Nellis

12-6-84

United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Caliente Resource Area
P. O. Box 237
Caliente, NV 89008

IN REPLY
REFER TO:

NWHR
4700
(NV-057.7)

(702) 726-3141

DEC 06 1984

Wild Horse Organized Assistance
Atten: Dawn Y. Lappin, Director
P.O. Box 555
Reno, NV 89505

Dear Ms. Lappin:

Enclosed is the draft copy of the Nevada Wild Horse Range Herd Management Area Plan, and the Nevada Wild Horse Range and Nellis Range Complex Gathering Plan and associated Environmental Assessment.

If you as a member of the C & C Committee have additional comments and recommendations, please submit them to the Caliente Resource Area office at the address indicated above prior to January 9, 1985.

The next C & C Committee meeting is tentatively scheduled for January 12, 1985, at 9:00 A.M. The purpose of this meeting will be to incorporate the public's comments into the plan and prepare plans for signature.

Sincerely,

R. H. Wolfe

R. H. Wolfe
Area Manager

Enclosures

D904C

NEVADA WILD HORSE RANGE

HERD MANAGEMENT AREA PLAN

CALIENTE RESOURCE AREA

LAS VEGAS DISTRICT

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. INTRODUCTION

Preparation of a wild horse herd management area plan designed to specifically manage the wild horses populating the Nevada Wild Horse Range consistent with the U.S. Air Force use of the area in balance with the available forage was recommended through a Cooperative Agreement between the Bureau of Land Management, Nevada State Office, and United States Air Force, Nellis Air Force Base (November 12, 1973).

The Nevada Wild Horse Range (NWHR) Herd Management Area Plan (HMAP) is designed to effectively manage the wild horse population in accordance with the Bureau of Land Management NSO Manual Supplement 4730 (November 24, 1982), and 43 Code of Federal Regulations 4700. Effective management of the wild horse population is essential so that through management a net benefit to the valuable resources (i.e., vegetation, soils, wild horses, wildlife, etc.) which occupy the area, can be the ultimate goal.

The Nevada Wild Horse Range was established in 1962 by a Cooperative Agreement with the Commander, Nellis Air Force Base and the State Director, Nevada Bureau of Land Management. The NWHR was the first wild horse area established in the U.S. and was brought about over concern by both agencies for the proper management of wildlife and wild horses within the withdrawn area (Nellis Range Complex). Even though the primary purpose of the Nellis Range Complex (NRC), a complex withdrawn from public use, is weapons development and flight training, the existence of wild horses on the NWHR is a secondary use of the lands.

In 1971 Congress passed the Wild Horse and Burro Act and promulgated 43 Code of Federal Regulations 4700 to implement the Wild Horse and Burro Act. In 1977 a five-party agreement was developed for protecting, developing, and managing the natural resources of fish and wildlife, vegetation, watershed, and wild horses with the U.S. Air Force (USAF), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), Department of Energy (DOE), Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and the Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW).

Wild horse population estimates in 1962 were 200 head. These horses were mainly in the area designated as the Nevada Wild Horse Range. Since 1962 the wild horses have expanded their range and roam over most of the north side of the NRC. The present population, including areas on the NRC outside of the NWHR, is 4,890 wild horses (actual count, by aerial census, March 1, 1984) Table 2, page 7. The total area of the present home range is estimated at 1,780,000 acres.

Historically NRC was grazed by livestock, wild horses, and wildlife. Even though the primary purpose of the area was withdrawn primarily for military purposes in 1940, livestock grazing continued until 1979. Attempts were made during the fifties and sixties to discontinue livestock grazing to no avail. In 1979 a fence along the northern boundary was completed, thus eliminating livestock grazing from the area and movement in and out of the NRC by wild horses.

Nationally the NWHR is not well known and does not generate much public interest, because of its remoteness and inaccessibility. The National Wild Horse Association, a Las Vegas based organization, has shown considerable active interest and has been involved in helping develop and maintain water improvements along with the USAF.

The U.S. Air Force and the Department of Energy have on-going programs of weapons testing and training, which is the primary use of the withdrawal area. These activities require controlled access to the area because of this primary use.

This plan was developed through a Consultation and Coordination (C&C) process with various interest groups, and State and Federal Government agencies who have an interest in the well-being of wild horses and wildlife on the NRC. The C&C Committee, after visiting parts of the NRC and becoming completely familiar with the existing data, have recommended that 2,000 wild horses be managed for initially on the Nevada Wild Horse Range only, with future analysis of monitoring studies to be used to determine the appropriate management number.

II. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

A. Location and Size

The Nevada Wild Horse Range is located in the northeast corner of the Nellis Range Complex (NRC) approximately 40 miles southeast of Tonopah, Nevada (see area map, Appendix 1). The Nevada Wild Horse Range is comprised of 394,000 acres. At present wild horses roam over a much larger area. The area the wild horses are presently using is shown in Appendix 1. Approximate acreage is as follows:

Wild Horse Use Areas	Acres
NRC outside of NWHR	1,390,000
NWHR	394,000
NRC not known to be used by wild horses	151,000
Total NRC	1,935,000

B. Resource Data

1. Vegetative Resource

No vegetative inventory has been conducted nor is one planned. Utilization studies initiated in 1980 on the NWHR show that heavy to severe use is being made within 1/2 mile of all water facilities. Outward from waters to about 4-1/2 miles the use is moderate to heavy.

Cactus Flat and Kawich Valley should have similar vegetative communities. However, this is not the case. The intense grazing on Cactus Flat has altered the vegetative community, and rabbitbrush is increasing to a high percentage in the plant community.

Generally the vegetation in the NRC is composed of galleta grass, Indian ricegrass, numerous forbs, big sage, low sage, bud sage, rabbitbrush, buckwheat, desert globemallow, pinyon pine, and juniper.

2. Range Condition and Trend

Trend studies (photo plot method) were initiated in the spring of 1981 on the NWHR. Vegetative trends can only be determined after many years of data collection. Based on the physical damage to the forage plants from trampling and grazing, and the abundance of undesirable plants, the apparent trend is down.

The apparent condition varies from good to poor depending on the distance from water. These areas within 1/2 mile of water are in very poor condition whereas those farther removed are in fair to good condition, depending on distance from water sources. The visual appearance and field observation of comparison areas were used to derive the apparent condition.

3. Soils

No intensive soil survey has been conducted.

4. Water (Appendix 1)

Water sources for the wild horses and wildlife on the NWHR consist mainly of developed springs and pipelines and natural catchment basins. Past livestock operations developed some of the springs and pipelines, but since these operations have been restricted from the NRC, these developments have deteriorated to the point that they provide water only at the source.

The BLM with assistance from the National Wild Horse Association, USAF, and DOE are maintaining five springs, Rose Spring, Silverbow Spring, Tunnel Spring, Upper and Lower Corral Springs. Rose and Silverbow spring developments consist of pipelines for better water distribution.

Waters in the Cedar Pass area are maintained by the Nevada Wild Horse Association. Summer and Cedar Springs, along with George's Water, are used and maintained by Mr. Joseph P. Fallini, Jr.

Wild horse use on the NWHR is restricted to the above mentioned water sources especially during the summer months.

5. Animals

a. Wildlife

Mule deer are found on all mountain ranges within the area. Antelope use the foothills and the valleys. Main concentrations of antelopes are in the northern portion of

Cactus Flat and all of Kawich Valley with occasional sightings around Stonewall Mountain. The desert bighorn sheep are on and around Stonewall Mountain. Mountain lions are found throughout the entire area.

Other wildlife species found in the area include a variety of raptors, such as Golden eagles and hawks, numerous small birds and small mammals, and many reptiles. Jackrabbits and cottontails are common, but population levels fluctuate periodically in high/low cycles.

There are no known threatened/endangered plant species in the identified wild horse use area. There are, however, three candidate species within the area, that are being considered for federal listing under the endangered species act. Asclepias eastwoodiana; category 2, Sclerocactus polyancistrus; category 2, and Astragalus beatleyae; category 2 (Federal Register Vol. 45, No. 242 and Vol. 48, No. 229). Astragalus beatleyae is also listed critical endangered by Nevada State Status NRS 527.270.

In addition, the bald eagle may use the area as a pass-through species. Also the status of the peregrine falcon in the NRC is unknown.

For wildlife population estimates see Table 1 below. Little emphasis has been placed on data collection, particularly due to the controlled access to the NRC because of its primary use.

TABLE 1
Wildlife Population Estimates*

Species	Location	Number
Desert Bighorn Sheep	Stonewall Mountain	50-75
Pronghorn	Overall	200
Mule Deer	Stonewall Mountain	50
	Kawich Range	50
	Belted Range	35
Chukar Partridge	Stonewall Mountain	400-500
	Belted Range	150
	Kawich Range	600
Mountain Lion	Stonewall Mountain	3
	Belted Range	2
	Kawich Range	5

*Estimates are not based on definitive inventory information.

b. Livestock

Livestock are no longer licensed to graze this area and only an occasional livestock trespass occurs.

c. Wild Horses

1) Present Situtation

a) Population Size

Estimated wild horse population in the 1960's was 200-400 head according to U.S. Air Force personnel.

Little emphasis has been placed on data collection, particularly due to the controlled access to the NRC because of its primary use.

The BLM and USAF have been conducting aerial horse inventories since 1976. Inventory results are disclosed in Table 2 below.

TABLE 2
Wild Horse & Burro Inventory

DATE	LOCATION	INVENTORY		HORSE	BURRO
1963	Nevada Wild Horse Range			200	0
			Total	200	
November 1973	NWHR	Ground		800	0
			Total	800	
March 1976	Kawich Valley	Aerial		114	0
	Gold Flat & Cactus Flat			950	0
			Total	1,064	
May 1977	Overall	Aerial		1,300	0
			Total	1,300	
April 1980	Stonewall	Aerial		341	33
	Goldfield	Aerial		225	36
	Cactus Flat & Kawich Valley & Belted Range	Aerial		2,556	0
			Total	3,122	69
June 1982	Stonewall Mountain	Aerial		574	113
	Goldfield/Mud Lake	Aerial		314	82
	Cactus Flat and Cactus Range	Aerial		2,756	0
	Kawich Valley & Range	Aerial		401	0
			Total	4,405	195

TABLE 2--Continued
Wild Horse & Burro Inventory

DATE	LOCATION	INVENTORY		HORSE	BURRO
August 1983	Stonewall Mountain	Aerial		604	49
	Goldfield/Mud Lake	Aerial		144	32
	Cactus Flat and Goldflat	Aerial		3,138	0
	(Areas A/C Incomplete)			283	0
	Kawich Range/Valley	Aerial		691	0
			Total	4,860	81
March 1984	Stonewall (Top of Mountain not inventoried)	Aerial		543	58
	Goldfield/Mud Lake	Aerial		284	60
	Cactus/Gold Flat (Area A not Inventoried)	Aerial		3,363	0
	Kawich	Aerial		700	0
			Total	4,890	118

Aerial Censuses invariably undercount total number of wild horses per given area. There has been no correction factor developed for this area. Thus, total count data secured on the Nellis Range Complex is presumably below the actual population size. In addition, due to time allotted and security restrictions total use areas are not always flown resulting in less consistent data.

b) Color

Horse colors vary from white to black and all shades in between. However, the predominant colors are bay and sorrel with a few pintos in the Stonewall Mountain area, palominos in Mud Lake, and grays in the Kawich Valley area.

c) Gatherings

Aside from rancher roundup, prior to the Wild Horse and Burro Act, no efforts have been made to control the wild horse population on the NRC. However, prior to construction of the north boundary fence, the Battle Moutain BLM District rounded up horses just north of the NRC. Only one minor gathering operation was conducted in the Spring of 1984 on the NRC, five head of wild horses were gathered from the Stonewall Mountain Area and relocated in the Caliente Resource Area as part of a study.

d) Condition

Generally animals appear to be in fair to good condition. The population as a whole appear to be healthy with isolated maladies afflicting some of

the older animals. Lack of sufficient water during the summer does stress the current population especially during very dry periods.

e) Cover

The main source of cover is provided by the pinyon-juniper on the mountain slopes. Some cover is provided by the canyons and rocky outcrops along the foothills.

f) Seasonable Use and Home Range

A comprehensive study has never been performed to determine the seasonal use patterns or home ranges of wild horse bands inhabiting the management area. Identification of major use areas, however, was accomplished (Appendix 1). Accurate knowledge pertaining to wild horse movement patterns is important in order to understand animal/vegetation interrelationships. The limited information obtained thus far shows the horses tend to concentrate in the areas close to the water source during the summer months. Most of these areas are along the upper portions of the piedmont slope. During the colder months, the horses use a much larger area extending 10-15 miles from known water sources.

Four wild horse use areas have been identified in the area, Kawich, Stonewall, Goldfield Hills, and Cactus Flat/ Goldflat. Horses in the Stonewall home range seldom mix with the other three herds. The Cactus Flat/Goldflat herds and Goldfield herds do intermix (especially during the winter months near the Mud Lake Area) as do the Cactus Flat/Goldflat and Kawich herd.

g) Population Data

There is no data for sex ratio age structure, or mortality. Productivity based on limited data from one year's observation is approximately 8 or 9 percent.

d. Burros

Burros do exist west of the Stonewall Mountain and the Goldfield Range. Present population (actual count) 1984 are:

Stonewall Mountain - 58 burros
Goldfield Range - 60 burros

Most of the burros are west of the Stonewall Mountains off the Range Complex, but they do occasionally migrate onto the range. The burros that migrate onto the NRC during construction of the west boundary fence will be removed from the NRC. There are no burros on the NWHR.

The animals appear to be in good condition.

6. Population Demography

Effective management of wild populations is contingent on the acquisition and accurate interpretation of reliable sex and age data. Management of wild horse populations is no exception. Sex and age information secured through capture operations is a reliable technique utilized by the Bureau of Land Management to analyze population processes for management purposes. Thus far there has been no significant removal from the NRC. However, this technique will be used as well as additional information gathered through other type studies. Analysis needs for the Nevada Wild Horse Range Herd Management Area population are: sex ratio, age structure, productivity, and mortality or conversely survival.

C. Existing Projects (Appendix 1)

1. Water

Water projects consist of three spring developments with troughs at the source (Tunnel Spring, Upper, and Lower Corral Spring) and two spring developments with a pipeline distribution system (Rose Spring and Silverbow Spring). These projects are maintained by the BLM with assistance from USAF, DOE, and National Wild Horse Association.

Water projects left over from past livestock operations have deteriorated and are in need of repair. The pipeline projects are no longer functional and provide water only at the spring source. There are also several springs and silted in reservoirs that need maintenance or development to function better for wild horses and wildlife.

2. Fence

The northern boundary fence of the Nevada Range Complex was constructed between 1977-1979 to restrict cattle and wild horse movement into the range. The west boundary fence will be constructed in FY 1985, thus, eliminating wild horse and burro movement on the west side. There are no interior fences except for exclosures.

D. Coordination

1. Relationship to Other Resource Use

a. Wild Horse - Wildlife

Present estimate of big game are 50 to 75 Desert Bighorn Sheep, 200 antelope, and 135 mule deer.

In the Stonewall use area where a bighorn sheep population exists, the wild horses are making heavy demands on the water and forage resources. Even the highest mountain peaks show sign of horse use.

The Cactus Flat/Gold Flat area has approximately 120 head of antelope, with additional antelope use in Kawich Valley. During the winter months, the antelope frequent the areas between the Silver Bow and Rosebud Springs.

The resident herd of mule deer is very small in number at the present. The NDOW feels that this is the result of too many horses in and around the deer habitat. One hundred and thirty-five deer are estimated in the area on a seasonal basis mainly from a migratory herd.

Continued heavy use of forage and uncontrolled horse population increase and expansion of horse use will likely result in reduced productivity of bighorn sheep, antelope, mule deer, and other wildlife species in the area. Should the heavy forage utilization by horses continue, a demise of native big game species could occur in the area.

b. Wild Horse - U.S. Air Force and Department of Energy

The U.S. Air Force has used the NWHR and surrounding area as a military training area for the past forty years which is a primary use of the withdrawn area.

Sandia National Laboratories, through a contract with DOE, has used the northern portion of the Range Complex for military weapons test and development for more than ten years. These agency's activities are expected to increase with time.

2. Cooperation in Mangement

Because various state and federal agencies are involved in uses of the NRC and particularly the NWHR, and based on Congress' adoption of the Wild Horse and Burro Act, there have been a series of cooperative agreements which have affected the management of the resources. Therefore, included is a summary of cooperative agreements (Appendix 2) that affect wild horse management on the bombing range.

3. Management Number

Through successive C&C meetings and field trips the C&C Committee members recommended an initial management number of 2,000 head of wild horses to be managed on the NWHR only. A large gathering operation will be required to obtain the initial management number. Future management numbers will be determined through subsequent analysis of monitoring data. Actual use numbers to be used in monitoring analysis will be obtained by aerial census.

III. OBJECTIVES

The overall objectives are to maintain and manage populations of wild, free-roaming horses on the NWHR as recognized components secondary only to the primary uses the area was withdrawn for in conformity with the goals esablished in the Wild Horse and Burro Act.

A. Habitat

1. Specific Objectives

a. Determine key areas and key forage plant species for wild horses. Within five years, these key areas and key species will be evaluated through field observations to determine which key areas and key forage plant species to continue to monitor.

b. Do not allow utilization of key forage plant species by horses to exceed the allowable use factor by more than ten percent on the NWHR as established by the Nevada Range Monitoring Task Group (1984).

c. Maintain a static to upward trend in vegetation characteristics by maintaining wild horse numbers at a compatible level with the vegetation resource. Key management area studies to be evaluated every three years to determine the relationship of wild horse numbers to vegetative trend.

2. General Objectives

Eliminate areas of impact to vegetation around limited water sources by maintaining sources in functional conditions and adjust the wild horse population numbers to what the source is capable of supporting.

B. Wild Horses

1. Specific Objectives

a. Determine carrying capacity (long-term management numbers) of wild horses for the Nevada Wild Horse Herd Management Area within 12 years. Initiate monitoring with 2,000 head.

b. Obtain information on population characteristics (i.e., color, condition, average band size), and population dynamics (i.e., age class, sex ratio, age structure) every three years (depending on access to the NRC based on its primary use) to be evaluated as the information is obtained. In addition, collect information on seasonal movement and distribution patterns. Information is necessary to better understand the forces which shape the population and will assist in the establishment of management direction and new objectives.

2. General Objectives

a. Maintenance of a population of sound, healthy animals by selective removal during capture operations of seriously lame, ill, or deformed individuals.

b. Enhance unusual or unique color markings (i.e., pinto, white, appaloosa, palomino, buckskin, grulla, roan, gray, etc.) by selective retention or relocation of those colored animals during capture operations.

c. Manage for wild horse use on the NWHR only. This can be accomplished through wild horse adjustment and modification of waters.

IV. MANAGEMENT METHODS

A. Habitat

1. Specific Management Methods

a. Determine key areas and key forage species for wild horses. Initially key areas and key species will be selected using the Nevada Range Monitoring Task Force Procedures. Within five years, these key areas and key species will be evaluated through field observations and study analysis to determine which key areas and key forage plant species to continue to monitor. Criteria for selection of key areas will be that they provide a significant amount of the available forage in the pasture and be selected only after a careful evaluation of the current pattern of grazing used by the wild horses has been determined. Key areas will be selected in a homogenious vegetation type and contain the key species or have the potential to produce the key species to be monitored. Areas remove from water or having limited accessibility should not be considered as key management areas but may be suitable for comparison areas.

Key forage plant species should be palatable to the grazing animals during the season of use. Key species should provide more than 15 percent of the available forage in the grazing area or have the potential for greater production if it is critical to the needs of the grazing animal. The key

species must be a perennial forage plant; and be consistent with management objectives for the plant community.

Depending on the objectives for each key area the following types of studies may be conducted at each key area: utilization, frequency, ground cover, climate, actual use, and apparent trench studies.

Within six years, all key areas and key species will be evaluated to determine their effectiveness in reflecting the current grazing management over similar areas in the HMA.

b. Do not allow utilization of key forage plant species to exceed allowable use factors by more than ten percent on the NWHR as presented in the Nevada Range Monitoring Handbook (First Edition, 1984) and BLM Manual 4412.

Allowable use factors as established by the Nevada Range Studies Task Group are:

Plant Category	Spring	Summer	Fall	Winter	Yearlong
Perennial Grasses and Grasslike	50	50	60	60	55
Shrubs, Half Shrubs and Trees	30	50	50	50	45

Initially the wild horse population will be adjusted to an interim level of 2,000 animals per C&C Committee members recommendations and five-party cooperative members recommendations. This initial adjustment in the wild horse population will have a direct impact on the utilization levels within the NRC and HMA.

Additional key areas will be selected and appropriate studies installed to determine if management objectives are being met.

Monitoring studies will be used to indicate a need for further adjustments in grazing pressure either on small use areas or HMA wide.

c. Maintain a static to upward trend in vegetation characteristics by maintaining wild horse numbers at a compatible level with the vegetation resource. Use to be monitored using methodology as established by the Nevada Range Monitoring Task Group (Nevada Rangeland Monitoring Handbook, First Edition, 1984).

Range sites have not been determined for the NWHR which limits the degree of monitoring to be accomplished. However, studies consisting of utilization, frequency, ground cover, climate, actual use, and apparent trend will

be used in the analysis to determine trend. By adjusting the animal population to a compatible level with the vegetative resource then a static to upward trend should be maintained.

The initial adjustment of the wild horse population will greatly benefit the vegetation community and should result in a favorable vegetative trend.

Utilization and climate data will be collected yearly. All other data should be collectd at three-year intervals. Apparent trend will be determined initially and at three-year intervals.

2. General Management Methods

Eliminate areas of impact to vegetation around limited water sources by maintaining sources in functional condition and adjust the wild horse population numbers to what that source is capable of supporting.

Initially water sources need to be brought back into functional condition with adequate water storage, with annual maintenance thereafter.

Water sources needing minor repairs to major reconstruction and development are ranked by priority. Starting with highest priority they are as follows: Cedar Wells--develop with storage and troughs; Upper and Lower Corral Springs--reconstruction, add new troughs and storage; Silverbow pipeline--repair, add new troughs storage and consider extending pipeline. Rose Spring pipeline--add storage and consider pipeline extension; Tunnel Spring--add storage; Cedar Spring--develop with storage. Development of additional springs will be considered only through consultation with the five-party cooperators.

Completion of repairs and/or reconstruction is dependent upon feasibility and funding. Initially certain projects will be proposed in FY 1985 for funding and access to the NRC based on its primary use. Additional projects will be proposed every year until all projects are working.

The C&C Committee has recommended the initial management of 2,000 head of wild horses on the NWHR. Once initial management numbers are obtained water sources will be monitored yearly to determine if adequate water is available for horses using the area. If not, the horses will be removed from that area and either relocated or put up for adoption.

B. Wild Horses

1. Specific Management Methods

a. Determine carrying capacity (long-term management numbers) of wild horses for NWHR HMA within twelve years using monitoring studies, as described by the Nevada Range Monitoring Task Force. Initiate monitoring with 2,000 head (C&C recommendation).

Long-term management numbers will be determined from analysis of utilization, frequency, ground cover, climate data, actual use, and apparent trend studies.

Utilization studies will be read every year and short-term adjustment to the wild horse population may be necessary based on utilization results. Other monitoring studies except for climate data will be collected every three years. If apparent trend shows need for substantial adjustment prior to twelve years, then the wild horse population will be adjusted accordingly.

In addition to vegetative monitoring resulting in wild horse population adjustments, the wild horse population may be adjusted based on the availability of water in use areas. Water sources will be monitored yearly to determine if there is sufficient water available for wild horses and wildlife. Horses should have ample quantities of water at all times The Stockman's Handbook (1978), even though the reference is for domestic horses, suggest 10-12 gallons daily; this amount depends on weather, work done, food ration, and size of horse.

b. Collect information on population characteristics (i.e., color, condition, average band size), and population dynamics (i.e., age class, sex ratio, age structure) every three years (or less depending on funding) to be evaluated as information is obtained. Age-class information will need to be acquired in July and January. In addition, seasonal movement and distribution studies will be conducted four times a year, at least every three years. Information to be collected during periodic capture, aerial census, and on ground field observations. Information is necessary to better understand the forces which shape the population and will assist in the establishment of management direction and new objectives.

2. General Management Methods

a. Maintenance of a population of sound, healthy animals can be obtained by selective removal during capture operations of seriously lame, ill, or deformed individuals.

b. Enhance unusual or unique color markings (i.e., Kawich Valley, white, gray, grulla; Cactus Flat/Gold Flat, roan, palomino, buckskin). Also preserve a portion of the pinto population from the Stonewall Mountain area by either relocating a portion of the population during the Stonewall capture operation to areas within the NWHR or to appropriate HMA where a certain color is being managed (i.e., Little Mountain HMA, Caliente Resource area) to enhance the management objectives for that area, yet not exceed the management numbers.

The initial wild horse adjustment will not be concerned with selective removal concerning color except for preserving a portion of the pinto population from Stonewall Mountain. After the initial adjustment to 2,000 head, enhancement of color will be considered to aid in maintaining the unique development of certain colors.

The pinto population to be preserved will be captured during the initial adjustment capture operation and relocated to appropriate HMA, where wild horse numbers are below management levels. The number of pintos to be relocated will be from 5-10 head and will be picked from among all pintos captured. The pinto band will be monitored for two years to assure success in relocating them. If they can't be relocated successfully, they will be placed into appropriate adoption centers for adoption.

c. Manage for wild horse use only on the NWHR. Management will be in balance with forage resources and consistent with management goals for other resources. To accomplish this, the C&C Committee recommended adjustment of wild horses on the NRC down to the initial management number of 2,000 head on the NWHR. Thereafter, certain waters outside the NWHR will be managed for wildlife use only. Modification projects will be identified as needed with prior coordination with and approval by the USAF which is responsible for the primary use of the NRC. Completion of projects will be contingent on feasibility and funding. Actual design of the project will be coordinated to meet the objectives of wild horse and wildlife.

C. Population Adjustment

Initial population reduction of wild horses on the Nellis Range Complex will come from the following areas:

Stonewall Mountain
Goldfield/Mud Lake
Cactus Flat/Goldflat
Kawich Valley

Actual numbers from each area varies because of the free-roaming behavior of wild horses and the influence of availability of water. The initial reduction, however, should be close to 3,500 head of wild horses from NRC which includes the NWHR. The initial management number as recommended by the C&C Committee on the NRC will be 2,000 head of horses located within the NWHR.

There may be subsequent minor population adjustments based on available water. However, future population adjustments will be conducted only when range monitoring studies demonstrate a need. Adjustments will be based on the utilization of key forage species (Range Studies Task Group, 1981). A basic utilization--population size formula will be employed for calculation of necessary adjustment as follows:

$$x = \frac{\text{(Desired Population Size)}}{\text{Desired Utilization}} = \frac{\text{Present Population Size}}{\text{Present Utilization}}$$

Utilization monitoring, as per BLM Manual 4412.22 B7C5, and the Nevada Range Monitoring Procedures Handbook, 1981, will be executed in the key management areas. Wild horse adjustment will be contingent on the 2,000 head population reflecting an annual finite rate of increase as determined by future population studies analysis.

All population reductions will be in accordance with guidelines established by the NWHR Gathering Plan, covering the NRC area, and 43 Code of Federal Regulation 4740.

V. STUDIES AND ASSESSMENT

Actual procedures for each type of study will be contained in the HMA files in the Caliente Resource Area office in order that some consistency can be attained in the program for each HMA. Studies and assessment will be conducted based on controlled access and the primary use of the NRC.

A. Habitat

1. Trend

Trend is defined as a change in vegetation and soil characteristics as a direct result of environmental factors, primarily climate, and grazing. Trend studies will be used in combination with other studies to evaluate the effectiveness of this management plan and will be read every three years. The frequency sampling procedure described by Tueller et. al., (1972) will be the methodology utilized. The data collected will be reserved in the allotment files located in the Caliente Bureau of Land Management office.

2. Utilization

Utilization studies help to evaluate management systems by determining patterns and quantity of use. The key forage plant method is the technique adopted for this management plan. Section 4423.33B7C of the Bureau of Land Management Manual and the Range Studies Task Group (1984) describes this particular method adequately. Utilization transects will be conducted throughout the key management area. Data will be reserved with trend information.

3. Actual Use

Wild horse actual use estimates will be obtained from aerial census conducted by the Caliente Resource Area Wild Horse and Burro Specialist at a minimum of once every three years. It will require 15 hours of helicopter time to complete each census, pending access to the NRC, based on its primary use. Data will be reserved with trend utilization information.

B. Wild Horses

1. Home Ranges and Seasonal Movement Patterns

A comprehensive study will be conducted to secure information on home ranges and seasonal movement patterns. This information is essential to accomplish utilization studies. Considering the present situation regarding the size and topography of the HMA and the number of wild horses, a study could be conducted with limited funding and access to the NRC based on its primary use as follows:

Phase 1 - October, January, April, July

Objective: Determine seasonal movement patterns and home range establishment.

Method: On the ground observations from vehicle conducted seasonally (fall, winter, spring, and summer), with sighting locations plotted on a map.

Phase 2 - Evaluation of information acquired through field work.

In addition, information regarding other population characteristics and population dynamics would be gathered at this time (i.e., color, condition, band size, age classes, sex ratio, etc.). This additional information would require use of a spotting scope positioned at strategic locations.

2. Productivity and Survival

Information on young/adult classification will be collected when funding is available, but should be gathered at a minimum of every three years. The survey should be conducted in July and

again the following January. Aerial survey will be the method used to collect data, plus additional information should be collected during the survey that would enhance data already contained in the resource files concerning other characteristics of the population (i.e., color, condition, band size, actual count, home ranges, and seasonal movement patterns, etc.)

3. Sex Ratio Determination

Classification of captured animals--sex determination will be conducted on all horses captured during gathering operations.

Field observation--a spotting scope positioned at strategic locations (water sources, trails, natural salt licks, etc.) will be employed to obtain sex ratio information where possible. Sex ratio should be determined every three years. When studies are conducted, unless all animals in a band can be classified, the data will not be used.

4. Age Structure Evaluation

Relative age structure of the NWHR HMA population will be periodically evaluated during gathering operations.

5. Relocation

The relocation of wild horses from one herd management area to another may be undertaken when necessary to meet specific management objectives. Relocation is a tool that has utility in maintaining vigor in herds and in enhancing selected characteristics which are managed in a population. Therefore, relocation of wild horses will not be overlooked here. The main emphasis is the pintos on Stonewall Mountain. The proposal is that during the Stonewall capture operation 5-10 pintos will be picked out of the gathered horses and relocated either on the NWHR or to appropriate HMA outside the NRC. Relocation to areas of the public lands under multiple use management outside the NRC will occur only as allowed for by established wild horse management numbers.

VI. MODIFICATION

This plan may be modified as new data and evaluation deem necessary.

