

Red Rock

d

7-27-00



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Las Vegas District Office
4765 Vegas Drive
Las Vegas, Nevada 89108

In Reply Refer To:
4700
(NV-052)

July 27, 2000

NOTICE OF FULL FORCE AND EFFECT DECISION
RED ROCK HERD MANAGEMENT AREA
EMERGENCY WILD HORSE GATHER AND REMOVAL

MANAGEMENT ACTION: The action is to gather approximately 80 animals (40 wild horses and 40 burros) from the Red Rock Herd Management Area (HMA). Approximately 90 wild horses and burros will remain in the HMA. The action would implement the Proposed Action of Environmental Assessment (NV-052-00-061), Red Rock HMA Wild Horse Emergency Gather, dated July 27, 2000.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: The water and forage situation in the Red Rock HMA has been closely monitored because a lack of precipitation over the winter of 1999-2000 provided little to no recharge for the springs and limited forage production within the HMA. Currently 50% of the springs available in the area that supports both wild horses and burros have gone dry. The LVFO is planning to drill wells to help but they cannot be developed in time to correct the situation. Water is being hauled to the animals involved. The National Wild Horse Association (NWHHA) is assisting in the water hauling operation. The wild horses and burros are currently in fair condition, but the water and forage needed for their survival is very limited. As the forage and water supply becomes critically low, their condition will deteriorate very rapidly and gather operation will be much more difficult. In addition to this resource problem, a significant number of burros (3 in 30 days) have been killed on highway 160 which runs through the HMA and is unfenced with a 60 MPH speed limit. A number of burros are presently residing on the roadside creating a hazard to motorist and themselves. In order to prevent additional loss of wild horses and burros and potential harm to motorists, a gather is requested immediately. Approximately 40 burros and 50 wild horses will remain in the Red Rock HMA. The NWHHA has been briefed concerning this emergency gather and is in agreement with the action. The horses gathered of adoption age will be retained, prepared and adopted in Las Vegas at our October 8, 2000 adoption in conjunction with the NWHHA Wild Horse Show. NWHHA members will assist in preparation, care, training and adoption of these animals.

DECISION: Enclosed is the Decision Record, Finding of No Significant Impact and the Environmental Assessment (NV-052-00-061) which analyzes the impacts of removing wild horses and burros within the Red Rock HMA. Given the information contained in these documents, it is my decision to gather approximately 80 wild horses and burros from the HMA and leave approximately 90 wild horses and burros in the Red Rock HMA.

METHODS: The method of capture will be to use a helicopter to herd the animals to portable wing traps. The BLM will conduct the removal through a private contractor under the current requirements contract and supervised by a Contracting Officer's Representative. It is estimated that 2 trap locations will be required.

DATES: The action is scheduled to begin on July 29, 2000, and will likely be four days in duration.

LOCATION: The action will occur in the Red Rock HMA.

AUTHORITY: The authority for this decision is contained in Sec.3(a) and (b) and Sec.4 of the Wild Free Roaming Horse and Burro Act (P.L. 92-195) as amended and Title 43 of the Code of Federal Regulations. The authority for the Full Force and Effect decision can be found at 43 CFR 4770.3(c) which states:

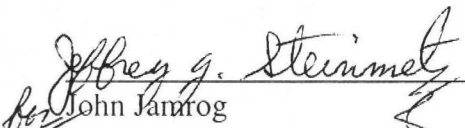
The authorized officer may place in full force and effect decisions to remove wild horses or burros from public lands if removal is required by applicable law or to preserve or maintain a thriving ecological balance and multiple use relationship. Full force and effect decision shall take effect on the date specified, regardless of an appeal. Appeals and petitions for stay of decision shall be filed with the Interior Board of Land Appeals, as specified in the part.

