



United States Department of the Interior



9-25-01

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

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In Reply Refer To:
4700 (CA-370) P

September 25, 2001

CERTIFIED MAIL NO: 7106 4575 1292 3954 1050
Return Receipt Requested

Nevada State Clearinghouse
Division of Administration
Capitol Complex
Carson City, NV 89702

DECISION

Gather Plan/Establishment of Appropriate Management Level for the ~~Little High Rock Home Range~~ of the ~~High Rock Herd Management Area~~

Dear Interested Party:

Enclosed for your review is my Decision for the Little High Rock Home Range of the High Rock Herd Management Area. The Decision represents the Proposed Action as described in Environmental Assessment No. CA-370-01-07.

This environmental assessment was sent out for public review on June 8, 2001. On June 21, 2001 a decision was issued to immediately remove animals to the Appropriate Management Level called for in proposed action of the Environmental Assessment due to a shortage of available water. However, the decision was not intended to establish an Appropriate Management Level.

This Decision is for the purpose of establishing an Appropriate Management Level, and implementing future removals in the Little High Home Range of the High Rock Herd Management Area.

APPEAL PROCEDURES

Within thirty (30) days of your receipt of this decision, you have the right of appeal to the Board of Land Appeals, in accordance with the regulations of 43 CFR 4.400. If an appeal is taken, you must follow the procedures outlined in the enclosed Form 1842-1, Information on Taking Appeals to the Board of Land Appeals. Within thirty (30) days after your appeal, you are required to provide a Statement of Reasons to the Board of Land Appeals and a copy to the Regional Solicitor's Office listed in Item 3 on the form.

Sincerely,



Joseph M. McFarlan
Acting Surprise Field Manager

Enclosures - 3

Decision Record/FONSI

Form 1842-1

Mailing List



United States Department of the Interior



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DECISION RECORD/FONSI

Environmental Assessment # CA-370-01-07

LITTLE HIGH ROCK APPROPRIATE MANAGEMENT LEVEL ESTABLISHMENT/CAPTURE PLAN

Decision

Based on all the information available to me, it is my decision to implement the Proposed Action of Environmental Assessment # CA-370-01-07, which was sent out for public review on June 8, 2001. No additional mitigation measures were identified as a result of the environmental analysis.

Rationale

The Proposed Action and two alternatives were analyzed in Environmental Assessment # CA-370-01-07. The No Action alternative was not chosen as it would not restore a natural thriving ecological balance. Degradation of riparian habitats would continue, and animals would be increasingly stressed due to the lack of available water to support growing herds.

I have chosen to implement the Proposed Action because this alternative would lead to restoration of a natural thriving ecological balance, resulting in overall positive impacts to both the wild horses and their habitat. Implementation of the Proposed Action is consistent with land use planning goals and objectives and in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.

Due to the concern of animals perishing during the summer of 2001, because of a severe water shortage in the area, a Full Force and Effect decision was issued on June 21, 2001 to allow for the immediate removal of animals to the lower end of the population called for in the Proposed Action. This removal was accomplished in July, 2001.

Discussion

During the public comment period for EA-370-01-07, which started on June 8, 2001, comments were received from two different individuals.

One comment dealt with the size of the populations to be managed for. The individual felt that the lower end of the range (48 head) was too low for a viable herd. It was explained that there are several other herds in the vicinity of Little High Rock and that mixing of populations occurs. This should minimize herd viability problems. In addition, blood samples were drawn from a sample of those animals removed in July 2001, for genetic testing. This will provide a baseline for comparing genetic variability during future removals.

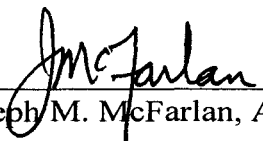
Another comment questioned the removal of horses if livestock are still grazing in the area. It was affirmed that there have been no livestock grazing in this area due to water availability and remoteness from ranching operations.

One comment stated that the wild horses in the Little High Rock Home Range would not reach the levels displayed in the population models under the no action alternative, as mortality rates would increase and foal crops decrease as the populations became large. The projected numbers from the population model were displayed for comparison purposes, and it is recognized that populations would never reach those projected levels, due to increased mortality and reduced foaling rates.

Finding of No Significant Impact

Based upon the Environmental Assessment # CA-370-01-07, I have determined that implementation of the Proposed Action of the Little High Rock AML Establishment/Capture Plan would not result in any significant impacts on the quality of the human environment. Therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement is not required according to Section 102 (2) (c) of NEPA.

The proposed action is in conformance with the Cowhead/Massacre Management Framework Plan and would not cause any undue or unnecessary environmental degradation.



Joseph M. McFarlan, Acting Surprise Field Manager

9/26/01
Date

SUBPART 1821.2--OFFICE HOURS; TIME AND PLACE FOR FILING

Sec. 1821.2-1 *Office hours of State Offices.* (a) State Offices and the Washington Office of the Bureau of Land Management are open to the public for the filing of documents and inspection of records during the hours specified in this paragraph on Monday through Friday of each week, with the exception of those days where the office may be closed because of a national holiday or Presidential or other administrative order. The hours during which the State Offices and the Washington Office are open to the public for the filing of documents and inspection of records are from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., standard time or daylight saving time, whichever is in effect at the city in which each office is located.

Sec. 1821.2-2(d) Any document required or permitted to be filed under the regulations of this chapter, which is received in the State Office or the Washington Office, either in the mail or by personal delivery when the office is not open to the public shall be deemed to be filed as of the day and hour the office next opens to the public.

(e) Any document required by law, regulation, or decision to be filed within a stated period, the last day of which falls on a day the State Office or the Washington Office is officially closed, shall be deemed to be timely filed if it is received in the appropriate office on the next day the office is open to the public.

* * * * *

Certified Mail List for Little High Rock Decision
September 25, 2001

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