

9-27-07



United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Surprise Field Office
PO Box 460
Cedarville, CA 96104
www.ca.blm.gov/surprise

In reply refer to:
4700 (CA 370) (P)

September 27, 2007

Dear Interested Party,

The Surprise Field Office will be preparing several environmental assessments (EA) for proposed wild horse Herd Management Areas actions in FY 2008. The required assessments will include environmental analysis of establishing Appropriate Management Level for the Massacre Lakes Herd Area, and an environmental analysis of the impacts for gathering and removal of wild horses on the Massacre Lakes, Carter Reservoir, and Buckhorn Herd Management Areas. Enclosed with this letter is summary information about the proposal for each herd management area. Your comments concerning the proposals should be sent to:

Bureau of Land Management
Attn: Steve Surian
Surprise Field Office
PO Box 460.
Cedarville, CA 96104

Your comments and those received from other interested parties and affected interests will be used to determine the significant issues to be analyzed in the EA. Your comments should be submitted by October 15, 2007 to insure consideration. The BLM will issue a preliminary EA, an EA and decision record to complete this process.

If you are not interested in receiving information concerning the proposals discussed in this letter, or if you wish to be removed from our mailing list, please contact us at the above address or you may call Steve Surian (530) 279-2712.

Sincerely,

Shane DeForest
Field Manager

Enclosures:

- Herd Management Area Map
- Information summary

Issue Scoping Information Wild Horse Management

Massacre Lake Herd Management Area

An environmental assessment (EA) will be prepared to establish and maintain wild horse appropriate management levels within the Massacre Lakes Herd Management Area (HMA). The HMA is located 25 miles east of Cedarville CA, in north central Washoe County Nevada, and consists of 35,846 acres of public land and 4,044 acres of state/county/private lands. The HMA overlaps with the Massacre Lakes Allotment, and the Massacre Rim Wilderness Study Area.

The current Appropriate Management Level (AML) has been established at 25-35 wild horses by the Land Use Planning process. In September 2007, a census of the HMA was completed by helicopter, and 110 horses (includes 12 foals) were counted.

The EA will affirm or re-establish the AMLs based on the analysis of monitoring data collected on the Massacre Lakes Herd Management Areas. The AML would be consistent with achieving a thriving natural ecological balance between wild horse populations, wildlife, livestock, wilderness, archeological values, soil and vegetation resources. The AML will also be consistent with attaining Rangeland Health Standards and Guidelines for Northeast California and Northwestern Nevada. The timeline for completing this EA is early November.

Carter Reservoir and Buckhorn Herd Management Areas

The Appropriate Management Level is 35 wild horses for the Carter Reservoir HMA and the AML for the Buckhorn HMA is 85 wild horses. The AMLs for each HMA were established in 2003, based on the analysis of resource monitoring data. The BLM will prepare separate EAs for each of the herd management areas to analyze the impacts associated with the proposal to remove excess wild horses. The proposed gathers and removals are needed to restore wild horse herd numbers to levels consistent with the Appropriate Management Level (AML) for each HMA. These actions would help to promote the achievement and maintenance of a thriving natural ecological balance for a period of approximately three –four years. Projected gather periods are winter 2007/2008, or fall 2008. The gathers would be accomplished using a helicopter, or a combination of helicopter, bait traps, and by horseback.

The Carter Reservoir HMA is located 10 miles east of Cedarville CA, in northern Washoe County Nevada, and along the California Stateline, and consists of 21,074 acres of public land and 2,349 acres of state/private lands. In September 2007, 104 horses were counted in Carter Reservoir Herd Management Area (30 horses in Sand Creek Allotment, and 66 horses in Crooks Lake Allotment).

The Buckhorn HMA is located about 40 miles south of Cedarville CA, in northern Washoe County Nevada, and in Lassen County California, and consists of 60,274 acres of public land and 13,273 acres of state/county/private lands. The Buckhorn Herd Management Area population is estimated at 287 horses based on a 2005 helicopter census and 20% estimated population increases since the census. Prior to gathering and removal of wild horses a census would be completed to confirm current populations.

The following table a summary of information for the proposed actions.