APPEALS: Within 30 days of receipt of this decision, you have the right of appeal to the board of Land Appeals, Office of the Secretary, in accordance with the regulation at 43 CFR, Part 4, Subpart E and 43 CFR 4770.3(a) and (c). Within 30 days after filing a Notice of Appeal, you are required to provide a complete statement of the reasons why you are appealing. The appellant has the burden of showing that the decision appealed from is in error. If you wish to file an appeal and petition for a stay, the petition for a stay must accompany your notice of appeal and be in accordance with 43 CFR, Part 4, Subpart E and 43 CFR 4770.3(c). Copies of the Notice of Appeal and Petition for a Stay must be submitted to (1) the Interior Board of Land Appeals, Office of Hearings and Appeals, 4015 Wilson Boulevard, Arlington, VA 22203, (2) the Regional Solicitor's Office, Western Region, U.S. Department of the Interior, Federal Building, Suite 6201, 125 S. State Street, Salt Lake City, UT 84138-1180, and (3) Las Vegas Field Office, 4765 Vegas Drive, Las Vegas, NV 89108. The original documents should be filed with this office.

If you request a stay, you have the burden of proof to demonstrate that a stay should be granted. A petition for a stay of a decision pending appeals shall show sufficient justification based on the following standards:

1.
The relative harm to the parties if the stay is granted or denied,
2.
The likelihood of the appellant's success on the merits,
3.
The likelihood of immediate and irreparable harm if the stay is not granted, and
4.
Whether the public interest favors granting the stay.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Contact Gary McFadden of my staff, at (702) 647-5024 or write to the above address.


for John Jamrog
Assistant Field Manager
Renewable Resources

7-27-2000
Date

RECEIVED
D.C.N.R.
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR
2000 JUL 31 AM 11:51

**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
AND
DECISION RECORD**

**RED ROCK HERD MANAGEMENT AREA
EMERGENCY WILD HORSE GATHER AND REMOVAL
BLM(NV-052-00-061)**

Finding of No Significant Impact

Based on the analysis of potential environmental impacts contained in Environmental Assessment BLM (NV-052-00-061), I have determined that the action will not have a significant effect on the human environment, and therefore, an environmental impact statement will not prepared.

Decision

It is my decision to approve the emergency gather and removal of wild horses from the Red Rock Herd Management Area (HMA) as described in the proposed action of BLM (NV-052-00-061). Each of the Standard Operating Procedures described in the Proposed Action will be strictly followed.

Monitoring

The monitoring described in the proposed action of BLM (NV-052-00-061) is sufficient for the proposed action.

Rationale

This action will allow for the gather of wild horses and burros in the Red Rock HMA. The water, forage, and vehicle incident situation for the wild horses and burros (approximately 80 hd), has become critical. The proposed action will prevent stress and possible death by dehydration, lack of feed and vehicle incident of a substantial number of wild horses and burros.

The Water Hauling Alternative was not selected because it is not feasible for the BLM to haul water to 140 wild horses and burros in remote locations.

No Action Alternative was not selected because it would not allow for the removal of wild horses and would allow for the potential death and suffering of a substantial number of wild horses.

The proposed action is in conformance with the objectives of the Las Vegas Resource Management Plan and is consistent with Federal, State and local laws, regulations and plans to the maximum extent possible.

John Janrog

John Janrog
Assistant Field Manager
Renewable Resources

7-27-00
Date

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

LAS VEGAS FIELD OFFICE

RED ROCK HERD MANAGEMENT AREA

WILD HORSE REMOVAL PLAN AND ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

