass. The potential vegetative composition is about 25% grasses, 5% forbs, and 70% shrubs. Where management results in abusive use by livestock, shadscale increases in density while Indian ricegrass and bud sagebrush compositions are reduced. With further site degradation, shadscale may become dominant to the extent of a nearly pure stand. Cheatgrass, halogeton and tansy mustard are species likely to invade this site. Ecological Site 024XY002 comprises 37% of the Pumpernickel Allotment. 5% of this site is at the potential natural community, 79% is in late seral condition, and 16% of this site is in mid seral condition. The sites that are at potential have a good mixture of shadscale, budsage, and bottlebrush squirreltail. The areas that are in late seral condition also have a good mixture of shadscale and budsage with a less amount of bottlebrush squirreltail and a small amount of cheatgrass. The areas that are in mid seral are shadscale dominated sites that also have cheatgrass and halogeton present. The areas that are in early seral condition are cheatgrass dominated sites.

Ecological Site 024XY005

Ecological Site 024XY005 loamy 8-10" p.z. occurs on lower mountains, hills, and piedmont slopes of all exposures. Elevations are 5000 to 6500 feet. The plant community is dominated by Thurbers needlegrass and Wyoming sagebrush. The potential vegetative composition is 55% grasses, 5% forbs, and 40% shrubs. Where management results in abusive use by livestock, Thurbers needlegrass and bluebunch wheatgrass decrease and are replaced by bluegrasses and bottlebrush squirreltail as the dominant grasses in the understory. Cheatgrass and other annuals will begin to dominate the understory as conditions deteriorate. Wyoming big sagebrush and downy rabbitbrush increase in the overstory and become the dominant vegetation on this site. Where site degradation has been fire induced, broom snakeweed may comprise 30-50 percent of the total annual yield. Ecological Site 024XY005 comprises 15% of the Pumpernickel Allotment. 6% of the site is in late seral condition and 94% of the site is mid seral condition. Both the areas that are in late and mid seral conditions are dominated by big sagebrush. The difference in condition is that the late seral site has more diversity in the remaining composition by weight .

Ecological Site 024XY009

The Ecological Site 024XY009 Saline Meadow 6-10" p.z. occurs on nearly level floodplains and inset fans. Elevations are from 4000 to 5500 feet. The plant community is dominated by alkali sacaton, with lesser amounts of alkali muhly. Potential vegetative composition is 85% grasses and grass-like plants and 15% forbs. Where management results in abusive use by livestock, "woody plants" often increase, especially rabbitbrush species. Inland saltgrass and Baltic rush increase and become the main understory species. Fivehook bassia, annual mustards, foxtail barley and other annual forbs and grasses are species likely to invade this site. Ecological Site 024XY009 comprises less than 1% of the Pumpernickel Allotment. 100% of this site is in early seral condition. This site consists of 60% baltic rush and at potential baltic rush should only comprise 2% of the total weight of vegetation.

Ecological Site 024XY030

Ecological Site 024XY030 shallow calcareous loam 8-10" p.z. is found on summits and sideslopes of piedmont slopes, hills, and lower mountains on all exposures. Elevations are 500 to 6500 feet. The plant community is dominated by black sagebrush, Thurbers needlegrass, and Indian ricegrass. The potential vegetative composition is 50% grasses, 5% forbs, and 45% shrubs. Where management results in abusive use by livestock, Indian ricegrass and Thurbers needlegrass decrease as Sandberg bluegrass and bottlebrush squirreltail increase in the understory. The density of black sagebrush, rabbitbrush, shadscale, and horsebrush increase and become the dominant overstory vegetation. Abusive grazing by sheep will reduce black sagebrush in the plant community. Cheatgrass, Russian thistle, and halogeton are species most likely to invade this site. Ecological Site 024XY030 comprises 10% of the Pumpernickel Allotment. 16% of the site is in late seral condition and 84% of the site is in mid seral condition. The areas that are in late seral are dominated by black sagebrush with the other shrubs presents the shrubs equal 85-90% of the composition by weight. The mid seral sites are dominated also by black sagebrush which makes up 77% of the total composition by weight.

F. Wildlife Habitat

1. Mule Deer

Wildlife habitat evaluation for the Sonoma Range Wildlife Habitat Area was collected in 1990. Five parameters are considered when evaluating the habitat suitability and they are: browse vigor, forage quality, vertical cover, disturbance or interference, and water distribution.

The Sonoma Range (DS-5) includes 57,389 acres located at the higher portions of the mountain range. The Sonoma Range DS-5 has an overall habitat suitability of 75 or good rating; where Good ranges from 61 to 80. See Table #4 for a summary of the individual parameters.

Sonoma Range (DY-1) includes 97,311 acres at the sides and lower portions of the mountain range. The Sonoma Range DY-1 has an overall habitat suitability of 61 or Good; where Good ranges from 61 to 80. See Table #4 for a summary of the

individual parameters.

Table #4 ***Summary of the individual Mule Deer Habitat Suitability parameters for the Sonoma Range DS-5 and DY-1 listed from limiting to least limiting.***

	Mule Deer Use Area		
Parameters	**DS-5**	**DW-1**	**Optimum Rating**
Forage Quality Rating	4.5	3.6	17.0
Vertical Cover Rating	9.2	8.7	17.0
Disturbance or Interference	14.8	14.4	18.0
Water Distribution Rating	16.0	14.4	16.0
Browse Vigor Rating	16.0	12.0	16.0

Table #5 ***1990 Mule Deer Habitat Condition Ratings for the Sonoma Range DS-5 and DY-1 Transects that Lie Within the Pumpernickel Allotment.***

Use Area	**Transect**	**Habitat Condition Rating**
DS-5	6	57 - Fair
DS-5	30	63 - Good
DS-5	32	75 - Good
DW-1	16	59 - Fair
DW-1	21	53 - Fair

The forage quality rating is the most limiting parameter for the Sonoma Range for both DS-5 and DW-1.

