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10-25-94

Buffalo Hills Meeting on 25 October 94

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Carrying Capacity

Computations of the appeal file are for potential stocking rates. Carrying capacity estimates exceeded past stocking rates for livestock and BLM choose not to increase active preference. Therefore, the FMUD kept active preference and reduced wild horses according to the computations for carrying capacity.

Errors in computations.

* Weight averaging use pattern mapping data discounted the heavy and severe use on riparian habitat.

* Use of 60% utilization as the desired utilization does not have rational or supportive objectives of the allotment evaluation. 60% overall utilization were to be measured in February. Data presented for Buffalo Hills Pasture were collected on August 1, 1988 and not February.

* Actual use data for wild horses is based upon when monitoring data were collected against the start of the growing season on March 1. Therefore, the number of horses are multiplied by the days and divided by days/month. The AUMs are not for the whole year.

Manager's rationale

Carrying capacities are not strictly dependent on computations. Terms and conditions of licenses provide BLM authority to remove cattle when utilization levels are approached or achieved. BLM issued a 10 year term licensed based upon this FMUD.

Reductions in livestock will not meet riparian objectives, however wild horse reductions will. The carrying capacity applies only to horses and not livestock. Fencing will protect riparian areas and projects are pending funding. There is no interim measures.

Buffalo Hills Wild Horse Gather

February 1993

Granite HMA 100% in BH Allotment
BH HMA 100% in BH Allotment

Total Horses Captured.....1,437
in BH HMA..... 382
in Granite HMA.....1055

Total Horses Released
in BH HMA*..... 77*
in Granite HMA.....387

*Not all horses captured during gather, post gather census showed a total of 230 wild horses in BH HMA.

Wild Horse in Buffalo Hills Allotment
in BH HMA.....230
in Granite HMA.....387

in Calico HMA portion of Allotment.....
approx.....100*

TOTAL.....717

*from 1993 to 1994, the Calico HMA portion of the allotment contained 602 horses prior to gather in 1994. After the gather in 1994 a total of 289 wild horse were returned to the Calico HMA after gathering 602.