



## United States Department of the Interior

### BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Elko District Office  
3900 East Idaho Street  
Elko, Nevada 89801  
<http://www.nv.blm.gov>



In Reply Refer To:  
4700(NVE02000)

April 23, 2009

APR 23 2009

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APR 27 2009

DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION  
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR  
BUDGET AND PLANNING DIVISION

Dear Interested Party:

The BLM is proposing to gather approximately 489 wild horses, remove approximately 389 head, and return 100 to the Rock Creek Herd Management Area (HMA), located in the northwestern portion of Elko County (see attached map). The gather would be conducted in the fall of 2009. The gather is needed to protect public rangeland from undue degradation caused by excessive numbers of wild horses and to protect herd health by insuring adequate forage resources are available. The post gather population of 100 wild horses would represent the lower limit of the appropriate management level (AML) and should allow the herd to grow to the upper limit of 250 animals over a four year period without the need for additional gathers to remove excess animals in the interim.

Removal of excess wild horses from the Rock Creek HMA to the lower limit of the established (AMLs) is proposed to prevent deterioration of the range and to achieve and maintain a thriving natural ecological balance keeping with the multiple-use management concept for the area as authorized under Section 3 (b) (2) of the 1971 Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act and Section 302(b) of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976. The March 2009 inventory flight showed most of the horses outside of the HMA.

Multiple capture sites (traps) would be used. Whenever possible, capture sites would be located at previously used sites. The Elko District Office Wild Horse Specialist would record and sort captured horses by sex, age and color. To assess herd health, factors such as pregnancy, parasite loading, physical condition, etc., would be recorded. Animals would be returned to the HMA based on desired characteristics (including a normal age structure and sex ratio).

To further lengthen the time before a future gather may be required, BLM is also considering participating in immunocontraceptive research as part of this gather. About 75 release mares would receive the fertility control drug, porcine zona pellucidae (PZP). This vaccine has shown effectiveness of 94% in year one, 82% in year two, and 68% in year three. Treated mares would be expected to foal normally in 2010, but fewer mares would foal in 2011, 2012, and 2013. The average annual growth rate would be expected to decline slightly which would increase the gather cycle to four years instead of three.

An environmental assessment is being prepared for this gather. If you have any information, data, analysis or issues or concerns about this proposed gather and removal of wild horses, please submit them in writing, prior to May 27, 2009. Please address your comments to the BLM

Tuscarora Field Office, Attention: Bruce Thompson, Wild Horse Specialist, 3900 Idaho Street, Elko, NV 89801.

Also, if you would like to continue receiving the information concerning this HMA, please notify this office in writing at the above address by May 27, 2009, to remain on the mailing list.

Thank you for your interest in wild horses and public land management. If you have questions, please call Bruce Thompson at (775) 753-0200.

Sincerely,



Mel M. Meier, Manager  
Tuscarora Field Office

Enclosure(s): As stated above

- cc: - American Horse Protection Assoc.
- Animal Welfare Institute
- Animal Protection Institute of America
- The Fund for Animals, Inc
- Anna Charlton-Animal Rights Law Center
- Colorado Wild Horse and Burro Coalition
- Wild Horse Spirit
- Nevada Commission for the Preservation of Wild Horses
- Kathryn Cushman
- National Wild Horse Association
- National Mustang Assoc. Inc.
- Wild Horse Organized Assistance
- Wild Horse Preservation League
- Wild Horse Observers Assoc.
- Wild Horses Forever
- Wild Horse Sanctuary
- Natural Resources Defense Council
- Elko County Commissioners
- Elko County Natural Resource Advisory Commission
- Nevada Dept. of Wildlife
- Nevada State Clearing House
- Nevada Farm Bureau Federation
- Nevada State Dept. of Agriculture
- Nevada Cattleman's Association
- US Fish and Wildlife Service
- Air Force Environmental Office
- Senator Dean Rhoads
- Honorable Harry Reid
- Congressman Dean Heller
- John Carpenter

