



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Elko Field Office
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DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR
BUDGET AND PLANNING DIVISION

In Reply Refer To:
4700(NV-012)

November 8, 2005

Dear Interested Party:

This letter is to inform you the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Elko Field Office, will be conducting an emergency wild horse gather on public lands affected by the Esmeralda Fire. The Esmeralda Fire burned within approximately 2 miles of the southern end of the Rock Creek Herd Management Area (HMA). The fire started on July 15, 2005 and was caused by lightning. The fire burned a total of approximately 96,986 acres, which encompasses approximately 72,930 acres of public lands administered by the BLM and 24,056 acres of private land. Remaining vegetation within the burn is restricted to small unburned pockets or islands.

A small number of wild horses were reported within the burned boundaries of the fire. On October 31, 2005, a census flight was conducted to determine numbers and locations of these animals. Twenty two animals were located within the burn boundary. Removal of the 22 wild horses would eliminate potential for starvation from lack of forage. The emergency gather will be conducted under a BLM contract which is scheduled to start on November 13, 2005. The performance time for the gathers is 2 days. We estimate all 22 wild horses will be gathered. **All wild horses gathered will be transported to the north end of the Rock Creek HMA and released.**

The appropriate management level (AML) for the Rock Creek HMA is 150-250 animals. The HMA was last gathered in 2004 and reduced to 154 wild horses. The post gather population of this emergency gather would be 190 wild horses which represent the middle level of the AML for the herd.

Thank you for your interest in wild horses and public land management. If you have questions, please call Bryan Fuell at (775) 753-0314.

Sincerely,

Shane DeForest
Assistant Field Manager,
Renewable Resources