



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
SURPRISE RESOURCE AREA
P.O. BOX 460
CEDARVILLE, CALIFORNIA 96104-0460



IN REPLY REFER TO:

4700(CA-028)

November 13, 1991

Catherine Barcomb, Executive Director
Commission for the Preservation of Wild Horses
Stewart Facility
Capitol Complex
Carson City, NV 89710

Dear Catherine:

Enclosed are the copies of the documents that you requested in your letter of October 14, 1991. I apologize for our original notification not going to you directly. Normally all our correspondence concerning wild horses goes directly to the Commission. I assure you in the future all correspondence dealing with wild horses will be sent to you. I would also like to provide you with more information concerning our proposed decision to gather wild horses from the East High Rock Area. We plan to remove 50 animals from the East High Rock and Wall Canyon Wild Horse Management Areas. The following points are key to our proposed decision to remove a few animals from each herd.

A. Livestock Management

Livestock management is always a concern on those areas where some wild horses are being removed. This is a brief summary of the current livestock management on the two herd areas proposed for some horse removal. We have spent considerable time and effort to improve grazing management over the past ten years. Grazing management plans specifically designed to lessen the impacts of grazing and improve the vegetative resource have been implemented throughout most of the Resource Area. The 50,360 acre area that the East High Rock Herd ranges on has been excluded from all livestock grazing. This area is part of the Massacre Mountain Grazing Allotment but grazing is not permitted on this part of the Allotment. The Wall Canyon Herd ranges on 47,900 acres that is within the Wall Canyon Grazing Allotment. Since 1987, this Allotment has received a significant amount of non-use in livestock grazing. Livestock use from 1987 to 1991 ranged from total non-use to 41 percent of permitted AUMs. This is a significant reduction in the number of cattle using this area for the past five years.

B. Established Population Levels

Our proposed action is to maintain these two horse herds within a population levels established in the Land Use Plan. The removal of animals is not a reduction from a higher population level to a lower level. These population levels were set with the goal

of maintaining a healthy, viable horse herd that is also in ecological balance with other resources and uses found on the public lands. **In 1983, when the Land Use Plan was completed, forage allocations were made for watershed cover, wildlife, livestock and wild horses using the best information available at the time. Population levels for each horse herd was based on these allocations.** The population levels established in the Land Use Plan received a high level of public review, including several comments from environmental and wild horse groups. The population levels for each horse herd was not a major issue. Many factors need to be considered when herd population levels are established. These animals are on the range yearlong and the numbers need to be in balance with both summer and winter use areas. The herd also needs to be at a level that will maintain itself through drought years as well as the better precipitation years. **Our intention is to maintain the horse numbers within the population levels set in the Land Use Plan, realizing that this was our initial attempt at balancing all range uses. These numbers will remain until our monitoring data indicates that the numbers should be at a higher or lower level.** We then would develop an amendment to the Land Use Plan, establish new population levels and provide the same opportunity for comment as the original plan.

I hope this information will be of use to you. If it would be of additional assistance to you, we could meet with you and go over the management plans of each horse herd we manage in Nevada. We could also make sure you have current copies of all documents and answer any questions you may have. Please do not hesitate to contact me at (916) 279-6101.

Sincerely,



J. Anthony Danna
Surprise Resource Area Manager

Enclosures (3)

- 1-Cowhead/Massacre Land Use Plan
- 2-High Rock Herd Management Area Plan
- 3-Wall Canyon Herd Management Area Plan



**COMMISSION FOR THE
PRESERVATION OF WILD HORSES**

Stewart Facility
Capitol Complex
Carson City, Nevada 89710
(702) 687-5589

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December 3, 1991

J. Anthony Danna, Area Manager
BLM-Surprise Resource Area
P.O. Box 460
Cedarville, California 96104-0460

Dear Mr. Danna,

I would like to thank you for the information I recently received from you along with the letter explaining your management action selections.

I must commend you on your goals. "Grazing management plans specifically designed to lessen the impacts of grazing and improve the vegetative resource have been implemented throughout most of the Resource Area." I realize that you have spent considerable time and effort to improve grazing management over the past years. The single most important element we have to protect is the quality of the range itself. Without that range all wild horses, wildlife, and livestock would suffer.