VII. APPROVAL

Prepared by: _____ _____
RGE CON/WH&B Specialist, BLM
Caliente R.A. Date

Recommend to Members of Five-Party Agreement:

_____	Chairman	C&C Commmittee, Sierra Club
_____	Secretary	C&C Committee, Wild Horse Organized Assistance
_____	Vice Chairman	C&C Committee, Nevada Wild Horse Federation
_____	Vice Chairman	C&C Committee, Clark County Game Management Board
_____	Vice Chairman	C&C Committee, National Wildhorse Association
_____	Vice Chairman	C&C Committee, HSSN
_____	Vice Chairman	C&C Committee, Fraternity of Desert Bighorn

Recommended for Approval:

_____ _____
Area Manager, BLM
CRA Date

_____ _____
Commander
554 Operations Support Wing
Nellis AFB, NV Date

_____ _____
Regional Director, U.S. Dept. of Interior
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Date

_____ _____
Director
Nevada Dept. of Wildlife Date

Manager, Department of Energy
Nevada Operations Office

Date

Approved by:

District Manger
Las Vegas District

Date

Concurrence:

State Director
Nevada State Office

Date

APPENDIX 1

MAPS

Map #1 - Map of C&C Area

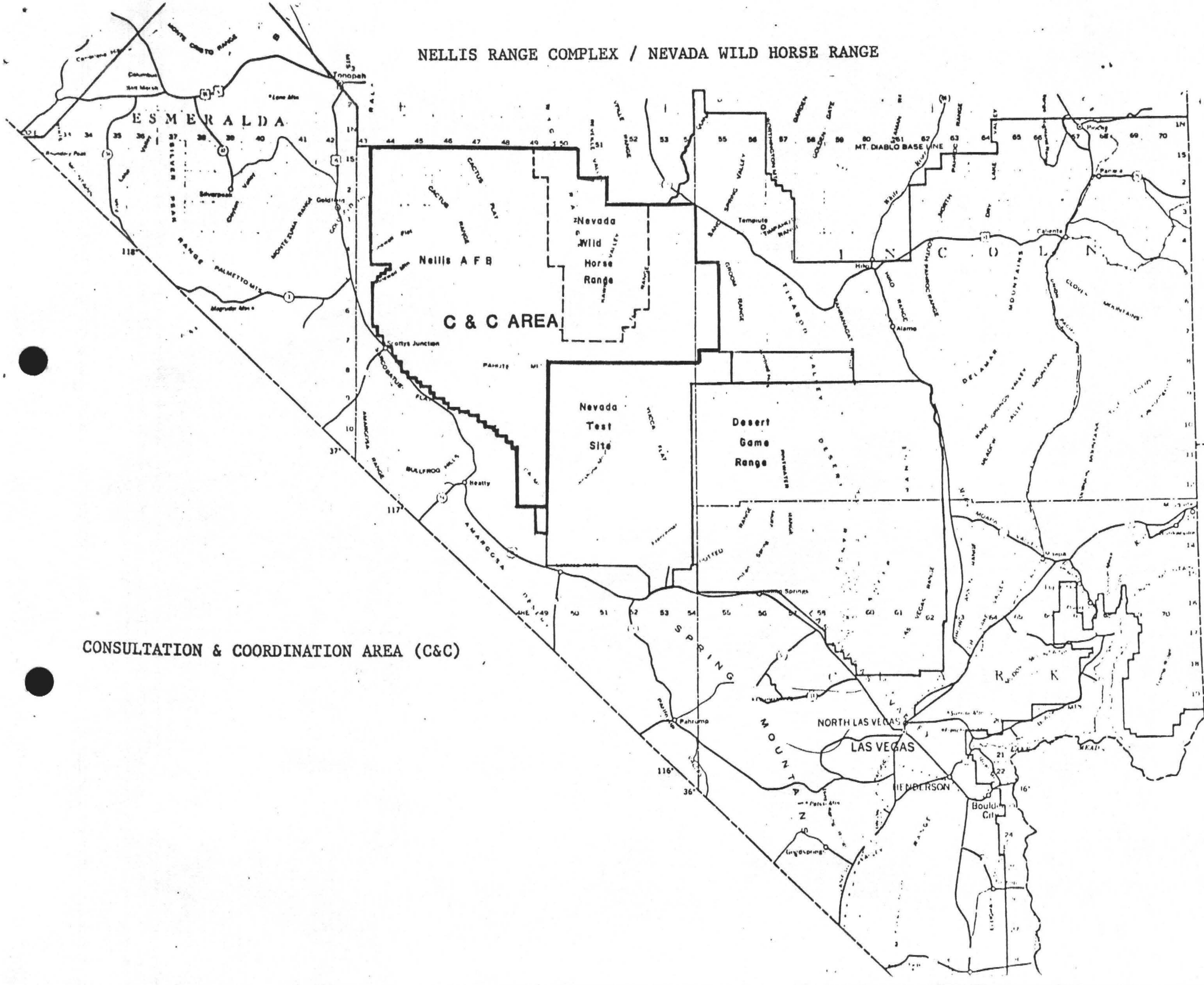
Map #2 - NRC & NWHR

Map #3 - Home Range and Herd Use Area

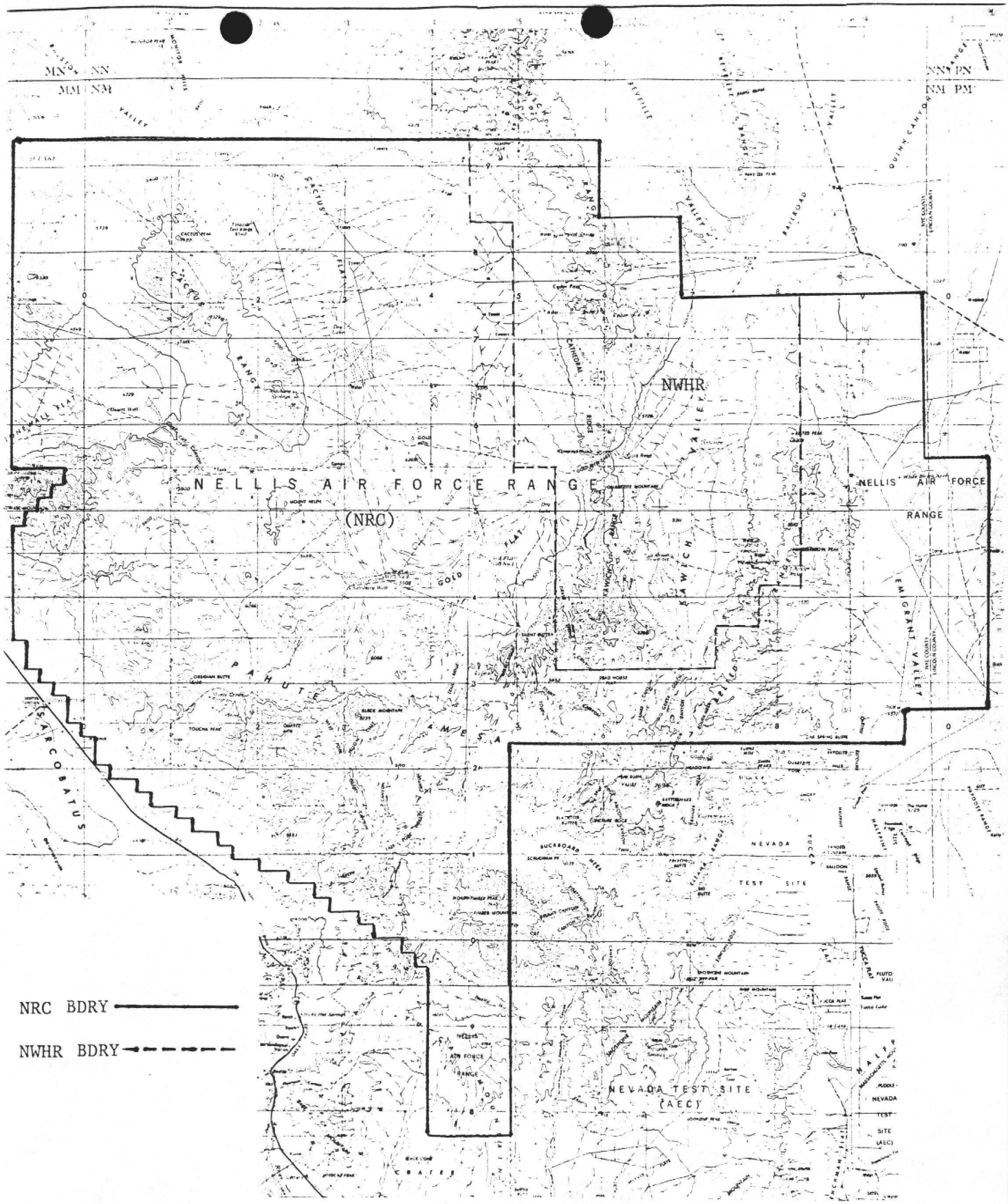
Map #4 - Existing Projects

Consultation & Coordination Area (C&C)

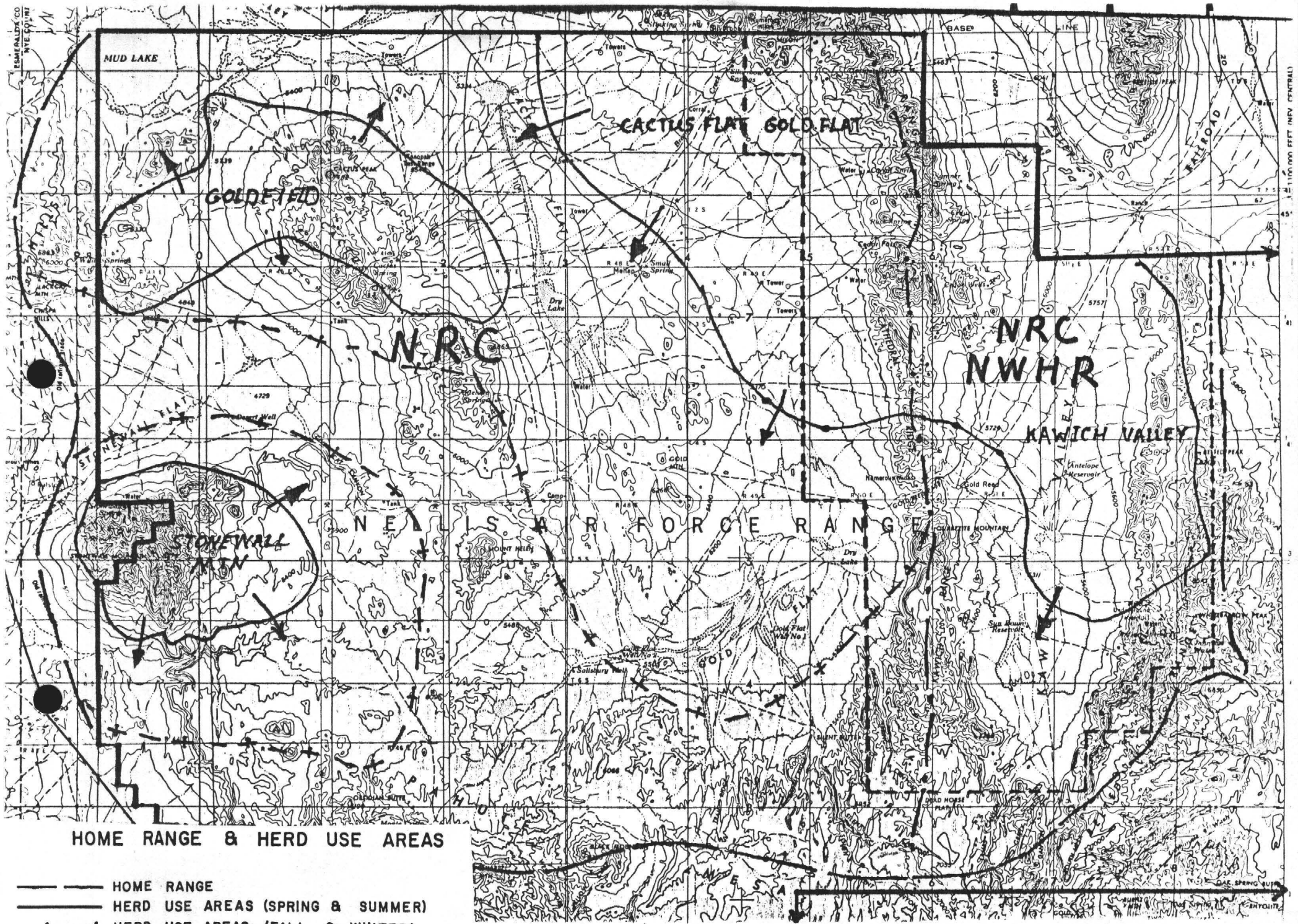
NELLIS RANGE COMPLEX / NEVADA WILD HORSE RANGE



CONSULTATION & COORDINATION AREA (C&C)


NELLIS AIR FORCE RANGE
(NRC)
NWHR
NELLIS AIR FORCE RANGE
NEVADA TEST SITE
(AEC)
NRC BDRY
NWHR BDRY

Home Range & Herd Use Areas



HOME RANGE & HERD USE AREAS

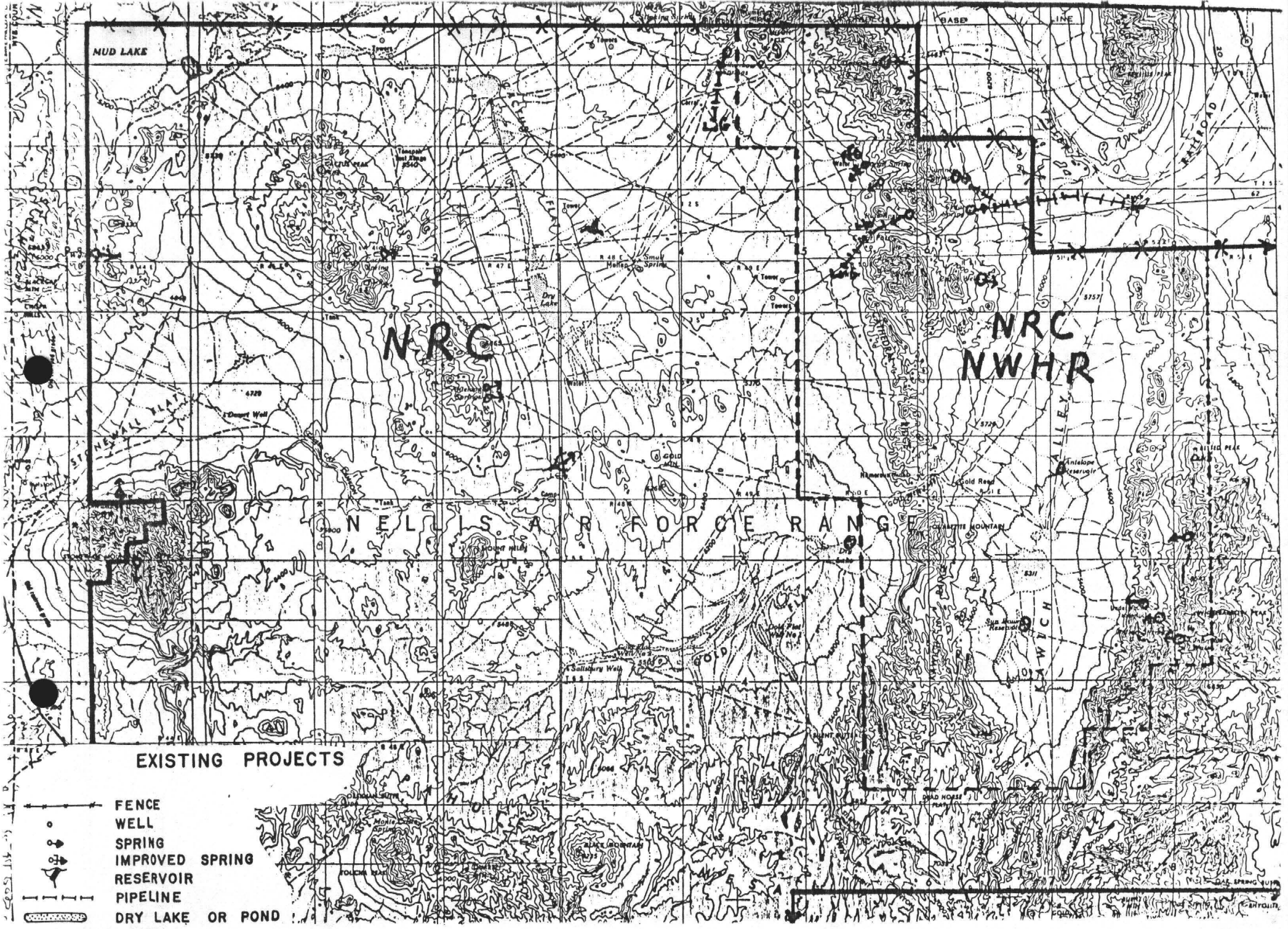
— — — HOME RANGE

——— HERD USE AREAS (SPRING & SUMMER)

— + — + HERD USE AREAS (FALL & WINTER)

—•—•— Ridgetop Separating use areas

Existing Projects


MUD LAKE
NRC
NRC
NWHR
NELLIS AIR FORCE RANGE
EXISTING PROJECTS
FENCE
WELL
SPRING
IMPROVED SPRING
RESERVOIR
PIPELINE
DRY LAKE OR POND
CORRAL
TANK
TROUGH

APPENDIX 2

SUMMARY OF WILD HORSE AND WILDLIFE COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
FOR THE NELLIS AIR FORCE RANGE

June 1962 - WILD HORSE MANAGEMENT AREA.

Agencies Involved - U.S. Air Force and Bureau of Land Management.

Purpose - "Because of the deep concern expressed by a large number of people in regard to preservation of wild horses and the need to manage and control their use, an area within the boundaries of the land withdrawn for the Nellis Air Force Base Nevada, has been identified as suitable wild horse area. The area is presently being used by wild or abandoned horses by their own selection. The horse use is not inconsistent with the needs of the Air Force. Identifying the area for horse use will provide an area which can be managed for the horses and their habitat. It is reliably estimated on the basis of counts made by the State Fish and Game Department that more than 200 horses now run in this area. This approximate number of wild horses will be maintained as long as their use of the range remains in balance with the forage resources available." The agreement stated further, "By cooperation with Nevada State and county officials the control of the desired number of horses to use the range will be achieved." The total area involved in the agreement was 435,000 acres.

December 1963 - COOPERATIVE PLAN FOR THE CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE RESOURCES ON NELLIS AIR FORCE BASE RANGES.

Agencies Involved - U.S. Air Force, Bureau of Sports Fisheries and Wildlife (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service), Nevada Fish and Game Commission (Nevada Department of Wildlife), and Bureau of Land Management.

Purpose - The agreement provided for the management, development, and protection of fish and wildlife resources on the Nellis Air Force Base Range. It included all big game species (deer, antelope, big horn sheep). It also included horses under the term wild life and estimated the population for the wild horse range to be 200 horses.

June 1965. WILD HORSE MANAGEMENT AREA.

Agencies Involved - U.S. Air Force and the Bureau of Land Management.

Purpose - This was a reissuance of the June 1962 agreement. The new agreement reduced the size of the wild horse management area to 394,500 acres, which was the only change.

January 15, 1969 - COOPERATIVE PLAN FOR THE CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE RESOURCES ON NELLIS AIR FORCE BASE RANGES.

Agencies Involved - U.S. Air Force, Bureau of Sports Fisheries and Wildlife, Nevada Fish and Game Commission, and the Bureau of Land Management.

Purpose - This was a reissuance of the 1963 cooperative plan. The only change was an update of the animal numbers for the wild horse area which were as follows - horses - 400, deer - 200, antelope - 100.

November 12, 1973 - COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT, NEVADA STATE OFFICE, AND UNITED STATES AIR FORCE, NELLIS AIR FORCE BASE.

Agencies Involved - U.S. Air Force and Bureau of Land Management.

Purpose - Cancelled 1962 and 1965 agreements. New agreement complies with provisions of the Wild Horse and Burro Act of December 15, 1971 and 43 CFR Part 4700, which authorized BLM to enter into cooperative agreement with other agencies when wild horses use lands under their jurisdiction for all or a part of the year. Agreement recognized that the horses on the Nevada Wild Horse range were under the jurisdiction of BLM. It called for a management plan to be developed to provide for the management of the horses and their habitat.

January 1977 - FIVE-PARTY COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT.

Agencies Involved - U.S. Air Force, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of Energy, Bureau of Land Management, and Nevada Department of Wildlife.

Purpose - Protecting, developing, and managing the natural resources of fish and wildlife, vegetation, watershed, and wild horses and burros on the Nellis Air Force Range, the Nevada Test Site, and the Tonopah Test Range. The agreement calls for resource inventories and the development of a resource management plan.

GLOSSARY

Actual Count. Censuses invariably undercount total numbers of animals per given area, those animals actually seen and counted are referred to as actual count. Hence, actual count implies that there has been no correction factor added to numbers of animals counted, which if added would reflect the total population estimate for that area.

Age Structure. The ratio of one age class to another used in determining or understanding the population dynamics and identifying future or past problems in the herd.

Allotment. An area of land where one or more operators graze their livestock. It generally consists of public lands but may include parcels of private or state-owned lands. The number of livestock and season-of-use are stipulated for each allotment. An allotment may consist of several pastures or be only one pasture.

Allotment Management Plan (AMP). A livestock grazing management plan dealing with a specific unit of rangeland, based on multiple-use resource management objectives. The AMP considers livestock grazing in relation to other uses of the range and in relation to renewable resources-watershed, vegetation, and wildlife. An AMP establishes season-of-use, number of livestock to be permitted on the range, and rangeland developments needed.

Act, The. The Wild Free-Roaming Horse and Burro Protection Act of December 15, 1971, 16 U.S.C. 1331-1431.

Animal Unit Month (AUM). Amount of feed or forage by an animal-unit for one month.

BLM. The Bureau of Land Management.

C&C Committee. Consultation & Coordination Committee made up of; Sierra Club, Nevada Wildlife Federation, Wild Horse Organized Assistance, Clark County Game Management Board, National Wild Horse Association, Humane Society of Southern Nevada, Fraternity of Desert Bighorn, all of whom made recommendation to the five-pary cooperative agreement committee concerning development of a management plan for the NRC.

Carrying Capacity. The maximum number of animals possible without inducing damage to vegetation or related resources. It may vary from year to year on the same area due to fluctuating forage production.

Community. A group of plants and animals living in a specific region under relatively similar conditions.

Demography. The study of vital statistics of a population.

DOE. Department of Energy.

Erosion. The wearing away of the land surface by wind, running water, and other geological agents.

Enclosure. A small area set aside and protected from grazing, either to preserve representative areas in excellent range condition or to allow observation of succession on depleted rangeland without grazing.

Fecundity. Rate at which an individual produces offspring, usually expressed only for females.

Finite Rate of Increase (λ). Factor by which the population increases during each time unit.

Five-Party Cooperative Agreement. Agreement between five agencies; U.S. Air Force, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Department of Energy, Bureau of Land Management, and Nevada Department of Wildlife, for the purpose of protecting, developing, and managing the natural resources of fish and wildlife, vegetation, watershed, and wild horses and burros on the Nellis Air Force Range, the Nevada Test Site, and the Tonopah Test Range.

Forage. All browse and herbaceous food that is available to grazing animals.

Grazing System. A systematic application of grazing treatments to a management unit in a prescribed sequence over recurring periods of time; the manipulation of livestock to accomplish a desired result.

Habitat. A specific set of physical conditions that surround the single species, a group of species, or large community. In wildlife management, the major components of habitat are considered to be food, water, cover, and living space.

Habitat Management Plan (HMP). A written and officially approved plan for a specific geographical area of public land that identifies wildlife habitat and related objectives, establishes the sequence of actions for achieving objectives, and outlines procedures for evaluating accomplishments.

Herd. A number of wild animals of one species that remain together as a group.

Herd Management Area (HMA). That area of wild horse habitat covered by HMAP.

Herd Management Area Plan (HMAP). A plan for management of the HMA.

Home Range. An area that an animal or group of animals travel in pursuit of their routine activity.

Key Management Area. These are areas that may be a relatively small portion of a range selected because of its location, use, or grazing value as a monitoring point for management decisions. It is assumed that key areas, if properly selected, will reflect the overall acceptability of current grazing management over all or part of the grazing unit.

Key Species. (1) Forage species whose use serves as an indicator to the degree of use of associated species; (2) those species which must, because of their importance, be considered in the management program.

Management Framework Plan (MFP). A planning decision document which establishes for a given area of land, land-use allocations, coordination guidelines for multiple-use, and objectives to be achieved for each class of land use or protection. It is BLM's Land Use-Use Plan.

Mortality. Ratio of the number of deaths of individuals to the population, often described as a function of age.

NDOW. Nevada Department of Wildlife.

NRC. Nellis Range Complex.

NWHR. Nevada Wild Horse Range. Established in 1962 as the first wild horse area established in the United States. NWHR was established by a Cooperative Agreement with the Commander, Nellis Air Force Base and the State Director, Nevada Bureau of Land Management.

ORV. Off-Road Vehicle.

Perennial (Plant). A plant that has a life cycle of three or more years.

Public Land. Tracts of land administered by the Bureau of Land Management.

Range Condition. The current productivity of a range relative to what the range is naturally capable of producing.

Range Inventory. An itemized list of resources of a management area such as range site; range condition classes; range condition trends; range use; estimated proper stocking rates; physical developments; and natural conditions such as water, barriers, etc.

Range Trend. Change in vegetation and soil characteristics as a direct result of environmental factors, primarily climate and grazing.

Reasonable Numbers. That number of animals which the wildlife management agency is striving to maintain within a given planning unit under a multiple-use concept on a sustained yield basis.

Riparian. Of, on, or pertaining to the bank of a river, or a pond or small water source.

Sex Ratio. The ratio existing between the number of male and female animals within a given herd, band, or population.

Shrub. A relatively low-growing, much branched, many stemmed, woody, perennial plant.

Soil. The unconsolidated mineral and organic material on the immediate surface of the earth that serves as a natural medium for the growth of land plants.

Soil Associations. A group of defined and named soil units occurring together in a characteristic pattern over a geographic region.

Unit Resource Analysis (URA). A comprehensive display of physical resource data and an analysis of the current use, production, condition, and trend of the resource and the potentials and opportunities within a planning unit, including a profile of ecological values.

USAF. United States Air Force.

USFWS. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Utilization (Range Utilization). A degree of use of current year's plant production made by grazing animals.

Vegetative Type. A plant community with distinguishable characteristics, described by the dominant vegetation present.

Watershed. The total area above a given point on a stream that contributes water to the flow at that point.

LITERATURES CITED

M. E. Ensminger, B.S., M.A., PhD. 1978. The Stockman's Handbook (Animal Agricultural Series). Fifth Edition. The Interstate Printers & Publishers, Inc., Danville, Illinois.

Tueller, P.T., G. Lorain, K. Kipping, and C. Wilkie. 1972. Methods for Measuring Vegetation Changes on Nevada Rangelands. Nevada Agriculture Experiment Station Technical Bulletin #16.

U.S. Department of the Interior, 1984. Little Mountain HMAP. Bureau of Land Management, Caliente Resource Area, Caliente, Nevada.

NEVADA WILD HORSE RANGE

AND

NELLIS RANGE COMPLEX

GATHERING PLAN

Prepared By:

Wild Horse & Burro Specialist Caliente Resource Area, BLM	Date

Recommended for Approval:

Area Manager, BLM Caliente Resource Area	Date
Sierra Club Chairman, C&C Committee Las Vegas, Nevada	Date
Nevada Wildlife Federation Vice Chairman, C&C Committee Las Vegas, Nevada	Date
Wild Horse Organized Assistance Secretary, C&C Committee Reno, Nevada	Date
Clark County Game Management Board C&C Committee Las Vegas, Nevada	Date
National Wild Horse Association C&C Committee Las Vegas, Nevada	Date

Humane Society of Southern Nevada
C&C Committee
Las Vegas, Nevada

Date

Fraternity of Desert Bighorn
C&C Committee
Las Vegas, Nevada

Date

Approved By:

District Manager, BLM
Las Vegas District

Date

Concurrence:

State Director, BLM
Nevada State Office

Date

Proposal

The proposed action is to reduce the wild horse population on the USAF Tactical Fighter Weapons Training Center Range (Nellis Range Complex) which includes the Nevada Wild Horse Range (NWHR). The Nellis Range Complex (NRC) covers approximately 1.9 million acres and included within the NRC in the NWHR which covers approximately 394 thousand acres. This reduction will leave a viable population of 2,000 wild horses on the NWHR, a unique area established in 1962 for a unique purpose. To accomplish this goal, all the wild horses on the Nellis Range Complex outside the NWHR will be removed. In addition, the number of the wild horses on the NWHR will be adjusted. To retain the viable population of 2,000 wild horses on the NWHR, 3,500 to 4,500 wild horses will be removed from the NRC.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Gather Area

The gather area is the USAF Tactical Fighter Weapons Training Center Range approximately 40 miles Southeast of Tonapah, Nevada (map attached). The gathering operation will take place in Goldfield/Mudflat, Cactus Flat/Gold Flat, Stonewall Mountain, and Kawich areas with other small gatherings in isolated areas on the Range Complex, priority based on funding.

Existing Situation

In March 1984, the Bureau of Land Management, with the aid of the U. S. Air Force, conducted the most recent census on the U. S. Air Force Tactical Fighter Weapons Training Center Range which includes the NWHR. Of the 4,890 (actual count) wild horses counted, over half the population roam off the NWHR. A situation also exists with very limited perennial water sources available for the wild horses especially during summer months. Thus during the drier years, the potential for a massive dieoff exists. The BLM is responsible for the vegetation soils, wild horses, and wildlife habitat on the Nellis Range Complex. Therefore, the decision to remove horses from this area is based on manageability of these horses, concerns of various governmental and state agencies, Consultation and Coordination (C&C) committee members, other public comment, and proposed bureau planning documents.

REMOVAL PROCESS

Summary

Under this plan approximately 3,500 to 4,500 head of wild horses will be removed from within the gather area. Once captured, the horses will be transported to the Palomino Valley adoption center. From there, they will be adopted to qualified individuals.

Removal Methods

Any and all access or removal actions on the NRC, whether on the ground or in the air, will be coordinated with and approved by the USAF which is responsible for the NRC, a controlled access area based on its primary use.

The BLM would be responsible for the capture, care, temporary holding of wild horses and their transportation to the Palomino Valley adoption center.

The capture operation would utilize water and/or bait traps, and/or helicopters, if necessary, to gather horses.

Traps may be portable or permanent as long as they are approved by the BLM and USAF representatives.

If helicopter gathering is utilized to capture wild horses, then no trapping will be allowed between March 15 and June 15, due to foaling period. Only the BLM may contract for the use of helicopters to assist in capturing wild horses.

Trap locations and the time of trapping will be determined by Bureau of Land Management and USAF representatives.

The Bureau of Land Management will provide for brand inspector services, veterinarian services (if necessary), and a BLM representative to assure capture is being conducted in accordance with applicable regulations.

Due to the number of wild horses identified in this plan to be removed, this plan will remain in effect until all animals are gathered down to appropriate management level and placed in adoption centers.

Justification

Justification for removal is based on the Bureau of Land Management planning process and is supported by Public Law 92-195.

Wild horses exist on areas outside and adjacent to the Nevada Wild Horse Range which was established as a sanctuary in 1962 for wild horses, which is secondary to the purpose of the withdrawal. Horses existing outside of the Nevada Wild Horse Range have been identified to be removed. The NWHR is partially within and adjacent to the Tonopah Test Range. Ground and air access are controlled by the USAF based on the primary use of the NRC. Monitoring studies cannot be conducted in the Tonopah Test Range because of the inherent danger and security restrictions. In addition, wild horses have been identified to be completely removed from Stonewall Mountain because of the existing bighorn sheep population.

Currently, the management of wild horses on the NRC range is undergoing a Consultation and Coordination (C&C) process. The C&C Committee is made up of various interest groups and government agencies who have an interest in the well-being of wild horses and wildlife on the NRC. The C&C Committee, after visiting parts of the NRC and analyzing existing data have recommended that wild horses be managed only on the Nevada Wild Horse Range and that horses outside the Nevada Wild Horse Range be removed.

Analysis of monitoring studies on the Nevada Wild Horse Range will be used to determine what the future management numbers of wild horses will be. Future removals will be based on the results of these monitoring studies.

Brand Inspector

The services of the State Brand Inspector will be obtained and all inspections will comply with the procedures set forth in Instruction Memorandum NV-83-26, which outlines the procedure for processing private horses captured during removal operations.

Veterinarian Services

Provisions will be made to have a veterinarian available to the operation within a few hours notice. During the trapping operation the nearest full-time veterinary service is Las Vegas, Nevada, approximately 180 miles away from trap site. Also, the veterinarian in Caliente, Nevada, will be available to the trapping operation within a few hours notice.

The Bureau of Land Management's authorized representative or his designee will summon a veterinarian if, in his judgement, veterinary services are required to alleviate suffering of one or more horses, to ensure their well being, or to diagnose and/or treat disease, sickness or injury.

DISPOSITION AND HANDLING OF HORSES

Provisions for Humane Treatment

The welfare and humane treatment of wild horses will be of primary importance in handling them. Trapped wild horses which are seriously injured, obviously sick or lame, or very old, whose condition is such that it is obvious they will not recover will be humanely destroyed at the trap by the Bureau of Land Management's authorized officer only, or by a veterinarian if authorized by the Bureau's representative. BLM's authorized officers have been trained by a licensed veterinarian in the state of humane euthanasia of wild horses.

Captured horses will be removed from the trap within ten hours from the time of capture. Water will be available in the holding corral at all times. Horses held for ten hours or more in the holding facility will be provided good quality grass, hay, or mixed alfalfa, and grass hay at the rate of not less than two (2) pounds of hay per 100 pounds of body weight per day.

The Inspection and Identification of Captured Horses

As soon as practical after entering the holding corral, each group of horses will be inspected. The horses will be identified and separated if necessary so as to assure the safety and well being of the captured animals.

Animals which are branded, which are suspected of being branded, or which are known to be private, will be separated out and handled in accordance with applicable federal and state laws.

Destruction of Animals

Should it become necessary during the course of the gather to destroy a horse because of disease, age, or injury it will be the responsibility of the Bureau of Land Management's authorized representative's to destroy the horse in a safe, humane manner. No other individual will be allowed to destroy any captured horse unless the representative has specifically stated (and made reference to in writing) that he will be away from the job site for an extended period of time. During this time, the representative will appoint a qualified individual to take over his responsibilities.

Disposal of Animals Which are Destroyed During the Removal Operation

Carcasses will be disposed of by burial or consumed by fire or left to the environment as outlined by Instruction Memorandum NV-83-84. This will satisfy State and County sanitary requirements.

Prior to disposal, data which includes the date of death, apparent reason for death, sex, color, age, and freeze mark number (if assigned), will be collected.

Transport of Captured Animals

All motorized equipment employed in the transporation of captured animals shall, under the provisions of 43 CFR 4720.4(b), be subject to the following reservations and/or restrictions:

a. All such transportation shall be in compliance with appropriate state and federal laws and regulations and policies applicable to the humane transporation of horses and burros.

b. Vehicles shall be in good repair, of adequate rated capacity, and carefully operated so as to ensure that captured animals are transported without undue risk or injury with adequate ventilation and size.

Bobtail trucks, single deck trucks, can be used to haul horses from the capture site to the Palomino Valley adoption center. Single deck trucks with trailers 40 feet or longer are required to have two partition gates to separate horses. Trailers less than 40 feet need only one partition gate to separate the horses.

c. Vehicles shall be inspected and approved by a BLM representative prior to use.

d. Where required by the BLM representative, animals shall be sorted as to age, size, temperment, sex, and condition when transporting them so as to minimize, to the extent possible, injury due to fighting and trampling.

e. The BLM representative shall consider the condition of the animals, weather conditions, type of vehicles, and distance to be transported when planning for the movement of captured animals. The BLM representative shall provide for any brand and/or health services required for the captured animals.

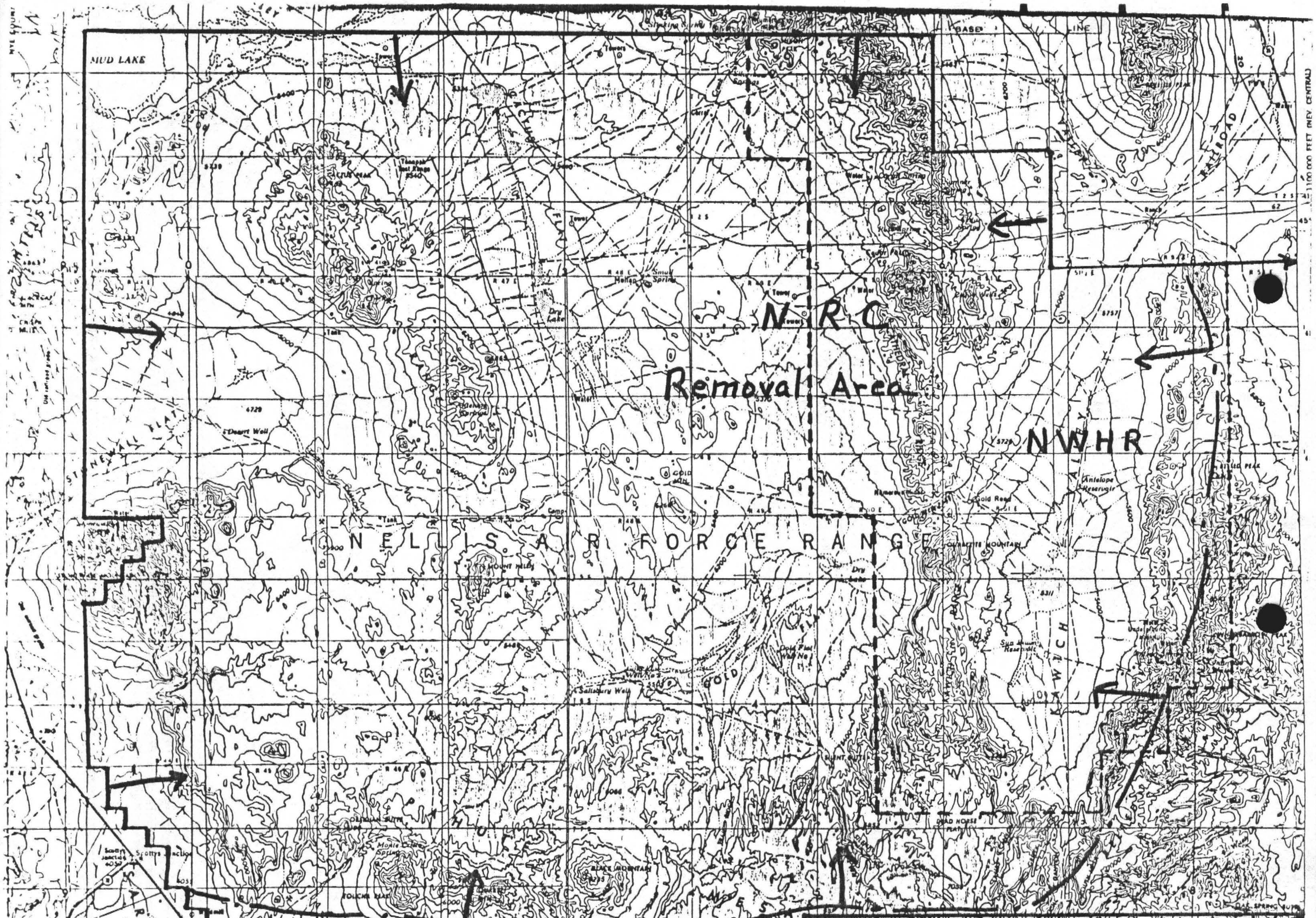
Public Relations

In general, all publicity, formal public contact, and inquiries will be handled by the CIC subcommittee through the Public Affairs Officer, Las Vegas District BLM office.