2. Bighorn Sheep

At this time there is no occupied bighorn sheep habitat. Bighorn Sheep populations are limited now by the domestic sheep grazing within the allotment. If any potential restocking of bighorn sheep were to occur all domestic sheep/ bighorn sheep conflicts would have to be resolved first. At that time the limiting factor would be water distribution for all three use areas.

Table #6 Bighorn Sheep Optimum Carrying Capacity and Habitat Suitability Rating (HSR)

Use Area	Optimum Carrying Capacity	Percent of Optimum
BS-3	3	69
BW-2	4	49
BY-1	38	38

G. Water Inventory

The water inventory conducted in 1978-1986 found 44 perennial springs, 12 intermittent springs, 3 perennial seeps, 19 intermittent seeps, 1 pond, 2 perennial reservoirs, 1 intermittent reservoir, and 1 intermittent well. One well and one pipeline have been added to the Pumpernickel Allotment since 1986. Streams were not inventoried during this inventory. The focus was on springs and seeps.

H. Riparian Habitat

No functionality has been conducted on the riparian habitat within the Pumpernickel Allotment, but on the July 28, 1994 field tour the following riparian areas were identified: Wilson Creek, Spanish Basin, China Creek, Garden Canyon, Kent Springs, and Brooks Spring.

I. Wild Horse Distribution

The following table lists the flight date, number of horses observed and the type of aircraft that were used to collect distribution data on horses in or near the Tobin Range HMA.

Table #7 Wild Horse Distribution

Date	Number Observed	Aircraft Type
3/69	0	Fixed Wing
9/74	0	Super Cub
6/77	0	Super Cub
8/80	14 1/	Bell 47
10/86	0	Bell 47
8/89	0	Shrike Aero Commander
8/91	27	Bell 47G4 Soloy
2/92	29	Cessna 210
5/92	34	Maule MX-5
9/92	42 2/	Maule MX-5

1/ In Tobin Range HMA, on the western boundary north of China Creek.

2/ 9 head of the 42 horses observed were in the Tobin Range HMA on the western boundary north of China Creek.

Evaluation of Table #4

There were no wild horses found in that portion of the Tobin Range HMA that is contained within the Pumpernickel Allotment until August 1980. Prior to the total removal of wild horses from the Sonoma Range HA in October/November 1986, a helicopter census of the Tobin Range HMA did not find any horses in or near that part of the HMA contained within the allotment. With the exception of August 1980 and September 1992, all of the horses observed in the allotment have been in the Sonoma Range HA which shares a common boundary with the Tobin Range HMA from Smelser Pass south to the allotment boundary fence at Panther Canyon.

The primary area of use by wild horses is in the Sonoma Range HA with only occasional use in the Tobin Range HMA along the common boundary. The attached map outlines the area of use that has been observed since 1991. During distribution flights, horses have been found on the lower slopes and hills from China Creek north to the Smelser Pass area in the Sonoma Range HA. Field observations indicate the horses are watering primarily on private lands along China Creek and north of Kent Spring, then trailing back to the lower slopes and foot hills north of China Creek during late spring, summer and fall. During the winter months the animals have been reported using an area on the southern end of Buffalo Mountain approximately two miles north of Smelser Pass, as well as the lower slopes and foothills between Smelser Pass and China Creek. Wild horses have been observed on fenced private land along Ragan Creek and on the flats at the mouth of Garden Canyon. During the last two winters (93/94 & 94/95), wild horses have been observed using the west side of the Sonoma Range south of Sheep Ranch Canyon.

J. Wild Horse Removal Data

October/November 1986	442 head	Sonoma Range HA
May 1992	4 head	Pumpernickel Reservoir

In conformance with the Sonoma-Gerlach MFP-III, wild horse and burro decision WH&B 1.3, all wild horses were removed from the Sonoma Range HA. The number of horses shown above is the total number of horse removed from the Sonoma Range HA. It is not known if any of the horses removed in 1986 came from the Pumpernickel Allotment. Removal records do not indicate the number of animals removed by allotment, however a census conducted in June 1985 did not find any horses in the Pumpernickel Allotment portion of the Sonoma Range HA.

In May 1992, Tom Filbin of Agri-Beef reported that four wild horses had broken through a fence around their private lands at Pumpernickel Reservoir, driving approximately 25 head of brood mares onto federal lands. Following an on site inspection of the domestic and wild horses, the 4 studs were declared problem animals and removed from Agri-Beef's fenced private lands.

V. CONCLUSIONS

A. Range - long term

1. Manage, maintain, and improve public rangeland conditions to provide forage on a sustained yield basis with an initial stocking level of 9,437 AUMs.

This objective has been met in:

(1) the South Pumpernickel Area because utilization has been slight and the trend is upward.
(2) the Tobin Mountains area because the utilization has been slight to not apparent in this area.
(3) the Edna Mountain area because the trend is up.
(4) the Golconda area because the trend is static to upward.
(5) the Spanish Basin area except for the burn areas because utilization has been within the proper levels and trend is upward.

This objective has not been met in:

(6) the Dixie Fire area, the insect kill areas, or the burn on the Sonomas because these areas consist mostly of annual species that are not produced on a sustained yield basis due to the fact that annual production is dependent on the amount and timing of annual precipitation.
(7) in the North Pumpernickel Area because the trend is static to downward. Present Condition of Ecological Site 024XY002, which is 79% in good condition and climatical factors as well as pre-mining drift of livestock from the North Buffalo Allotment could be possible reasons for the static to downward trend.