DROUGHT EMERGENCY

2000

NV-052-00-061

CHAPTER I - INTRODUCTION/PURPOSE AND NEED

Introduction

The water and forage situation in the Red Rock HMA has been closely monitored because the lack of precipitation over the winter of 1999-00 provided no recharge for the springs and limited forage production within the HMA. Currently 50% of the springs available in the area where wild horses and burros overlap have gone dry. The LVFO is planning to develop wells to help but the wells cannot be developed in time to correct the situation. Water is being hauled to the animals involved. The National Wild Horse Association (NWHHA) is assisting in the water hauling operation. The wild horses and burros are currently in fair condition, but the water and forage needed for their survival is very limited. As the forage and water supply becomes critically low, their condition will deteriorate very rapidly and the gather operation will be much more difficult. In addition to the resource problem a number of burros (3 in 30 days) have been killed on HWY 160 which runs through the HMA and is unfenced with a 60 MPH speed limit. A number of burros are presently residing on the roadside creating a hazard to motorists and themselves. In order to prevent a loss of wild horses and burros and potential harm to motorists, a gather is requested immediately. Approximately 40 burros and 50 wild horses will remain in the Red Rock HMA. The NWHHA has been briefed concerning this emergency gather and is in agreement with the action. The horses gathered of adoption age will be retained, prepared and adopted in Las Vegas at our October 8, 2000 adoption in conjunction with the NWHHA Wild Horse Show. NWHHA members will assist in preparation, care, training and adoption of these animals.

Purpose and Need

The proposed action is to gather wild horses and burros in the Red Rock HMA to reduce use and the possibility of vehicle incidents. Approximately 90 wild horses and burros would remain in the HMA.

The purpose of this capture/removal plan is to outline the methods and procedures to be used in the capture/removal process and to discuss the disposition of the older unadoptable horses removed from the area.

The need for this action is to prevent the stress and possible death of wild horses and burros from a lack of water, forage and protection from vehicles and to allow the water and forage resources a chance to recover.

The wild horse gather would be conducted by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Las Vegas Field Office through the use of the Great Basin Wild Horse and Burro Gather Contract. The removal operation would begin after issuance of the final gather plan and environmental assessment by the Las Vegas Field Office.

The proposed action(s) would: (1) prevent stress and the possible death of wild horses and burros (2) prevent the over utilization of forage and water and (3) reduce or eliminate the incident level between wild horses and burros.

Land Use Plan Conformance Statement

The proposed action and alternatives described below are in conformance with the Las Vegas Resource Management Plan (RMP), this action is consistent with Federal, State and local laws, regulations, and plans to the maximum extent possible.

Relationship to Planning

The Las Vegas Field Office has prepared several environmental assessments which address the capture and removal of wild horses. The Red Rock HMA was last gathered in 1996. There was an environmental assessment record prepared at that time (NV-054-94-89), but due to the age of that document, this environmental assessment is being prepared.

The capture area is not covered by a herd management area plan (HMAP). IBLA has ruled "...that it is not necessary that BLM prepare an HMAP as a basis for ordering the removal of wild horses, so long as the record otherwise substantiates compliance with the statute. Indeed, 43 CFR 4710.3-1 does not require preparation of an HMAP as a prerequisite for a removal action. Thus, we are not persuaded that preparation of an HMAP must in all cases precede the removal of wild horses from an HMA/WHT, and decline to order preparation of HMAP's." (IBLA 88-591, 88-638, 88-648, 88 679, at 127).

The removal also implements the Strategic Plan for Management of Wild Horses and Burros on Public Lands, issued on 6/92; U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management. The Strategic Plan states that only animals between the ages of 1 and 3 years should be removed. However, current National and Nevada policy is to remove animals up to nine years of age from HMAs and from horse free areas, and to adjust the removal criteria somewhat in cases of emergency.

CHAPTER II - PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES

PROPOSED ACTION

The proposed action is a Bureau initiated action which would be carried out by a contractor. The proposed action is to gather approximately 80 wild horses and burros found within the Red Rock HMA.

Those horses that are determined to be suitable for the adoption program would be prepared locally in Las Vegas and adopted at our October 8, 2000 event. Mares and studs age 15 and over would be placed into a pasture like setting or "long-term holding" facilities to live out their days. Horses within the ages of 6-9 would be targeted for gelding (in the case of the studs), training, and eventually the adoption program. Horses within the ages of 1-5 would be placed directly into the adoption program after being prepared locally.

Time and Method of Capture

The water resources in the HMA are being carefully monitored as is the condition of the wild horses in the pasture. A gather would have to commence before horse and burro condition begins to deteriorate. The purpose of the proposed action is to alleviate pain and suffering of the animals and ultimately to prevent the death of animals.