Coordination

The Caliente Resource Area will cordinate with the Palomino Valley adoption center to assure that there is space available in the corrals for the captured horses and that they can be handled safely and efficiently.

NRC Removal Area


NRC
Removal Area
NWHR
NELLIS AIR FORCE RANGE
MUD LAKE
STONEWALL FLAT
Desert Well
Dry Lake
Small Spring
Antelope Reservoir
Gold Road
QUARTZITE MOUNTAIN
MOUNT HELEN
Salisbury Well
Gold Flat Well No 1
BLACK MOUNTAIN
DEAD HORSE FLAT
Scottys Junction
BASE LINE
RAILROAD
1 100 000 FEET (NEV. CENTRAL)

NWHR
4700
(NV-057.7)

EA #NV-050-4
Environmental Assessment
for
Herd Management Area Plan and
Gathering Plan for the Nellis Range Complex
and Nevada Wild Horse Range.

I. Purpose of and Need for Action

The purpose of this Environmental Assessment (EA) is to analyze the impacts of the Herd Management Area Plan and Gathering Plan for the Nellis Range Complex (NRC) and Nevada Wild Horse Range (NWHR). A need for action has been determined through on-site observations and utilization studies which have shown this area to be in various stages of range deterioration. Also wild horses exist outside of the NWHR on other areas of the NRC. In addition, the HMAP and Gathering plans were developed through a Consultation and Coordination (C & C) process with various interest groups, and State and Federal Government agencies who have an interest in the well-being of wild horses and wildlife on the NRC, and who support the proposed action.

II. Introduction

The NRC is comprised of approximately 1.9 million acres. The NWHR consisting of 394 thousand acres lies within the NRC. The NWHR was established in 1962 to meet the demands of a concerned public to have an area set aside for wild and free-roaming horses. Since its inception, wild horse populations have gone virtually unchecked and herd management has been non-existent, resulting in wild horses expanding their use areas. In 1976 aerial inventories were initiated to begin a population census of wild horse numbers in the area. Current actual count numbers are 4,890. Aerial censuses invariably undercount total number of wild horses per given area. There has been no correction factor developed for this area. Thus, total count data secured on the Nellis Range Complex is presumably below the actual population size. In addition, due to time alloted and security restrictions total use areas are not always flown resulting in less consistent census data.

Utilization studies initiated in 1980 on the NWHR show that heavy to severe use is being made within ½ mile of all water facilities. Outward from waters to about 4½ miles the use is moderate to heavy. Based on physical damage to the forage plants from trampling and grazing, and the abundance of undesirable plants, the apparent trend is down. In addition, lack of sufficient water during the summer does stress the current population especially during very dry periods.

Four wild horse use areas have been identified in the area. Kawich, Stonewall, Goldfield Hills, and Cactus Flat/Goldflat. These use areas include horses which have expanded their home range out of the NWHR to other areas on the NRC.

The need for wild horse management in these areas has been identified by the Bureau of Land Management, USAF, and other state and Federal Government agencies with various interest groups involvement in the planning phase.

This EA is written in conjunction with the HMAP and gathering plans. These plans should be referred to for detailed description of the present situation and management objectives.

III. Description of the Proposed Action and Alternatives

A. Proposed Action

The proposed action is designed to implement the management objectives as outlined in the NWHR HMAP. The area incompassed by the plan is the NRC, approximately 40 miles southeast of Tonopah, Nevada. The proposal is to manage wild horses only on the Nevada Wild Horse Range. This action, to be initiated over a three year period, entails the gathering of 3500-4500 head of wild horses.

This reduction will leave a viable population of approximately 2,000 head of wild horses on the NWHR, a unique area established in 1962 for a unique purpose secondary in purpose to the withdrawal. To accomplish this, all the wild horses on the NRC outside the NWHR will be removed. In addition, the number of wild horses on the NWHR will be reduced. Under this action the Bureau of Land Management would be responsible for either water or bait, and/or helicopter capture, care, temporary holding, and transporting wild horses to Palomino Valley adoption center.

Monitoring studies will be established for determining long-term management numbers of wild horses. Future adjustment to the wild horse population will be based on analysis of monitoring studies.

B. Alternative 1-No Action

This alternative states that no management action be undertaken in the project area.

C. Alternative 2-Total Removal

This action calls for total removeal of all horses from the project area, thus relinquishing any need for management.

IV. Affected Environment

A detailed description of the existing environment is presented in "Proposed Public Land Withdrawal, Nellis Air Force Range, Nye, Clark, and Lincoln Counties." Additional information can be found in the Wild Horse Management Plan proposed for this area. Items not adequately covered in the above mentioned EA or Management Plan, are discussed below.

A. Sandia Laboratories, a research and testing company, maintains a headquarters on the Nellis Range Complex in the northern Cactus Flat area. Complaints have been received of optical interference caused by increasing dust pollution in the air. This is caused by accelerated vegetation removal and subsequent baring of top soil by horses in the area.

B. There are occasional vehicle/horse collisions on the Range Complex. These result in death to the horse and damage to the vehicle. Although there have been no human injuries, there is the potential for a human death to occur from some future collision.

C. No wilderness study areas (WSAs) are identified in the project area.

D. There are no known threatened/endangered plant species in the identified wild horse HMA or gathering areas. However, there are three candidate species within the area: Asclepias eastwoodiana; category 2, Sclerocactus polyancistrus; category 2, and Astragolus beatleyae;category 2, (Federal Register Vol. 45, No. 242 and Vol. 48, No. 229). Astragalus beatleyae is also listed critical endangered by Nevada State Status NRS 527.270.

E. A variety of vegetation communities exist within the gather area. These vegetation types are shadscale, big sage, low sage, rabbitbrush, pinyon-juniper, and Joshua. Within these vegetation communities are key areas with selected key species which are sensitive to changes in management techniques due to the fact that they receive greater amounts of use by grazing animals. Based on the use these key areas receive, these areas may serve as indicators to measure the success of the proposed management actions.

F. The NRC supports several wildlife species deer, antelope, Desert Bighorn, several different predators, and a host of non-game animals. Little emphasis has been placed on data collection parciularly due to the controlled access on the NRC because of its primary purpose. Competition for forage, and in some instances water, during critical times of the year may stress wildlife populations.

G. There is no visual contrast rating for this area, because BLM has no visual management authority over the area.

H. Current wild horse populations, based on recent aerial census, is 4,890 (actual count) animals within the HMA. Actual population is estimated to be higher than this level. The overall health of these animals appears to be good, though, during dryer periods with out precipitation the wild horses are greatly stressed from lack of sufficient available water.

Based on the Physical damage to the forage plants from trampling and grazing, and the abundance of undesirable plants, the apparent vegetative trend is down.

V. Analysis of the Proposed Action and Alternatives

A. Proposed Action

1. Environmental Impacts

a. Over the short term approximately 3,500-4,500 head of wild horses will be impacted by the proposed action. These horses will be removed from the range and transported to Palomino

Valley Adoption Center. Reduction of horse numbers on the NRC, over the long term, would create positive impacts to the soils and forage resource by allowing for vegetative regrowth. Positive impacts to Sandia Laboratories would also be realized through decreased dust pollution.

b. Reduction of wild horse numbers would reduce the frequency of vehicle/horse collisions on the NRC in the short as well as long term.

c. No impacts to wilderness study areas.

d. The three candidate threatened/endangered plant species should benefit from a reduction in grazing pressure. Hence the impact should be beneficial in the long term.

e. The rangeland vegetation will respond favorably in the short and long term due to the reduction in grazing pressure. Forage availability is expected to increase, utilization levels will decrease and vegetation trend should improve. (This assumes a static level of use of the area by other herbivores.) Also, a decrease in dust pollution should result with an increase in vegetation cover due to reduced grazing pressure in the long term.

There will be no known adverse impacts to the vegetation based on the proposed action. No irreversible or irretrievable commitment of any of the vegetative resources will occur due to the proposed action.

f. Wildlife species (i.e., deer, antelope, desert bighorn and other wildlife species) should benefit in the short term from decreased competition for space and forage. Competition between wildlife species and other grazing animals will be reduced due to an improvement in vegetation conditions. Increases in wildlife species are expected to occur as a result of the proposed action, especially over the long term.

g. No visual impact as a result of proposed action is expected.

h. The proposed action will impact wild horse habitat, as well as wild horse populations. Vegetation will improve in the HMA over the long term. Maintenance of waters on the NWHR will improve water availability to the horses as well as wildlife.

The initial adjustment of wild horse populations will result in a positive impact to the 2,000 wild horses remaining on the NWHR over the long term as well as short term. This impact should result in healthier horses with an increased productivity.

Unavoidable impacts in the form of injuries to the horses being removed may occur during the removal process. These injuries

are not expected to exceed two percent of the total number of horses captured. The change in life style of the horses captured will also be an unavoidable impact.

i. Disturbance of cultural resources sites may occur during capture operations. Archaeological inventories will be conducted at trap sites prior to construction.

2. Recommended Mitigating Measures

a. If previously undiscovered cultural resources should be found during actual construction activities, the Authorized Officer will require activities for that area to be temporarily halted by issuing a Stop Order until the resource(s) can be inspected and appropriate surveys or salvage operations are completed by a qualified cultural resources professional, at which time a Notice to Proceed will be issued.

b. Project related traffic shall ingress and egress the project area over the same route(s) in order to minimize disturbance to soils, vegetative cover, and other resources.

c. Capture and holding corrals will be temporarily constructed of portable panels six feet high or higher.

d. Corrals will be removed and sites cleanded up upon capture and removal of wild horses from facility.

e. The Bureau of Land Management's authorized representative or his designee will summon a veterinarian if, in his judgement, veterinary services are required to alliviate suffering on one or more horses to insure their well being, or to diagnose and/or treat disease sickness or injury.

3. Unavoidable Adverse Impacts

a. Some destruction of vegetation in the area of capture sites and temporary holding facilities will probably occur as well as some soil disturbance during capture operations.

4. Short-Term vs. Long-Term Effects on Productivity

The effects of the herd management plan in the project area should be increasingly realized through time.

5. Irreversible or Irretrievable Commitments of Resources

This would occur if horses are killed during capture operations or if sick or injured animals have to be destroyed.

B. Alternative 1 - No Action

1. Environmental Impacts

   a. Increased amounts of dust pollution would be expected to continue to interfere with Sandia Labs operation.

   b. As wild horse populations increase unchecked, loss to vehicle collisions would also be expected to increase. The number of vehicles operating on the range has been steadily increasing and this trend is expected to continue. Collisions between horses and vehicles can also be expected to increase, with the injury or death of personnel being a possible result.

   c. Competition for forage and water resources within horse herds would be expected to increase.

   d. Adverse impacts to the forage and soils resources would be expected to continue through increased utilization.

   e. Increased competition for forage between horses and big game wildlife species would probably be realized.

   f. Horse loss due to capture operations would not occur.

   g. The general ecology of the area would continue to be adversely impacted by increasing horse populations.

   h. Horse loss would occur due to population collapse after habitat is destroyed or from lack of sufficient water for wild horses under high population density.

2. Mitigating Measures

   None offered under this alternative.

3. Unavoidable Adverse Impacts

   Same as listed under V.B.1.(a-e, h, i)

4. Short-Term Use vs. Long-Term Effects on Productivity

   Productivity in this area would continue to be negatively impacted. The range resource would be expected to continue to deteriorate, while horse populations increased. It is expected that horse populations would increase beyond the support capability of the range resource and would crash. These impacts would be negative to the entire ecology of the area.

5. Irreversible or Irretrievable Commitments of Resources

   Increasing overutilization of the range could lead to irreversible damage to this resource. Animals lost to mass population die-off

would be irretrievable. Increasing competition between horses and other wildlife species could lead to a loss of wildlife from its habitat.

C. Alternative 2 - Total Removal

1. Environmental Impacts

a. Total removal of wild horses from the project area would impact the environment the same as in the proposed action except:

(1) Costs of capture operations would be increased while management costs would be nonexistent. Impacts to Bureau economics would be of short duration.

2. Recommended Mitigation

Same as under the Proposed Action.

3. Unavoidable Adverse Impacts

Same as for the proposed action.

4. Short-Term Use vs. Long-Term Effects on Productivity

Adverse impacts to BLM economics would become short-term.

5. Irreversible or Irretrievable Commitments of Resources

Under this alternative, the entire wild horse resource would be lost from this area unless reintroduced at some later time.

Rec'd - Nov 16, 1984
WHOA
P.O Box 555
Reno, Nv 89504

DT03D

NEVADA WILD HORSE RANGE

AND

NELLIS RANGE COMPLEX
~~CAPTURE~~ GATHERING
~~REMOVAL~~ PLAN

Prepared By: _____ _____
Wild Horse & Burro Specialist — Date
Caliente Resource Area

Recommended for Approval: _____ _____
Area Manager — Date
Caliente Resource Area

Concurred By: _____ _____
District Manager — Date
Las Vegas District

Approved: _____ _____
State Director — Date
Nevada

Proposal

The proposed action is to reduce the wild horse population on the USAF Tactical Fighter Weapons Training Center Range (Nellis Range Complex) which includes the Nevada Wild Horse Range (NWHR). The Nellis Range Complex (NRC) covers approximately 1.9 million acres and included within the NRC in the NWHR which covers approximately 394 thousand acres. This reduction will leave a viable population of ~~1,500~~ 2000 wild horses on the NWHR, a unique area established in 1962 for a unique purpose. To accomplish this goal, all the wild horses on the Nellis Range Complex outside the NWHR will be removed. In addition, the number of the wild horses on the NWHR will be adjusted. To retain the viable population of ~~1,500~~ 2000 wild horses on the NWHR, 3,500 to 4,500 wild horses will be removed from the NRC.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Gather Area

The gather area is the USAF Tactical Fighter Weapons Training Center Range approximately 40 miles Southeast of Tonapah, Nevada (map attached). The main gathering operation will take place in Goldfield/Mudflat, Cactus Flat/Gold Flat, Stonewall Mountain, and Kawich areas with other small gatherings in isolated areas on the Range Complex, priority based on funding.

Existing Situation

In March 1984, the Bureau of Land Management, with the aid of the U. S. Air Force, conducted the most recent census on the U. S. Air Force Tactical Fighter Weapons Training Center Range which includes the NWHR. Of the 4,890 (actual count) wild horses counted, over half the remaining population roam off the NWHR. A situation also exists with very limited perennial water sources available for the wild horses especially during summer months. Thus during the drier years, the potential for a massive dieoff exists. The BLM is responsible for the vegetation soils, wild horses, and wildlife habitat on the Nellis Range Complex. Therefore, the decision to remove horses from this area

is based on manageability of these horses, concerns of various governmental and state agencies, Consultation and Coordination (C&C) committee members, other public comment, and proposed bureau planning documents.

REMOVAL PROCESS

Summary

Under this plan approximately 3,500 to 4,500 head of wild horses will be removed from within the gather area. Once captured, the horses will be transported to the appropriate adoption center. From there, they will be adopted to qualified individuals.

Removal Methods

The BLM would be responsible for the capture, care, temporary holding of wild horses and their transportation to ~~appropriate~~ PALOMINO adoption center.

The capture operation would utilize water and/or bait traps, and/or helicopters, if necessary, to gather horses.

Traps may be portable or permanent as long as they are approved by the BLM representatives. AND USAF.

If helicopter gathering is utilized to capture wild horses, then no trapping will be allowed between March 15 and June 15, ~~1984~~, due to foaling period. Only the BLM may contract for the use of helicopters to assist in capturing wild horses.

Trap locations and the time of trapping will be determined by Bureau of Land Management and USAF representatives.

Any and all removal actions, whether on the ground or in the air will be ~~coordinated with~~ APPROVED BY the USAF which is responsible for the NRC, a controlled access area based on its primary use.

OR ACCESS to the NRC COORD with AND

The Bureau of Land Management will provide for brand inspector services, veterinarian services (if necessary), and a BLM representative to assure capture is being conducted in accordance with applicable regulations.

Due to the number of wild horses identified in this plan to be removed, this plan will remain in effect until all animals are gathered and placed in adoption centers.

Justification

Justification for removal is based on the Bureau of Land Management planning process and is supported by Public Law 92-195.

Wild horses exist on areas outside and adjacent to the Nevada Wild Horse Range which was established as a sanctuary in 1962 for wild horses, which is secondary in purpose of the withdrawal. Horses existing outside of the Nevada Wild Horse Range have been identified to be removed. The NWHR is partially within and adjacent to the Tonopah Test Range. Ground and air access are controlled by the USAF based on the primary use of the NRC. Monitoring studies cannot be conducted in the Tonopah Test Range because of the inherent danger and security restrictions. In addition, wild horses have been identified to be completely removed from Stonewall Mountain because of the existing big horn sheep population.

Currently, the management of wild horses on the NRC range is undergoing a Consultation and Coordination (C&C) process. The C&C Committee is made up of various interest groups and government agencies who have an interest in the well-being of wild horses and wildlife on the NRC. The C&C Committee, after visiting parts of the NRC and analyzing existing data have recommended that wild horses be managed only on the Nevada Wild Horse Range and that horses outside the Nevada Wild Horse Range be removed.

Analysis of monitoring studies on the Nevada Wild Horse Range will be used to determine what the future management numbers of wild horses will be. Future removals will be based on the results of these monitoring studies.

Brand Inspector

The services of the State Brand Inspector will be obtained and all inspections will comply with the procedures set forth in Instruction Memorandum NV-83-26, which outlines the procedure for processing private horses captured during removal operations.

Veterinarian Services

Provisions will be made to have a veterinarian available to the operation within a few hours notice ~~during the daylight hours.~~ During the trapping operation the nearest full-time veterinary service is Las Vegas, Nevada, approximately 180 miles away from trap site. Also, the veterinarian in Caliente, Nevada, will be available to the trapping operation within a few hours notice.

The Bureau of Land Management's authorized representative or his designee will summon a veterinarian if, in his judgement, veterinary services are required to alleviate suffering of one or more horses, to ensure their well being, or to diagnose and/or treat disease, sickness or injury.

DISPOSITION AND HANDLING OF HORSES

Provisions for Humane Treatment

The welfare and humane treatment of wild horses will be of primary importance in handling them. Trapped wild horses which are seriously injured, obviously sick or lame, or very old, whose condition is such that it is obvious they will not recover will be humanely destroyed at the trap by the Bureau of Land Management's authorized officer only, or by a veterinarian if authorized by the Bureau's representative. BLM's Authorized officers have been trained by a Nevada licensed veterinarians ~~to the humane procedure & technique of disposal by gun shot.~~

Captured ~~Trapped~~ horses will be removed ~~from the trap~~ no within ten hours from the time of capture. Water will be available in the holding corral at all times. Horses held for ten hours or more in the ~~traps~~ or holding facility will be provided ~~by~~ humane euthanasia.

good quality grass, hay, or mixed alfalfa, and grass hay at the rate of not less than two (2) pounds of hay per 100 pounds of body weight per day.

The Inspection and Identification of ~~Trapped~~ Captured Horses

As soon as practical after entering the holding corral, each group of horses will be inspected. The horses will be identified and separated if necessary so as to assure the safety and well being of the captured animals.

Animals which are branded, which are suspected of being branded, or which are known to be private, will be separated out and handled ~~as outlined by Instruction Memorandum NV-83-26. to that procedure~~ in accordance with applicable Federal & State laws.

Destruction of Animals

Should it become necessary during the course of the gather to destroy a horse because of disease, age, or injury it will be the responsibility of the Bureau of Land Management's authorized representative's to destroy the horse in a safe, humane manner. No other individual will be allowed to destroy any captured horse unless the representative has specifically stated (and made reference to in writing) that he will be away from the job site for an extended period of time. During this time, the representative will appoint a qualified individual to take over his responsibilities.

Disposal of Animals Which are Destroyed During the Removal Operation

Carcasses will be disposed of by burial or consumed by fire or left to the environment as outlined by Instruction Memorandum NV-83-84. This will satisfy State and County sanitary requirements.

Prior to disposal, data which includes the date of death, apparent reason for death, sex, color, age, and freeze mark number (if assigned), will be collected.

Transport of Captured Animals

All motorized equipment employed in the transporation of captured animals shall, under the provisions of 43 CFR 4720.4(b), be subject to the following reservations and/or restrictions:

a. All such transportation shall be in compliance with appropriate state and federal laws and regulations, policies applicable to the humane transporation of horses and burros.

b. Vehicles shall be in good repair, of adequate rated capacity, and carefully operated so as to ensure that captured animals are transported without undue risk or injury.

Bobtail trucks, single deck trucks, or double-decked trucks (with minimum 13'6" high) can be used to haul horses from the ~~trap~~ capture site to ~~adoption~~ Palomino center. Single deck trucks with trailers 40 feet or longer are required to have two partition gates to separate horses. Trailers less than 40 feet need only one partition gate to separate the horses.

c. Vehicles shall be inspected and approved by a BLM representative prior to use, insuring adequate ventilation & size.

d. Where required by the BLM representative, animals shall be sorted as to age, size, temperment, sex, and condition when transporting them so as to minimize, to the extent possible, injury due to fighting and trampling.

e. The BLM representative shall consider the condition of the animals, weather conditions, type of vehicles, and distance to be transported when planning for the movement of captured animals. The BLM representative shall provide for any brand and/or health services required for the captured animals.

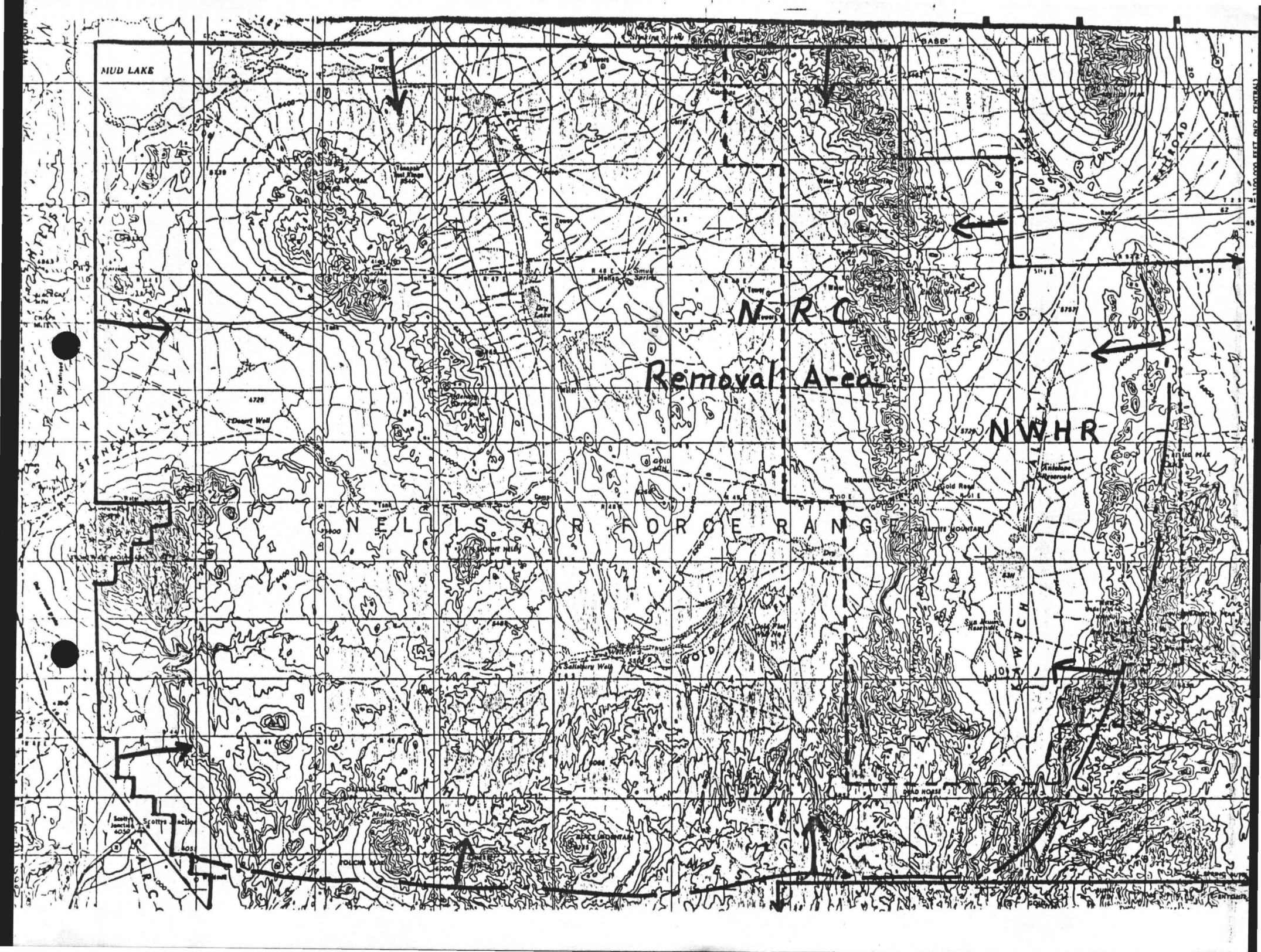
Public Relations

In general, all publicity, formal public contact, and inquiries will be handled by the Subcommittee on Public Affairs Officer, Las Vegas District office. This will ensure continuity in this part of the project. ~~All tours, site inspections,~~ filming expeditions, etc., by the media and/or members of the general public while the project is under way must first be coordinated and approved by the USAF and will be supervised by the Bureau of Land Management to ensure that safety requirements are met, and that gathering operations are not interfered with. In addition, each individual outside the Bureau of Land Management will be required to obtain the proper clearances as required by the U.S. Air Force for access to the NRC.

Coordination

The Caliente Resource Area will cordinate with the Palomino ~~appropriate~~ adoption center to assure that there is space available in the corrals for the captured horses and that they can be handled safely and efficiently.

NRC Removal Area


MUD LAKE
NRC
Removal Area
NWHR
NELLIS AIR FORCE RANGE

Dawn

D904C

NEVADA WILD HORSE RANGE

HERD MANAGEMENT AREA PLAN

CALIENTE RESOURCE AREA

LAS VEGAS DISTRICT

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

Page

Page

I. INTRODUCTION

Preparation of a wild horse herd management area plan designed to specifically manage the wild horses populating the Nevada Wild Horse Range consistent with the U.S. Air Force use of the area in balance with the available forage was recommended through a Cooperative Agreement between the Bureau of Land Management, Nevada State Office, and United States Air Force, Nellis Air Force Base (November 12, 1973).

The Nevada Wild Horse Range (NWHR) Herd Management Area Plan (HMAP) is designed to effectively manage the wild horse population in accordance with the Bureau of Land Management NSO Manual Supplement 4730.6, Release NV4-6, and 43 Code of Federal Regulations 4700.

Effective management of the wild horse population is essential so that through management a net benefit to the valuable resources (i.e., vegetation, wildlife, soils, wild horses, etc.) which occupy the area, can be the ultimate goal.

The Nevada Wild Horse Range was established in 1962 by a Cooperative Agreement with the Commander, Nellis Air Force Base and the State Director, Nevada Bureau of Land Management. The NWHR was the first wild horse area established in the U.S. ~~by the Secretary of Interior~~ and was brought about over concern by both agencies for the proper management of wildlife and wild horses within the withdrawn area (Nellis Range Complex). Even though the primary purpose of the Nellis Range Complex (NRC), a complex withdrawn from public use, is weapons development and flying training, the existence of wild horses on the NWHR is a secondary use of the lands.

In 1971 Congress passed the Wild Horse and Burro Act and promulgated ~~47~~ 43 Code of Federal Regulations 4700 to implement the Wild Horse and Burro Act. ~~Based on this~~, a Five-Party Agreement was developed in 1977 for protecting, developing, and managing the natural resources of fish and wildlife, vegetation, watershed, and wild horses with the U.S. Air Force (USAF), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), Department of Energy

(DOE), Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and the Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW).

Wild horse population estimates in 1962 were 200-~~400~~ head. These horses were mainly in the area designated as the Nevada Wild Horse Range. Since 1962 the wild horses have expanded their range and roam over most of the north side of the NRC. The present population, including areas on the NRC outside of the NWHR, is 4,890 wild horses (~~actual~~ aerial count, March 1, 1984).* The total area of the present home range is estimated at 1,780,000 acres. (~~The est pop. is 6,000-7,000~~ More Recent est.)

*See TABLE 2, page 8.

Historically NRC was grazed by livestock, wild horses, and wildlife. Even though the primary purpose of the area was withdrawn primarily for military purposes in 1940, livestock grazing continued until 1979. Attempts were made during the fifties and sixties to discontinue livestock grazing to no avail. In 1979 a fence along the northern boundary was completed, thus eliminating livestock grazing from the area and movement in and out of the NRC by wild horses.

Nationally the NWHR is not well known and does not generate much public interest, because of its remoteness and inacessibility. The National Wild Horse Association, a Las Vegas based organization, has shown considerable active interest and has been involved in helping develop and maintain water improvements along with the USAF.

The U.S. Air Force and the Department of Energy have on-going programs of weapons testing and training, which is the primary use of the withdrawal area. These activities require controlled access to the area because of this primary use.

This plan was developed through a Consultation and Coordination (C&C) process with various interest groups, and State and Federal Government agencies who have an interest in the well-being of wild horses and wildlife on the NRC. The C&C Committee, after visiting parts of the NRC and becoming completely familiar with the existing data, have recommended that ~~1,500~~ 2000 wild horses be managed for initially on the

Nevada Wild Horse Range only, with future analysis of monitoring studies to be used to determine the ~~ultimate~~ APPROPRIATE management number.

II. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

A. Location and Size

The Nevada Wild Horse Range is located in the northeast corner of the Nellis Range Complex (NRC) approximately 40 miles southeast of Tonopah, Nevada. (See area map, Appendix 1.) The Nevada Wild Horse Range is comprised of 394,000 acres. At present wild horses roam over a much larger area. The area the wild horses are presently using is shown in Appendix 1. Approximate acreage is as follows:

Wild Horse Use Areas	Acres
NRC outside of NWHR	1,390,000
NWHR	394,000
NRC not known to be used by wild horses	151,000
Total NRC	1,935,000

B. Resource Data

1. Vegetative Resource

No vegetative inventory has been conducted nor is one planned. Utilization studies initiated in 1980 on the NWHR show that heavy to severe use is being made within 1/2 mile of all water facilities. Outward from waters to about 4-1/2 miles the use is moderate to heavy.

Cactus Flat and Kawich Valley should have similar vegetative communities. However, this is not the case. The intense grazing on Cactus Flat has altered the vegetative community, and rabbitbrush is increasing to a high percentage in the plant community.

Generally the vegetation in the NRC is composed of galleta grass, Indian ricegrass, numerous forbs, big sage, low sage, bud sage, rabbitbrush, buckwheat, desert globemallow, pinyon pine, and juniper.

2. Range Condition and Trend

Trend studies (photo plot method) were initiated in the spring of 1981 on the NWHR. Vegetative trends can only be determined after many years of data collection. Based on the physical damage to the forage plants from trampling and grazing, and the abundance of undesirable plants, the apparent trend is down.

The apparent condition varies from good to poor depending on the distance from water. These areas within 1/2 mile of water are in very poor condition whereas those farther removed are in fair to good condition, depending on distance from water sources. The visual appearance and field observation of comparison areas were used to derive the apparent condition.

3. Soils

No INTENSIVE soil survey has been conducted, ~~nor is one planned.~~

4. Water (Appendix 1)

Water sources for the wild horses and wildlife on the NWHR consist mainly of developed springs and pipelines and natural catchment basins. Past livestock operations had developed some of the springs and pipelines, but since these operations have been restricted from the NRC, these developments have deteriorated to the point that they provide water only at the source.

The BLM with assistance from the National Wild Horse Association, USAF, and DOE are maintaining five springs, Rose Spring, Silverbow Spring, Tunnel Spring, Upper and Lower Corral Springs. Rose and Silverbow spring developments consist of pipelines for better water distribution.

Waters in the Cedar Pass area are maintained by the Nevada Wild Horse Association. Summer and Cedar Springs, along with George's Water, are maintained by Mr. Joseph P. Fallini. JR.

Wild horse use areas are restricted to the above mentioned water sources especially during the summer months.

5. Animals

a. Wildlife

Mule deer are found on all mountain ranges within the area. Antelope use the foothills and the valleys. Main concentrations of antelopes are in the northern portion of Cactus Flat and all of Kawich Valley with occasional sightings around Stonewall Mountain. The desert bighorn sheep are on and around Stonewall Mountain. Mountain lions are found throughout the entire area.

Other wildlife species found in the area include a variety of raptors, such as Golden eagles and hawks, numerous small birds and small mammals, and many reptiles. Jackrabbits and cottontails are common, but population levels fluctuate periodically in high/low cycles.

There are no known threatened/endangered plant species in the identified wild horse use area. ~~However~~, there are, however, three candidate species within the area, are being considered for federal listing under the endangered species act. Asclepias eastwoodiana; category 2, Sclerocactus

polyancistrus; category 2, and Astragalus beatleyae; category 2 (Federal Register Vol. 45, No. 242 and Vol. 48, No. 229). Astragalus beatleyae is also listed critical endangered by Nevada State Status NRS 527.270. ~~Current list for Nevada was developed at the Threatened and Endangered Plant Workshop, Reno, Nevada (March 1984).~~

In addition, the bald eagle may use the area as a pass-through species. Also the status of the peregrine falcon in the NRC is unknown.

For wildlife population estimates see Table 1 below.

TABLE 1
Wildlife Population Estimates

Species	Location	Number
Desert Bighorn Sheep	Stonewall Mountain	50-75
Pronghorn	Overall	200
Mule Deer	Stonewall Mountain	50
	Kawich Range	50
	Belted Range	35
Chukar Partridge	Stonewall Mountain	400-500
	Belted Range	150
	Kawich Range	600
Mountain Lion	Stonewall Mountain	3
	Belted Range	2
	Kawich Range	5

Footnote: Not based on definitive inventory information

ADD PAGE 7 ON WILDLIFE

b. Livestock

Livestock are no longer licensed to graze this area and only an occasional livestock trespass occurs.

c. Wild Horses

1) Present Situtation

a) Population Size

Origin ~~of the wild horse in this area~~ is not known, but it ~~is probably from domestic stock~~ of ranches ~~and mining operations~~. Estimated wild horse population in the 1960's was 200-400 head according to U.S. Air Force personnel.

Little emphasis has been placed on data collection, particularly due to the controlled access to the NRC because of its primary use.

ADD to Wildlife page 6.

The BLM and USAF have been conducting aerial horse inventories since ~~1977~~ 1976. Inventory results are disclosed in Table 2 below.