This objective is unknown for the Buffalo Mountains area because no trend or utilization has been done in this area.

Actual use has varied from 5841 AUMs to 9265 AUMs due to the variations in the sheep operation.

2. Maintain an acceptable allowable use level on key forage species that will provide a sustained yield.

a. This objective has been met in:

(1) the South Pumpernickel Area because utilization has been slight and the trend is upward.
(2) the Tobin Mountains area because the utilization has been slight to not apparent in this area.
(3) the Edna Mountain area because the trend is up.
(4) the Golconda area because the trend is static to upward.
(5) the Spanish Basin area except for the burn areas because utilization has been within the proper levels and trend is upward.

b. This objective has not been met in:

(1) the Dixie Fire area, the insect kill areas, or the burn on the Sonomas because these areas consist mostly of annual species that are not produced on a sustained yield basis due to the fact that annual production is dependent on the amount and timing of annual precipitation.
(2) in the North Pumpernickel Area because the trend is downward. Climatical factors as well as pre-mining drift of livestock from the North Buffalo Allotment could be possible reasons for the

static to downward trend.

c. This objective is unknown for the Buffalo Mountains area because no trend or utilization has been done in this area.

3. Improve range/ecological condition from fair to good on 15,491 acres and from good to excellent on 950 acres.

Location of acreages from the objective is unknown. The 1978 Ecological Site Inventory shows the following acreages of ecological condition for the Pumpernickel Allotment:

Poor	963	1%
Fair	62886	45%
Good	61689	44%
Excellent	13674	10%

The trend for the allotment is as follows:

a. Golconda Area has a static to upward trend.
b. North Pumpernickel Valley has a static to downward trend.
c. Edna Mountains has an upward trend.
d. Buffalo Mountains is unknown.
e. South Pumpernickel Valley has an upward trend.
f. Spanish Basin has an upward trend.
g. Dixie Fire is unknown.
h. Tobin Mountains has an upward to static trend based on professional judgement of the area.

B. Wildlife - long term

1. Manage, maintain, and improve public rangeland habitat condition to provide forage on a sustained yield basis, with an initial forage demand for big game of 222 AUMs for mule deer and 28 AUMs for bighorn sheep, by:

Improving or maintaining mule deer habitats in Edna Mountain DT-5, Buffalo Mountain DY-6, Tobin Range DY-4 and DS-4 and Sonoma Range DS-5 and DW-1.

a. Mule Deer

Unknown for the Edna Mountains, the Buffalo Mountains, and the Tobin Mountains. The Sonoma Range as a whole is in good condition with the limiting factor being forage quality. The current condition ratings conducted within the allotment show DS-5 as having 2 transects with good habitat condition ratings and 1 with a fair habitat condition rating. For DW-1, the current transects within the allotment show two fair habitat condition ratings.

b. Bighorn Sheep

No bighorn sheep have been reintroduced onto the allotment. The habitat suitability rating is at 69% of optimum on the summer range, the winter range is at 49% of optimum, and the yearlong range is at 38% of optimum. The limiting factor is water distribution.

2. Protect sage grouse strutting and nesting habitats and improve brooding habitat.

Met because the area is in a late seral stage, utilization has been slight to light, and no vegetal manipulation has occurred in this area. Only one known site has been identified in the Pumpernickel allotment for sage grouse. At this site only one male sage grouse was seen. Potential bird displacement. Lack of specific monitoring data to determine trend.

3. Wildlife habitat management objectives for vegetation utilization shall be as follows except where adjusted by an approved HMP, AMP, and HMAP.

a. Terrestrial: will not exceed levels established in the Sonoma Gerlach EIS Table 1-3 for key species.

b. Wetland Riparian: shall not exceed 50% for key species.

1. Uplands- same answer as Range #2.

2. Wetland Riparian

(a) Garden Creek

Met, except for where the sheep corrals are located.

(b) Kent Spring

Not Met from the reservoir to Kent Spring. Met below Kent Spring and the reservoir. Use has been made by cows, sheep, and wild horses.

(c) China Creek

Met, Use Pattern Mapping indicates that China Creek is meeting its use limit.

(d) Manganese Spring

Is on private land. However, the trough is dry and no apparent use has been observed.

(e) Ragan Creek

Is only a seasonal run-off wash.

(f) Granite Wash Spring

Needs to be reconstructed. (Has been reconstructed since this was first written.)

(g) Gregg Canyon/Wilson Creek

Not met on Nevada bluegrass in 1993 on the 100 yards of the two mile stream that was monitored. It was met on the following

species that were monitored along the 100 yard transect: sedge, horsetail, willow, and wild rose. Met in 1994 (Field Trip).

(h) Spanish Basin

Met in 1993 and 1994.

(i) Brooks Spring

Currently the spring is dry as a result of mine dewatering and water is being piped from the mine to a reservoir near Brooks Spring.

(j) Sulphur Spring

No data.

4. Develop a Habitat Management Plan (HMP) for the Tobin Range WHA-T-* in cooperation with NV-060.

Not Met. Has not been initiated.

C. Wild Horse - long term

1. Manage, maintain and improve public rangeland conditions to provide for an initial stocking level of 204 AUM's of forage on a sustained yield basis for 17 wild horses in that part of the Tobin Range HMA contained within the Pumpernickel Allotment. (WH&B 1.1)

Not Met. Sufficient forage is available, use pattern mapping indicates slight use and the trend is static to upward within the HMA, however during the evaluation period the horses have almost exclusively used the Sonoma Herd Area and other areas outside the HMA (Dixie Fire Area) with the exception of observations in August 1980 and September 1992. The Sonoma Herd Area shares a common boundary with the Tobin Range HMA from Smelser Pass south to the allotment boundary fence at Panther Canyon.