However, as we had discussed previously on the phone, per the IBLA ruling, by law we must protest the removal of any horses in Nevada managed by your agency that are removed for any other reason that supported by monitoring. In 1989, an IBLA decision stated that the removal of horses from herd management areas would be based on an appropriate determination that removal was necessary to restore the range to a thriving natural ecological balance and prevent deterioration of the range, in accordance with the Wild Free Roaming Horse and Burro Act. IBLA also stated that "an allowable management level (AML) established purely for administrative reasons because it was the level of wild horse use at a particular point in time cannot be justified under the statute."

For the above reasons we must protest any further removals of horses from ranges in Nevada. We can only speak for ranges in Nevada as by statute that is the extent of our authority.

Depending upon time available I would like to take you up on your invitation to come over and meet with you and go over the management plans for each herd area that you manage in Nevada.

J. Anthony Danna
December 3, 1991
Page 2

Again, thank you for the information you have sent and I look forward to working with you in the future. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Catherine Barcomb". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name.

CATHERINE BARCOMB
Executive Director

4/17/91

Notice of Action in a Horse Herd Management Area

State: California
County: Lassen
District: Susanville
Area: Eagle Lake Resource Area
HMA Name: Twin Peaks
Number: CA-242
Acres: 653,425

Date that 15-day notification period ends: April 17, 1991

1. Description of Action: Construction of a steel and wire fence located principally on the common property boundary between BLM land and the Horne Ranch owned by R.C. Roberts.
2. Location of Activity: Eagle Lake Resource Area, Cal-Neva Planning Unit, Observation Allotment. T.34N., R.16E., Sections 01, 02, 03, 04, 10 and 11. (See attached map.)
3. Description of Activity: The Horne Ranch is private property located within the Twin Peaks Herd Management Area. The Horne Ranch now receives use by wild horses. The landowner periodically complains of the wild horse use, and requests that BLM remove the horses. The BLM then periodically either hazes the horses off the private property back on to BLM land or removes them. Because the Horne Ranch contains haylands and other productive pasture, it attracts the horses from the adjacent BLM lands which are less productive. The hazing has only a temporary effect and the wild horses promptly return to it. Periodic removal has the effect of removing the offending horses; however, shortly thereafter other horses within the HMA inhabit the territory vacated by the ones that were removed. Once wild horses return to the Horne Ranch, the cycle of complaints and hazing or removal begins anew. In order to halt this cycle and to establish an accurate boundary reflective of land ownership in the area, it is proposed that a fence be built along the common boundary line between the Horne Ranch and BLM lands. The proposed fence would also serve as a barrier to livestock movement. There is an old decrepid fence that roughly surrounded the Horne Ranch in the same vicinity as the proposed action that seems to have been built without regard to land ownership. It appears to be 50 to 80 years old and no longer serves as an effective barrier to wild horse or livestock movement on or off the Horne Ranch as apparently it once did. The old decrepid fence would be removed as part of the proposal.

The proposal is not specifically provided for in the 1982 Cal-Neva Land Use Plan but it is not in conflict with it. By law, BLM must respond to requests for removal of wild horses from private lands and by policy gives such requests priority. Implementation of the proposed action is expected to prevent wild horse entry into the Horne Ranch and therefore significantly lower the number of removal requests. Fewer removal requests would allow BLM to apply more of its wild horse and burro management efforts and funding to areas unrelated to special request private land hazing or gather operations.

4. Chronology of Events: An environmental assessment will be prepared by April 30, 1991, in order to comply with NEPA-required environmental documentation. Should the proposal be approved following this assessment, construction would commence in May 1991.

MORNE RANCH AREA

PROJECT MAP
HORNE BOUNDARY FENCE

— AGREED FENCE ROUTE
3/11/91

█ Some of the BLM/
Private Land Property
Boundary

HORNE
FENCES
11/16/91

by: K. Vissler

Handwritten notes:
MARGINAL
SHAPES
DOWNSIDE
WATER

MARGINAL
SHAPES
DOWNSIDE
WATER

MAYLANDS

GREEN: SOME OF
THE PROPERTY
BOUNDARIES

HORN
GLISS
FENCE LINE

1/2 mile
repair