In addition to BLM and USAF Census, Table 3 below lists results of aerial census performed by EPA-NERC, Las Vegas, Nevada. Most horses were counted on the NWHR except for some expansion over into the Mud Lake area during winter months.

strike

TABLE 2

Wild Horse & Burro Inventory

YEAR	LOCATION	INVENTORY	HORSE	Total	BURRO	Total
1963	Nevada Wild Horse Range		200	200	0	
1973	NWHR	Ground	800	800	0	
1976	Kawich Valley	Aerial	114		0	
	Gold Flat & Cactus Flat		950	1,064	0	

TABLE 2
Wild Horse & Burro Inventory (Continued)

YEAR	LOCATION	INVENTORY	HORSE	Total	BURRO	Total
1977	Overall	Aerial	1,300	1,300	0	
1980	Stonewall	Aerial	341		33	
	Goldfield	Aerial	225		36	
	Cactus Flat & Kawich Valley & Belted Range	Aerial	2,556	3,122	0	69
1982	Stonewall Mountain	Aerial	574		113	
	Goldfield/Mud Lake	Aerial	314		82	
	Cactus Flat and Cactus Range	Aerial	2,756		0	
	Kawich Valley & Range	Aerial	401	4,405	0	195
1983	Stonewall Mountain	Aerial	604		49	
	Goldfield/Mud Lake	Aerial	144		32	
	Cactus Flat and Goldflat	Aerial	3,138		0	
	(Areas A/C Incomplete)		283		0	
	Kawich Range/Valley	Aerial	691	4,860	0	81
1984	Stonewall (Top of Mountain not inventoried)	Aerial	543		58	
	Goldfield/Mud Lake	Aerial	284		60	
	Cactus/Gold Flat (Area A not Inventoried)	Aerial	3,363		0	
	Kawich	Aerial	700	4,890	0	118

Dates

Aerial Censuses invariably undercount total number of wild horses per given area. There has been no correction factor developed for this area. Thus, total count data secured on the Nellis Range Complex is presumably below the actual population size. In addition, due to time allotted and security restrictions total use areas are not always flown resulting in less consistent data.

TABLE 3
EPA - NERC Aerial Census

Date	Horses	Burros
08/21/72 & 08/26/72	259	0
11/12/72 & 11/18/72	275	0
02/10/73 & 02/25/73	239	5

05/06/73 & 05/12/73	447	0
08/07/73 & 08/11/73	542	0
11/10/73 & 12/01/73	422	0
03/21/74 & 04/04/74	515	0
06/28/74 & 06/29/74	158	0

b) Color

Horse colors vary from white to black and all shades in between. However, the predominant colors are bay and sorrel with a few pintos in the Stonewall Mountain area.

c) Gatherings

Aside from rancher roundup, prior to the Wild Horse and Burrow Act, no efforts have been made to control the wild horse population on the NRC. However, prior to construction of the north boundary fence, the Battle Moutain BLM District rounded up horses just north of the NRC. Only one minor gathering operation was conducted in the Spring of 1984 on the NRC, five head of wild horses were gathered from the Stonewall Mountain Area and relocated in the Caliente Resource Area as part of a study.

d) Condition

Generally animals appear to be in fair to good condition. The population as a whole appear to be healthy with isolated maladies afflicting some of the older animals. Lack of sufficient water during the summer does stress the current population especially during very dry periods.

e) Cover

The main source of cover is provided by the pinyon-juniper on the mountain slopes. Some cover is provided by the canyons and rocky outcrops along the foothills.

f) Seasonable Use and Home Range

A comprehensive study has never been performed to determine the seasonal use patterns or home ranges of wild horse bands inhabiting the management area. Identification of major use areas, however, was accomplished (Appendix 1). Accurate knowledge pertaining to wild horse movement patterns is important in order to understand animal/vegetation interrelationships. The limited information obtained thus far shows the horses tend to concentrate in the areas close to the water source during the summer months. Most of these areas are along the upper portions of the piedmont slope. During the colder months, the horses use a much larger area extending 10-15 miles from known water sources.

Four home ranges have been identified in the area, Kawich, Stonewall, Goldfield Hills, and Cactus Flat/ Goldflat. Horses in the Stonewall home range seldom mix with the other three herds. The Cactus Flat/Goldflat herds and Goldfield herds do intermix (especially during the winter months near the Mud Lake Area) as do the Cactus Flat/Goldflat and Kawich herd.

g) Population Data

There is no data for sex ratio age structure, or mortality. Productivity based on limited data from one year's observation is approximately 8 or 9 percent.

d. Burros

Burros do exist around Stonewall Mountain and the Goldfield Range. Present population (actual count) 1984 are:

Stonewall Mountain - 58 burros
Goldfield Range - 60 burros

Most of the burros are off the Range Complex, but they do occasionally migrate onto the range. There are no burros on the NWHR.

CLARIFY→

The animals appear to be in good condition.

6. Population Demography

Effective management of wild populations is contingent on the acquisition and accurate interpretation of reliable sex and age data. Management of wild horse populations is no exception. Sex and age information secured through capture operations is a reliable technique utilized by the Bureau of Land Management to analyze population processes for management purposes. Thus far there has been no significant removal from the NRC. However, this technique will be used as well as additional information gathered through other type studies. Analysis needs for the Nevada Wild Horse Range Herd Management Area population are: sex ratio, age structure, productivity, and mortality or conversely survival.

C. Existing Projects (Appendix 1)

1. Water

Water projects consist of three spring developments with troughs at the source (Tunnel Spring, Upper, and Lower Corral Spring) and two spring developments with a pipeline distribution system (Rose Spring and Silverbow Spring). These projects are maintained by the BLM with assistance from USAF, DOE, and National Wild Horse Association.

Water projects left over from past livestock operations have deteriorated and are in need of repair. The pipeline projects are no longer functional and provide water only at the spring source. There are also several springs and silted in reservoirs that need maintenance or development to function better for wild horses and wildlife.

2. Fence

The northern boundary fence of the Nevada Range Complex was constructed in Between 1977 1979 to restrict cattle and wild horse movement into the range. The west boundary fence will be constructed in FY 1985, thus, eliminating wild horse and burro movement on the west side. There are no interior fences except for exclosures.

D. Coordination

1. Relationship to Other Resource Use

a. Wild Horse - Wildlife

Present estimate of big game are 50 to 75 Desert Bighorn Sheep, 200 antelope, and 135 mule deer.

In the Stonewall herd area the wild horses (600+) are making heavy demands on the water and forage resources. Even the highest mountain peaks show sign of horse use.

(external to the NWHR)

The Cactus Flat/Gold Flat herd area has approximately 120 head of antelope and 3,000 to 3,500 head of horses. During the winter months, the antelope frequent the areas between the Silver Bow and Rosebud springs. The horses are making heavy demands ~~outside~~ on the vegetative resources and are utilizing similar forage species as the antelope.

The resident herd of mule deer is very small in number at the present. The NDOW feels that this is the result of too many horses in and around the deer habitat. One hundred and thirty-five deer are estimated in the area on a seasonal basis mainly from a migratory herd.

Continued heavy use of forage and uncontrolled horse population increase and expansion of horse use will likely result in reduced productivity of bighorn sheep and mule deer, ANTELOPE & OTHER WILDLIFE SPECIES. in the area. Should the heavy forage utilization by horses continue, a demise of native big game species could occur in the area.

b. Wild Horse - U.S. Air Force and Department of Energy

The U.S. Air Force has used the NWHR and surrounding area as a military training area for the past forty years which is a primary use of the withdrawn area.

Sandia National Laboratories, through a contract with DOE, has used the northern portion of the Range Complex for military weapons test and development for more than ten years. These agency's activities are expected to increase with time. ~~Though their impact on the wild horse population~~

~~are not totally known at this time, certain conflicts are developing.~~

2. Cooperation in Mangement

Because various state and federal agencies are involved in uses of the NRC and particularly the NWHR, and based on Congress' adoption of the Wild Horse and Burro Act, there have been a series of cooperative agreements which have affected the management of the resources. Therefore, included is a summary of Cooperative Agreements (Appendix 2) that affect wild horse management on the bombing range.

3. Management Number

Through successive C&C meetings and field trips the C&C Committee members recommended an initial management number of ~~1,500~~ 2000 head of wild horses to be managed on the NWHR only. A large removal will be required to obtain the initial management number. Future management numbers will be determined through subsequent analysis of monitoring data. Actual use numbers to be used in monitoring analysis will be obtained by aerial census.

III. OBJECTIVES

The overall objectives are to maintain and manage populations of wild, free-roaming horses on the NWHR as recognized components secondary only to the primary uses the area was withdrawn for in conformity with the goals esablished in the Wild Horse and Burro Act.

Primary - Secondary use.

A. Habitat

1. Specific Objectives

a. Determine key areas and key forage plant species for wild horses. Initially key areas and key species will be selected using the Nevada Range Monitoring Task Force Procedures. Within five years these key areas and key species will be evaluated through field observations and to determine which key areas and key forage plant species to continue to monitor.

b. Do not allow utilization of key forage plant species by horses to exceed the allowable use factor by more than ten percent on the NWHR as established by the Nevada Range Monitoring Task Force as follows:

Plant Category	Spring	Summer	Fall	Winter	Yearlong
Perennial Grasses and Grasslike	50	50	60	60	55
Shrubs, Half Shrubs and Trees	30	50	50	50	45

c. Maintain a static to upward trend in vegetation characteristics by maintaining wild horse numbers at a compatible level with the vegetation resource to be monitored by establishing appropriate studies on key management areas using methodology as established by the Nevada Range Monitoring Task Force to be evaluated every three years.

* Ref. Nev. Range Task Force members.

2. General Objectives

Eliminate areas of impact to vegetation around limited water sources by maintaining sources in functional conditions and

adjust the wild horse population numbers to what the source is capable of supporting.

B. Wild Horses

1. Specific Objectives

a. Determine carrying capacity (long-term management numbers) of wild horses for the Nevada Wild Horse Herd Management Area within 12 years, using monitoring studies, as described by the Nevada Monitoring Task Force. Initiate monitoring with ~~1,500~~ 2000 head.

b. Obtain information on population characteristics (i.e., color, condition, average band size), and population dynamics (i.e., age class, sex ratio, age structure) every three years (depending access to the NRC based on its primary use) to be evaluated as the information is obtained. In addition, collect information on seasonal movement and distribution patterns. Information to be collected during periodic capture, aerial census, and on ground field observations. Information is necessary to better understand the forces which shape the population and will assist in the establishment of management direction and new objectives.

2. General Objectives

a. Maintenance of a population of sound, healthy animals by selective removal during capture operations of seriously lame, ill, or deformed individuals.

b. Enhance unusual or unique color markings (i.e., pinto, white, appaloosa, palomino, buckskin, grulla, roan, gray, etc.) by selective retention or relocation of those colored animals during capture operations.

c. Manage for wild horse use on the NWHR only. This can be accomplished through wild horse adjustment and modification of waters.

IV. MANAGEMENT METHODS

A. Habitat

1. Specific Management Methods

a. Determine key areas and key forage species for wild horses. Initially key areas and key species will be selected using the Nevada Range Monitoring Task Force Procedures. Within five years, these key areas and key species will be evaluated through field observations and study analysis to determine which key areas and key forage plant species to continue to monitor. Criteria for selection of key areas will be that they provide a significant amount of the available forage in the pasture and be selected only after a careful evaluation of the current pattern of grazing used by the wild horses has been determined. Key areas will be selected in a homogenious vegetation type and contain the key species or have the potential to produce the key species to be monitored. ~~Areas remove from water or having limited accessibility should not be considered as key management areas but may be suitable for comparison areas.~~ This AREA SHOULD BE for COMPARISON

Key forage plant species should be palatable to the grazing animals during the season of use. Key species should provide more than 15 percent of the available forage in the grazing area or have the potential for greater production if it is critical to the needs of the grazing animal. The key species must be a perennial forage plant; and be consistent with management objectives for the plant community.

Depending on the objectives for each key area the following types of studies may be conducted at each key area: utilization, frequency, ground cover, climate, actual use, and apparent trench studies.

Within six years, all key areas and key species will be evaluated to determine their effectiveness in reflecting the current grazing management over similar areas in the HMA.

b. Do not allow utilization of key forage plant species to exceed allowable use factors by more than ten percent on the NWHR as presented in the Nevada Range Monitoring Handbook (First Edition, 1984) and BLM Manual 4412.

Allowable use factors as established by the Nevada Range Studies Task Group are:

Plant Category	Spring	Summer	Fall	Winter	Yearlong
Perennial Grasses and Grasslike	50	50	60	60	55
Shrubs, Half Shrubs and Trees	30	50	50	50	45

Initially the wild horse population will be adjusted to an interim level of 1,500 animals per C&C Committee members recommendations and five-party cooperative members recommendations. This initial adjustment in the wild horse population will have a direct impact on the utilization levels within the NRC and HMA.

Additional key areas will be selected and appropriate studies installed to determine if management objectives are being met.

Monitoring studies will be used to indicate a need for further adjustments in grazing pressure either on small use areas or HMA wide.

c. Maintain a static to upward trend in vegetation characteristics by maintaining wild horse numbers at a compatible level with the vegetation resource. Use to be monitored using methodology as established by the Nevada Range Monitoring Task Group (Nevada Rangeland Monitoring Handbook, First Edition, 1984).

Range sites have not been determined for the NWHR which limits the degree of monitoring to be accomplished. However, studies consisting of utilization, frequency, ground cover, climate, actual use, and apparent trend will be used in the analysis to determine trend. By adjusting the animal population to a compatible level with the vegetative resource then a static to upward trend should be maintained.

The initial adjustment of the wild horse population will greatly benefit the vegetation community and should result in a favorable vegetative trend.

Utilization and climate data will be collected yearly. All other data should be collectd at three-year intervals. Apparent trend will be determined initially and at three-year intervals.

2. General Management Methods

Eliminate areas of impact to vegetation around limited water sources by maintaining sources in functional condition and adjust the wild horse population numbers to what that source is capable of supporting.

Initially water sources need to be brought back into functional condition with adequate water storage, with annual maintenance thereafter.

Water sources needing minor repairs to major reconstruction and development are ranked by priority. Starting with highest priority they are as follows: Cedar Wells--develop with storage and troughs; Upper and Lower Corral Springs--reconstruction, add new troughs and storage; Silverbow pipeline--repair, add new troughs storage and consider extending pipeline. Rose Spring pipeline--add storage and consider pipeline extension; Tunnel Spring--add storage; Cedar Spring--develop with storage. Development of additional springs will be considered only through consultation with the five-party cooperators.

Completion of repairs and/or reconstruction is dependent upon feasibility and funding. Initially certain projects will be proposed in FY 1985 for funding and access to the NRC based on its primary use. Additional projects will be proposed every year until all projects are working.

The C&C Committee has recommended the initial management of ~~1,500~~ 2000 head of wild horses on the NWHR. Once initial management numbers are obtained water sources will be monitored yearly to determine if adequate water is available for horses using the area. If not, the horses will be removed from that area and either relocated or put up for adoption.

B. Wild Horses

1. Specific Management Methods

a. Determine carrying capacity (long-term management numbers) of wild horses for NWHR HMA within twelve years using monitoring studies, as described by the Nevada Range

Monitoring Task Force. Initiate monitoring with ~~1,500~~ 2000 head (C&C recommendation).

Long-term management numbers will be determined from analysis of utilization, frequency, ground cover, climate data, actual use, and apparent trend studies.

Utilization studies will be read every year and short-term adjustment to the wild horse population may be necessary based on utilization results. Other monitoring studies except for climate data will be collected every three years. If apparent trend shows need for substantial adjustment prior to twelve years, then the wild horse population will be adjusted accordingly.

In addition to vegetative monitoring resulting in wild horse population adjustments, the wild horse population may be adjusted based on the availability of water in used areas. Water sources will be monitored yearly to determine if there is sufficient water available for wild horses and wild life. Horses should have ample quantities of water at all times (the Stockman's Handbook, 1978) even though the reference is for domestic horses, this source suggest 10-12 gallons daily; this amount depends on weather, work done, food ration, and size of horse.

b. Collect information on population characteristics (i.e., color, condition, average band size), and population dynamics (i.e., age class, sex ratio, age structure) every three years (or less depending on funding) to be evaluated as information is obtained. Age-class information will need to be acquired in July and January. In addition, seasonal movement and distribution studies will be conducted four times a year, at least every three years. Information to be collected during periodic capture, aerial census, and on ground field observations. Information is necessary to

better understand the forces which shape the population and will assist in the establishment of management direction and new objectives.

2. General Management Methods

a. Maintenance of a population of sound, healthy animals can be obtained by selective removal during capture operations of seriously lame, ill, or deformed individuals.

b. Enhance unusual or unique color markings (i.e., Kawich Valley, white, gray, grulla; Cactus Flat/Gold Flat, roan, palomino, buckskin). Also preserve a portion of the pinto population ~~on~~ from the Stonewall Mountain area by either relocating a portion of the population during the Stonewall capture operation to areas within the NWHR or to appropriate HMA where a certain color is being managed for (i.e., Little Mountain HMA, Caliente Resource area, to enhance the management objectives for that area. and to not exceed the ~~carrying capacities~~ management numbers.

The initial wild horse adjustment will not be concerned with selective removal concerning color except for preserving a portion of the pinto population ~~on~~ from Stonewall Mountain. After the initial adjustment to ~~1,500~~ 2000 head, enhancement of color will be considered to aid in maintaining the unique development of certain colors.

The pinto population to be preserved will be captured during the initial adjustment capture operation and relocated to appropriate HMA, not to exceed management numbers. The number of pintos to be relocated will be from 5-10 head and will be picked from among all pintos captured. The pintos band will be monitored for two years to assure success in relocating them. If they can't be relocated successfully, they will be placed into appropriate adoption centers for adoption.

c. Manage for wild horse use only on the NWHR, ~~only in~~ balance with forage resources and consistent with management goals for other resources. To accomplish this the C&C Committee recommended adjustment of wild horses on the NRC down to the initial management number of ~~1,500~~ 2000 head on the NWHR. Thereafter, certain waters outside the NWHR will be ~~modified but remain available~~ MANAGED only for wildlife use. Modification projects will be identified as needed with prior coordination with and approval by the USAF which is responsible for the primary use of the NRC. Completion of projects will be contingent on feasibility and funding. Actual design of the project will be coordinated to meet the objectives of wild horse and wildlife.

C. Population Adjustment

Initial population reduction of wild horses on the Nellis Range Complex will come from the following areas:

Stonewall Mountain
Goldfield/Mud Lake
Cactus Flat/Goldflat
Kawich Valley

Actual numbers from each area varies because of the free-roaming behavior of wild horses and the influence of availability of water. The initial reduction, however, ~~will~~ SHOULD be close to 3,500 head of wild horses from NRC which includes the NWHR. The initial management as recommended by the C&C Committee on the NRC will be ~~1,500~~ 2000 head of horses located within the NWHR.

There may be subsequent minor population adjustments based on available water. However, future population adjustments will be conducted only when range monitoring studies demonstrate a need. Adjustments will be based on the utilization of key forage species (Range Studies Task Group, 1981). A basic utilization--population

size formula will be employed for calculation of necessary adjustment as follows:

$$x = \frac{\text{(Desired Population Size)}}{\text{Desired Utilization}} = \frac{\text{Present Population Size}}{\text{Present Utilization}}$$

Utilization monitoring, as per BLM Manual 4412.22 B7C5, and the Nevada Range Monitoring Procedures Handbook, 1981, will be executed in the key management areas. Wild horse adjustment will be contingent on the ~~1,500~~ 2000 head population reflecting an annual finite rate of increase as determined by future population studies analysis.

All population reductions will be in accordance with guidelines established by the NWHR Gathering Plan, covering the NRC area, and 43 Code of Federal Regulation 4740.

V. STUDIES AND ASSESSMENT

Actual procedures for each type of study will be contained in the HMA files in the Caliente Resource Area office in order that some consistency can be attained in the program for each HMA.

Studies & assessments will be conducted and controlled as needed & the primary use of the NRA,

A. Habitat

1. Trend

~~Trend is defined as a change in vegetation and soil characteristics as a direct result of environmental factors, primarily climate and grazing.~~ Trend studies will be used in combination with other studies to evaluate the effectiveness of this management plan and will be read every three years. The frequency sampling procedure described by Tueller et. al., (1972) will be the methodology utilized. The data collected will be reserved in the allotment files located in the Caliente

Bureau of Land Management office. Refer to the range monitoring map (Appendix 1) for approximate location of the trend plots.

2. Utilization

Utilization is defined as the degree of herbage removed from current annual production. Utilization studies help to evaluate management systems by determining patterns and quantity of use. The Key Forage Plant Method is the technique adopted for this management plan. Section 4423.33B7C of the Bureau of Land Management Manual and the Range Studies Task Group (1981) describes this particular method adequately. Utilization transects will be conducted throughout the key management area. Data will be reserved with trend information.

3. Actual Use

Wild horse actual use estimates will be obtained from aerial census conducted by the Caliente Resource Area Wild Horse and Burro Specialist at a minimum of once every three years, depending on funding. It will require ten hours of helicopter time to complete each census and access to the NRC based on its primary use. Data will be reserved with trend utilization information.

B. Wild Horse

1. Home Ranges and Seasonal Movement Patterns

A comprehensive study will be conducted to secure information on home ranges and seasonal movement patterns. This information is essential to accomplish utilization studies. Considering the present situation, regarding the size and topography of the HMA and number of wild horses, a study could be conducted with

limited funding and access to the NRC based on its primary use as follows:

Phase 1 - October, January, April, July

Objective: Determine seasonal movement patterns and home range establishment.

Method: On the ground observations from vehicle conducted seasonally (fall, winter, spring, and summer), with sighting locations plotted on a map.

Phase 2 - Evaluation of information acquired through field work.

In addition, information regarding other population characteristics and population dynamics would be gathered at this time (i.e., color, condition, band size, age classes, sex ratio, etc.). This additional information would require use of a spotting scope positioned at strategic locations.

2. Productivity and Survival

Information on young/adult classification will be collected when funding is available, but should be gathered at a minimum of every three years. The survey should be conducted in July and again the following January. Aerial survey will be the method used to collect data, plus additional information should be collected during the survey that would enhance data already contained in the resource files concerning other characteristics of the population (i.e., color, condition, band size, actual count, home ranges, and seasonal movement patterns, etc.)

3. Sex Ratio Determination

Classification of captured animals--sex determination will be conducted on all horses captured during gathering operations.

Field observation--a spotting scope positioned at strategic locations (water sources, trails, natural salt licks, etc.) will be employed to obtain sex ratio information where possible. Sex ratio should be determined every three years. When studies are conducted, unless all animals in a band can be classified, the data will not be used.

4. Age Structure Evaluation

Relative age structure of the NWHR HMA population will be periodically evaluated during gathering operations.

5. Relocation

The relocation of wild horses from one herd management area to another may be undertaken when necessary to meet specific management objectives. Relocation is a tool that has utility in maintaining vigor in herds and in enhancing selected characteristics which are managed in a population. Therefore, relocation of wild horses will not be overlooked here. The main emphasis is the pintos on Stonewall Mountain. The proposal is that during the Stonewall capture operation 5-10 pintos will be picked out of the gathered horses and relocated either on the NWHR or to appropriate HMA outside the ~~bombing range~~ NRC. ~~With the emphasis of maintaining and building a population of pintos, where the interested public could view them.~~

~~One proposed~~ relocation area that ~~exists~~ outside the ~~Bombing Range~~ NRC is the ~~Little Mountain HMA in the~~ Caliente Resource Area. ~~This area has a relocation study identified in the HMAP~~ which identifies the study methods. Relocation of pintos to this area

Relocation to areas outside the future domain under multiple use may only be allowed by establishing wild horse management areas.

would enhance specific management objectives for that area (Little Mountain HMAP Caliente Resource Area, BLM).

VI. MODIFICATION

This plan may be modified as new data and evaluation deem necessary.

VII. APPROVAL

Prepared By:

RGE CON/WH&B Specialist BLM Caliente R.A.	Date

Recommended for Approval:

Area Manager BLM CRA	Date

MEMBERS of CC

Approved By:

District Manger BLM Las Vegas District	Date

Concurrence:

State Director BLM Nevada State Office	Date
Commander Nellis Air Force Base Department of the Air Force	Date
Regional Director, U.S. Dept. of Interior U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service	Date

Director Nevada Dept. of Wildlife	Date
Manager, Department of Energy Nevada Operations Office	Date

APPENDIX 1

MAPS

Map #1 - Map of C&C Area

Map #2 - Home Range and Herd Use Area

Map #3 - Existing Projects

Consultation & Coordination Area (C&C)

Home Range & Herd Use Areas

Existing Projects

APPENDIX 2

SUMMARY OF WILD HORSE AND WILDLIFE COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
FOR THE NELLIS AIR FORCE RANGE

June 1962 - WILD HORSE MANAGEMENT AREA.

Agencies Involved - U.S. Air Force and Bureau of Land Management.

Purpose - "Because of the deep concern expressed by a large number of people in regard to preservation of wild horses and the need to manage and control their use, an area within the boundaries of the land withdrawn for the Nellis Air Force Base Nevada, has been identified as suitable wild horse area. The area is presently being used by wild or abandoned horses by their own selection. The horse use is not inconsistent with the needs of the Air Force. Identifying the area for horse use will provide an area which can be managed for the horses and their habitat. It is reliably estimated on the basis of counts made by the State Fish and Game Department that more than 200 horses now run in this area. This approximate number of wild horses will be maintained as long as their use of the range remains in balance with the forage resources available." The agreement stated further, "By cooperation with Nevada State and county officials the control of the desired number of horses to use the range will be achieved." The total area involved in the agreement was 435,000 acres.

December 1963 - COOPERATIVE PLAN FOR THE CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF FISH AND WILD LIFE RESOURCES ON NELLIS AIR FORCE BASE RANGES.

Agencies Involved - U.S. Air Force, Bureau of Sports Fisheries and Wildlife (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service), Nevada Fish and Game Commission (Nevada Department of Wildlife), and Bureau of Land Management.

Purpose - The agreement provided for the management, development, and protection of fish and wildlife resources on the Nellis Air Force Base Range. It included all big game species (deer, antelope, big horn sheep). It also included horses under the term wild life and estimated the population for the wild horse range to be 200 horses.

June 1965. WILD HORSE MANAGEMENT AREA.

Agencies Involved - U.S. Air Force and the Bureau of Land Management.

Purpose - This was a reissuance of the June 1962 agreement. The new agreement reduced the size of the wild horse management area to 394,500 acres, which was the only change.

January 15, 1969 - COOPERATIVE PLAN FOR THE CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE RESOURCES ON NELLIS AIR FORCE BASE RANGES.

Agencies Involved - U.S. Air Force, Bureau of Sports Fisheries and Wildlife, Nevada Fish and Game Commission, and the Bureau of Land Management.

Purpose - This was a reissuance of the 1963 cooperative plan. The only change was an update of the animal numbers for the wild horse area which were as follows - horses - 400, deer - 200, antelope - 100.

November 12, 1973 - COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT, NEVADA STATE OFFICE, AND UNITED STATES AIR FORCE, NELLIS AIR FORCE BASE.

Agencies Involved - U.S. Air Force and Bureau of Land Management.

Purpose - Cancelled 1962 and 1965 agreements. New agreement complies with provisions of the Wild Horse and Burro Act of December 15, 1971 and 43 CFR Part 4700, which authorized BLM to enter into cooperative agreement with other agencies when wild horses use lands under their

jurisdiction for all or a part of the year. Agreement recognized that the horses on the Nevada Wild Horse range were under the jurisdiction of BLM. It called for a management plan to be developed to provide for the management of the horses and their habitat.

January 1977 - FIVE-PARTY COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT.

Agencies Involved - U.S. Air Force, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of Energy, Bureau of Land Management, and Nevada Department of Wildlife.

Purpose - Protecting, developing, and managing the natural resources of fish and wildlife, vegetation, watershed, and wild horses and burros on the Nellis Air Force Range, the Nevada Test Site, and the Tonopah Test Range. The agreement calls for resource inventories and the development of a resource management plan.

GLOSSARY

Age Structure. The ratio of one age class to another used in determining or understanding the population dynamics and identifying future or past problems in the herd.

Allotment. An area of land where one or more operators graze their livestock. It generally consists of public lands but may include parcels of private or state-owned lands. The number of livestock and season-of-use are stipulated for each allotment. An allotment may consist of several pastures or be only one pasture.

Allotment Management Plan (AMP). A livestock grazing management plan dealing with a specific unit of rangeland, based on multiple-use resource management objectives. The AMP considers livestock grazing in relation to other uses of the range and in relation to renewable resources-watershed, vegetation, and wildlife. An AMP establishes season-of-use, number of livestock to be permitted on the range, and rangeland developments needed.

Act, The. The Wild Free-Roaming Horse and Burro Protection Act of December 15, 1971, 16 U.S.C. 1331-1431.

Animal Unit Month (AUM). Amount of feed or forage by an animal-unit for one month.

Carrying Capacity. The maximum number of animals possible without inducing damage to vegetation or related resources. It may vary from year to year on the same area due to fluctuating forage production.

Community. A group of plants and animals living in a specific region under relatively similar conditions.

Demography. The study of vital statistics of a population.

Erosion. The wearing away of the land surface by wind, running water, and other geological agents.

Enclosure. A small area set aside and protected from grazing, either to preserve representative areas in excellent range condition or to allow observation of succession on depleted rangeland without grazing.

Fecundity. Rate at which an individual produces offspring, usually expressed only for females.

Finite Rate of Increase (λ). Factor by which the population increases during each time unit.

Forage. All browse and herbaceous food that is available to grazing animals.

Grazing System. A systematic application of grazing treatments to a management unit in a prescribed sequence over recurring periods of time; the manipulation of livestock to accomplish a desired result.

Habitat. A specific set of physical conditions that surround the single species, a group of species, or large community. In wildlife management, the major components of habitat are considered to be food, water, cover, and living space.

Habitat Management Plan (HMP). A written and officially approved plan for a specific geographical area of public land that identifies wildlife habitat and related objectives, establishes the sequence of actions for achieving objectives, and outlines procedures for evaluating accomplishments.

Herd. A number of wild animals of one species that remain together as a group.

Herd Management Area (HMA). That area of wild horse habitat covered by HMAP.

Herd Management Area Plan (HMAP). A plan for management of the HMA.

Home Range. An area that an animal or group of animals travel in pursuit of their routine activity.

Key Management Area. These are areas that may be a relatively small portion of a range selected because of its location, use, or grazing value as a monitoring point for management decisions. It is assumed that key areas, if properly selected, will reflect the overall acceptability of current grazing management over all or part of the grazing unit.

Key Species. (1) Forage species whose use serves as an indicator to the degree of use of associated species; (2) those species which must, because of their importance, be considered in the management program.

Management Framework Plan (MFP). A planning decision document which establishes for a given area of land, land-use allocations, coordination guidelines for multiple-use, and objectives to be achieved for each class of land use or protection. It is BLM's Land Use-Use Plan.

Mortality. Ratio of the number of deaths of individuals to the population, often described as a function of age.

ORV. Off-Road Vehicle.

Perennial (Plant). A plant that has a life cycle of three or more years.

Public Land. Tracts of land administered by the Bureau of Land Management.

Range Condition. The current productivity of a range relative to what the range is naturally capable of producing.

Range Inventory. An itemized list of resources of a management area such as range site; range condition classes; range condition trends; range use; estimated proper stocking rates; physical developments; and natural conditions such as water, barriers, etc.

Range Trend. Change in vegetation and soil characteristics as a direct result of environmental factors, primarily climate and grazing.

Reasonable Numbers. That number of animals which the wildlife management agency is striving to maintain within a given planning unit under a multiple-use concept on a sustained yield basis.

Riparian. Of, on, or pertaining to the bank of a river, or a pond or small water source.

Sex Ratio. The ratio existing between the number of male and female animals within a given herd, band, or population.

Shrub. A relatively low-growing, much branched, many stemmed, woody, perennial plant.

Soil. The unconsolidated mineral and organic material on the immediate surface of the earth that serves as a natural medium for the growth of land plants.

Soil Associations. A group of defined and named soil units occurring together in a characteristic pattern over a geographic region.

Unit Resource Analysis (URA). A comprehensive display of physical resource data and an analysis of the current use, production, condition, and trend of the resource and the potentials and opportunities within a planning unit, including a profile of ecological values.

Utilization (Range Utilization). A degree of use of current year's plant production made by grazing animals.

Vegetative Type. A plant community with distinguishable characteristics, described by the dominant vegetation present.

Watershed. The total area above a given point on a stream that contributes water to the flow at that point.

LITERATURES CITED

M. E. Ensminger, B.S., M.A., PhD. 1978. The Stockman's Handbook (Animal Agricultural Series). Fifth Edition. The Interstate Printers & Publishers, Inc., Danville, Illinois.

Tueller, P.T., G. Lorain, K. Kipping, and C. Wilkie. 1972. Methods for Measuring Vegetation Changes on Nevada Rangelands. Nevada Agriculture Experiment Station Technical Bulletin #16.

U.S. Department of the Interior, 1984. Little Mountain HMAP. Bureau of Land Management, Caliente Resource Area, Caliente, Nevada.

Lloyd Smith, National Wild Horse Assos.,

Dawn y. Lappin, Wild Horse Organized Assist.

Dave F. Rollins, Clark County Game Mgmt Board

John H. Young, Nevada Wildlife Federation,

Wilfred Allen, Fraternity of Desert Bighorn,

Dart Anthony, Humane Society of Southern, NV,

Kenneth P. Reid, Sierra Club,

050

IN REPLY REFER TO
4700/4150
(N-931.3)

United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Nevada State Office
300 Booth Street
P.O. Box 12000
Reno, Nevada 89520

Bureau of Land Management
OCT 25 1982
LAS VEGAS
DISTRICT OFFICE
Las Vegas, Nevada

October 22, 1982

Instruction Memorandum No. NV-83-26
Expires 9/30/84

To: District Managers, Nevada

From: State Director, Nevada

Subject: Processing of Privately Owned Animals During Wild Horse Gatherings and/or Livestock Impoundments

As you may be aware, the Nevada State Office has been attempting to develop a cooperative agreement with the Nevada Department of Agriculture for processing the subject animals. At the present time, it does not appear that a cooperative agreement with the State will be forthcoming in the immediate future. As a result, the enclosed procedures will be utilized by BLM in Nevada until such time as an agreement with the Department of Agriculture can be obtained. These procedures reflect the position of the Executive Director, Nevada Department of Agriculture, as expressed in the attached letters. It is not the intent of this memorandum to redefine existing guidance for conducting impoundment activities. Please refer to 43 CFR 4150 for proper trespass and impoundment procedures.

In addition to the above, you should be aware that the cooperative agreement between the Nevada Department of Agriculture and BLM for the disposition of wild horses and burros (copy enclosed), dated March 24, 1978, will remain in effect. However, the procedures contained in this agreement are applicable to those situations where a notice of intent to impound is not issued in connection with a wild horse and burro gathering. Since the procedures outlined in the subject Instruction Memorandum require the issuance of a notice of intent to impound prior to all wild horse or burro gatherings, the March 24, 1978 Cooperative Agreement will only be utilized at such time as it is known that all privately owned animals have been removed from a particular gathering area during previous roundups.