2. Remove wild horses from checkerboard land HA's unless a cooperative agreement providing for the retention and protection of wild horses is consummated with the affected land owner(s). (WH&B 1.3)

Not Met. A cooperative agreement has not been consummated with the private land owners within the Sonoma Herd Area contained within the Pumpernickel Allotment. Wild horses from within the allotment however are still utilizing the Sonoma Herd Area almost exclusively over the Tobin HMA.

3. Maintain and improve the free-roaming behavior of wild horses by:

a. protecting their home range

Met. Wild horses still have free movement within the allotment. No actions (ie fences) have been taken to impede the movement of wild

horses within the allotment.

b. assuring free access to water

Met. Water is available to wild horses both on private and public lands within the allotment.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Technical Recommendations

1. Carrying Capacity

At this time, there is insufficient utilization data available to base any changes in the authorized livestock use or establish an appropriate management level for wild horses within the allotment, either upward or downward. Carrying Capacity will be determined through an analysis of actual use and use pattern mapping data following the 1997 grazing year.

2. Grazing System

FROM:

The Pumpernickel Allotment has been for the most part a winter/early spring allotment with a low number of cattle during the summer and rams during the summers of the 93 and 94. It is a C allotment run in common without an intensive grazing system.

TO:

2a through 2c are the stepping stones in the process that the group has taken to arrive at the technical recommendation for the proposed grazing system.

a. Use Areas Considerations When Selecting a Grazing System

(1) Golconda

Appears the existing livestock management is working, leave management as is.

(2) Edna Mountains

Appears the existing livestock management is working, leave management as is.

(3) North Pumpernickel

Use 4/15 as a possible threshold date to start providing spring deferment on different parts of the use area.

(4) Buffalo Mountains

Develop water in this area, so it can better be utilized by cattle.

(5) Middle Pumpernickel

Livestock using the Pumpernickel Allotment should not use the winterfat or bug infested areas from May 1 to October 1 after the seeding is completed to allow for the establishment of the seeding.

(6) Spanish Basin

Rotate summertime sheep use between the Tobins and Spanish Basin. Need drift fences to keep livestock from drifting into the Clear Creek Allotment.

(7) Dixie Fire

Use in the early spring by livestock for cheatgrass control.

(8) South Pumpernickel

Currently is receiving slight to no apparent use except for on private land around Kent Spring.

(9) Tobins

Rotate summertime sheep use between the Tobins and Spanish Basin.

b. Five Grazing Alternatives (BLMs and Permittees)

(1) Holistic, which would include:

(a) planning on a yearly basis
(b) monitoring toward objectives
(c) control of situation - flexibility
(d) Rewards for efforts

(2) Specific use areas for each operator.

(3) Everyone use all of the allotment (No specific use areas for individual operators).

(4) Rotation of season/timing of use by use area.

(5) Continue winter/early spring season of use with flexibility to use during the summer.

c. Individual Operators Proposals for Grazing

Continue with a winter/early spring grazing system for the allotment, with provisions for use by cattle and sheep after such time by rotating areas of use from year to year. The following is the way that the operators propose to graze the Pumpernickel Allotment:

(1) Agri Beef -

Agri Beef Company sheep generally are staged and the rams put in with the ewes on private lands

before entering the Pumpernickel Allotment. This often results in delayed entry, but it is critical to the operation to maintain the full season of use authority in the allotment, especially in the event that the privata hay fields are unavailable. Sheep enter in bands of 1800 to 2500 head, usually over a period of several days.

One band is moved to the southern end and essentially only trailed to other BLM grazing allotments in the winter use period. Eventually this band is brought back into the allotment in the spring, where it is staged with the other bands to move onto permits in the Battle Mountain District and Mountain City Forest Service District.

Two bands are generally moved to the western foothills of the allotment. The east-side bands may also use the North Buffalo and Copper Canyon Allotments, Battle Mountain District, as weather and feed conditions permit in January and February, and we attempt not to use the same areas at the same time of year each year, even though it is dormant season grazing.

The movement of bands is dependent on weather and upon Agri Beef's attempt to keep them in areas of lower cattle use (which are generally areas of less perennial water availability). Light snows enable the sheep to use higher elevations in the foothills, using snow for watering needs. Heavier snows force the sheep into lower elevations. Very heavy snows require removal of the sheep from the allotment and feeding on privata lands. Dry conditions in some years require use of existing developed and undeveloped seasonal and perennial waters. Wetter conditions allow greater dispersion, because of snow, snowmelt waters, ephemeral runoff, and greater succulence of the forage (which results in lower demand of water sources).

Because of the environmental factors which dictate our use of the allotment by sheep, any artificially designed movement, rotation, etc. would likely fail.

Sheep are moved off the allotment in late April and May, except for the ram band (500 or fewer), which summers in the allotment under herder supervision. The past few years we have been totaling summertime use of this band between Spanish Basin and the China Creek/Garden Creek areas, with one of the areas being rested each year. We prefer to continue this use and this rotation.

(2) Rock Creek Ranch -

Turnout on the Edna Mountains first beginning after the first of November. Move cows in lots of 10 to 15 from the Ednas to Sulphur Spring and Brooks Spring. If the snow falls, then move the cows to Golconda Summit and Smelser seeding. In the late spring utilize Garden Creek and China Creek Area. Utilization of Middle Pumpernickel may accrue immediately, or after turnout prior to coming home around the first of May. Movement of livestock is dependent on winter weather conditions.

(3) Roger Johnson _

Continue with winter grazing (October through first week of May). Rotate cows between Gregg/Wilson Canyon, mid Pumpernickel Valley, and other areas throughout the allotment depending on where or how everyone else is operating through planning on a yearly basis.

