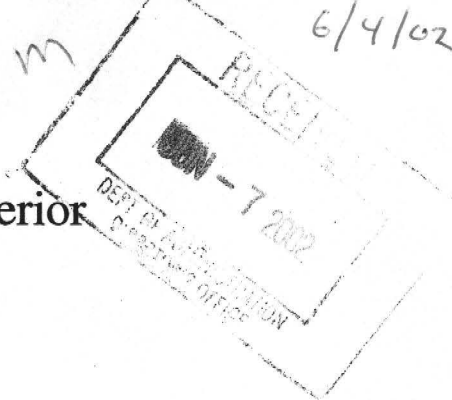




# United States Department of the Interior

## BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Elko Field Office  
3900 East Idaho Street  
Elko, Nevada 89801-0611  
<http://www.nv.blm.gov>



In Reply Refer To:  
4130/4400.4 (NV-012)

JUN - 4 2002

*received June 17<sup>th</sup>*

Dear Interested Citizen:

This letter is to update you on the events occurring within the Little Humboldt, Jakes Creek and Tall Corral Grazing Allotments administered by the Elko Field Office. As you are aware, the Elko Field Office completed an evaluation of monitoring data for these allotments and this evaluation was mailed to interested parties on March 5, 2002. Because of critical resource issues, it was necessary to ask for a very short review time. We realize that this was a great inconvenience to many of you and for that we apologize. However, it is because of the comments we received that we are adjusting our timeline and re-evaluating the next steps in the multiple use decision process.

It has come to our attention that in order to restrict wild horses to the Castle Ridge Pasture within the Little Humboldt Herd Area (as proposed in the allotment evaluation), a land use plan amendment may be necessary. The purpose of the amendment would be to formally establish a herd management area within the Little Humboldt Herd Area. Herd Management Areas (HMAs) are areas that are specifically designated for the maintenance and management of wild horses and the Elko Record of Decision (ROD) and Approved Resource Management Plan (RMP) did not establish such. Also to be covered in the proposed land use planning effort would be establishing HMAs in the Owyhee and Rock Creek areas. It is anticipated that this effort would begin after the new fiscal year in October of 2002 and could take a year or more to complete.

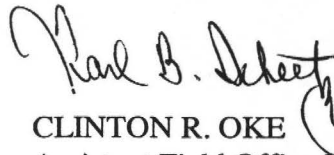
Another event which affected our multiple use decision timeline was the Interior Board of Land Appeals (IBLA) ruling in F. Duane Blake et al., v. Bureau of Land Management (IB96-155R). This ruling found that Biological Assessments (BAs) prepared by the BLM for submission to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service regarding actions that may impact species protected under the Endangered Species Act, are appealable under the Taylor Grazing Act when the proposed action affects livestock grazing use. Thus the Elko Field Office felt that a Full Force and Effect Decision needed to be issued concurrently with the submission of the BA and on May 10, 2002, the Elko Field Office issued a Full Force and Effect Decision regarding livestock grazing in the Basin. This decision closed the Basin to livestock grazing until the streams within the Basin (South Fork of the Little Humboldt River, Secret, Sheep, Oregon Canyon, and Pole Creeks) reach proper functioning condition (PFC) as defined in BLM Technical Reference 1737-9 (BLM 1993) and meets the short-term desired future condition (DFC) objectives.

In response to the May 10, 2002 Full Force and Effect Decision, Oro Vaca, Inc., appealed the decision and requested a Stay and an Interim Stay. The BLM is currently in the process of responding to these legal requests.

Because of the multiple pastures within the Little Humboldt, Tall Corral and Jakes Creek Allotments that are currently under closure to livestock grazing (Jakes Creek, Kelly Creek Seeding North, Kelly Creek Seeding South, Divide, and the Basin North and South Pastures), the BLM is working closely with the permittee to determine where livestock can graze within these allotments and still meet multiple use objectives. Utilization monitoring and other types of range indicator studies are being conducted on a weekly basis.

If you have any further questions, please contact Kathy McKinstry, Natural Resource Specialist at (775) 753-0290.

Sincerely,



CLINTON R. OKE  
Assistant Field Office Manager  
Renewable Resources

for

cc: Barrick Goldstrike, Inc.  
BLM - Winnemucca Field Office  
Committee for Idaho's High Desert  
Elko County Commissioners  
Friends of Nevada Wildlife  
Farm Credit Service  
Fund for Animals - New York City, NY.  
Fund for Animals - Jackson, WY.  
Friends of Nevada Wilderness  
Hawkwatch International, Inc.  
Humboldt County Commissioners  
Natural Resources Defense Council  
National Audubon Society  
Nevada Division of Wildlife - Elko  
Nevada Division of Wildlife - Elko, Pete Bradley  
Nevada Cattlemen's Association  
Nevada State Clearing House  
Nevada First Corporation  
Nevada Outdoor Recreation Assn.  
Phyllis Jo Dean