4 Enclosures
Encl. 1-Procedures
Encl. 2-Ltr. dtd 8/19/81
Encl. 3-Ltr. dtd 8/20/81
Encl. 4-Cooperative Agreement

Distribution
Director (250) 1 w/encls.
SCD (D-558A) 3 w/encls.
DM (CA-020) 1 w/encls.
Nevada Dept. of Agriculture

PROCEDURES FOR PROCESSING PRIVATELY
OWNED ANIMALS DURING LIVESTOCK IMPOUNDMENTS

I. General

The procedures outlined below should be followed when conducting wild horse gatherings and/or livestock impoundment activities on public lands. When implemented, these procedures should provide a uniform approach for the disposition of privately owned animals which are taken up from public lands in connection with impoundment activities.

II. Specific

1. With the following exceptions, procedures for processing animals during wild horse gatherings and livestock impoundment activities are essentially the same:

a. Wild Horse Gathering - Concurrently issue a 28-day notice of intent to gather and notice of intent to impound.

b. Livestock Impoundment - Issue notice of intent to impound.

2. The Nevada Department of Agriculture and District Brand Inspector will be included on lists to receive copies of the above notices, as well as a Notice of Public Sale, when issued.

3. The BLM authorized officer will contact the District Brand Inspector for date(s) and time that brand inspection(s) will be needed.

4. The BLM and District Brand Inspector will jointly inspect impounded animals and place them in one of the following three categories for action outlined in Paragraphs 5 through 11 below:

a. Branded animals with offspring, including yearlings.

(1) Owner(s) of animal(s) can be determined.

(2) Owner(s) of animal(s) cannot be determined.

b. Unbranded animal(s) with offspring (including yearlings) with obvious evidence of existing or former private ownership.

c. Unbranded animals and offspring (including yearlings) without obvious evidence of former private ownership.

5. The District Brand Inspector will determine ownership of branded animals and their offspring.

6. The BLM authorized officer will determine, after consultation with the District Brand Inspector, if unbranded animals are wild and free-roaming horses or burros.

7. The District Brand Inspector will determine, if possible, the ownership of unbranded animals determined not to be wild and free-roaming horses or burros.

8. Branded animals with offspring and any claimed unbranded animals with offspring with evidence of existing or former private ownership and which have been determined to be privately owned will be retained in BLM custody pending notification of owner or claimant for settlement in full for impoundment and trespass charges or sale of animals at public auction.

9. Branded animals with offspring whose owners cannot be determined, unclaimed unbranded animals with offspring with evidence of existing or former private ownership, and unbranded cattle and offspring will be released to the custody of the Nevada Department of Agriculture as estrays.

10. The District Brand Inspector will issue a Brand Inspection Certificate for the immediate shipment of wild horses or burros to a central holding corral (Palomino Valley or other destination) and for the branded/claimed animals and their offspring (under Paragraph 4 above), where impoundment and trespass charges have not been offered or received, for shipment to an auction yard (Fallon or other destination).

11. There may be certain exceptions in these procedures due to adequacy of the gathering/impoundment facilities, location of these facilities, ability to contact owners/claimants, etc.; however, the intent of these procedures can be followed to accomplish the requirements for the State of Nevada and meet the objectives for impoundment.

ROBERT LIST
GOVERNOR

STATE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE
JOHN H. RAETZ, CHAIRMAN
DON J. DAVIS
DAVID H. FULSTONE II
LOUIE A. GUAZZINI, JR.
HAROLD W. HALL
DONNELL J. RICHARDS
ROBERT E. WRIGHT
ARNOLD SETTELMEYER

THOMAS W. BALLOW, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
JACK N. ARMSTRONG, D.V.M., DIRECTOR
DIVISION OF ANIMAL INDUSTRY
PHILLIP C. MARTINELLI, DIRECTOR
DIVISION OF PLANT INDUSTRY
STEPHEN J. MAHONEY, DIRECTOR
DIVISION OF BRAND INSPECTION

STATE OF NEVADA
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
350 CAPITOL HILL AVENUE—P.O. BOX 11100
RENO, NEVADA 89510
TELEPHONE (702) 784-6401

August 19, 1981

Mr. George Giacometto
3405 Highland
Winnemucca NV 89445

Dear George:

We are encountering some confusion about how horses captured by the BLM and inspected by our Brand Inspectors are handled, particularly where the owner is known and where capture fees and trespass fines or assessments are high. This letter should clear that up.

In the case of the horses captured by BLM and held at the Sonoma Ranch which reportedly belong to a Mr. McNinch, proceed as follows:

1. BLM captured the horses and delivered them to the Sonoma Ranch where they are being held and boarded for BLM by Mr. Richards. BLM is responsible for the board bill from the time of capture until removal. The horses are being held and handled by BLM under federal trespass laws and regulations.

2. There is no question about the ownership of the horses and so they should not be considered or handled as estray or stray horses under state law.

3. You should provide a brand inspection for "Identification purposes only." when requested by any party.

4. Any dispute over the possession and/or charges for these horses should be between the BLM and Mr. McNinch without us getting involved. All we can do is provide identification of the animals as requested by any party which may assist them in reaching ultimate agreement or settlement.

5. In the future we should provide brand inspection as requested and we should handle estray or stray horses. We can accept custody when completely released to us and return them to the owner or advertise them as estrays. We should not accept custody of horses from the BLM unless they completely release them.

Encl. 2-1

George Giacometto
Winnemucca

August 19, 1981

As long as the BLM expects the horses to be held as collateral for charges due them, then they should retain possession and be responsible for the cost of feed and care of the animals.

Sincerely,

Thomas W. Ballow,
Executive Director

TWB:bp

cc: Mickey Richards
Steve Mahoney
Les Sweeney
Geren Long

ROBERT LIST
GOVERNOR

STATE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE
JOHN H. RAETZ, CHAIRMAN
DON J. DAVIS
DAVID H. FULSTONE II
LOUIE A. GUAZZINI, JR.
HAROLD W. HALL
DONNELL J. RICHARDS
ROBERT E. WRIGHT
ARNOLD SETTELMEYER

THOMAS W. BALLOW, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
JACK N. ARMSTRONG, D.V.M., DIRECTOR
DIVISION OF ANIMAL INDUSTRY
PHILLIP C. MARTINELLI, DIRECTOR
DIVISION OF PLANT INDUSTRY
STEPHEN J. MAHONEY, DIRECTOR
DIVISION OF BRAND INSPECTION

STATE OF NEVADA
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
350 CAPITOL HILL AVENUE P.O. BOX 11100
RENO, NEVADA 89510
TELEPHONE (702) 784-6401

August 20, 1981

Frank Shields
District Director, BLM
Winnemucca, NV 89445

Dear Frank:

As a result of discussions with Lester Sweeney and Geren Long in the State BLM office yesterday, we agreed on how the horses should be handled. A copy of the letter sent to George Giacometto is enclosed which outlines the agreement reached.

There has been a misunderstanding which has developed apparently because we were administering different laws relating to horses, which sometimes appear to be in conflict.

I think it will work out alright if the Nevada Department of Agriculture is careful to take possession only of Estray horses and when BLM turns them over there is no holding requirement. We have no funding or authority to pay for care and board for horses while they are being held as collateral by BLM.

For clarification I have enclosed a copy of NRS 569.005 which defines the term "Estray". In order to be an Estray the owner must be unknown in the section where the animal is found. This, of course, does not apply in this case.

Once we do take estray animals then our first responsibility is to identify them, find the owner, and return them to him. We can collect costs of care and advertising. We do have some authority to collect damages where the estray has broken through a legal fence and caused damage and where the owner has complied with State trespass laws.

I recognize that our differing laws and responsibilities make us appear to be uncooperative at times but we are attempting to cooperate any way we can to assist the Bureau of Land Management in removing excess horses

Encl. 3-1

from ranges in Nevada. We appreciate the cooperation we have received from you.

Sincerely,

Thomas W. Ballow
Executive Director

TWB:elb

cc: Ed Spang w/Att
George Giacometto
Mickey Richards
Steve Mahoney

COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT

BETWEEN

THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, STATE OF NEVADA

AND THE

NEVADA STATE OFFICE, BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

FOR THE

DISPOSITION OF WILD HORSES AND BURROS

GATHERED FROM PUBLIC RANGES WITHIN

THE STATE OF NEVADA

I. PURPOSE

This cooperative agreement between the Department of Agriculture, State of Nevada, hereinafter referred to as the STATE, and the Bureau of Land Management, hereinafter referred to as the BLM, is for the purpose of identifying procedures to be carried out relative to the disposition of horses and burros gathered from the Federal ranges by the BLM or its agents in connection with roundups of horses and burros within the State of Nevada.

II. AUTHORITY

The STATE is responsible for determining diseased animals and ownership of domesticated animals under State law pursuant to Title 50 of the Nevada Revised Statutes and State Regulation #58.

The BLM is responsible for identification, management and protection of "wild free-roaming horses and burros", as defined in 16 U.S.C. 1331, et seq.

The BLM is authorized to enter into cooperative agreements with State agencies concerning the management and protection of wild free-roaming horses and burros under the provisions of the Wild Free-Roaming Horse and Burro Act of December 15, 1971, 16 U.S.C. 1331-1340 (Supp. 1, 1971), and the Taylor Grazing Act, 43 U.S.C. 315-315r (1970), and other authorities.

III. PROCEDURES

A. BLM shall notify the STATE of any intended or planned roundup of horses and/or burros, stating the locality or area where the gathering is to take place, the starting time of such gathering and any other specifics necessary to ensure proper cooperation between the parties thereto pursuant to this agreement.

B. Any unlicensed horses and burros gathered by the Bureau of Land Management or its agents, from lands under the administration of the Bureau of Land Management, will be examined by the Bureau of Land Management and a State Brand Inspector at the capture site as provided in this paragraph. Horses with obvious brands or other evidence of private ownership will be released to the STATE at or near the capture sites if they can be separated without unreasonable handling. The STATE will issue a Brand Inspection Clearance Certificate for all other horses for transportation to the designated BLM central holding facility. These horses will be reexamined by the BLM and a State Brand Inspector at the designated BLM central holding facility. Horses determined to be privately owned will be returned by BLM to the capture site and released to the STATE or released to the STATE at the central holding facility at the option of the STATE. No horses will be transported across Brand Inspection District boundaries without a Brand Inspection Clearance Certificate issued by a State Brand Inspector if the designated time frame agreed to by the parties as provided herein has not elapsed.

Specific procedures for obtaining Brand Inspection services are as follows:

1. The District Brand Inspector should have the opportunity to inspect all horses before they are loaded for shipment to the designated holding facility, therefore:

a. The Area Manager and District Wild Horse Specialist shall consult with the District Brand Inspector prior to each roundup and shall develop a reasonable minimum time frame for obtaining brand inspection services for each specified capture site.

b. BLM will not load any of the capture horses for transportation to the designated holding site unless the specific agreed upon time frame has elapsed.

c. BLM shall make every effort to notify the District Brand Inspector of required inspection services in excess of the minimum time whenever possible.

d. BLM will reimburse STATE for the actual cost of brand inspection services provided at the capture site.

e. All horses and burros gathered pursuant to this agreement will be transported from the capture site to a designated BLM central holding facility where they may be inspected by STATE prior to processing to determine if horses and burros (1) are branded in accordance with State law and/or are foals and yearlings following branded mothers, (2) are unbranded and/or foals and yearlings following unbranded mothers, or (3) possess any of the following evidence of existing or former private ownership, to wit: Gelding, shoes, saddle or bridle marks, and/or foals and yearlings following mothers having these characteristics. STATE shall bear all costs incurred in conducting said inspection at BLM's central holding facility and shall not be reimbursed by BLM for this inspection.

f. The District Brand Inspector shall expedite wild horse inspections to the fullest extent possible.

C. STATE shall provide a brand inspection and issue a Brand Inspection Certificate for horses and burros determined to be wild free-roaming horses and burros under the Act prior to their being placed in private custody. BLM shall reimburse STATE for the actual cost to the STATE of said brand inspection. The STATE agrees to provide a monthly accounting to the Bureau of Land Management of all brand inspection services for billing purposes.

D. Those horses determined to be unbranded pursuant to the provisions of III. B of this agreement will be disposed of in accordance with the provisions of the Wild Free-Roaming Horse and Burro Act, 16 U.S.C. 1331-1340 (Supp. 1, 1971), and any regulations adopted pursuant thereto.

E. In case of disagreement which the parties are unable to resolve by the exercise of good faith efforts as to the status of any particular horse or horses, the STATE and BLM agree to submit the question to an administrative law judge of the Department of Interior. BLM agrees to pay for the services of such judge and for the costs, not including any costs incurred by State, of any hearing made necessary by the submission of the question.

F. Disposition of those horses that are claimed, but which lack any evidence of present or former private ownership will be determined jointly by the STATE and BLM on a case-by-case basis. In case of disagreement as to proper disposition, STATE and BLM agree to submit the question to an administrative law judge as set forth in III.E.

G. The STATE and the BLM shall cooperate (without reimbursement to either party) in the collection of medical specimens from five to ten animmals in the initial gathering for the purpose of establishing a health status survey.

H. State/Federal health requirements and regulations governing the interstate and international movement of livestock shall be complied with. Compliance with the receiving States' or countries' requirements and regulations shall be

accomplished through a Nevada licensed and federally accredited private veterinarian who shall be reimbursed by the BLM or the person shipping the animal. Blood samples will be drawn from all unbranded and unclaimed horses and the samples submitted to the STATE Animal Disease Laboratory for EIA analysis. BLM shall reimburse the STATE for such tests.

IV. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

A. Meetings

Joint STATE and BLM meetings may be held at any time it is beneficial for either party or in the interest of individuals or the public. Meetings may be held at the field or State Office level, as determined by convenience.

B. Funding Obligation

Nothing in this cooperative agreement shall be construed as obligating any party hereto for the expenditure of funds unless and until appropriated by Congress.

C. Restriction of Congressional Delegates or Resident Commissioners

No member or delegate of Congress, or Resident Commissioner shall be admitted to any share or part of this agreement, or to any benefit which may arise therefrom.

D. Discrimination

All cooperative work under the provisions of this agreement will be accomplished without discrimination against any person because of race, creed, color, sex, or national origin.

E. This agreement shall not apply to Federal impoundments of domestic livestock, conducted by BLM pursuant to 43 CFR § 9239, for the purpose of enforcing BLM livestock trespass regulations.

F. Termination

This agreement becomes effective when signed by all the designated representatives of the parties hereto and shall remain in force until terminated by mutual agreement, or upon thirty days written notice of one party to the other party of their intention to terminate upon a date indicated.

G. Amendment

Amendments to this agreement may be proposed by any party and shall become effective upon written approval of all parties.

DATED this 24th day of March, 1978.

Approved: State of Nevada
Department of Agriculture

By: Executive Director

Approved: U.S. Department of Interior
Bureau of Land Management

By: Nevada State Director

APPROVED AS TO FORM ONLY

ATTORNEY GENERAL

By: Deputy Attorney General

meeting Sept 1984

Attendance	Rep	From
Phillip C Leopmiller	BLM	Caliente
CUB WOLFE	BLM CALIENTE →	
DAN JARLENSICI	AF	NELLIS
Monte Crook	AF	NELLIS
ROBERT G. YODER	U.S FWS	L.V.
George H. Reed	Clark Co. Game Management Board	L.V.
John Young	Nev. Wildlife Federation	L.V.
Dawn Y. Lappin	WNDA	Reno
Dave Anthony	HSSN	L V
John Donaldson	NDOW	LV
Ken Reid	Sierra Club	LV
LLOYD T. SMITH	NWHA	L.V.
Frank E Bingham	DOE	L.V.
JOE ROSS	BLM	L.V.
Carol Beasley	Sierra Club	L.V.
TERRY TRUCE	BLM	LVDO
BOB FURTEK	—	No. Las Vegas
BUTCH PADILLA	NEV. DEPT. OF WILDLIFE	LAS VEGAS
KEMP CONN	BLM	LAS VEGAS
STAN WILKERSON	BLM	LAS VEGAS

September 8, 1984

The meeting of the Consultation and Cooridination Planning Committee started at 9:10 a.m. in the Conference Room at the Bureau of Land Management in Las Vegas. Introductions were again made to refresh memories; all C & C members were present, as well as representatives for the Five Party Agreement. Ken Reid, Chairman, stated he would be able to continue on the committee as long as the meetings were on the weekends, when he could attend. All members agreed that meetings would be made to include all members. Ken Reid began the discussion of what problems exist on the range. Dawn Lappin introduced notes from the field trip of August 4, 1984. Water, spillage from construction, as well as a wet year had brought horses down from their range into the basin. George Reid informed the group about the numerous seeps in the canyons. As water dries up in the basin the horses move back to the mountains.

Some discussions led into the avenue of disposal of horses that are not allowed under PL 92-195. Kemp Conn, District Manager, explained the legal aavenues that must be adhered, i.e., capture plans, comment periods for the public, capture of animals, and methods of disposal. Ken Reid had prepared a questionaire regarding the issues. It was determined by the committee that no votes would be taken, but rather a consensus of opinions. The questions were prioritized, rather than in numerical order.

QUESTIONAIRE:

1. The entire group agreed that some reductions were necessary.

2. & 3. Were combined and a reduction of 50-75% reduction would be necessary to halt vegetative damage to the resource, as well as protect the animals in the years of drought (which are the more normal).

4. & 5. Combined, consensus of random removal, leaving a broad distribution between age and sex.

6. Under the law, adoption first priority. Later the discussion cntered around the lowering of fees, according to a time table of the adoptable animals. I.e, $125.00 for the first 45 days; a waiver of lowered fees after that period. The consensus of the group, Dawn Lappin and Lloyd Smith expressing some concern about the minimum fees, agreed that a minimum of $50.00 per animal.

7. same as above.

8. At first this was not thought as a viable solution, however under advisement, it was dtermined that this alternative should be included for those specific times where it may be necessary to protect the genetic qualities, or for scientic purposes. Relocation or transplant is however, limited.

9. Present Bureau of Land Management policies allow only for the destruction of sick or injured horses; and the adoption of all others. Dawn Lappin and Dart Anthony did not believe it was the duty of this committee to influence or attempt to change legislation.

9. & 10. Limited by current BLM policies.

11. No one agreed to putting unadoptables back onto the range. Which would disrupt the random capture.

12. Consensus that springs needed improvement. It was not discussed who would fund this project, but all agreed that manual labor could and has been contributed, in the past by National Wild Horse Association, in the future, groups included in the C & C. Planning Group.

13. I don't have notes that this was discussed, but I believe that once NDOW determined the needs of wildlife this would be in their management plan.

14. Agreed water facilities should be for both wildhorses and wildlife. Somewhere about this time, Dawn Lappin pointed out the priorities of this range. 1. Air Force needs; 2. wild horse refuge, and wildlife. Since this is the only refuge for horses, since horses are limnited to 1971 range. At the present and probably in the future, hunting would not be permitted for wildlife, so any excesses in populations would be for transplant purposes. 15. same as above.

16. Dart Anthony had sent letters inquiring about satillite counting; Air Force inquiry said it would not be specific enough and improbable because of the nature of testing on the range.

17. It was determined that a base population of 1500-2000 wild horses should be planned for.

Frank Bingham, Environmental Coordinator for the Five Party Agreement wrote on the board his interpretations of what he had heard, the C & C Committee agreed.

1. Manage for 1500-2000 wild horses, initially. through non-selective remval.

2. Develop Management Plan
    a. improvements
    b. monitoring
    c. wildlife numbers, improvements, and transplant opportunities.

3. Adoption Procedures
    a. Nationwide public relations program, keeping horses in Nevada.

b. Satillite centers nationally and public relations locally.

4. Adoption Fee

a. After consideration of WHOA analysis of adoptability and fees, Initially, $125.00 for the first 45 days' request waiver after 45 days.

b. Subcommittee set up including Air Force, Dart Anthony, and Lloyd Smith. (Air Force conatct: Lt. Col. John Kumenicz HQTFWC/PA Nellis AFB, NV 89191.
STAN WILKERSON

c. Lloyd Smith and Dawn Lappin preferred minimum pf $50.00 adoption fee. After 45 days action pursuant to statutes.

Five Party group will gettogether and get back to C & C. Target date for early October, around 20th. Agreed that C & C members would limit any verbage to the BLM release.

NEVADA
BLM
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

News Release

FOR RELEASE August 3, After 1 p.m. 84-14
CONTACT Capt. D. Benoit 643-2750
Stan Wilkerson 388-6403 8/3/84

CONSULATION AND COORDINATION COMMITTEE FORMED

The Las Vegas District of the Bureau of Land Management has announced that the members of the five-party agreement, (Nevada Division of Wildlife, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of Energy, U.S. Department of the Air Force, Bureau of Land Management), has formed a Consultation and Coordination Planning Committee.

The committee is made up of representatives of wildlife, humane, wildhorse and burro interest groups, who have previously worked with BLM and other governmental agencies on the management of wildlife, wild horses and burros.

Their purpose will be to advise the members of the five-party agreement on matters concerning the management of wildhorses and burros and other wildlife on the Nevada Wildhorse Range, Nellis Air Force Base Bombing and Gunnery Range.

The first meeting of the committee, which was orientational and organizational in nature, was held on August 3, 1984.

NOV 2 1984

WILD HORSE AND BURRO STATEMENT

Bureau of Land Management (BLM) personnel meeting in Reno November 1 and 2 discussed implementation of Nevada land use plans which deal with managing wild horse and burro herds on the public lands. The BLM reviewed its completed land use plans which call for the management of wild horse and burro herds based on various interest and resource values, the manageability of the herd area or territory itself, and recognition of other uses of the land and of adjacent private lands.

The BLM has already identified three areas for contracts which will allow them to proceed with managing the herds and habitat in order to meet objectives set forth in plans. They are the Pine Nuts and Pah Rah areas in Carson City District and the Reveille Herd Management Area in the Battle Mountain District. At this time, the Pine Nuts area will be managed for a herd of 575, while the Reveille wild horse area will be for 650 horses. The Pah Rah range is in Nevada's checkerboard lands, a mixture of private and public lands. Through the land use plan, private land owners have asked the BLM to remove horses from the Pah Rahs. BLM is required by law to respond to these requests.

BLM personnel also discussed priorities for implementation of herd area management plans in other areas of the State where land use plans are complete and the public has been involved in addressing the protection and management of wild horse and burro herds as components of the public lands and their many resource uses. These recommendations will now be taken back to the BLM district offices for

review and submitted to the BLM's headquarters in Washington, D. C. for final determination on Bureauwide basis. Within the next few weeks the Nevada BLM will be notified as to its portion of the $16.7 million appropriated by Congress for the wild horse program for the 1985 fiscal year. With public involvement, the Bureau can then begin other contracts for gathering. Separate contracts will concern feed and maintenance of the animals. All Nevada horses will continue to be processed through the Palomino Valley Corrals northeast of the Reno-Sparks area. Additional holding facilities may be contracted before the horses receive new homes through the Adopt-A-Horse program. Transportation fees have recently been waived, so the cost for adoption anywhere in the country is $125 for a horse and $75 for a burro.

Because the Bureau is responsible for managing a variety of resources in a large area of Nevada, the need to plan was critical in providing the proper balance between the effective use and necessary protection of the resources. The land use decisions adopted set out a combination of multiple-use best for the area, including the maintenance of wild horses and burros in herd areas.

The public will continue to be involved in updates of the plan and in implementation of specific program objectives, such as for the wild horse and burro herds.

In the first three contracts, current horse population figures indicate a need for gathering of about 900 horses in the Reveille area; 425 in the Pine Nut range; and 1650 in the Pah Rah range.

WHOA!

WILD HORSE ORGANIZED ASSISTANCE

INC.

The BLM claims wild horses and burros are seriously damaging the range resource and for their own benefit, must be managed. They also claim rapidly increasing wild horse herds.

TRUTH: The BLM has dismissed the grazing EIS's inventory on public lands stating, "data is inadequate to make livestock adjustments," hence no livestock will be reduced based on the BLM range surveys. However, BLM doesn't appear to mind using "inadequate" data to reduce the wild horse numbers anywhere from 40-85%. Preliminary research doesn't document large rates of increases at this time, and in fact support our previous theories of less than 15%; yet the BLM has claimed for years rates of increases from 25-66%..

BLM states that massive budget reductions in social programs, i.e., food stamps, medicare, etc. mandate further reductions in the wild horse programs...to make the animals 'self-supporting' on the public rangelands. Yet they raised the adoption fees for wild horses.....THEY REDUCED LIVESTOCK GRAZING FEES ON THE PUBLIC RANGELANDS...further subsidizing an already heavily subsidized program. Read further on in this fact sheet on the inequity of the grazing fees!

BLM states they have no 'plans' to destroy 6,000 wild horses, of course not, they have ingeniously devised instead a set of circumstances that will bring this about.

* Falsely create panic on 'rapidly' increasing wild horse herds.
* Set adoption fees prohibitively high to scuttle adoption program.
* Plan to destroy horses not adopted within 45 days.

Now BLM will go before Congress to convince your representatives, that this is a needless waste of a resource, therefore, Congress should amend the Wild Horse Act to allow the BLM the authority to sell 'unadopted' wild horses. When indeed it is they who are determining the 'unadopted.' Before the $200 fee raise, no animals were determined to be 'unadoptable.' We did an analysis of Bureau data, here is the results:

Adoption fee/adoptability relationship

Adoption Fee	% Adoptable
$15.00	98- 1/
50.00	90
100.00	75
150.00	45
200.00	15-2/

1/Information collected by informational request from Districts and interviews. Current fees of $15.00 to $25.00. 2% of animals are currently classed as unadoptable

2/Taken from BLM National Statistics which is presumed were derived from questionaires sent to adoption applicants. Sample survey of clientele indicates < 5% @ $200.00.

Analysis of $125,000 Gathering Budget
(95,000 - 95 = 1,000 horses gathered)

Adoption fee	Horses Destroyed	Horses Adopted	Disposal Cost	Revenue	Additional Horses gathered
$200.00	850	150	$144,550	$30,000	316
150.00	550	450	137,650	67,500	711
100.00	250	750	130,750	75,000	789
50.00	100	900	127,300	45,000	474
15.00	20	980	125,460	14,700	155

BLM claims a Committee for the Interior Insular and Office of Management and Budget (OMB-Stockman); yet the base figures had to be supplied originally by guess who....BLM! The same committee recommended that livestock grazing be brought to the fair market value...was it? NO! Why is it that the horse must pay his own way, and livestock doesn't?

THE COMMITTEES ARE NOT EMPOWERED TO CHANGE THE LAW!

Furthermore, investigation shows even more inequities than we had previously imagined.. These figures were computed from Nevada Budget and Income figures.

LIVESTOCK GRAZING BUDGET FY '82..... $5,322,000
Grazing fees paid, minus funds ret. to grazing boards,etc..... 1,355,970
3,966,030

HENCE.. Ratio is BUDGET vs. INCOME....3.9 to 1
Therefore for every $4.00 spent by the BLM for livestock, they receive $1.00.

WILD HORSE BUDGET FY 81..... $1,160,000
3276 captured horses @$25.00 ... 81,900
1,078,100

HENCE..ratio is BUDGET vs. INCOME....14 to 1
Therefore in 1981, every $14 spent by the BLM, $1.00 was returned.

WILD HORSE BUDGET FY '82..... $1,188,000
3800 captured horses @$200..... 760,000
428,000

HENCE..ratio is BUDGET vs. INCOME....1.5 to 1
Therefore in 1982 for every $1.50 spent by BLM, they receive $1.00

In order for livestock and wild horse programs to be comparable, BLM would have to charge $6.05 per AUM per cow; not $1.86 the current costs. Or, lower the adoption fee of $200.00 to $78.00 per animal. Despite the inequity, the Adoption fees are raised and the livestock grazing is decreased.

- -

Where do the funds go from livestock grazing permits:
Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, Section 401(b)(1) provides for the distribution of grazing fees as follows:

50% to United States Treasury
25% to Grazing Boards
25% to Range Improvement in States

HENCE: $1.86 is the cost per animal per month to graze on the public land.

.93 goes to the United States Treasury
.46½ goes to grazing boards to represent livestock operators that advise BLM on how to manage the public lands.
.46½ goes to Range improvement projects on the public lands, mainly water development, seedings, etc. Most of which has been closed off to horse use, has been used in past to reduce wild horses too!

$ 1.86

Truthfully, the livestock operator really only pays the public $.93, since the rest of the monies are returned to be used by him in other ways. Can you feed your dog or cat for one month on $.93, let alone a cow and her calf?

.....

Honorable James Santini
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Honorable Paul Laxalt
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Honorable Howard Cannon
U. S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

President Ronald Reagan
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Robert Burford, Director
Bureau of Land Management
Interior Building
Washington, D.C. 20240

WHITE HOUSE HOT LINE....(state complaint).....(202) 456-7639
this is used for public opinion lines

.....

BE A REGISTERED VOTING PUBLIC...IT IS OUR ONLY TOOL LEFT

LET YOUR CONGRESSIONAL REPRESENTATIVES KNOW HOW YOU FEEL, YOUR VOTE WORRIES THEM.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

NAME _____
ADDRESS _____
CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

☐ REGULAR MEMBERSHIP $15
☐ FAMILY MEMBERSHIP $20
☐ CONTRIBUTING MEMBERSHIP $25
☐ PATRON $100
☐ SPONSOR $500
☐ BENEFACTOR $1000 or more

P.O. Box 555
Reno, Nevada 89504
Telephone 702-323-5908

☐ I am interested in monthly or bi-monthly meetings

ALL CONTRIBUTIONS ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE. Checks for donations under $15 will serve as their own receipts.

Analysis of $95,000 gathering budget (95,000 - 95 = 1000 horses gathered.

ADOPT.FEE	HORSES KILLED	HORSES ADOPT.	DISPOSAL COST	REVENUE	ADDITION-WH CAPT.
$200	850	150	$144,550	$30,000	316
150	550	450	137,650	67,500	711
100	250	750	130,750	75,000	789
50	100	900	127,300	45,000	474
15	20	980	125,460	14,700	155

BUDGET = $95,000 for gathering
$95,00 - 95(gathering cost) = 1,000 horses captured

$200.00 ADOPTION FEE

Destroy 850 horses @ $148.00 =	$125,800
Adopt 150 horses @ $125.00 =	18,750
Total Disposal Cost =	$144,550
Revenue = 150 x $200.00 =	30,000

Gather additional horses $30,000-95= 316

$150.00 ADOPTION FEE

Destroy 550 horses @ $148.00=	$ 81,400
Adopt 450 horses @ $125.00=	56,250
Total Disposal Cost=	137,650
Revenue = 450 x $150.00 =	67,500

Gather additional horses $67,500 - 95 = 711

$100.00 ADOPTION FEE

Destroy 250 horses @ $148.00 =	37,000
Adopt 750 horses @ $125.00 =	93,750
Total Disposal Cost =	130,750
Revenue = 750 x $100.00 =	75,000

Gather additional horses $75,000 - 95 = 789

$50.00 ADOPTION FEE

Destroy 100 horses @ $148.00 =	14,800
Adopt 900 horses @ $125 =	112,500
Total Disposal Cost =	127,300
Revenue = 900 x $50.00	45,000

Gather additional horses $45,000 - 95 = 474

$15.00 ADOPTION FEE

Destroy 20 horses @ $148.00 =	2,960
Adopt 980 horses @ $125.00 =	122,500
Total Disposal Cost =	125,460
Revenue = 980 x $15.00 =	14,700

Gather additional horses $14,700 - 95 = 155

Euthenasia Agent (T 61 or 1/2 T 61 and 1/2 Sodium Phenobarbitol

$8.00 per horse

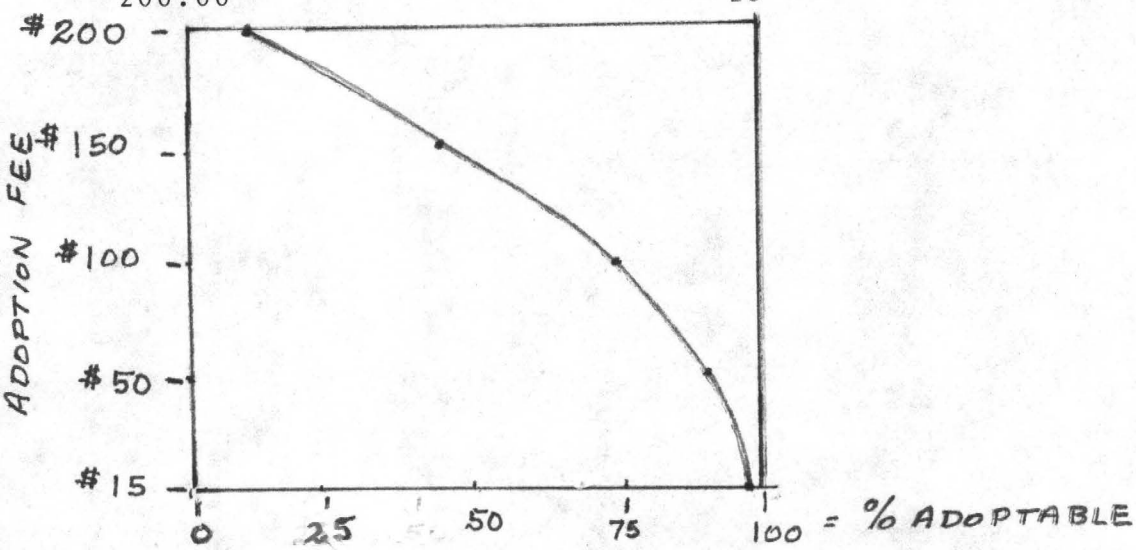
*These costs include man hours for capture, maintenance, etc.

CONCLUSION

At a reasonable fee more horses can be adopted in a shorter period of time resulting in less maintenance costs, less veterinarian costs, and less public outcry.

ADOPTION FEE/ADOPTABILITY RELATIONSHIP

ADOPTION FEE	PERCENTAGE ADOPTABLE	
$ 15.00	98	1)
50.00	90	
100.00	75	
150.00	45	
200.00	15	



1) Experience with current $15.00 adoption fee; 2% of animals are currently classed unadoptable.

2) Taken from BLM National Statistics, which it is presumed were derived from questionaires mailed to adoption applicants. Sample survey of clientele indicates < 5% @ $200.00.

- Cost of Current Program
  Gather $ 95.00

  Process, Adopt, Maintenance fac., 125.00

- Cost to Gather and Destroy 243.00

CONCLUSION

GATHERING AND DESTROYING ANIMALS IS NO MORE COST EFFECTIVE THAN GATHERING AND ADOPTING.

FILE COPY

Humane Society of Southern Nevada

Congress
of the
United States
House of Representatives

HARRY REID
NEVADA

COMMITTEES:
FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
TRAVEL AND TOURISM CAUCUS
SELECT COMMITTEE ON AGING

September 4, 1984

Mr. Dart Anthony
Chairman of the Board
Humane Society of Southern Nevada
Post Office Box 85118
Las Vegas, Nevada 89185-0118

Dear Mr. Anthony:

Thank you very much for your letter of August 23. I applaud you and the other participants of the Consultation and Coordination Planning Committee to obtain an accurate counting of the wild horse and burro populations on the Nevada Wild Horse Range within the Nellis Air Force Base Bombing and Gunnery Range.

In an effort to be of assistance, I have discussed the possibility of employing a NASA satellite with Mr. Kleinsorger of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration. First of all, Mr. Kleinsorger informs me that the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration has jurisidiction over the use of LANDSAT satellites. Therefore I have directed a copy of your letter to the Administrator of NOAA.