(4) Arnold Ginsberg -

Rotate cows between the Dixie Fire Area (Smelser Pass), China Creek, and Kent Springs (South Pumpernickel).

3. Wild Horses (There were three alternatives considered by the group. The group selected alternative a to forward to the Area Manager)

a. Remove all wild horses, and establish an appropriate management level of 0 for the Tobin Range HMA contained within the Pumpernickel Allotment.

Rationale:

Distribution and census flights, and on the ground observations have found horses in the Sonoma HA and areas outside of either the Tobin Range or Sonoma HA, except for 2 occasions when horses were observed on the extreme western boundary of the HMA. There is adequate forage, water, and only slight use has been ;found on forage within and adjacent to the HMA. Data strongly indicates that wild horses in the allotment are residents of the Sonoma Range HA. Removal of all horses form the allotment would in conformance with the Sonoma-Gerlach MFP-III decision WH/B 1.3.

* Lack sufficient yearlong habitat in the HMA.
* Too expensive to fence horses into HMA.
* Remove all horses because of damage occurring to private property (private horses/range projects).
* Adequate forage, slight use within HMA, and good condition range, yet the horses are not utilizing the HMA.
* Predators may be affecting their range of use.

b. Establish an appropriate management level of 17 wild horses for the Tobin Range HMA contained within the Pumpernickel Allotment.

Rationale:

Insufficient monitoring data exists at the time to establish a carrying capacity for livestock or wild horses within the allotment. Establishment of an AML of 17 wild horses would be consistent with the livestock carrying capacity decision, but would be in conflict with the June 7, 1989 Interior Board of Land Appeals Decision, which states an AML must be established based on monitoring.

c. Remove wild horses in accordance with current BLM policy (9 and younger) and establish a non-reproductive herd.

Rationale:

This type of herd would provide an area to relocate horses from sanctuaries which are being closed, or to relocate horses which exceed existing age criteria from other herd areas.

B. Range Improvements

The following is a list of range improvements identified and prioritized by the Pumpernickel Working Group:

1. Trough replaced at Rye Grass Spring.
2. Increase trough storage space at Sulphur Spring.
3. Extend and add tank to Brooks Spring Pipeline.
4. Seal Reservoir above Kent Spring and Powerline Reservoir.
5. Seedings at Mid Pumpernickel bug infested area and south facing slope adjacent to Wilson Creek.
6. Build 3-4 drift fences between Pumpernickel and Clear Creek Allotments.
7. Develop water at Iron Pint either a well or pipeline.
8. Construct dirt tanks for Buffalo and Edna Mountains (possibly develop spring in Ednas T.35N., R.40E., Section 31).
9. Prescribe burn in South Pumpernickel and Tobins with a test site at Mustang Corrals.
10. Develop pipeline from Garden Creek into South Pumpernickel.
11. Seeding Dixie Fire Area.
12. Look for possible water developments within the Tobin HMA for wild horses and livestock.

c. Allotment Objectives

1. Short Term

a) Combine Range #2 and Wildlife #3a to read:

Utilization of key plant species in upland habitats shall not exceed 50% except where adjusted by an approved activity plan.

b) Requantify Wildlife #3b to read:

Total utilization of key plant species in riparian habitat shall not exceed 50% except where adjusted ba an approved activity plan. The following riparian habitats have bee identified as riparian habitat to monitor:

(1) Wilson Creek
(2) Spanish Basin
(3) Kent Spring
(4) Garden Creek
(5) China Creek
(6) Brooks Spring
(7) Sulphur Spring
(8) Granite Wash Spring

2. Long Term

a. Range

1) Manage, maintain, and improve public rangeland conditions to provide forage on a sustained yield basis with an initial stocking level of 9,437 AUMs.

Maintain this objective.

3) Improve range/ecological condition from fair to good on 15,491 acres and from good to excellent on 950 acres.

Combine with Wildlife # and Wild Horse # to a desired plant community objective.

b. Wildlife - long term

1) Manage, maintain, and improve public rangeland habitat condition to provide forage on a sustained yield basis, with an initial forage demand for big game of 222 AUMs for mule deer and 28 AUMs for bighorn sheep, by:

Improving or maintaining mule deer habitats in Edna Mountain DT-5, Buffalo Mountain DY-6, Tobin Range DY-4 and DS-4 and Sonoma Range DS-5 and DW-1.

Maintain first portion of the objective, but combine the second portion (mule deer habitat condition) with Range #3 and Wild Horse # into a desrired plant community objective because the

limiting factor for the mule deer habitat on the Sonoma Range is forage quality and can best be addressed through a desired plant community objective. Habitat condition ratings should be completed on the Edna Mountains, Buffalo Mountains, and the Tobin Range to determine their limiting factors and recommendations made to address their limiting factors.

2) Protect sage grouse strutting and nesting habitats and improve brooding habitat.

Rewrite as a desired plant community objective because this a vegetative issue that is best addressed as a desrired plant community objective.

4) Develop a Habitat Management Plan (HMP) for the Tobin Range WHA-T-* in cooperation with NV-060.

c. Wild Horse - long term

1) Manage, maintain and improve public rangeland conditions to provide for an initial stocking level of 204 AUMs of forage on a sustained yield basis for 17 wild horses in that part of the Tobin Range HMA contained within the Pumpernickel Allotment. (WH&B 1.1)

2) Remove wild horses from checkerboard land HA's unless a cooperative agreement providing for the retention and protection of wild horses is consummated with the affected land owner(s). (WH&B 1.3)

Maintain as written.

3) Maintain and improve the free-roaming behavior of wild horses by:

a. protecting their home range

b. assuring free access to water

Maintain as written.