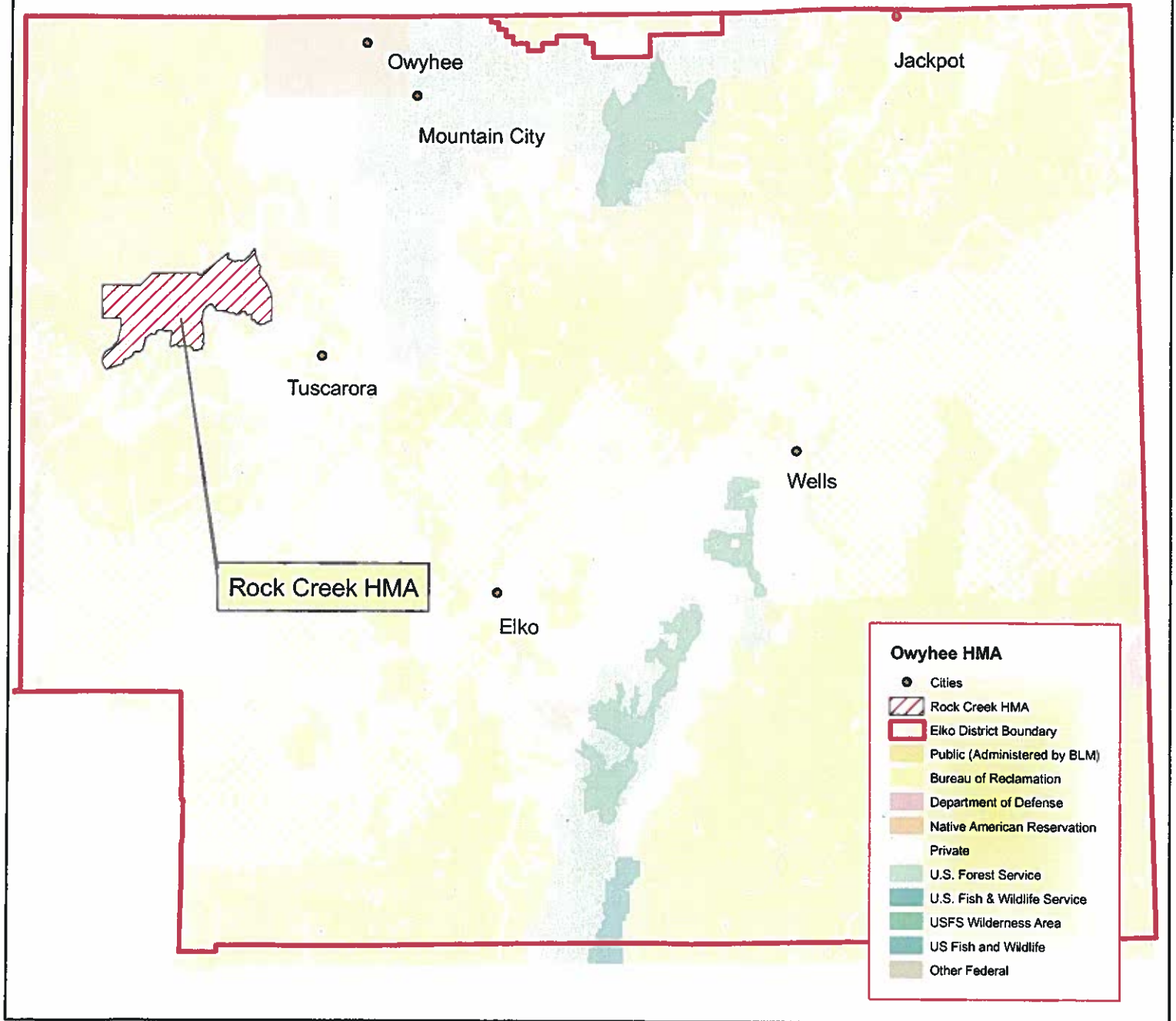
- Shoshone-Paiute Tribes of Duck Valley
- TeMoak Tribe of Western Shoshone
- Ellison Ranching Company
- IL Ranch
- Jack & Irene Walther
- SRK
- Patricia and Lana Paul
- Karen A Sussman
- Karen Klitz
- Nevada First Corporation
- Western Watersheds Project
- Public Lands Foundation
- Leta Collord
- Holland and Hart, LLP
- Joe Cumming
- Nevada Ranch Service
- Cowboy John Tours
- Sharon Cook
- Friends of Nevada Wildlife
- Friends of Nevada Wilderness (Reno)
- Sierra Club (Washington D.C.)
- Sierra Club (Toiyabe Chapter Atten: Rose Strickland)
- Sierra Club (Toiyabe Chapter Atten: Marjorie Sill)
- Barbara Warner
- Nora and Charles Watson
- URS Corp
- Nevada Land and Resource Co.
- ENLC
- Resource Concepts Inc – Rex Cleary
- Resource Concepts Inc – John McLain
- Steve Fultone
- Elnoma Reeves
- Hawkwatch International, Inc.
- Nevada Outdoor Recreation Association
- Wilderness Society
- Wilderness Impact Research Foundation
- Red Rock Audubon Society
- Roger Scholl
- Cindy McDonald
- Nevada High Country Tours
- Donald Molde, MD
- Nevada State Bank
- Tina Nappe
- Craig Downer
- RC McClymonds
- Mandy McNitt
- Citizens Against Recreational Eviction – USA
- Adrea Lococo
- Sustainable Grazing Coalition

- Darynne Jessler
- Nevada Cattlemen's Association
- USFS-Mountain City Ranger District
- Natural Resource Conservation Service
- Duane Erickson
- Orson Tingey -Barrick Mgmt Corporation
- Gary Sundseth - Barrick Mgmt Corporation
- Brenda Younkin



**NATIONAL  
SYSTEM OF  
PUBLIC LANDS**

# Rock Creek HMA Location Map



1:1,300,000

Data published in:  
North American Datum 1983 (NAD83)  
UTM coordinates, Zone 11, meters