However, Mr. Kleinsorger suggested that the Department of the Air Force be contacted to discuss the possibility of using high altitude photographs for counting purposes. Mr. Kleinsorger believes that LANDSAT satellites may not have the capability, because of the technology used, to obtain an accurate count.

In any case, I will be in touch as soon as I have further word. I am sorry that I will not have a full report before your September 8 meeting. But, I would like to hear from you if there is anything I can do in the meantime.

With all best wishes,

Sincerely,

Harry Reid

HARRY REID
Member of Congress

HMR:sam

☐ WASHINGTON OFFICE: 1711 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING, WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515, (202) 225-5965
☐ LAS VEGAS OFFICE: 420 FEDERAL BUILDING, 300 LAS VEGAS BOULEVARD, SOUTH, LAS VEGAS, NEVADA 89101, (702) 388-6545
☐ HENDERSON/BOULDER CITY OFFICE: 201 LEAD STREET, ROOM 26, HENDERSON, NEVADA 89015, (702) 565-0057
☐ NORTH LAS VEGAS OFFICE: 2200 CIVIC CENTER DRIVE, POST OFFICE BOX B, NORTH LAS VEGAS, NEVADA 89030, (702) 388-6166

The Humane Society Of Southern Nevada

August 23, 1984

FILE COPY

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

The Honorable Harry Reid
Member of Congress
1711 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Re: National Aeronautics and Space Administration

Dear Harry:

In previous communications with you, you've stated that if the Humane Society of Southern Nevada or I ever needed help from your Washington, D.C. office, we shouldn't hesitate to let you know. Well, a situation has come up and the services of your Washington, D.C. office will be needed.

I'd like to give you a slight bit of background first. On August 3, 1984 at the offices of the Bureau of Land Management in Las Vegas a meeting was held to form a consultation and coordination planning committee. This new committee will act as an advisorary participant to the five-party agreement. The five-party agreement involves the Nevada Division of Wildlife, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Department of Energy, the U.S. Department of the Air Force, and the Bureau of Land Management. The new C & C committee will be conducting studies and making recommendations concerning the management of wild horses, burros and other wildlife herds on the Nevada Wild Horse Range within the Nellis Air Force Base Bombing and Gunnery Range.

In our first meeting it was agreed to 1) determine population numbers of all wildlife as an interim goal, 2) look at funding possibilities from federal agencies, 3) develop the most humane methods of removal of excess animals, 4) develop the most humane method of disposition of the removed wild horses, 5) create recommendations for expediting adoptions of the current Adopt-a-Horse program, 6) develop, in cooperation with the Department of Defense, an appropriate monitoring system of the wild horse population on Air Force property, and

(Continued, Page Two)

P.O. Box 85118 • Las Vegas, Nevada 89185-0118

FILE COPY

7) develop the correct time frame to get the job done so that the loss of wild horses and other wildlife due to the lack of water is minimized.

To do the job correctly, an accurate and precise census count of just how many wild horses there are on Nevada's Wild Horse Range within the Nellis Air Force Bombing and Gunnery Range is imperative. At our first meeting, HSSN brought up the possibility of using satellite photography of this area. The Air Force representatives on the committee were not sure if the National Aeronautics and Space Administration had the technology to perform this task.

Harry, I recall reading somewhere about intricate census countings being done for the U.S, Department of Agriculture using a NASA's satellite. This is where you and your Washington staff can assist me. Would you approach the appropriate department at NASA to see if a census count of wild horse herds in this sensitive security area using a satellite would be possible? I need to have this question answered before our next meeting, which is scheduled for September 8.

Thanking you and your staff in advance for your help.

Sincerely,

Dart Anthony
Chairman of the Board
Humane Society of Southern Nevada

Frank Bingham
DOE formally BLM

(2)

SUMMARY OF WILD HORSE AND WILDLIFE COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS

FOR THE NELLIS AIR FORCE RANGE

March 23, 1961 - MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING - U.S. AIR FORCE AND THE NEVADA STATE FISH GAME COMMISSION

Agencies Involved - U.S. air Force and Nevada State Fish and Game Commission

Purpose - Recognized the Nevada State Fish and Game Commission (NSF&G) role in the protection and management of wildlife on the Nellis Air Force Range (NAFR). It provided for access for NSF&G personnel onto the NAFR and directed the Air Force to appoint a liaison person to work with NSF&G.

June 1962 - WILD HORSE MANAGEMENT AREA.

Agencies Involved - U.S. Air Force and Bureau of Land Management.

Purpose - "Because of the deep concern expressed by a large number of people in regard to preservation of wild horses and the need to manage and control their use, an area within the boundaries of the land withdrawn for the Nellis Air Force Base Nevada, has been identified as suitable wild horse area. The area is presently being used by wild or abandoned horses by their own selection. The horse use is not inconsistent with the needs of the Air Force. Identifying the area for horse use will provide an area which can be managed for the

horses and their habitat. It is reliably estimated on the basis of counts made by the State Fish and Game Department that more than 200 horses now run in this area. This approximate number of wild horses will be maintained as long as their use of the range remains in balance with the forage resources available." The agreement stated further, "By cooperation with Nevada State and county officials the control of the desired number of horses to use the range will be achieved." The total area involved in the agreement was 435,000 acres.

December 1963 - COOPERATIVE PLAN FOR THE CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF FISH AND WILD LIFE RESOURCES ON NELLIS AIR FORCE BASE RANGES.

Agencies Involved - U.S. Air Force, Bureau of Sports Fisheries and Wildlife (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service), Nevada Fish and Game Commission (Nevada Department of Wildlife), and Bureau of Land Management.

Purpose - The agreement provided for the management, development, and protection of fish and wildlife resources on the Nellis Air Force Base Range. It included all big game species (deer, antelope, big horn sheep). It also included horses under the term wild life and estimated the population for the wild horse range to be 200 horses.

June 1965. WILD HORSE MANAGEMENT AREA.

Agencies Involved - U.S. Air Force and the Bureau of Land Management.

Purpose - This was a reissuance of the June 1962 agreement. The new agreement reduced the size of the wild horse management area to 394,500 acres, which was the only change.

January 15, 1969 - COOPERATIVE PLAN FOR THE CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE RESOURCES ON NELLIS AIR FORCE BASE RANGES.

Agencies Involved - U.S. Air Force, Bureau of Sports Fisheries and Wildlife, Nevada Fish and Game Commission, and the Bureau of Land Management.

Purpose - This was a reissuance of the 1963 cooperative plan. The only change was an update of the animal numbers for the wild horse area which were as follows - horses - 400, deer - 200, antelope - 100.

November 12, 1973 - COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT, NEVADA STATE OFFICE, AND UNITED STATES AIR FORCE, NELLIS AIR FORCE BASE.

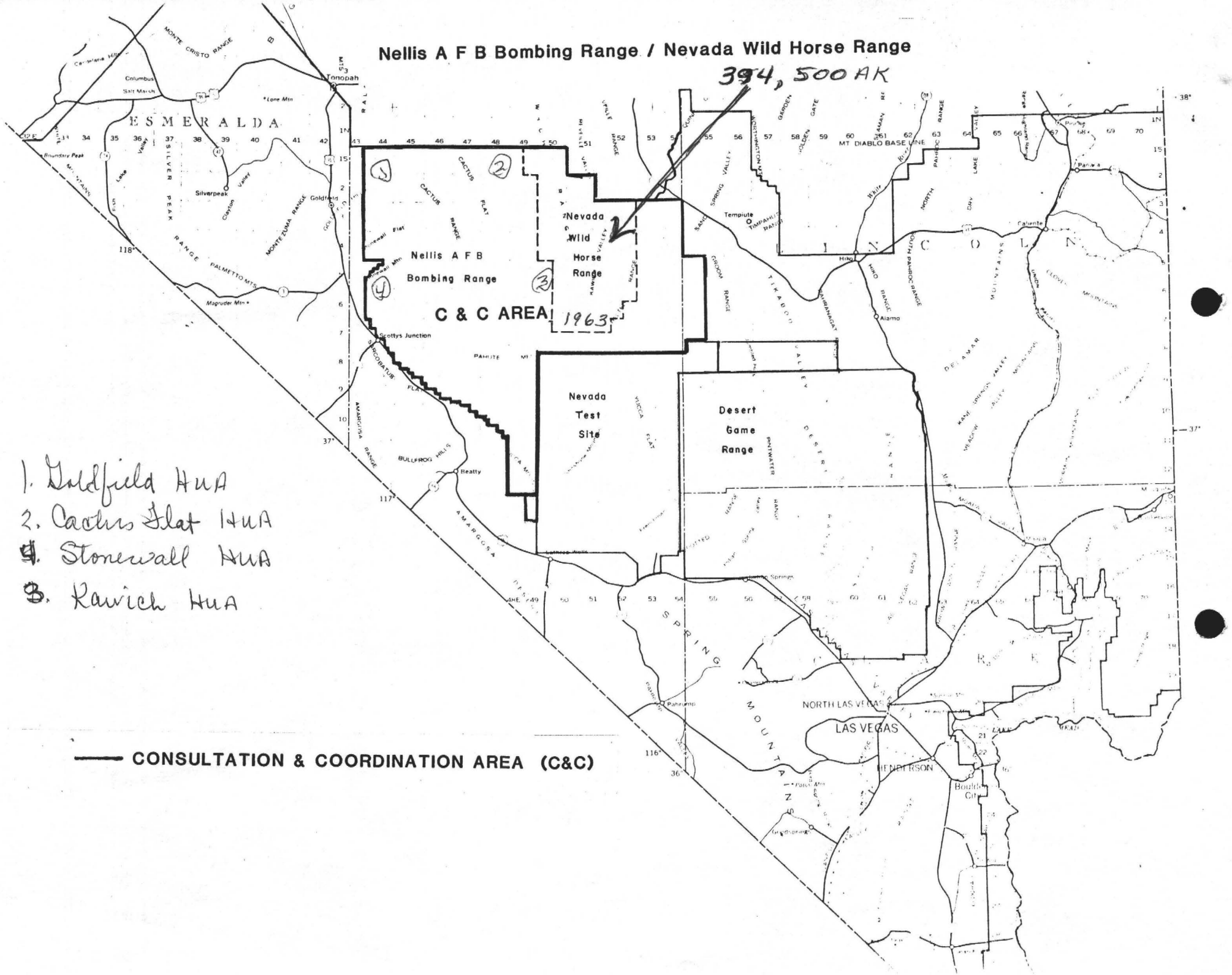
Agencies Involved - U.S. Air Force and Bureau of Land Management.

Purpose - Cancelled 1962 and 1965 agreements. New agreement complies with provisions of the Wild Horse and Burro Act of December 15, 1971 and 43 CFR Part 4700, which requires BLM to enter into cooperative agreements with other agencies when wild horses use lands under their jurisdiction for all or a part of the year. Agreement recognized that the horses on the Nevada Wild Horse range were under the jurisdiction of BLM. It called for a management plan to be developed to provide for the management of the horses and their habitat.

January 1977 - FIVE-PARTY COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT.

Agencies Involved - U.S. Air Force, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of Energy, Bureau of Land Management, and Nevada Department of Wildlife.

Purpose - Protecting, developing, and managing the natural resources of fish and wildlife, vegetation, watershed, and wild horses and burros on the Nellis Air Force Range, the Nevada Test Site, and the Tonopah Test Range. The agreement calls for resource inventories and the development of a resource management plan.


Nellis A F B Bombing Range / Nevada Wild Horse Range
394,500 AK
Nellis A F B Bombing Range
Nevada Wild Horse Range
C & C AREA
1963
Nevada Test Site
Desert Game Range
ESMERALDA
LINCOLN
1. Goldfield HMA
2. Cactus Flat HMA
4. Stonewall HMA
3. Kawich HMA
CONSULTATION & COORDINATION AREA (C&C)

S. cc to memb.

Questionaire

yes/no

1. Do you think some wild horses must be removed from C & C area?
2. 50% removal.
3. 75% removal.
4. Remove old horses too?
5. Remove a percentage of both old and best horses?
6. Adopt horses out?
7. Reduce adoption fee?
8. Transplant horses?
9. Put down unadoptables?
10. Put down only incurrable horses?
11. Return unadoptable horses to range?
12. Improve springs?
13. Install lowland troughs?
14. Install water facilities for all wildlife?
15. Install water facilities only for horses?
16. Do you think the Air Force should do aerial analysis of C & C area wildlife population?
16. Do you think it would be sufficient for the present study for the Air Force to do an aerial count of the wild horses only in the C & C area?
17. When ideal number is determined, should this ideal number of wild horses be maintained in the C & C area?

Questionaire Replies (5)

1. 5-yes

2. 3-more

   1-settle for entire range or east side.

   1-proper management level.

3. 2-yes

   1-settle for entire range or east side.

   1-proper management level.

   1-bottom line.

4. 3-yes

   2-no

5. 4-yes

   1-no answer.

6. 3-yes

   1-when possible.

   1-if possible, set time frame-90 days.

7. 5-yes

8. 2-no

   1-yes, when possible.

   1-yes, if permitted by statue.

   1-yes, when needed as alternative.

9. 1-sell them.

   1-yes, please define.

   1-unknown.

1-no, sell, use revenue to finance management.

1-nc, return to range.

10. 1-sell them.

1-no

1-unknown.

1-no, sell, use revenue to finance management.

1-yes

11. 3-no

1-yes

1-no, but this depends on mgr. level.

12. 4-yes

1-yes, if needed to support the proper population.

13. 4-yes

1-yes, if needed to support proper population.

14. 4-yes

1-no, improve existing ones.

15. 3-no

1-no, improve existing ones.

1-no, refer to #14.

16. 1-if feasible.

1-yes, as training mission.

1-if private sector not allowed on- AF with help.

1- no

1-yes,?

17. 1-only on the Wild Horse Range.

1-yes-W.H.R.

1-yes, reduce 3/4 to 4/5 of present horse pop.

1-yes, if the C and C is the Wild Horse Range.

1-Yes, in the entire C & C area.

Note

This questionaire is meant to be an aid in communication. Nothing more. It is not meant to be a conclusive survey of any sort. Questionaires have many limitations. They can stimulate creative thought and sharing to some degree, however. This was my intention in using this tool.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Aug. 4th 1984

Field Trip---C & C Planning Group Las Vegas

Cedar Springs.....Needs developement, seepage is contained in mud hole. Fallini's water nearby piped down to the lowlands.

Rose Spring.....Needs relocation out of wash, another tank and possible float. National Wild Horse Association on this committee did new pipe work, but it was now exposed due to horse activity and washout.

Dust at Mud Lake was very visible as we left Rose Spring and went to Corral Spring.

Corral Spring.....Needs tanks. Trailing through vegetation very visible.

Tunnel Spring..... Needs improvements

Silver Bow..... Needs tanks

Cedar Wells (3) Good range now, due to several wet years and recent rain storms.

Saw approximately 500-800 horses over the valley. As we crossed back over the mountains, another approximately 1000 in the valley exiting the base.

Ken Reid suggested we set some agenda for the next meeting to be held on September 8, 1984, in Las Vegas--9:00 a.m.

1. Minutes of last meeting

2. Report August 4th trip to Nevada Wild Horse Refuge Springs

3. Finding of August 4th trip

4. Discuss plans for horse withdrawal

5. Discuss plan for spring improvements, and funding

6. Discuss plans to maintain wild hors levels

7. Where do we go from here?

8. Need Recomendations to Nevada State Director, BLM; Nevada Delegation; and Nevada Department of Wildlife.

9. Need numbers on wildlife (reasonable numbers).

10. Air-Force Cooperation

Dawn G. Lappin

TONOPAH TEST RANGE BRIEFING & ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

1. Security badges must be worn in plain view at all times on TTR.

2. The following items are not permitted on TTR:

   a. Alcohol (except in housing & mess facilities)
   b. Drugs or controlled substances (without proper prescription)
   c. Personal firearms & ammunition
   d. Explosives & incendiaries
   e. Personal 2-way radios
   f. Personal recording or copying devices
   g. Personal cameras (use of official cameras must be approved by SNL)
   h. Personal binoculars
   i. Pets, wild or domestic

3. Stay away from buildings or areas in which you have no official business.

4. Sightseeing/exploring is not authorized.

5. Security personnal on TTR are Federal Officers with arrest authority granted under section 161K of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954 as amended. All lawful orders issued by Security Inspectors must be obeyed.

6. Observe all roadblocks and barricades unless cleared by security.

7. Stay away from areas with flashing blue lights (radiation hazard).

8. Do not pass vehicles with flashing emergency lights unless cleared by the driver or security escort.

9. Observe all speed limits as posted:

   a. Main road from main gate to Sandia CP: 55 mph
   b. All other paved roads (unless posted otherwise): 45 mph
   c. Unpaved roads (unless posted otherwise): 35 mph

10. Do not discuss anything you see or hear on TTR with unauthorized persons. Disclosure of sensitive and/or classified information to unauthorized persons is a violation of U.S. Criminal Code Title 18, punishable by fine and/or imprisonment.

Dawn Y. Lappin
ACKNOWLEDGED:

WITNESSED: 9617

DATE: 8-4-84

Date	Name	Address	Organization
8/3	STANTON WILKERSON		BLM
	Dean Daily	NELLIS AFB	554CESS/DESP
	Olan Waldrop	Nellis AFB	USAFTFWC/JA
	DAN JARLENSKI	NELLIS AFB	554 CSG/JA
	Liz Lane-Johnson	Nellis AFB	TFWC/PA
✓	DART ANTHONY	LAS VEGAS-NV	HUMANE SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN NEVADA
Secretary ✓	DAWN Y. LAPPIN	RENO, NV.	WHOA
✓	LLOYD T. SMITH	7715 ROBINDALE CIR. LV. 89123	
✓	R.H. "CUB" WOLFE	CALIENTE R.A. BLM	
✓	MONTE CROOK	NELLIS AFB	COL USAF
	Bob Turner	Nev. Dept. of Wildlife	
✓	ROBERT G. YODER	1500 No. DECATUR BLVD	U.S. FWS
✓	John Donaldson	4747 Vegas Dr. L.V.	NV Dept of Wildlife
✓	Frank Bingham	? So. Highland	Department of Energy
Geo. REID ✓	DAVID F. ROLLINS	116 So. JONES BLVD	CLARK COUNTY GAME MGMT BD.
	BUTCH PADILLA	4747 W. VEGAS DR., L.V	NEV. DEPT. OF WILDLIFE
	Richard A. Orr	703 or 237, Caliente NV	BLM Caliente
V. Chairman ✓	John Yeung	4791 E. Cleveland	nevada wildlife Federation
	Phil Seegmiller	PO Box 237 Caliente NV	BLM Caliente
	TERRY DRIVER	LAS VEGAS D.O.,	BLM
Chairman ✓	Ken. Reid	3839-F. Charleston #3, 89104	S. Nev. Chpt. F
✓	Wilferord Allen		FFAT. Dest Big Horn

765 Vegas Drive

CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION MEETING

The meeting of the C & C Planning Committee began at 9:00 a.m. on August 3, 1984, at the Las Vegas Bureau of Land Management District Office, with introductions of participants. Twelve members were present, five of which are participants to the Five Party Agreement. Present also were support staff people for the Air Force and Bureau of Land Management. Participants present were as follows:

Stanton Wilkerson	Las Vegas, NV	BLM
Dean Daily	Nellis AFB	554CESS/DESP
Olan Waldrop	Nellis AFB	USAFTFWC/JA
Dan Jarlenski	Nellis AFB	554CSG/JA
Lizlane Johnson	Nellis AFB	TFWC/PA
Dart Anthony	Las Vegas, NV	Humane Society of Southern Nevada
Dawn Y. Lappin	Reno, NV	WHOA
Lloyd T. Smith	Las Vegas, NV	NWHA
R. H. Wolfe	Caliente, NV	BLM
Monte Crook	Nellis AFB	Col., USAF
Bob Turner	Las Vegas, NV	Nevada Dept. of Wildlife
Robert G. Yoder	Las Vegas, NV	U.S. FWS
John Donaldson	Las Vegas, NV	Nevada Dept. of Wildlife
Frank Bingham	Las Vegas, NV	DOE
David F. Rollins	Las Vegas, NV	Clark County Game Management
Bruce Radilla	Las Vegas, NV	Nevada Dept. of Wildlife
Richard A. Orr	Caliente, NV	BLM
John Young	Las Vegas, NV	Nevada Wildlife Federation
Phillip Seegmiller	Caliente, NV	BLM
Terry Driver	Las Vegas, NV	BLM
Ken Reid	Las Vegas, NV	Sierra Club
Wilford Allen	Henderson, NV	Fraternity of Desert Bighorn

Nominations for Chairman were delayed to give parties time to become acquainted and become more aware of the concerns. Introduction of purpose was identified by Kemp Conn, District Manager, Las Vegas District Office, Las Vegas, Nevada, followed by a review of cooperative agreements, background and history, resource data, and inventiories of wildlife, wild horses and burros.

It was made clear that data for comparable data was sketchy at present but the Air Force had opened up windows of opportunity. Discussions of philosophical differences among the Committee members were uninhibited,

none so overwhelming so as to obscure purpose or concensus. It was agreed a plan was necessary to apply pressure to decision makers and funding agencies address:

1. Determine population numbers as an interim goal.
2. Funding possibilities.
3. Methods of removals.
4. Disposition of removed horses.
5. Recommendations to ease adoption.
6. Time frames.
7. Monitoring.

Recent drought threatening a substantial number of the horse population has been temporarily lessened because of recent precipitation, however, water is a major factor limiting their numbers. Sincere concern for the horses' well-being as well as the inter-relationships with other species is apparent.

Current policies under this administration magnified the failure of the adoption program, albeit the high fees; mistrust of the purpose of the high fees.

The group unanimously agreed no personal interviews media-wise would occur without the agreement of the full Committee.

Some discussion occurred regarding the particular makeup of the Committee, i.e., the absence of livestock, mining representatives, etc. Since no activity of those types occur with the C & C planning area, the exclusion was felt to be legitimate.

Nominations, Seconded and Carried for Ken Reid for Chairman, John Young for Vice Chairman, and Dawn Lappin as Secretary. The group will establish next meeting date, after the range tour on August 4, 1984.

Since I did not become Secretary until the end of the meeting, I pray my memory serves correctly.

P.S. Meeting date for 9:00 a.m., September 8, 1984 at the Las Vegas Bureau of Land Management District Office in Las Vegas, NV.

List of C & C Members and their addresses and phone numbers:

Nevada Division of Wildlife
Atten: John Donaldson
State Mailroom Complex
Las Vegas, NV 89158
Phone (702) 385-0285

Commander
554 RG/CC
Nellis Air Force Base
Atten: Col. J. W. La Casse
Las Vegas, NV 89191
Phone (702) 643-3600

US Fish and Wildlife Service
Desert National Wildlife Range
Atten: Bob Yoder
1500 North Decatur Boulevard
Las Vegas, NV 89103
Phone (702) 646-3401

Department of Energy
Nevada Operation Office
Atten: Frank Bingham
P.O. Box 14100
Las Vegas, NV 89114-4100
Phone (702) 295-1146

Bureau of Land Management
Caliente Resource Area
Atten: R. H. Wolfe
P.O. Box 237
Caliente, NV 89008
Phone (702) 726-3141

Wild Horse Organized Assistance
Atten: Dawn Y. Lappin, Director
P.O. Box 555
Reno, NV 89505
Phone (702) 851-4817

Clark County Game Management Board
Atten: David F. Rollins, Representative
116 South Jones Boulevard
Las Vegas, NV 89107
Phone: (702) 870-5507

Sierra Club
Atten: Kenneth P. Reid
3839 - East Charleston #3
Las Vegas, NV 89104
Phone (702) 459-8386

National Wild Horse Association
Atten: Lloyd T. Smith
7715 Robindale Circle
Las Vegas, NV 89123
Phone (702) 361-7704

Humane Society of Southern Nevada
Atten: Dart Anthony, Representative
P.O. Box 85118
Las Vegas, NV 89185-0118
Phone (702) 382-4799

Nevada Wildlife Federation
Atten: John Young, Representative
4791 East Cleveland
Las Vegas, NV 89104
Phone (702) 452-1223

Fraternity of Desert Bighorn
Atten: Wilford Allen, Representative
1111 Santa Ynez
Henderson, NV 89015
Phone (702)565-3335

3839 E. Charleston # 3
Las Vegas, Nevada 89104
August 6, 1984

Dear C & C Committee Members:

Since we were split into two groups most of the time on our August 3, 1984 trip, I thought it would facilitate our communication process if I shared a few things with the whole group.

I'm also enclosing a questionaire which you may fill out if you wish and send it to me or bring to the next meeting on September 8th. We'll try to give you the results then.

Also please feel free to call upon me any time.

Sincerely yours,

Kenneth P. Reid

Kenneth Patrick Reid MA
Sierra Club rep.
C&C Committee Chairman

My Immediate Impressions From Trip To C & C Area On August 3, 1984

From my direct visual contact with the Consultation and Coordination area which includes the Nevada Wild Horse Range and the Nellis AFB Bombing Range, my immediate impression is that there are far too many wild horses in this area for proper maintenance of feed, water and range for the general population of wildlife in this area. Moreover the wild horses are quite evidently doing severe damage to the range, water hole areas and water quality in general.

Considering the above I think prompt action must be taken to remove at least 50% of the present Wild Horse population from the studied area as soon as possible. This could be done in stages. Horses could be either relocated or removed to adoption centers. Best horses must be taken if horses are taken for adoption. Better horses will make better adoption candidates.

Also the water sources in these areas must be improved upon so as to preserve high quality and volume of water for entire wildlife population. This must also be done as soon as possible because water levels are

K. Reid

certainly being lowered periodically perhaps by extensive water use in nearby areas by agencies pumping water from underground sources. Dried up springs in lowland areas are proof enough of such impact. Preservation of existing water sources is imperative. Water is life! Dry springs spell death to wildlife.

C. Reid

Suggestions I Heard By Members Of C &C Committee.

1. Remove 50% or 75% of present horse population.
2. Adjust horse population when ideal number is determined.
3. Adopt horses off gradually.
4. Adopt all ages and grades.
5. Adopt only best horses off.
6. Leave older horses on range to live out normal life.
7. Put down only incurable horses.
8. Do not put down old horses. Return unadoptable horses to range.
9. Improve all water sources.
10. Install watertroughs in lowlands to replace dried up springs.
11. Have Air Force do aerial count of wildlife, feed analysis and water holes.
12. Since agencies in C & C area are using extensive amounts of underground water, said agencies should be responsible for dried up wells and springs.
13. Include entire wildlife population in plans for C & C area.
14. Maintain horse population at ideal level.

K. Reid

Questionaire yes/no

1. Do you think some wild horses must be removed from C & C area?
2. 50% removal.
3. 75% removal. 75% - 5000
4. Remove old horses too?
5. Remove a percentage of both old and best horses? random
6. Adopt horses out? 1st shot opp.
7. Reduce adoption fee? ↙
8. Transplant horses?
9. Put down unadoptables?
10. Put down only incurrable horses?
11. Return unadoptable horses to range?
12. Improve springs?
13. Install lowland troughs? wildlife
14. Install water facilities for all wildlife?
15. Install water facilities only for horses?
16. Do you think the Air Force should do aerial analysis of C & C area wildlife population?
16. Do you think it would be sufficient for the present study for the Air Force to do an aerial count of the wild horses only in the C & C area?
17. When ideal number is determined, should this ideal number of wild horses be maintained in the ~~C & C area~~?

C. Reid

8-3-84 (1)

AGENDA FOR CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION MEETING

August 3, 1984

Meeting to be called to order at 9:00 A.M.

1. Introduction of Members.

2. Consultation and Coordination process and organization of committee.

3. Purpose of Consultation and Coordination general goal of Five Party to establish recommendations for the development and implementation of an animal management plan on the Nellis Air Force Bombing and Gunnery Range with specific emphasis on the Nevada wild horse range.

4. Establishment of Five Party and briefing on agreements and documents.

5. Overview of wild horses on bombing range.

   A. Introduction.

   B. Background Information

      1. Location - map.

      2. Resource data.

      3. Existing projects.

6. Concerns.

   A. USFWS/NDOW.

      1. How to identify and prioritize areas of conflict between wildlife and horses.

      2. Areas with horse problems should be looked at first by the Consultation and Coordination process.

      3. Need access to the area for:

         a. Wildlife surveys.

b. Vegetative transects.

c. Special studies/marking.

4. Must establish carrying capacity and seasonal use for:

a. Antelope.

b. Deer.

c. Bighorn Sheep.

d. Horses.

5. What controls and/or use will be made on wildlife populations?

6. Threatened and Endangered Species.

7. Enforcement of wildlife laws.

8. Funding for management programs.

B. DOE/USAF.

1. Vehicle safety problems. Several vehicle accidents have resulted from wild horses (13 accidents).

2. Safety problems on the auxiliary airstrip. This runway cannot be used because of the wild horses in the area.

3. Dust produced from the overgrazed ranges causes problems with the use of sensitive optical equipment.

4. Bird strikes effecting flight operations (horned larks).

C. BLM

1. Access is limited and in the past required several schedule changes.
2. Vegetative damage
   a. high utilization levels of vegetation in study areas.
   b. replacement by undesirable species
3. Increase horse numbers
   a. exceeding carrying capacity
4. Expansion of Horses throughout range.
   a. wildlife populations
   b. Quality of the horse range.
5. Increased competition at watering sites.
   a. with wildlife
   b. among bands
   c. fighting at watering sites
6. Funding for management
   a. no funding available

7. Briefing of field Tour to Range

8. Set date for Next meeting.

Introduction - background - history

The Nevada Wildhorse Range (NWHR) was established in 1962 by a cooperative agreement with the Commander, Nellis Air Force Base, and the State Director, Nevada Bureau of Land Management. The NWHR was the first established and was brought about over concern by both agencies for the proper management of wildlife and wild horses within the withdrawn area. The Nevada Fish and Game Department, presently called Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW) early counts estimated the population within the NWHR to be approximately 200 horses. Since 1962 the wild horses have expanded their range and roam over a much longer area. The present population estimates are 5000-6000 wild horses on the NWHR and surrounding areas. The NWHR is 394,500 acres of unfenced range laying within the northern corner of the U.S.AF. Tactical Fighters Weapons Center Range Complex in Nye County. The entire area in which horses are found includes, 1,165,000 acres.

Historically this area was grazed by livestock, horses and wildlife. Even though the area was withdrawn for military purposes in 1940, which included grazing, livestock grazing continued until 1979. In 1979 a fence along the northern boundary was completed thus eliminating livestock grazing from the area. Nationally the NWHR is not well known and does not generate much public interest, because of its remoteness and the inaccessibility of the area.

The National Wild Horse Association, a Las Vegas based organization, has shown considerable active interest and has in cooperation worked with the USAF and DOE in the development and maintenance of water improvements. The USAF and the DOE has an on-going program of weapons development and military airovaft training which is presently increasing. These activities are the primary use of the range and limit access to the area by non-military personnel, especially the area designated as the Toropah Test Range.

INVENTORY OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Vegetative Utilization

Location	Date	Key Species	Percent Utilization
Rosebud Spring (¼ mile)	10/31/80	Oryzopsis hymenoides	80
		Stipa Species	85
		Atriplex canescens	75
Rosebud Corral (1 mile)	10/31/80	Hilaria jamesii	60
Rosebud Corral (2 miles)	10/31/80	Hilaria jamesii	33
		Eurotia lanata	60
Silverbow (¼ mile)	10/31/80	Atriplex canescens	79
		Oryzopsis hymenoides	75
Silverbow (1 mile)	10/31/80	Atriplex canescens	60
Silverbow (3.5 miles)	10/31/80	Atriplex canescens	33
		Oryzopsis hymenoides	40
Rosebud Corral (3.5 miles)	04/05/81	Oryzopsis hymenoides	61
		Hilaria jamesii	86
Silverbow (1.5 miles)	04/05/81	Oryzopsis hymenoides	67
		Hilaria jamesii	70
Silverbow Powerline	04/04/81	Hilaria jamesii	64
		Sphaeralcea ambigua	39
Kawich Valley Reservoir	04/04/81	Oryzopsis hymenoides	73
		Hilaria jamesii	43
		Sphaeralcea ambigua	35
Corral Spring (2.4 miles)	04/12/84	Sitanion hystrix	36
		Hilaria jamesii	34
		Poa Species	46
Corral Spring (1.5 Miles)	04/12/84	Sitanion hystrix	35
		Ephedra nevadensis	20
		Hilaria jamesii	22
Cedar Wells (1.5 miles)	04/12/84	Hilaria jamesii	12
		Sitanion hystrix	6
		Poa Species	25

(5)

WILD HORSE & BURRO INVENTORY

YEAR	LOCATION	TYPE OF INVENTORY	HORSE	Total	BURRO	Total
1963	Nevada Wild Horse Range	-	200	200	0	
1973	Kawich Range	Ground	163	163	0	
1976	Nevada Wild Horse Range	Ground	1064	1064	0	
1977	Overall	Aerial	1300	1300	0	
1980	Stonewall	Aerial	341		33	
	Goldfield	Aerial	225		36	
	Cactus Flat & Kawich Valley & Belted Range	Aerial	2556	3122	0	69
1982	Stonewall Mtn	Aerial	574		113	
	Goldfield / Mud Lake	Aerial	314		82	
	Cactus Flat and Cactus Range	Aerial	2756		0	
	Kawich Valley & Range	Aerial	401	4045	0	195
1983	Stonewall Mtn	Aerial	604		49	
	Goldfield/Mud Lake	Aerial	144		32	
	Cactus Flat and Goldflat	Aerial	3138		0	
	(Areas A/C Incomplete)		283		0	
	Kawich Range/Valley	Aerial	691	4860	0	81
1984	Stonewall (top of Mtn not inventoried)	Aerial	543		58	
	Goldfield/Mud Lake	Aerial	284		60	
	Cactus/Gold Flat (Area A not Inventoried)	Aerial	3363		0	
	Kawich	Aerial	700	4890	0	118

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
Bureau of Land Management
Box 1551, Reno, Nevada 89505
Wilber - 323-8651

PUBLIC LANDS REPORT

From: BLM State Director, Nevada

Subject: NEVADA HAS THE ONLY WILD HORSE REFUGE IN THE NATION

For release March 5, 1964

Many have praised them; many have cursed them, and the controversy over whether the wild horse is really "wild" or whether he is good or bad is far from over.

Author and educator, J. Frank Dobie, said that the mustang "was the most beautiful, the most spirited and the most inspiriting creature to print foot on the grasses of America."

Livestockmen and professional land and wildlife managers are apt to refer to the wild horse as a stray and a pest; a despoiler of the land and its forage resources; a runaway or abandoned domestic animal that should be controlled and managed.

But whatever the verdict, if such will ever come, the wild horse has found a haven in Nevada. It's a remote, 435,000 acre expanse of desert and mountains in the northeast corner of the Nellis Air Force Base practice range northwest of Las Vegas. Supervision of the range has been assigned to the Bureau of Land Management.

BLM Nevada State Director, J. R. Penny, said that the refuge was established about a year ago by the Department of the Interior in cooperation with the Department of Defense in answer to pleas from across the Nation by thousands of wild horse admirers. There are about 200 horses on the refuge--they are considered mixtures of Spanish mustangs,

Indian ponies, and domestic horses that have strayed or were abandoned by their owners.