3. Desired Plant Community Objectives

a. Golconda

Maintain the ecological condition in the loamy 5-8" (024XY002) and Loamy 8-10" (024XY005) ecological sites, in mid seral or better condition.

b. Edna Mountains

Maintain the ecological condition in the Shallow Calcareous Loam 8-10" (024XY032) range site, in mid seral condition or better.

c. North Pumpernickel Valley

(1) Maintain the ecological condition in the loamy 5-8" (024XY002) ecological site, in mid seral or better condition.

(2) Improve the trend in the Loamy 5-8" ecological site from static to downward to static or upward.

(3) Brooks Spring Meadow 024XY009

d. Buffalo Mountains

Maintain the ecological condition in the loamy 5-8" (024XY002) ecological site, in mid seral or better condition.

e. Mid Pumpernickel

(1) Maintain the ecological condition in the loamy 5-8" (024XY002) and Loamy 8-10" (024XY005) ecological sites, in mid seral or better condition.

(2) Improve the productivity of the bug-infested area by seeding of desirable grass and shrub species adapted to the ecological site.

(3) Maintain or improve the size of the area dominated by winterfat, in approximately section 11, T33N., R.40E., and maintain the frequency of occurrence of winterfat, within statistical levels of confidence, as determine by frequency monitoring to be established in 1995.

f. Spanish Basin

(1) Maintain the late seral ecological condition in Claypan 12-16" (024XY027) ecological site.

(2) Maintain or improve the mid seral ecological condition of South Slope 8-12" (024XY028) and Loamy Slope 12-14" (024XY021) ecological sites.

(3) Riparian Habitat

(4) Improve the productivity of the burned south facing slope adjacent to Wilson Creek in Gregg Canyon by seeding of desirable grass and shrub species adapted to the ecological site.

g. Dixie Fire

Decrease the percent composition by weight of annuals, and increase the percent species composition by weight of perennial species, by seeding of the burn area with desirable species adapted to the ecological site.

h. South Pumpernickel

(1) Maintain the late seral ecological condition in the Droughty Loam 8-10" (024XY020) ecological

site.

(2) Maintain the ecological condition in the Loamy 8-10" (024XY005) ecological site in mid seral condition or better.

(3) Improve the productivity of grasses and forbs in dense brush areas (south of powerline) in the Loamy 8-10" ecological site, through controlled burning.

(4) Riparian Habitat

i. Tobins

(1) Maintain or improve the mid seral ecological condition in the Shallow Calcareous Loam 8-10" (024XY030) and the Shallow Calcareous Loam 10-14" (024XY031) ecological sites.

(2) Improve the productivity of grasses and forbs in dense brush areas (south of powerline) in the Loamy 8-10" ecological site, through controlled burning.

(3) Riparian Habitat

D. Wildlife Monitoring

Complete habitat condition ratings for the Edna Mountains, Buffalo Mountains, and the Tobins during the same time period as establishment of desired plant community objectives.

E. Wild Horse Monitoring

Wild horse monitoring is dependent on which alternative is selected. If the AML is determined to be zero, then no wild horse monitoring is required. If the AML is left at 17 until monitoring data can be used to determine the carrying capacity, then a helicopter census would be completed every 3 years and distribution flights flown in the winter and summer as funding permits.

F. Set Schedule for Next Evaluation

The monitoring information will be analyzed in five years from issuance of the Final Multiple Use Decision. If the monitoring documents short term objectives are met, a formal re-evaluation would be done five years later. If short term objectives are not being met a re-evaluation would be completed at that time.