R15E

R16E

R17E

R18E

R19E

R20E

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T38N

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T37N

T36N

T36N

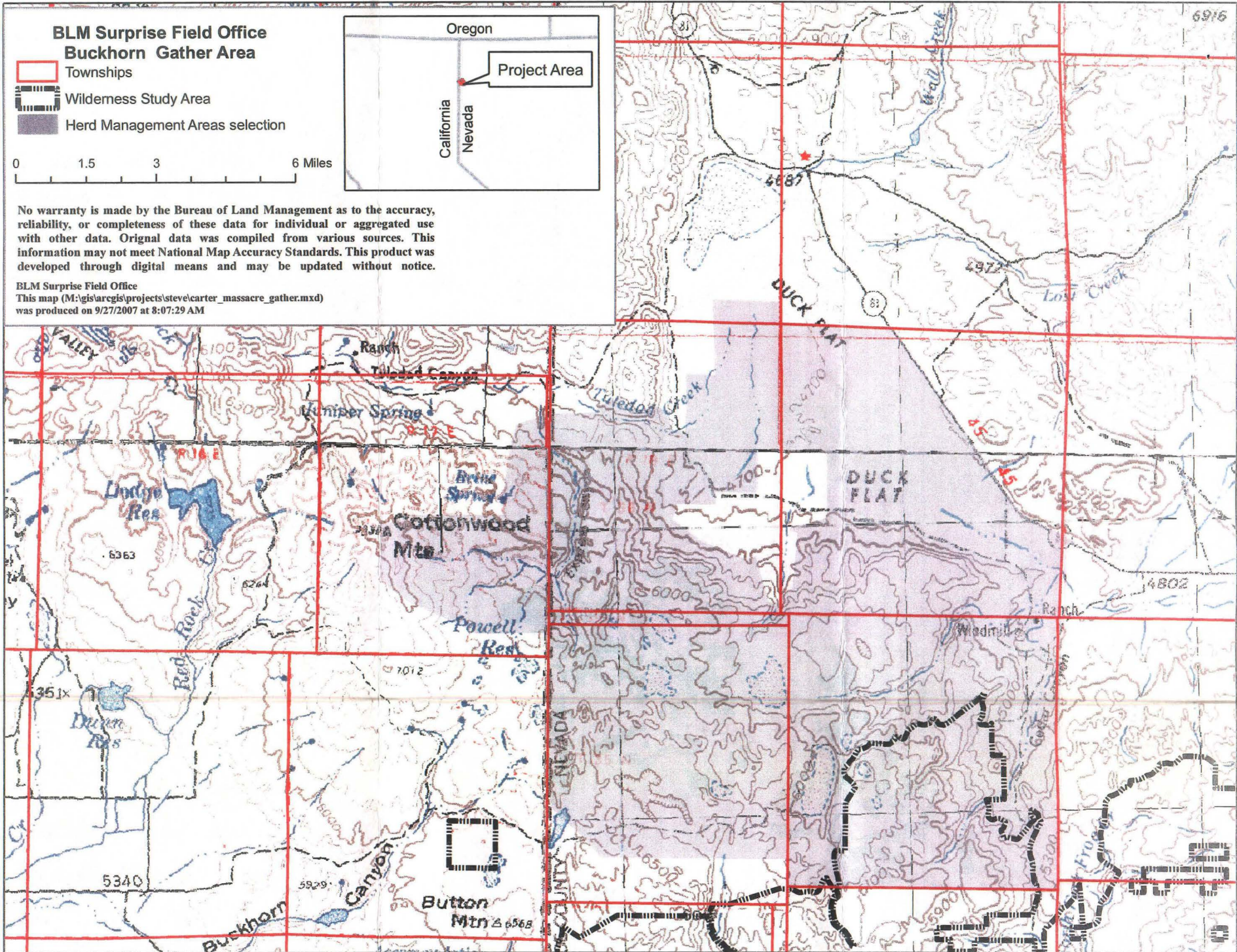
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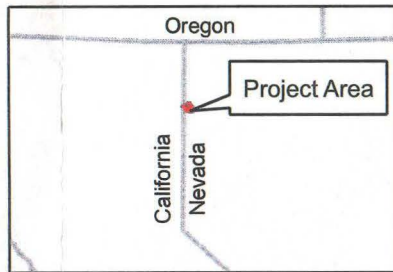
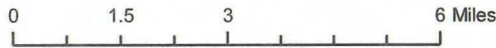
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**BLM Surprise Field Office
Buckhorn Gather Area**

- Townships
- Wilderness Study Area
- Herd Management Areas selection



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R17E

R18E



R19E

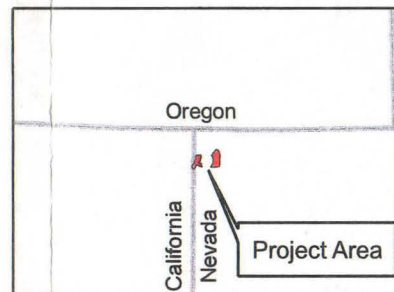
R20E

R21E

R22E

**BLM Surprise Field Office
Carter Reservoir/Massacre Lakes
Gather Area**

-  Herd Management Areas (HMA)
-  National Conservation Area
-  Wilderness Study Area



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