"Only one generation is needed to change a domestic bred horse to a wild one", said Penny.

Penny noted that according to one authority, the wild horse of today could be considered a "feral exotic"--an introduced animal that has gone wild. Although the degree of relationship between the present wild horses and the early Spanish mustangs varies, today's horses probably bear little resemblance to the animals which strayed from Spanish expeditions, missions, and settlements in the 16th and 17th centuries.

One of the reasons for selecting the Nellis Air Force Base practice range for the wild horse refuge is that grazing by domestic livestock is not permitted in the area and it was thought that there would be no competition for forage between the wild horses and domestic livestock. Subsequent investigations of the refuge area by range conservationists revealed that at least parts of it were being grazed by livestock--although such use is unauthorized. The Air Force is taking steps to eliminate such use.

Cooperative arrangements for the wild horse refuge have been worked out between the Air Force and BLM. The area is used ocassionally by the Air Force for gunnery practice and the public is not permitted to enter it. Part of the agreement between the two agencies assures access for range conservationists during periods when practice military missions are halted.

With the help of wildlife specialists from other agencies, BLM range specialists will inventory available forage for use by wild horses and native wildlife. A management plan to control the number of animals in the refuge will also have to be worked out. Wild horses have few natural enemies and would quickly overpopulate the range if not managed.

Penny said that in recent years wild horses have actually been on the increase in some parts of the West, including Nevada.

"There are many reasons for their increase, such as favorable winter weather in recent years, improved range conditions, more range water developments which permit horses to range over larger areas, and recent Federal restrictions on rounding up horses with mechanical equipment."

In 1959 Congress passed a law preventing the use of airplanes or motor vehicles in wild horse roundups on public lands. This has increased the cost of gathering horses for the Government and for ranchers running livestock in common on the public lands.

Two other factors affecting wild horse populations are the increased mechanization of ranches and the increase in private ownership of horses for recreational use in the West.

The role of the horse in western livestock operations is steadily diminishing, but in many cases the old work horses are kept on either for sentimental reasons or because there is no market for them. Left out on the open range for extended periods of time, these old veterans may stray and join up with semi-wild bands of other stray or abandoned horses.

Also, in recent years there has been an increase in private horse clubs in the West and a parallel increase in the private ownership of horses for recreational purposes. During the winter months when there is not much incentive to ride their horses, some owners will turn them out on the open range--which borders many western communities--and the horses will often stray and turn "wild".

Bands of uncontrolled, semi-wild horses are a source of local and regional controversy in the West. In large numbers, they can sharply reduce the amount of grass available for domestic livestock and big game.

In order to prevent the destruction of vegetation and soil erosion which might result from overgrazing, public range managers allocate the amount of forage that may be taken by domestic livestock and big game on public lands. Livestock grazing is also generally limited to specific periods of the year. If there are large numbers of horses on the range this means that other livestock use must be reduced in order to protect the vegetation and the soil.

Professional range managers are also very much concerned with the season of grazing use. There are certain periods of the year--particularly in the spring--when the range and forage plants are very susceptible to damage from grazing. In the early spring the soil is still moist from winter snows and the sharp hooves of cattle, sheep and horses puncture and trample the soil and the tender new growth of range grasses. During these periods sheep and cattle are usually kept off the range, but wild horses continue to graze.

But whatever course local controversies over the wild horse take, the Nevada wild horse refuge will assure that at least one wild herd will be preserved. At the time of its establishment, Secretary of the Interior, Stewart L. Udall, said "Preserving a typical herd of feral horses in one of the Nation's most isolated areas may prove difficult, but we will make the effort to assure those of us who admire the wild horse that there will always be some of these animals."

The wild horse has forever left its stamp on the face of the West. Such names as Mustang Prairie, Pinto Canyon, Broomtail Flat, and Horse Plains call to mind the red and blue roans, the duns, the smokies, the pintos, palominos, greys, bays, blacks, browns, and sorrels that once roamed the deserts, prairies and foothills in search of the free grass and water of an inspiring era of the West.

xxx

4700
(N-053)

AUG 23 1982

Las Vegas District Office
P.O. Box 26569
Las Vegas, Nevada 89126

Dawn Lappin
Wild Horse Organized Assistance
P.O. Box 555
Reno, NV. 89505

Dear Ms. Lappin:

Attached for your information are copies of the following items, per your request of August 8, 1982:

1. Environmental assessment for the Stonewall wild horse removal.

2. Stonewall Horse Removal Plan.

3. Nevada Wild Horse Range and U.S.A.F. TFWCR Wild Horse Herd Management Area Plan.

If you have questions, please contact this office.

Sincerely yours,

KEMP CONN

Kemp Conn
District Manager

United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Caliente Resource Area
P. O. Box 237
Caliente, NV 89008

IN REPLY REFER TO: 4700
(NV-057.7)

JUL 24 1984

(702) 726-3141

CERTIFIED MAIL NO: P 485 907 067
RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

Wild Horse Organized Assistance
ATTN: Dawn Y. Lappin, Director
P.O. Box 555
Reno, NV 89505

Dear Ms. Lappin:

The Five Party Cooperative Agreement Committee members (Department of Energy, U.S. Air Force, Nevada Division of Wildlife, Bureau of Land Management, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service) have identified the need for a Consultation and Coordination (C & C) Committee made up of special interest groups who will propose management objectives for wild horses on the U.S. Air Force Tactical Fighters Weapons Training Center Range and Tonopah Test Range (Nellis A.F.B. Bombing Range, see map attached). The intent is to form a committee made up of interest groups that are concerned with wild horse management on the bombing range. The purpose of the committee will be to identify wild horse issues and recommend goals for all wild horse areas. Emphasis will be placed on resolving resource concerns as they relate to wild horses inhabiting the bombing range, and make recommendations as needed to reach proposed objectives.

The meetings will be taking place over the next six months with the first meeting scheduled to be held in the Las Vegas District BLM office at 9:00 A.M. on August 3, 1984, with a trip to the Nellis Air Force Base Bombing Range on August 4, 1984.

Success of the C & C process on the bombing range will be determined greatly by the active participation of you as interested parties.

If you have any further questions concerning this program, please feel free to contact R. H. Wolfe, Area Manager, at the Caliente Resource Area BLM office.

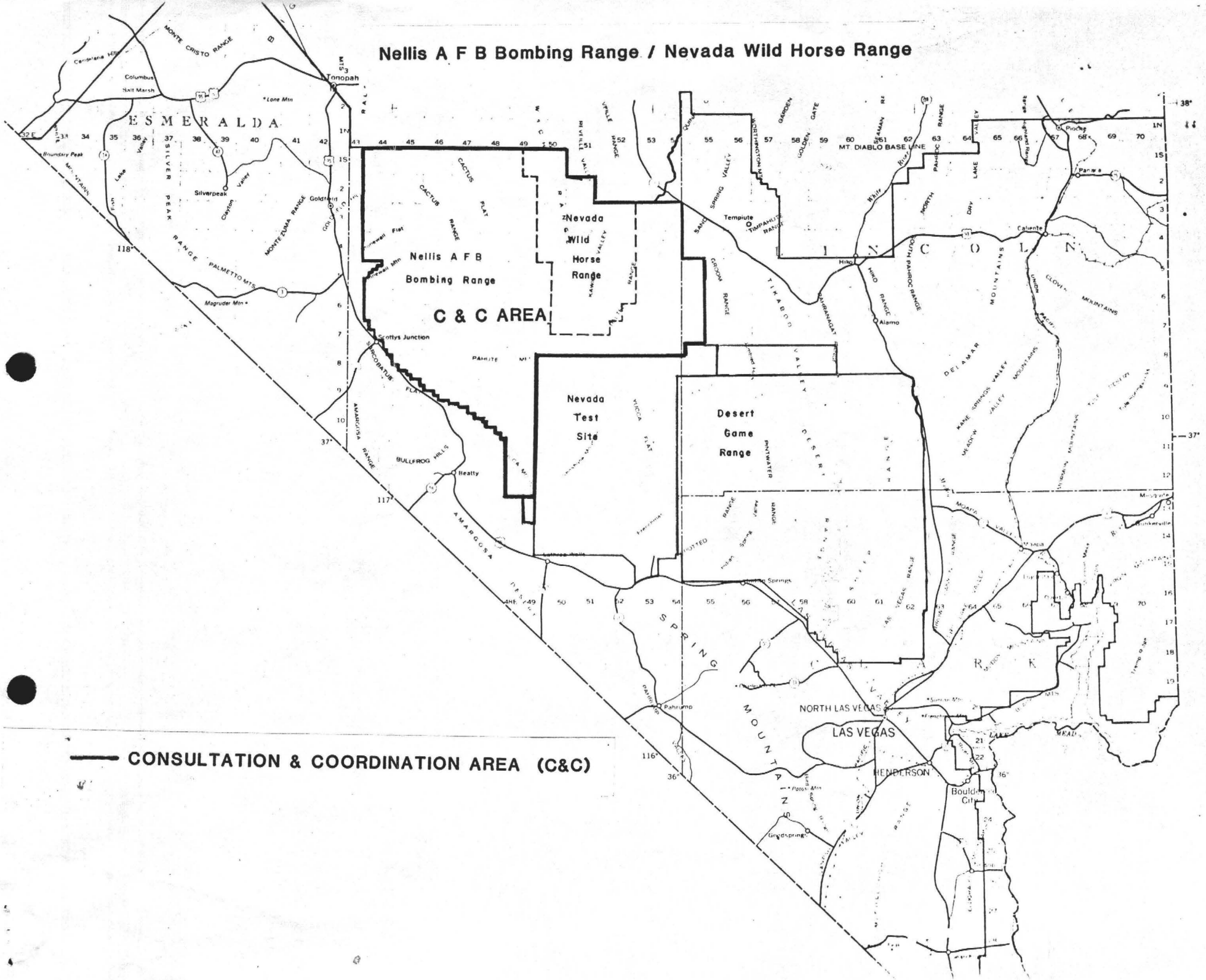
Sincerely,

R.H. Wolfe

R. H. Wolfe
Area Manager

Enclosure (1)

Nellis A F B Bombing Range / Nevada Wild Horse Range



NEVADA WILD HORSE RANGE AND USAF TACTICAL FIGHTER WEAPONS CENTER RANGE WILD HORSE REMOVAL PLAN

Nevada Wild Horse Range and
Nellis Bombing Range
Wild Horse Removal Plan

I. Objective. The objectives of this plan are to outline the methods and procedures to be used in capturing and transporting wild horses from the Range Complex and Nevada Wild Horse Range, (See map for capture area).

II. Number of Wild Horses

A. Present. The 1980 census for this area, approximately 1.1 million acres showed an actual count of 3,122 wild horses using the area outlined on the base map. The major use area where high concentration of wild horses occur are, Stonewall Mountain - 500 head, Goldfield range - 187 head, Kawich range - 2,435 head.

B. Future. Monitoring studies are to be used to establish an average population level. However to reduce resource damage that is presently occurring 2,000 wild horses will be removed in FY 82 and FY 83.

In FY 82 500 head of horses will be removed from the Kawich range. In FY 83 the removal schedule will be as follows:

Kawich Range remove	1350 head
Stonewall Mountain Range remove	480 head
Goldfield Range remove	87 head

Indeterminate U.S. Air Force scheduling and the migratory nature of wild horses will make it necessary to vary the above schedule. This variance will be determined by the BLM COAR in advance of the planned removal.

The removal will be conducted in such a manner as to alter the band structure, color, size, structure and sex ratio as little as possible. No particular animal or groups of animals are identified for removal.

The following number of wild horses will remain after the removal is complete.

Stonewall Mountain Range	75 head
Goldfield Range	50 head
Kawich Range	600 head

III. Methods of Capture

Wild horse capture will be accomplished by use of a helicopter, riders on horseback, and temporary corrals.

The temporary capture corrals will be constructed from portable pipe panels (height 6 to 7 ft.). An adjoining holding corral will be constructed to hold the horses after capture. Extending from the capture corrals will be wings (1/8 to 1/4 miles) also constructed from portable panels. The entire trap will be camouflaged with native brush and juniper.

The helicopter will drive the horses toward the wings of the trap entrance where riders will then flank the wild horses and drive them into the trap. Once the horses are in the trap the gate will be closed by hand.

A portable chute will be used to load the animals on the stock truck for transportation to Palomino Valley corrals. BLM is authorized to transport the horses to Palomino Valley prior to brand inspection.

If the horses are retained at the trap site overnight feed and water will be provided.

IV. Trap Sites

Eight to fourteen trap sites will be needed to capture 2,000 head from the area. These sites will be selected based on animal habits and topography of the area. Trap sites will be located so the least amount of resource damage will occur as possible. Existing roads and trails will be used and all sites will receive cultural clearance prior to use. If archaeological values are found the trap will be relocated.

V. Responsibility

It will be the responsibility of the Caliente Resource Area office to approve trap site locations, assure humane treatment to the horses (both in helicopter use and on the ground), and to see that the capture plan guidelines are observed, and to determine if destruction of sick or injured animals are necessary. The Las Vegas District Wild Horse and Burro Specialist's responsibility is to assure that the capture is being conducted in accordance with applicable regulations, BLM policy, and Range Complex Wild Horse herd area plan and this capture plan. The District Wild Horse/Burro Specialist or District Range Specialist will act in this capacity if the Caliente WH&B Specialist is not available.

VI. Destruction of Injured or Sick Animals

Any severely injured or seriously sick animal shall be destroyed in accordance with 43 CFR 4740.31. Such animals should be destroyed only when a definite act of mercy is needed to alleviate pain and suffering. If capture personnel or a BLM representative cannot determine severity of injury or sickness, a veterinarian will be on call to make the final decision.

Destruction will be done in the most humane method available.

VII. Transporting Injured or Diseased Animals

The Caliente Resource Area WH&B Specialist will determine if an injured or diseased animal can be transported to Palomino Valley Corrals (PVC) without further injury, harm or undue pain to the animal. If transportation is allowed, the animal will be treated by a veterinarian upon arrival at PVC. Animals that can not be transported will be examined and treated by a veterinarian at the trap site.

VIII. Safety

All capturing and handling of horses shall be done in the safest manner possible for the wild horses, personnel and saddle horses.

IX. Duration of the Capture Plan

This capture plan shall be in effect for the gathering of approximately 2,000 head.*

The gathering periods are to be coordinated with the U.S. Air Force, BLM and the Contractor, in order to schedule entry dates to the bombing range.

Extended periods of gathering will probably not be possible because of the U.S. Air Force activities. This will necessitate many gathering periods. The duration of this plan will be from December 1, 1981 through September 30, 1982 with the exception of the foaling period (March 1-June 30).

* Limited funding will require a removal period to extend over several years. Since this plan is to remove only 500 head in FY 82 from Stonewall Mountain, subsequent roundups will be necessary in FY 83 and FY 84 to achieve the desired population size.

X. Signatures

Prepared by:

5-27-82
Date

William T. Combs
William T. Combs, WH&B Specialist

Reviewed by:

06-07-82
Date

Terry Driver
Terry Driver, District Range Specialist

6-1-82
Date

David Pulliam, Wildlife Biologist

6/8/82
Date

Chief, Division of Resources

Approved by:

5/6/82
Date

Darwin Anderson, Area Manager
Caliente Resource Area

6/24/82
Date

Kemp Conn, District Manager

Environmental Assessment
for
Wild Horse Herd Management and Capture Plans
for the USAF Fighter Weapons Center Range Complex
NV-050-2-32

I. Purpose of and Need for Action

The purpose of this Environmental Assessment (EA) is to analyze the impacts of the Wild Horse Herd Management and Capture Plans to be operational on the Nevada Wild Horse Range and Range Complex (see attached map). A need for action has been determined through on-site observations and utilization studies which have shown this area to be in various stages of range deterioration.

II. Introduction

The Nevada Wild Horse Range (NWHR) was established in 1962 to meet the demands of a concerned public for a refuge for wild and free-roaming horses. Since its inception, wild horse populations have gone virtually unchecked and herd management has been non-existent. In 1977, inventories were initiated to begin a population census of animal numbers in the area. Current numbers are estimated at 3500-4800 individuals. In 1979 and 1980, utilization and apparent condition and trend studies were initiated, respectively. These studies have indicated overutilization of forage and damage to the range resource; intensity of use being relative to distance from water.

Three herd units are now recognized. These include groups which have expanded their home range out of the NWHR onto the U.S. Air Force (USAF) Tactical Fighter Weapons Center Range Complex.

The need for wild horse management in these areas has been identified by both the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the United States Air Force. This EA is written in conjunction with the Wild Horse Management and Capture Plans. These plans should be referred to for detailed description of the present situation and management objectives.

This EA is written in conformance to and in accordance with Public Law 95-195 as amended by Public Laws 94-579 and 95-514.

III. Description of the Proposed Action and Alternatives

A. Proposed Action

The proposed action is to manage wild horses on the Nevada Wild Horse Range and Range Complex in Nye County, Nevada. This action, to be initiated over a three-year period, entails the removal of 2,000 animals from three herd areas, funding permitted. Those animals removed will be made available to the public for adoption. Monitoring studies will be established for determining future numbers capable of being supported by the forage resource in the area. Once determined, populations will be maintained through herd management. A herd management plan and a capture plan have been developed for this area.

B. Alternative 1 - No Action

This alternative states that no management action be undertaken in the project area.

C. Alternative 2 - Total Removal

This action calls for total removal of all horses from the project area, thus relinquishing any need for management.

D. Alternative 3 - Management Including Fencing of the NWHR

This alternative suggests that the NWHR be fenced, thus containing all animals to be managed. Initial reductions would be made on the NWHR and all horses on the Range Complex would be removed. Those animals which are removed would be made available to the public through adoption. Those animals remaining on the NWHR would be managed for, as outlined in the proposed action.

IV. Affected Environment

A detailed description of the existing environment is presented in "Proposed Public Land Withdrawal, Nellis Air Force Range, Nye, Clark, and Lincoln Counties." A more concise description can be found in the Wild Horse Management Plan proposed for this area. Items of consideration not adequately covered in the above mentioned EA or Management Plan, are discussed below.

A. Sandia Labs, a missile research and testing company, maintains a headquarters on the Range Complex in the northern Cactus Flat area. Complaints have been received of optical interference caused by increasing dust pollution in the air. This is caused by accelerated vegetation removal and subsequent baring of top soil by horses in the area.

B. There are occasional vehicle/horse collisions on the Range complex. These result in death to the horse and damage to the vehicle. Although there have been no human injuries, there is the potential for a human death to occur from some future collision.

C. No Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs) are identified in the project area.

D. Issues concerning wild horses in the state have long been considered controversial by wild horse advocates and those who oppose the continued encroachment of wild horses on public land.

V. Analysis of the Proposed Action and Alternatives

A. Proposed Action

1. Environmental Impacts

a. Reduction of horse numbers on the Range Complex would create positive impacts to the soils and forage resource by allowing for vegetative regowth. Positive impacts to Sandia Labs would also be realized through decreased dust pollution.

b. The total vegetation resource in the area would be expected to improve due to decreased utilization.

c. The reduction of horse loss through inhumane death caused by collisions with vehicles is a positive impact.

d. Positive impacts to big game wildlife in the area (bighorn sheep, mule deer and antelope) would be realized through a reduction in grazing competition.

e. Positive impacts may be realized through a reduction in competition within horse herds.

f. Adverse impacts to the human experience, both in aesthetic and moral aspects may be realized through horse removal by horse protection groups and concerned individuals.

g. Adverse impacts to BLM economics may be realized through cost/benefit rates.

h. Impacts due to capture operations may include stress and/or injury to some animals. In the extreme case, some animals may be killed.

i. Positive impacts may be realized through adoption of wild horses and their subsequent care. Negative impacts may be created where animals cannot be adopted and must be destroyed.

j. Disturbance of the general ecology in the area will occur during capture operations. Impacts would be of short duration.

k. Disturbance of cultural resource sites may occur during capture operations.

2. Recommended Mitigating Measures

a. Mitigate impacts to the human experience by providing education on the necessity of managing wild horse herds in this area.

b. Mitigate impacts to BLM economics by soliciting funds from the USAF who are jointly responsible for actions taken in this area, and from concerned wild horse advocates who are willing to help in management efforts.

c. Mitigate impacts during capture operations by:

(1) Providing veterinarian assistance during operations.

(2) Constructing traps so as to ensure minimal injury to animals.

(3) Discontinuing operations should animals become unduly stressed.

(4) Ensuring that no operations take place during the peak foaling season of March, April, and May.

d. Mitigate impacts to unadoptable horses by destroying the animals in the most humane manner available.

e. Mitigate impacts to cultural resources by conducting archaeological clearances at trap sites prior to construction. If cultural resources are found, sites should be relocated.

f. Mitigate short-term impacts to the general ecology of the area by confining travel to existing roads and trails.

3. Unavoidable Adverse Impacts

a. Some destruction of vegetation in the area will probably occur as well as some soil disturbance during capture operations.

b. It is not feasible that all of the concerned public will agree to conditions and objectives set forth in the capture and herd management plan.

4. Short-Term vs. Long-Term Effects on Productivity

The effects of the herd management plan in the project area should be increasingly realized through time.

5. Irreversible or Irretrievable Commitments of Resources

This would occur if horses are killed during capture operations or if sick or injured animals have to be destroyed.

B. Alternative 1 - No Action

1. Environmental Impacts

a. Increased amounts of dust pollution would be expected to continue to interfere with Sandia Labs operation.

b. As wild horse populations increase unchecked, loss to vehicle collisions would also be expected to increase. The number of vehicles operating on the range has been steadily increasing and this trend is expected to continue. Collisions between horses and vehicles can also be expected to increase, with the injury or death of personnel being a possible result.

c. Competition for forage and water resources within horse herds would be expected to increase.

d. Adverse impacts to the forage and soils resources would be expected to continue through increased utilization.

e. Increased competition for forage between horses and big game wildlife species would probably be realized.

f. Positive impacts to wild horse groups may occur due to their continued advocacy of a no-action policy.

g. Horse loss due to capture operations would not occur.

h. The general ecology of the area would continue to be adversely impacted by increasing horse populations.

i. Horse loss would occur due to population collapse after habitat is destroyed under high population density.

2. Mitigating Measures

None offered under this alternative.

3. Unavoidable Adverse Impacts

Same as listed under V.B.1.(a-e, h, i)

4. Short-Term Use vs. Long-Term Effects on Productivity

Productivity in this area would continue to be negatively impacted. The range resource would be expected to continue to deteriorate, while horse populations increased. It is expected that horse populations would increase beyond the support capability of the range resource and would crash. These impacts would be negative to the entire ecology of the area.

5. Irreversible or Irretrievable Commitments of Resources

Increasing overutilization of the range could lead to irreversible damage to this resource. Animals lost to mass population die-off would be irretrievable. Increasing competition between horses and other wildlife species could lead to a loss of wildlife from its habitat.

C. Alternative 2 - Total Removal

1. Environmental Impacts

a. Total removal of wild horses from the project area would impact the environment the same as in the proposed action except:

(1) V.A.1.e. - would not be applicable.

(2) Costs of capture operations would be increased while management costs would be nonexistent. Impacts to Bureau economics would be of short duration.

(3) Adverse impacts to the human experience would be expected to intensify.

2. Recommended Mitigation

Same as under the Proposed Action except for V.A.2.a. which does not apply.

3. Unavoidable Adverse Impacts

Same as for the proposed action.

4. Short-Term Use vs. Long-Term Effects on Productivity

Adverse impacts to BLM economics would become short-term.

5. Irreversible or Irretrievable Commitments of Resources

Under this alternative, the entire wild horse resource would be lost from this area unless reintroduced at some later time.

D. Alternative 3 - Management Including Fencing of the NWHR

1. Environmental Impacts

a. Impacts to resources on the Range Complex would be the same as in V.C.1.a.

b. Impacts to resources on the NWHR would include V.A.1.b.-k., with these amendments:
(1) V.A.1.f. - Impacts to the human experience may be positive if by following the alternative, this area is viewed as an established refuge by the public.

(2) V.A.1.g. - Adverse impacts to BLM economics would be expected to increase due to the costliness of this alternative.

2. Recommended Mitigation

Same as for the proposed action.

3. Unavoidable Adverse Impacts

Same as for the proposed action.

4. Short-Term vs. Long-Term Effects on Productivity

The confinement of grazing to the NWHR may intensify the need for herd management in the long-term.

5. Irreversible or Irretrievable Commitments of Resources

(a) Same as for the proposed action.

(b) The NWHR would become an established refuge given to the management of wild horse herds.

VI. Signatures

Prepared by:

3/29/82
Date

Anna R. Rubin
Anna R. Rubin, Range Conservationist

Reviewed by:

4-1-82
Date

William T. Combs
William T. Combs, WH&B Specialist

4/1/82
Date

Cheryl L. Hoke
Cheryl L. Hoke, Environmental Specialist

4/2/82
Date

Marta L. Witt
Marta L. Witt, Writer/Editer

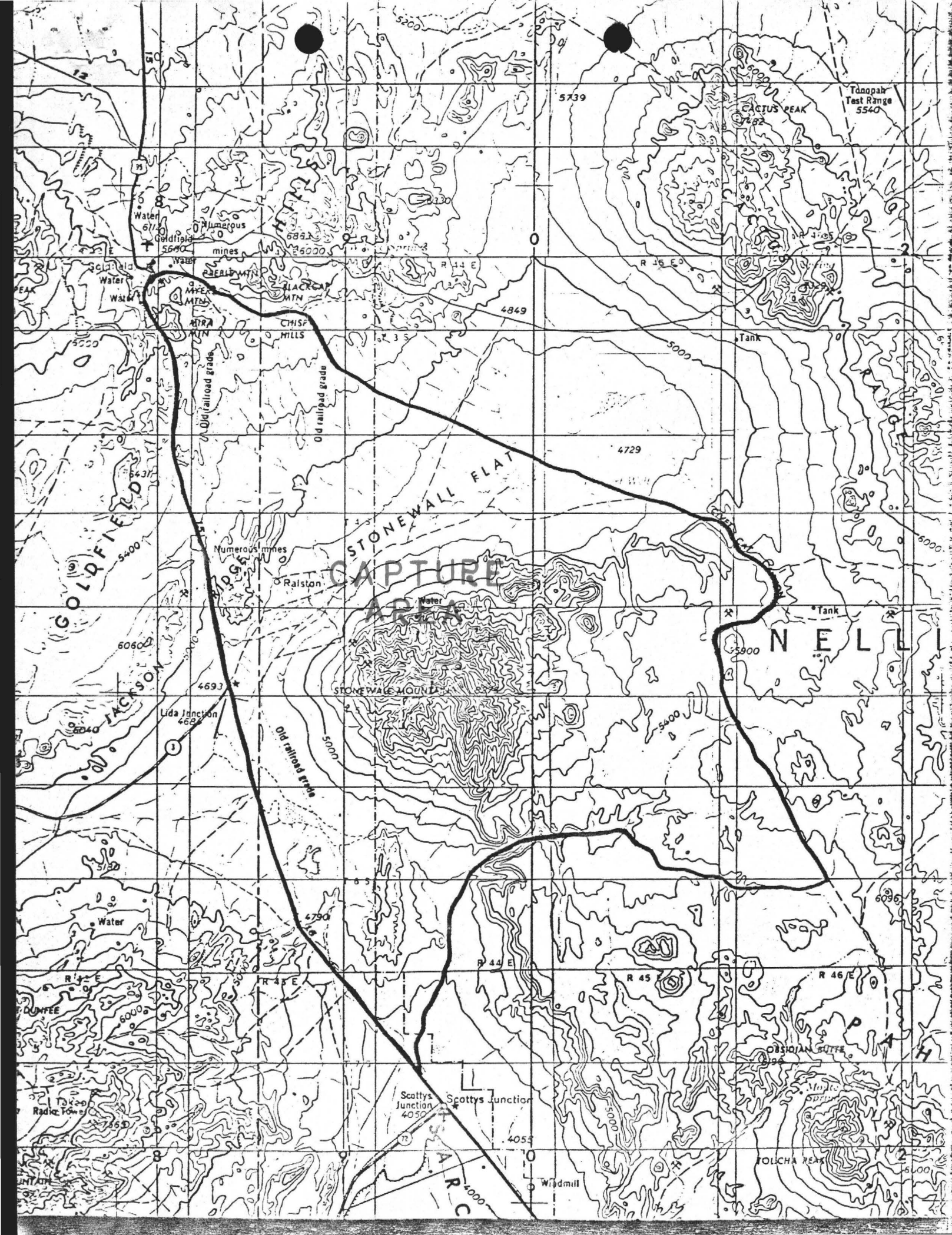
5/6/82
Date

Darwin C. Anderson
Darwin C. Anderson, Area Manager

Approved by:

6/24/82
Date

Kemp Conn
Kemp Conn, District Manager


Tonopah Test Range 5540
CACTUS PEAK 7182
5739
Water
Numerous mines
Goldfield 5640
Goldfield
Water
Water
MYER MTN
BLACKCAP MTN
CHISP HILLS
4849
Tank
Old railroad grade
4729
STONEWALL FLAT
CAPTURE AREA
Numerous mines
Ralston
Water
Tank
NELLI
STONEWALL MOUNTAIN
6374
Lida Junction 4682
4693
Old railroad grade
Water
Scotty's Junction 4050
Scotty's Junction
4055
Windmill
OBSIDIAN BUTTE
6096
TOLICHA PEAK
6000
Tonopah Radio Tower
GOLDFIELD
JACKSON
RANGE
PATH
R 44 E
R 45 E
R 46 E

Nevada Wild Horse Range and USAF Tactical Fighter
Weapons Center Range Complex
Wild Horse Herd Management Area Plan

Table of Contents

V. Management Methods

A. Minimal Management

B. Methods to be Used

C. Timing

VI. Cooperative Arrangements

VII. Management Facilities and Equipment

VIII. Studies and Assessment

A. Habitat Studies

B. Animal Studies

C. Animal Census

1. Wildlife
2. Wild Horse

IX. Modification

X. Persons, Groups, and Government Agencies Consulted

XI. Participating and Review Staff

XII. Signatures

Appendix

1.		Base Map 1
2.	Seasonal Use Areas and Home Range	Overlay 1
3.	Existing Projects	Overlay 2
4.	Resource Conflicts	Overlay 3

I. Introduction

The Nevada Wild Horse Range (NWHR) was established in 1962 by a cooperative agreement with the Department of Defense and the Department of Interior. Wild horse population estimates at that time were placed at 200-400 head. These horses were mainly in the area designated as the NWHR. Since 1962 the wild horses have expanded their range and roam over a much larger area. The present population estimates are 4000-5000 wild horses on the NWHR and surrounding area. The NWHR is 394,000 acres of unfenced range lying within the northeast corner of the USAF Tactical Fighters Weapons Center Range Complex in Nye County. The total area of the present home range is estimated at 1,165,000 acres. (See map), which is presently covered by a five party agreement for management with the U.S. Air Force (USAF), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), Department of Energy (DOE), Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and the Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW).

Historically this area was grazed by livestock, horses and wildlife. Even though the area was withdrawn for military purposes in 1940, livestock grazing continued until 1979. Attempts where made during the fifties and sixties to discontinue livestock grazing to no avail. In 1979 a fence along the northern boundary was completed thus eliminating livestock grazing from the area. Nationally the NWHR is not well known and does not generate much public interest, because of its remoteness and the inaccessibility of the area. The National Wild Horse Association, a Las Vegas based organization, has shown considerable active interest and has been involved in helping develop and maintain water improvements. The members are also very much interested in the welfare of the wild horses. The USAF and the DOE has an on-going program of weapons development and military aircraft training which is presently increasing. These activities lessen and/or prevent even agency access to the area, especially the area designated as the Tonopah Test Range.

II. Plans Purpose

The major purpose of this plan is to manage the wild horses according to the Wild Horse and Burro Act of December 15, 1971, (Public Law 92-195) as amended by Public Law 94-579 and Public Law 95-514.

III. Background Information

A. Location

The NWHR is located in the northeast corner of the USAF Tactical Fighters Weapons Center Range Complex (Range Complex) approximately 40 miles southeast of Tonopah, Nevada. (See area map) The general topography is of broad flat valleys and steep rocky mountains.

The area the wild horses are presently using is shown on overlay No. 1. The acreage is as follows:

NWHR	394,000 acres
Remaining Use Area	771,000 acres
	1,165,000 total acres

B. Resource Data

1. Vegetative Resource

No vegetative inventory has been conducted nor is one planned. To determine the grazing capacity monitoring studies will be conducted. Because of the security restriction placed on the area outside the NWHR, monitoring will be conducted on NWHR only.

Utilization studies initiated in 1980 show that heavy to severe use is being made within 1/2 mile of all water facilities. Outward from waters to about 4 1/2 miles the use is moderate to heavy and even past this point, the vegetation appears to have been mown.

Cactus Flat and Kawich Valley should have similar vegetative communities. However this is not the case. The intense grazing made on Cactus Flat has altered the vegetative community and rabbitbrush is increasing to a high percentage in the plant community.

Generally the communities in the valleys are composed of galleta grass, Indian ricegrass, numerous forbs, big sage, low sage, rabbitbrush, buckwheat, desert globemallow, pinyon pine, and juniper.

2. Range Condition and Trend

Condition and trend studies were initiated in the spring of 1981. Vegetative trends can only be determined after many years of data collection. Based on the physical damage to the forage plants from trampling, and grazing and the abundance of undesirable plants, the apparent trend is down.

The apparent condition varies from good to poor depending on the distance from water. These areas within 1/2 mile of water are in very poor condition whereas those farther removed are in fair to good condition, depending on distance from water sources. The visual appearance and field observation of comparison areas were used to derive the apparent condition.

3. Soils

Soils in the NWHR area are primarily aridisols and entisols. A few mollisols occur on the upper elevations of the mountains and high plateaus. No soil survey has been conducted nor is one planned.

4. Water (see overlay #2)

Water sources for the wild horses and wildlife in the home range consist mainly of undeveloped springs and natural catchment basins. Past livestock operations had developed some of the spring and pipelines, but since these operations have been restricted from the Range Complex, these developments have deteriorated to the point that they provide water only at the source.

The BLM with assistance from the National Wild Horse Association has developed five springs. Two of these spring developments are the water source for two pipelines for better water distribution.

Waters in the Cedar Peak area are maintained by the Nevada Wild Horse Association. Summer and Cedar Springs, along with George's Water, are maintained by Mr. Joseph Fallini. The Air Force maintains the water well at the Operations and Maintenance Compound on the Tonopah Test Range.

Wild horse use areas are restricted to the above mentioned water sources especially during the summer months.

5. Animals

a. Wildlife

An estimated 200-300 mule deer, 120 antelope, 35-50 desert bighorn sheep, and four (4) mountain lions make year long use of the area. The mule deer are found on all mountain ranges within the area. The antelope use the foothills and the valleys. Main concentrations are in the northern portion of Cactus Flat and all of Kawich Valley with occasional sightings around Stonewall Mountains. The desert bighorn sheep and the mountain lions are on and around Stonewall Mountain.

Other wildlife species found in the area include a variety of raptors, such as Golden eagles and hawks, numerous small birds and small mammals and many reptiles. Jackrabbits and cottontails are common, but population levels fluctuate periodically in high/low cycles.