Pumpernickel Allotment -

Rock Creek Allotment

North Pumpernickel

Spanish Basin

Pumpernickel

South Pumpernickel

Dixie Fire Burn

Golconda Mountains

Osgood Mountains

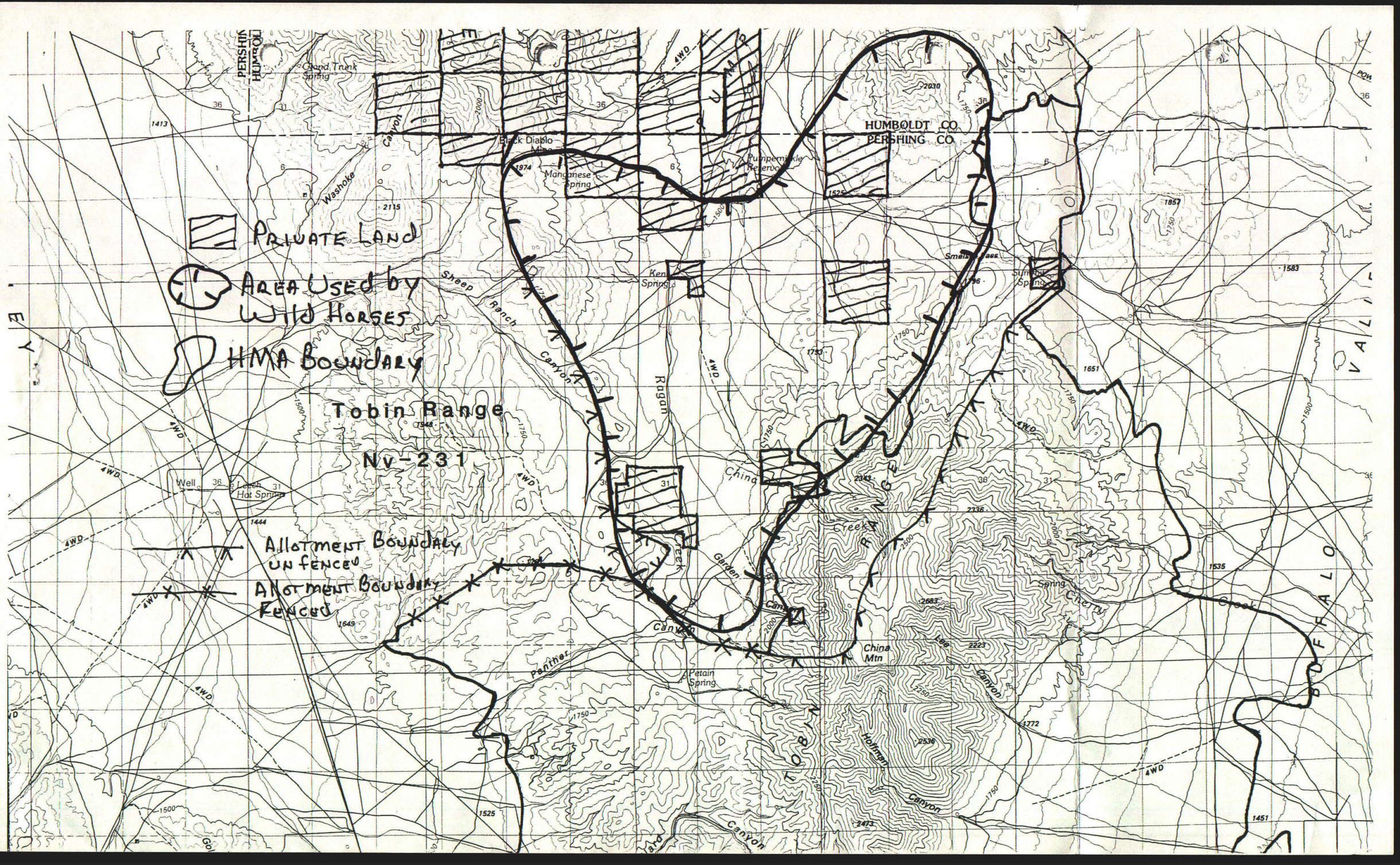
Sonoma Range

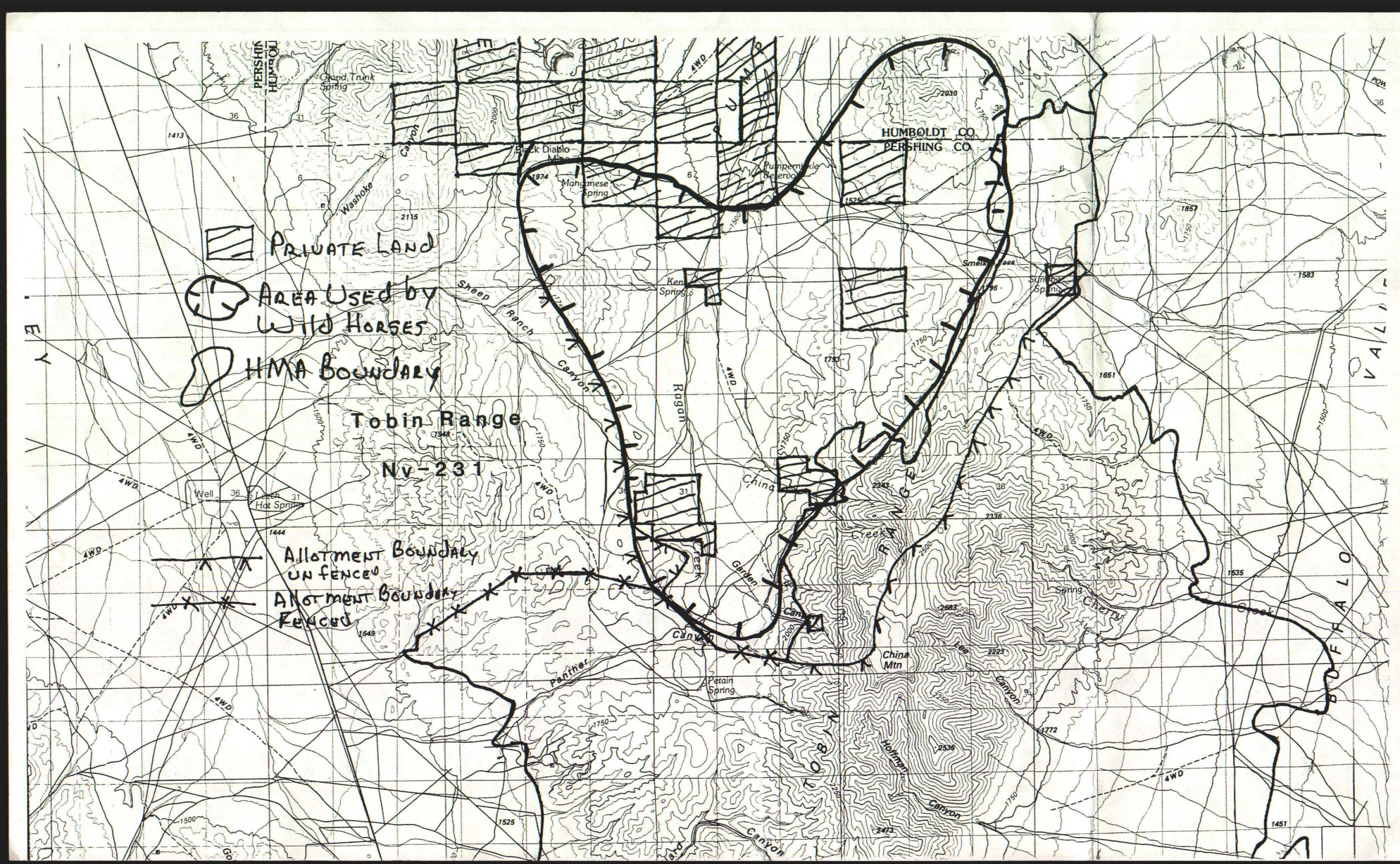
Fencing

Humboldt Co
Pershing Co

Pershing Co
Humboldt Co

Humboldt Co
Lander Co


PRIVATE LAND
AREA USED BY WILD HORSES
HMA BOUNDARY
Tobin Range
Nv-231
ALLOTMENT BOUNDARY UNFENCED
ALLOTMENT BOUNDARY FENCED
HUMBOLDT CO.
PERSHING CO.
Grand Trunk Spring
Black Diablo Mine
Manganese Spring
Pumpernickle Reservoir
Washoe
Canyon
Sheep Ranch
Ragan
Canyon
Ken Spring
Smelser
Sumbol Spring
China
Creek
RANGE
Well
Leech Hot Springs
Garden
Creek
Canyon
Panther
Canyon
Petain Spring
China Mtn
Log
Canyon
Cherry
Spring
Creek
TOBIN
Hoffman
Canyon
Canyon
BUFFALO VALLEY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Canyon
Panther
Petain Spring
China Mtn
Leg
Canyon
Spring
Cherry Creek
Hoffman
Canyon
4WD
BUFFALO VALLEY

Pumpernickel Allotment

Golconda Summit

Golconda Mountains

Rock Creek Allotment

North Pumpernickel

Pumpernickel Basin

Pumpernickel Mountains

Mount Tobin

Pumpernickel Range

Pumpernickel Mountains

Dixie Fire Burn

South Pumpernickel

Tobin Range

Buffalo Valley

Sonoma Range

Osgood Mountains

Iron Point

Golconda

Humboldt River

Humboldt

Iron Point

Silver King Mine

Silver Coin Mine

Golconda Summit

Rest Area

Kramer Hill

Water Tank

Sonoma Pk

Broad Gulch

Rock Creek

Corral

Adelaide Crown Mines

Tailings Pond

Adelaide Mine

Ridge Spring

Cumberland Harry Kau Mine

Cumberland Spring

Reinhart Spring

Landing Strip

Pumpernickel Reservoir

Manganese Spring

Black Diablo Mine

Petain Spring

China Mtn

Hot Springs

Sulphur Spring

Brooks Spring

Buffalo Valley Mine

Black Rock Mine

Timber Creek

Trenton

Gaging Station

Red House

Stonehouse

Lone T

Button Point Spring

Juniper Ridge

Lucky Canyon

Emigrant Canyon

Preble

Union Pacific

Southern Pacific

French Canal

Powerline

4WD

Well

Corral

Spring

Creek

Canyon

Ridge

Pole

Gulch

Mountains

Range

Basin

Valley

Point

River

Humboldt Co

Pershing Co

Lander Co

WHOA
WILD HORSE ORGANIZED ASSISTANCE
P.O. BOX 555
RENO, NEVADA 89504

Sonoma 7/27/95

. . . a note from

Dawn Y. Lappin

July 27, 1995

Bud C. Cribley, Area Manager
Sonoma-Gerlach Resource Area
BLM-Winnemucca District Office
705 East 4th St.
Winnemucca, Nevada 89445

RE: Pumpernickel Allotment Evaluation

Dear Mr. Cribley,

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the draft Pumpernickel Allotment Evaluation.