No endangered species are known to exist in the area.

b. Livestock

Livestock are no longer licensed to graze this area and only an occasional livestock trespass occurs.

c. Wild Horses

Origin of the wild horse in this area is not known, but it was probably from domestic stock of ranches and mining operations. Estimated wild horse population in the late 1950's was a 200-400 herd according to USAF personnel. Little emphasis has been placed on data collection, particularly due to the restricted entry and remoteness of the NWHR. In 1960 a Wild Horse Management Plan was developed for the NWHR. Even though both parties agreed to the plan it was never implemented. The BLM and USAF have been conducting aerial horse inventories since 1977. The present population is 3122 (actual count), with an estimated population of 3500-4000 horses present.

Horse colors vary from white to black and all shades in between. However, the predominant colors are bay and sorrel with a few pintos in the Stonewall Mountain area. The wild horses are found mainly within the NWHR. There are two other herds as shown on the base map. No efforts have been made to control the wild horse population at least for the past twenty years. Prior to that period data is sketchy.

Most animals appear to be in good condition. Some poor condition animals have been seen intermixed with animals of good condition. These poor condition animals could be the result of old age, sickness, parasites and nursing (mares).

There is no data for sex ratio, age structure, or mortality. Productivity based on limited data from one year's observation is approximately 8 or 9 percent.

d. Burros

There are no burros on the NWHR at this time. Burros do exist around Stonewall Mountain and the Goldfield range. Present population estimates are:

Stonewall Mountain - 110 burros
Goldfield Range - 50 burros

Most of the burros are off the Range Complex but they do occasionally migrate onto the range.

The animals appear to be in good condition.

6. Seasonal Use Areas (See Overlay # 1)

The horses tend to concentrate in the areas close to the water source during the summer months. Most of these areas are along the upper portions of the piedmont slope. During the cooler months the horses use a much larger area extending 10-15 miles from known water sources.

7. Home Range (See Overlay # 1)

Three home ranges have been identified in the area, Kawich, Stonewall, and Goldfield hills.

Horses in the Stonewall home range do not mix with the other two herds. The Kawich and Goldfield herds do intermix during the winter months near the Mud Lake area.

C. Existing Projects (See Overlay # 2)

1. Water

Water projects consist of three spring developments with troughs at the source and two spring developments with a pipeline distribution system. These projects are maintained by the National Wild Horse Association.

Water projects left over from past livestock operations have deteriorated and are in need of repair. The pipeline projects are no longer functional and provide water only at the spring source. There are also numerous nonfunctional wells and silted in reservoirs.

2. Fence

The northern boundary of the Range Complex has been fenced to restrict cattle movement into the range. There are no interior fences.

D. Coordination

1. Relationship to Other Resource Use and Resource Conflicts

a. Wild Horse - Wildlife (See Overlay # 3)

Present estimate of big game are 35 to 50 Desert Bighorn Sheep, 120 antelope, and, 200-300 mule deer.

In the Stonewall herd area the wild horses (500 +) are making heavy demands on the water and forage resources. The highest mountain peaks show sign of horse use. This herd is in direct conflict with the mule deer and desert bighorn sheep.

The Kawich herd area has approximately 120 head of antelope and 1500 to 2000 herd of horses. During the winter months the antelope frequent the areas between the Silver Bow and Rosebud springs. However, as the wild horses move back into the area in early spring the antelope leave this area. It is not known if the

horses are responsible for their departure or just a seasonal movement of antelope. The horses are making heavy demands on the vegetative resources and are utilizing the same forage species as the antelope.

The resident herd of mule deer is very small in numbers at the present. The NDOW feels that this is the result of too many horses in and around the deer habitat. Two to three hundred deer are estimated in the area on a seasonal basis mainly from a migratory herd.

Continued heavy use of forage and uncontrolled horse population increase and expansion of horse use will likely result in reduced productivity of bighorn sheep and mule deer in the area. Should the heavy forage utilization by horses continue, a demise of native big game species could occur in the area.

b. Wild Horse - U.S. Air Force and Department of Energy Uses

The U.S. Air Force has used the NWHR and surrounding area as a military training area for the past forty years. Initially there was little conflict between wild horses and the Air Force use because of the low wild horse population. In the last 10-15 years the horse numbers have increased and have interfered with the military's training to the point of in direct conflict between the two.

DOE, through a contract with Sandia National Laboratories, has used the northern portion of the Range Complex for military weapons test and development for more than ten years. The weapons development systems requires the use of many optical devices in which good visibility is necessary in order to be effective. The suspended particulates have increased to the point that, at times, the optical equipment is rendered useless. The increased particulates are the result of reduced ground cover from overgrazing.

Another problem is that of wild horses on or near the test site air field. This presents a potential safety hazard to aircraft that use the airfield.

The increased vehiclular use and the large wild horse population have resulted in vehicle/horse collisions. To date there have been no human injuries, but the potential for serious accidents exists.

IV. Objectives

A. Habitat

1. Forage

Maximum allowable use on the key forage species should be 55% for perennial grasses and forbs, and 45% for shrubs.

2. Cover

The main source of cover is provided by the pinyon-juniper on the mountain slopes. Some cover is provided by the canyons and rocky outcrops along the foothills.

3. Water

Present waters will be maintained. No new developments are planned.

B. Wild and Free Roaming Horses

1. Primary Objectives

The primary objectives are to manage, protect and control wild free roaming horses where they existed in 1971. The wild horses will be managed in accordance with Wild, Free-Roaming Horse and Burro Act, and the Range Land Improvement Act for protection against capture, branding, harassment, or death.

2. Animal Numbers

Representatives of the five agencies responsible for management of the NWHR, Tonopah Test Range, Desert Game Range and USAF Tactical Fighter Weapons Training Center Range Complex (formerly Nellis Air Force Range) made the following recommendations on February 12, 1982:

a. Reduce the numbers of horses from the present numbers to an average of 1000 animals.[1]

b. Confine and manage these animals to the Kawich Home Range.

c. Remove the horses/burros from the Stonewall and Goldfield Ranges.

[1] These interim numbers were derived by estimating the available suitable forage within a four mile radius of water. Numbers to be managed on NWHR will be derived from monitoring studies over a period of years. The selected number will be allowed to fluctuate an average of 20 percent between periodic removal operations.

3. Specific Objectives for the Three Home Ranges are:

a. Kawich (See Overlay #1)

Aerial counts in May 1981 showed 1700 horses using this home range. The horses have expanded this range in the recent past which is evident by the difference in vegetal cover in the Cactus Flat area to that in Kawich Valley. Livestock operators using the Kawich Valley possibly kept the wild horse level at a minimum in area.

If this herd is not reduced to a level that is in line with the vegetative carrying capacity serious resource damage can be expected.

An average herd size of 1000 horses will be maintained.

b. Goldfield Range (See Overlay #1)

The area is within the Tonopah Test Site and ground entry is severely restricted. Only aerial horse count and general vegetative data have been collected.

No monitoring studies can be conducted in this area because of the inherent danger and security restriction.

All horses will be removed from this area.

c. Stonewall Range (See Overlay #1)

There are approximately 570 head of horses currently using this area. The Nevada Department of Wildlife recommends total removal from this area because of the conflict between wildlife and wild horses. Only a small portion of the "home range" can be monitored, and the recommendation is to remove all horses from Stonewall Mountain.

4. Wildlife Objective

Increase Desert Bighorn Sheep herd population on Stonewall Range to 150 head.

Increase resident mule deer herd on Stonewall range to 300, Kawich range to 80.

Increase Antelope population on Kawich range to 300.

V. Management Methods

A. Minimal Management

In order to keep management at a minimal level, there will be no pasture fencing even though a higher population level might be maintained if fencing were used. The objective can be attained by reducing the wild horse population to the current grazing capacity of the suitable range. Wildlife demands shall be considered when determining the grazing capacity.

B. Methods to be Used

Methods to be used to reduce the wild horse population will be water trapping and/or helicopter gathering.

C. Timing

The initial reduction should take place in FY82 in accordance with the U.S. Air Force and Tonopah Test Range scheduling. Close coordination is required in order to effectively accomplish any removal of wild horses. A longer period (three years) of reduction may be required due to limited funding.

VI. Cooperative Arrangements (See Five-Party Cooperative Agreement)

The Bureau has entered into a Cooperative Agreement with the U.S. Air Force, Department of Energy, U.S. Fish and Wildlife, and the Nevada Department of Wildlife. This agreement details the different roles and responsibilities of each cooperator.

VII. Management Facilities and Equipment

Existing management facilities on the Kawitch consist of two pipelines and two corrals plus five spring developments. (See Overlay #3 for location). The pipelines and spring developments have increased the area of use made by the wild horses. The corrals are in disrepair and serve no purpose at this time, but could be repaired easily and used in a capture operation.

VIII. Studies and Assessment

A. Habitat Studies

Monitoring studies have been started on the Kawich area (NWHR) to evaluate range condition and trend, utilization, climate and grazing patterns.

B. Animal Studies

The Fish and Wildlife Service is interested in assisting in conducting a population dynamic study to determine age structure, mortality, natality, sex ratio, and a life table. The service will submit a proposal to the BLM to see if there is a possibility for funding the study. This information is greatly needed in order to manage the wild horses.

C. Animal Census

1. The NDOW will continue annual wildlife census.

2. BLM will continue annual wild horse census.

IX. Modification

This plan may be modified as new data and evaluation deem necessary.

X. Persons, Groups and Government Agencies Consulted

U.S. Air Force Nellis Air Force Base,
U.S. Department of Energy,
Nevada Department of Wildlife
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
National Wild Horse Association
Wild Horse Organized Assistance
Animal Protection Institute
Humane Society of Southern Nevada

XI. Participating and Review Staff

Dave Pulliam, Staff Wildlife Biologist
Terry Driver, Staff Range Conservationist
John Jamrog, SERA Range Conservationist
Stan VanVelsor, Caliente RA Range Conservationist
Marta Witt, Writer Editor (P&EC)
Cheryl Hoke, Environmental Coordinator (P&EC)

XII. Signatures

Prepared by:

5-20-82
Date

William T. Combs
William T. Combs, WH&B Specialist

Reviewed by:

05-06-82
Date

Terry Driver
Terry Driver, District Range Specialist

6-1-82
Date

David E. Pulliam Jr.
David Pulliam, Wildlife Specialist

6/15/82
Date

Edward T. Ciliberti, Chief
Division of Resources

Approved by:

5/6/82
Date

Darwin Anderson, Area Manager
Caliente Resource Area

6/24/82
Date

Kemp Conn, District Manager, Las Vegas
U.S. Department of Interior
Bureau of Land Management

Date

Commander Nellis Air Force Base
Department of the Air Force

Date

Regional Director, US Dept. of Interior
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Date

Director
Nevada Department of Wildlife

Date

Manager, Department of Energy
Nevada Operations Office

United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Caliente Resource Area
P. O. Box 237
Caliente, NV 89008

IN REPLY
REFER TO:

4700
4740.4
(NV-057.7)

(702) 726-3141

February 29, 1984

Wild Horse Organized Assistance
Atten: Dawn Y. Lappin, Director
P.O. Box 555
Reno, NV 89505

Dear Ms. Lappin:

The Caliente Resource Area Bureau of Land Management through a Cooperative Agreement with the National Mustang Association is in the process of implementing a wild horse relocation study as outlined in the Little Mountain Herd Management Area Plan (Caliente Resource Area, Bureau of Land Management). To implement this study it is necessary that a band of wild horses be captured and transported to Caliente, Nevada, and fitted with radio collars and released.

Therefore, enclosed for your review and comment is the "DRAFT" Stonewall Mountain Wild Horse Gathering Plan to implement the Little Mountain Herd Management Area Relocation Study and Environmental Assessment. Please forward all comments to the Caliente Resource Area office by March 28, 1984. Questions concerning this correspondence direct to Phillip C. Seegmiller, Caliente Resource Area, Bureau of Land Management, Wild Horse and Burro Specialist.

Thank you for your active participation in the wild horse and burro program.

Sincerely,

R.H. Wolfe

R. H. Wolfe
Area Manager

Enclosures

Draft

STONEWALL MOUNTAIN

(USAF Tactical Fighter Weapons Training Center Range)

WILD HORSE GATHERING PLAN
to

Implement the Little Mountain
Herd Management Area Relocation Study

Prepared by: _____ _____
Wild Horse Specialist Date
Caliente Resource Area

Recommended and Approved by:

_____ _____
Area Manager Date
Caliente Resource Area

Concurred by: _____ _____
District Manager Date
Las Vegas

Approved by: _____ _____
State Director Date
Nevada

INTRODUCTION

Proposal

This removal plan is designed to remove one band of five to ten head of wild horses (Preferably colored i.e., Pinto, white, Palomino, etc.) from the Stonewall Mountain Area (USAF Tactical Fighter Weapons Training Center Range). The purpose of the removal is to conduct a relocation study in the Caliente Resource Area as outlined in the Little Mountain Herd Management Area Plan, (Caliente Resource Area, Bureau of Land Management), and Cooperative Agreement between the Bureau of Land Management and the National Mustang Association (Caliente Resource Area, Bureau of Land Management).

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Gather Area

The gathering site is located at the base of Stonewall Mountain south of Stonewall Flat at Stonewall Spring, approximately 15 miles southeast of Goldfield, Nevada. Wild horses that use the area range out from Stonewall Spring approximately 15 miles in all directions. However, actual removal operations will take place at Stonewall Spring only. (See map for use area and water trap location covered by this gathering plan.)

Existing Situation

In August 1983 the Bureau with the aid of the USAF conducted the most recent census on the Nevada Wild Horse Range and the USAF Tactical Fighters Weapons Center Range Complex which includes the Stonewall Mountain area. Of the 4864 wild horses counted on the bombing range, 604 wild horses are located on the Stonewall Mountain area. The Stonewall Mountain area is outside and adjacent to the Nevada Wild Horse Range which was established in 1962.

The decision to remove horses from this area is based on manageability of these horses, USAF and public comment, and proposed Bureau planning documents.

REMOVAL PROCESS

Summary

One band of wild horses will be removed from the Stonewall Spring water trap site. Once captured the horses will be transported to the Little Mountain Herd Management area to a temporary holding corral near Caliente, Nevada. From there three wild horses will be fitted with radio collars the rest with color coded collars and released according to the Cooperative Agreement and the Little Mountain Herd Management Area Plan.

Removal Method

One band of wild horses will be captured by the National Mustang Association (NMA), with the assistance/supervision of the Caliente Wild Horse and Burro Specialist.

To accomplish capture a temporary water trap at Stonewall Spring using portable panels will be used.

The National Mustang Association will provide transportation to the holding facilities at release site on the Little Mountain Herd Management Area. They will also provide radio collars and receiver, assistance to the Bureau in monitoring horses well being in temporary holding facilities (care, feeding, watering and security, etc.), cost of brand inspection, spotting scope, and assistance in monitoring wild horses after release. The Bureau will provide temporary holding facilities, hay and water. The Bureau of Land Management will also select, assist in/supervise the capture, collar, release and monitor the movement and life cycles of the horses being relocated. The Bureau will "age", examine, describe/photograph and fit, with National Mustang Association assistance, radio and/or colored collars to horses prior to release. The Bureau of Land Management will provide for veterinarian examination of wild horses. The Bureau of Land Management will monitor relocated horses movements in accordance to Little Mountain Herd Management Area Plan with National Mustang Association's assistance.

If it becomes obvious that relocation is not occurring then the National Mustang Association will be contacted and removal plans initiated. Otherwise the study period will end in two years or life of collars, with horses being satisfactorily located on the Little Mountain Herd Management Area or removed.

Justification

Justification for using Stonewall Mountain as the removal area to obtain one band of wild horses for relocation study is based on the Bureau of Land Management planning process and manageability of the herd, and is supported by Public Law 92-195.

The Nevada Wild Horse Range was established in 1962. Since then horses have expanded and increased their range to the point that not only is there a conflict with USAF training operations but forage competition results to the detriment of desirable forage species. The Stonewall Mountain area is also inhabitated by Desert Bighorn sheep. The expanding horse population threatens the Bighorn sheep's existence, which resulted in recommendation for the complete removal of wild horses from the Stonewall Mountain area (Nevada Wild Horse Range and USAF Tactical Fighters Weapons Center Range Complex, Wild Horse Herd Management Area Plan, Bureau of Land Management, Caliente, Nevada).

Brand Inspector

The services of the State Brand Inspector will be obtained and all inspections will comply with the proceedures set forth in Instruction Memorandum NV-83-26, which outlines the procedure for processing private horses captured during removal operations.

Veterinarian Services

Provisions will be made to have a veterinarian available to the operation within a few hours notice during the daylight hours. During the trapping operation the nearest full-time veterinary service is Las Vegas, Nevada, approximately 180 miles away from trap site. At the temporary holding facility on Little Mountain, the nearest veterinary service will be Caliente, Nevada.

The Bureau of Land Management's authorized representative or his designee will summon a veterinarian if, in his judgment, veterinary services are required to alleviate suffering of one or more horses, to insure their well being, or to diagnose and/or treat disease, sickness or injury.

DISPOSITION AND HANDLING OF HORSES

Provisions for Humane Treatment

The welfare and humane treatment of wild horses will be of primary importance in handling them. Trapped wild horses which are seriously injured, obviously sick, lame, or very old will be humanely destroyed at the trap by the Bureau of Land Management's authorized officer only, or by a veterinarian if authorized by the Bureau's representative.

Trapped horses will be removed from the trap within ten hours from the time of capture. Water will be available in the holding corral at all times. Horses held for ten hours or more in the traps or holding facility will be provided good quality grass hay or mixed alfalfa and grass hay at the rate of not less than two (2) pounds of hay per 100 pounds of body weight per day.

The Inspection and Identification of Trapped Horses

As soon as practical after horses are trapped, each horse will be inspected. The horses will be identified and separated if necessary so as to assure the safety and well being of the captured animals.

Animals which are branded, which are suspected of being branded, or which are known to be private, will be separated out and handled as outlined by I.M. NV-83-26.

Destruction of Animals

Should it become necessary during the course of the gather to destroy a horse because of disease, age, or injury it will be the Bureau of Land Management's authorized representative's responsibility to destroy the horse in a safe, humane manner. No other individual will be allowed to destroy any captured horse unless the representative has specifically stated (and made reference to in writing) that he will be away from the job site for an extended period of time. During this time the representative will appoint a qualified individual to take over his responsibilities.

Disposal of Carcasses

Animals which are destroyed during the removal operations will be left to the environment and treated as outlined by I.M. NV-83-26. This will satisfy State and County sanitary requirements.

Prior to disposal, data which includes the date of death, apparent reason for death, sex, color, age, and freeze mark number (if assigned), will be collected.

Transport of Captured Animals

All motorized equipment employed in the transportation of captured animals shall, under the provisions of 43 CFR 4740.4(b), be subject to the following reservations and/or restrictions:

a. All such transportation shall be in compliance with appropriate state and Federal laws and regulations applicable to the humane transportation of horses and burros.

b. Vehicles shall be in good repair, of adequate rated capacity, and carefully operated so as to insure that captured animals are transported without undue risk or injury.

Bobtail trucks, single deck trucks, or double-decked trucks (with minimum 13'6" high) can be used to haul horses from the trap site to Caliente. Single deck trucks with trailers 40 feet or longer are required to have two partition gates to separate horses. Trailers less than 40 feet need only one partition gate to separate the horses.

c. Vehicles shall be inspected and approved by a Bureau representative prior to use.

d. Where required by the Bureau representative, animals shall be sorted as to age, size, temperment, sex, and condition when transporting them so as to minimize, to the extent possible, injury due to fighting and trampling.

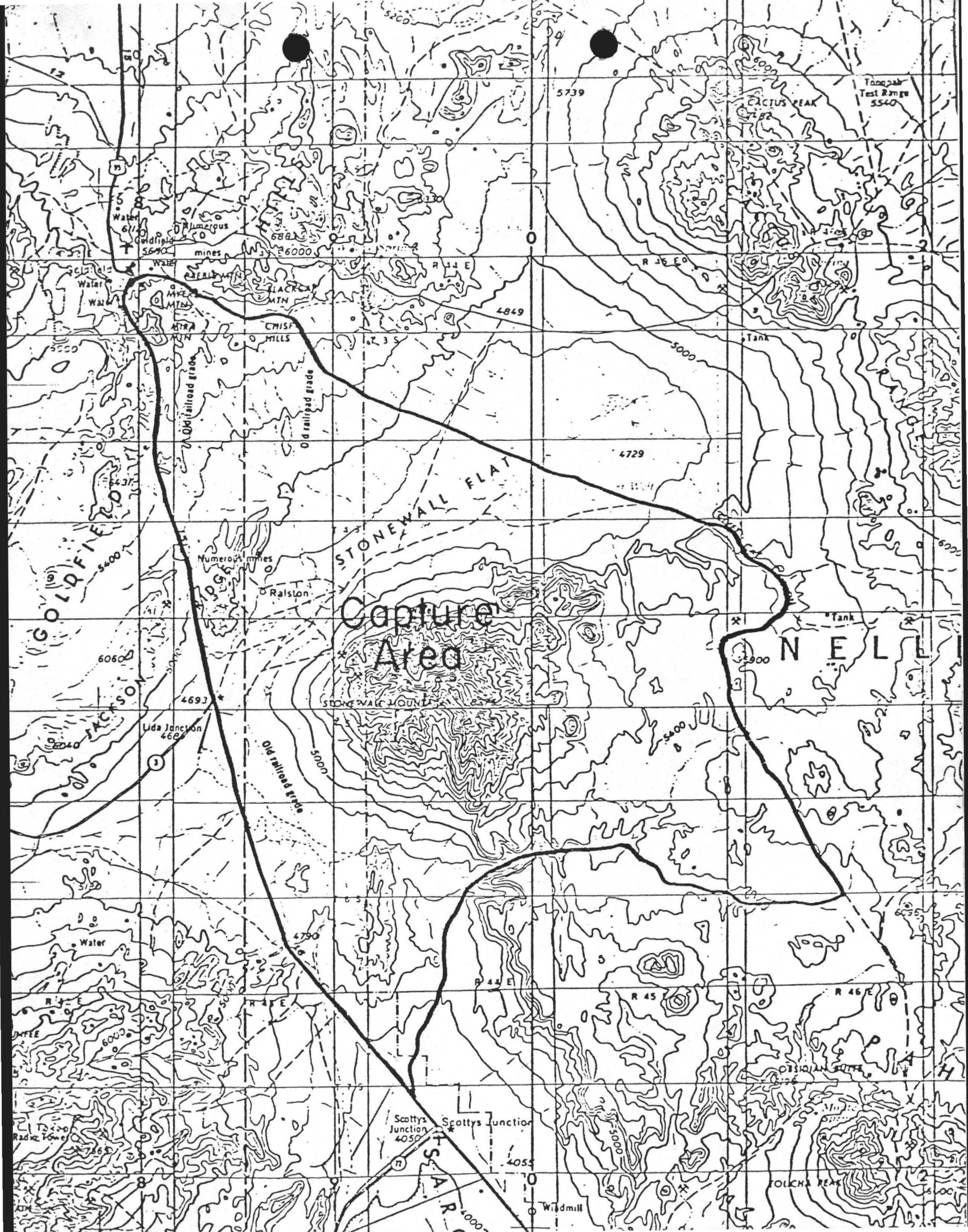
e. The Bureau representative shall consider the condition of the animals, weather conditions, type of vehicles, and distance to be transported when planning for the movement of captured animals. The Bureau representative shall provide for any health services required for the captured animals, as identified in the Cooperative Agreement with the National Mustang Association.

Public Relations

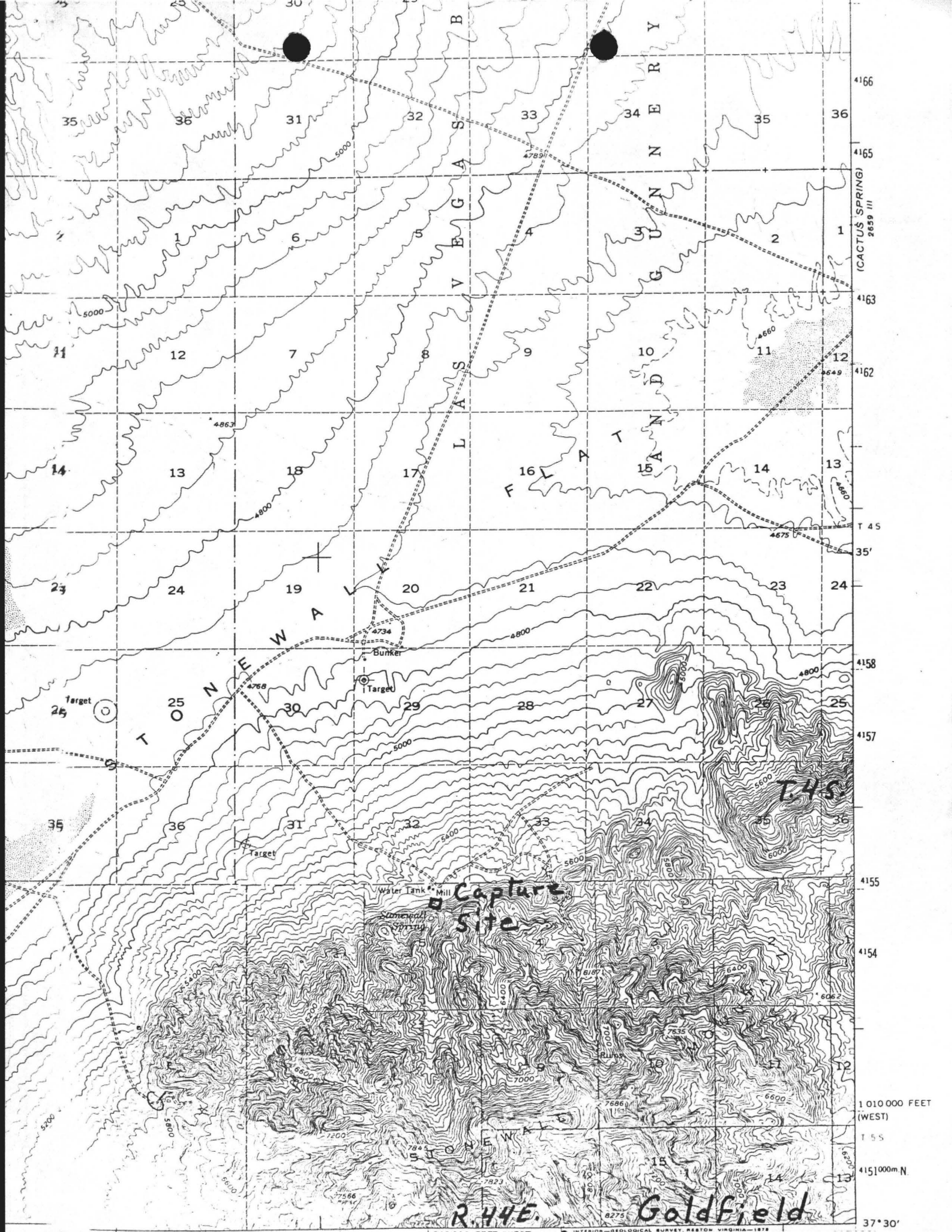
In general, all publicity, formal public contact, and inquiries will be handled by the Caliente Resource Area Office. This will insure continuity in this part of the project. All tours, site inspections, filming expeditions, etc., by the media and/or members of the general public while the project is under way will be supervised by the Bureau of Land Management to insure that safety requirements are met, and that gathering operations are not interfered with.

Coordination

The Caliente Resource Area will coordiate with the National Mustang Association to assure that capture operation, transporting, temporary holding and release of wild horses is handled safely and efficiently.



Capture Area
STONEWALL FLAT
STONEWALL MOUNTAIN
Numerous mines
Ralston
Old railroad grade
Old railroad grade
Old railroad grade
Lida Junction
Scottys Junction
Scottys Junction
4050
4055
Windmill
Water
Goldfield
5650
Numerous
mines
CACTUS PEAK
Tonopah Test Range
5540
Tank
Tank
NELL
GOLDFIELD
JACKSON
OBSIDIAN BUTTE
TOLICHA PEAK
5739
4849
4729
5000
5400
6060
4693
4790
6000
R 44 E
R 45
R 46 E


Target
Bunker
Target
Target
Water Tank
Mill
Capture Site
Stonewall Spring
Ruins
T. 4 S.
R. 44 E.
Goldfield
(CACTUS SPRING) 2659 III
1 010 000 FEET (WEST)
4151 000m N.
37°30'
T 4 S
T 5 S

Draft

EA #NV-057-04-14
STONEWALL MOUNTAIN WILD HORSE GATHER
RELOCATION PLAN

I. Introduction/Overview

The proposed action is to determine the impacts of removing one band of wild horses (5-10) from the Stonewall Mountain area, for the purpose of relocating these horses on to the Little Mountain Herd Management Area for the purpose of monitoring the movement and life cycles of the horses being relocated as outlined in the Little Mountain Herd Management Area Plan, and subsequent Cooperative Agreement between the Bureau of Land Management and the National Mustang Association (Caliente Resource Area Bureau of Land Management).

This operation would entail use of approximately 20 panels set around Stonewall Spring for the purpose of capturing a selected band of from five to ten wild horses from the present existing population of 500 to 600 wild horses. Captured horses would then be transported to holding facilities temporarily set-up on the Little Mountain Herd Management Area near Caliente, Nevada and prepared for release.

The capture operation, transporting, holding, release and monitoring the behavior of a single band of wild horses that have cohabited as a band in their original habitat is a cooperative effort between the Bureau of Land Management and the National Mustang Association. The study will last two years or for the life of the radio collars. The only alternative to the proposed action is no action, whereby no horses would be removed from this area to conduct relocation study.

Each party is responsible for certain actions and equipment determined essential for the safe and efficient handling of the wild horses. These responsibilities are listed in the Little Mountain Herd Management Area Plan, Cooperative Agreement, and Gathering Plan (Caliente Resource Area, Bureau of Land Management).

Water trapping would result in minimum impacts to the wild horses. Impacts to the wild horses during the relocation study will result in short term impacts such as; change of lifestyle, handling, fitting collars, etc. After the study is completed, horses again will need to be captured to remove collars, which will result in short term impacts to wild horses. Water or bait trapping will be the method used to capture horses to remove collars.

Relocation of wild horses on to the Little Mountain Herd Management area was addressed in the Environmental Assessment #NV-050-3-60, Caliente Resource Area, Bureau of Land Management.

In addition unavoidable impacts in the form of injuries to the horses may occur during the removal and relocation process. These injuries are

expected to be very minimal. Also, horses will have to adapt to a new area which is an unavoidable impact.

There will be no irreversible or irretrievable commitments of the resources other than the removal of one band of wild horses.

Because of the scale of this removal there will be minimal vegetation response due to reduced grazing pressure, and no impact to the Bighorn sheep on Stonewall Mountain.

All on-the-ground construction will conform with any mitigating measures that are determined to be necessary by the archaeologist.

Implementation of the gathering plan will cause no anticipated impacts on wilderness, wildlife, visual resource values around Stonewall Spring.

According to the literature search there are no Federally listed threatened and/or endangered plant/animal species in the area of impact.

II. Mitigation Measures

1. If previously undiscovered cultural resources should be found during actual construction activities, the Authorized Officer will require activities for that area to be temporarily halted by issuing a Stop Order until the resource(s) can be inspected and appropriate surveys or salvage operations are completed by a qualified cultural resources professional, at which time a Notice to Proceed will be issued by the Authorized Officer.

2. Horses will only be captured by use of water trapping at Stonewall Spring.

3. Project related traffic shall ingress and egress the project area over the same route(s) in order to minimize disturbance to soils, vegetative cover, and other resources.

4. Capture corrals will be temporarily constructed of portable panels six feet high or higher.

5. Corral will be removed and site cleaned up upon capture and removal of wild horses from facility.

1-6-85
file

WHOA!

WILD HORSE ORGANIZED ASSISTANCE
INC.
A Foundation for the Welfare of
Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros

BOARD OF TRUSTEES
DAVID R. BELDING
JACK C. McELWEE
GORDON W. HARRIS
BELTON P. MOURAS
GERTRUDE BRONN, Honorary
In Memoriam
LOUISE C. HARRISON
VELMA B. JOHNSTON, "Wild Horse Annie"

P. O. Box 555
Reno, Nevada 89504
Telephone ~~323-5908~~
Area Code 702
851-4817

January 6, 1985

Mr. R. H. Wolfe, Area Manager
Bureau of Land Management, Caliente Resource Area
Post Office Box 237
Caliente, Nevada 89008

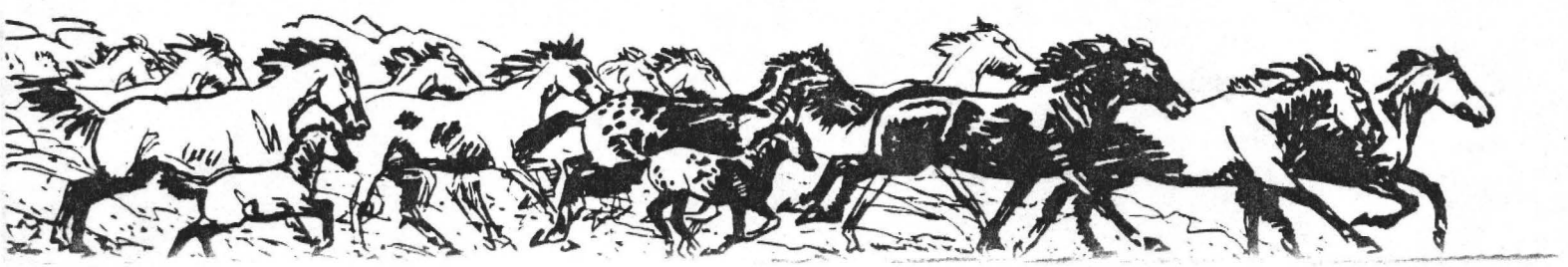
Re: NWHR 4700 (NV-057.7)

Dear Mr. Wolfe:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment further on the Draft of the Nevad Horse Range Herd Management Area Plan.

Looking back I can see only two areas at this time that concern me. First, I have the original release of the Interior Department's declaration of the Wild Horse Range and it states the acreage at 435,000 acres, not the 394,000 acres of the Plan. Now this could have been dropped over the years, but if it has then the committee should know that and see the documents that support that. If not, the 41,000 acres could mean a heck of a difference to the wild horse and any future monitoring that may occur. Please look into this for me. If you need the original document I will bring it with me when we meet.

Secondly, there seems to be no incentive to get the water repaired, and the only incentive I can see in the future, is if the Bureau wants horses at management levels (proper utilization) then the waters will have to be an intregal part of the agreement. Monitoring will do nothing if the data is scewed and animals have to concentrate around available waters. One way to alleviate the problem is to tie monitoring with the waters. I don't want horses sacrificed unnecessarily due to budget cuts, insufficient waters. Perhaps we can talk about this at the signing.



It is hoped, as is the case with CRMP, that any minor adjustments, or if the decisions have been wrong, can be corrected as we go and the committee brought back together to modify. I am serious about tying the needs of monitoring and/or research to the needs of BLM to manage the horses, not the needs of the military, even though it is the first priority.

Most sincerely,

Dawn Y. Lappin (Mrs.)
Director