We realize at this stage in the planning process this isn't a protestable document but strongly object to the suggestion of eliminating wild horses from this portion of their HMA. Regardless of their usage over the years it is their HMA and their rights by law are to use the area as they need, whether consistent yearly usage or not. Currently you are estimating 47 horses in this portion of the Tobin HMA overlapping the Pumpernickel Allotment. If wild horses are using areas outside of the established Tobin HMA boundary the District needs to document the information that their sole use is outside the HMA. As you are aware the Bureau must document that the horses have "established their home range outside the HMA, as well as documenting that their use is incompatible with other uses." The District is required to provide that information and propose a gather of horses outside the Tobin HMA, not suggest removal of the acreage from their HMA. Changing HMA boundaries would require a LUP amendment.

In addition, we believe you are in error by suggesting that the Tobin Range is included under the umbrella of the MFP III Decision WH&B 1.3., "Remove wild horses from checkerboard land HA's unless a cooperative agreement providing for the retention and protection of wild horses is consummated with the affected land owners. (WH&B 1.1). The Tobin HMA as well as the area you delineate as "area used by wild horses" according to the maps you have provided is not checkerboard nor do you need to get an agreement signed to allow the horses to use their rightful area by law. Also, the map delineated in this evaluation doesn't show the Sonoma HA to support your conclusions drawn on page 21 of the AE.

This is a "C" category allotment and you have stated numerous times in this document that "insufficient monitoring data exists at this time to establish a carrying capacity for livestock or wild horses within the allotment, either upward or downward." It is our understanding that an allotment evaluation is to evaluate monitoring data to evaluate the allotment conditions, determine if allotment objectives are being met and establish a carrying capacity. We are confused as to the purpose of this allotment evaluation if not a preparation to publish a proposed and final decision to establish carrying capacity.

We expect that you will be reviewing our comments for inclusion in your proposed and final decision on this allotment. If you have any questions or would like to discuss our comments please feel free to call. If you will be in the Reno area we will make ourselves available to meet with you at state office as time allows.

Sincerely,

Dawn Y Lappin By CB

DAWN Y. LAPPIN
Director

BOB MILLER
Governor

STATE OF NEVADA

CATHERINE BARCOMB
Executive Director

7/27/95

COMMISSION FOR THE PRESERVATION OF WILD HORSES
255 W. Moana Lane
Suite 207A
Reno, Nevada 89509
(702) 688-2626

July 27, 1995

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Catherine Barcomb

CATHERINE BARCOMB
Executive Director