The method of capture would be to use a helicopter to herd the animals to portable wing traps. It is the intention of the BLM to conduct the removal through a private contractor under the current requirements contract. At least one qualified Bureau employee would be supervising the capture operation and one Bureau employee would be supervising the sorting and shipping operations at all times. It is estimated that 2 trap locations would be required to accomplish the work.

The terrain in the proposed removal area consists of flat desert with a few rolling hills. Annual precipitation is approximately 6 inches per year, occurring during November, December and January. Average daytime high temperatures range from 95 -105 degrees F.

Administration of the Contract

BLM would be responsible for overseeing a contract for the capture, care, aging and temporary holding of approximately 80 wild horses and burros from the capture area. BLM would also be responsible to oversee the transportation of the wild horses to the adoption preparation facility as specified in the removal contract, which is expected to be Kingman Arizona.

The contractor would be briefed on duties and responsibilities before the notice to proceed is issued. There would also be an inspection of the contractor's equipment at this time to ensure that it meets specifications and is adequate for the job. Any equipment that did not meet specifications would be replaced within 36 hours. The contractor would also be informed of the terrain involved, the condition of the animals, the condition of the roads, potential trap locations, motorized equipment limitations, and the presence of fences and other dangerous barriers. The contractor would be provided with a topographic map of the capture area which shows acceptable trap locations and existing fences and/or physical barriers prior to any gathering

operation. The contractor would also be informed of existing conditions in the capture area and would be given direction regarding the capture and handling of animals to assure their health and welfare is protected.

At least one authorized BLM employee, a Contracting Officer's Representative (COR) or Project Inspector (PI), would be present at the site of captures/removals. The COR/PI would be directly responsible for the capture/removal. Other BLM personnel may be needed to assist the operation (i.e., an archaeologist or an archaeological technician to conduct cultural inventories, and a BLM law enforcement agent to protect BLM personnel and property from unlawful activities).

The CORs/Pis would be directly responsible for the conduct of the capture/removal operation and for reporting progress to the Las Vegas Field Office Managers and the Nevada State Office.

All publicity, public contact, and inquiries would be handled through the Managers for Renewable Resources. The managers would also coordinate the contract with the National Wild Horse and Burro Program Office, the adoption preparation facility, to assure there is space available in the corrals for the captured horses, animals are handled humanely and efficiently, and animals being transported from the capture site are arriving in good condition.

The COR/Pis would constantly evaluate the contractor's ability to perform the required work in accordance with the contract stipulations. Compliance with the contract stipulations would be ensured through issuance of written instructions to the contractor, stop work orders and default procedures should the contractor not perform work according to the stipulations.

To assist the COR/PI in administering the contract, the BLM would have a helicopter available, if needed, at the roundup site. This helicopter would be used with discretion to minimize disturbance to horses that would make capture more difficult. In addition, it would be used as needed to assure that the contractor is complying with the specifications of the contract and to ensure the humane capture of animals. In the event an additional helicopter is not available to observe the project helicopter, other methods would be utilized to observe the removal operations, such as using observers on horseback or in vehicles, or by placing stationary observers in strategic locations.

If the contractor fails to perform in an appropriate manner at any time, the contract would not be allowed to continue until problems encountered are corrected to the satisfaction of the COR/PI.

Standard Operating Procedures

The Standard Operating Procedures will consist of sections, C.4 thru C.7 of the Great Basin Wild Horse and Burro gathers contract to ensure the welfare, safety and humane treatment of the wild horses.

Government Furnished Property

The government would provide a portable "Fly" restraining chute at each pre-work conference, to be used by the contractor for the purpose of restraining animals to determine the age of specific individuals or other similar practices. The government may also provide portable 2-way radios, if needed. The contractor would be responsible for the security of all government furnished property.

Branded and Claimed Animals

A notice of intent to impound would be issued by the BLM prior to any capture operations in this area. The Nevada Department of Agriculture and the District Brand Inspector would receive copies of this notice, as well as the Notice of Public Sale, if issued. The COR/PI would contact the District Brand Inspector and make arrangements for dates and times when brand inspections will be needed.

When horses are captured, the COR/PI and the District Brand Inspector would jointly inspect all animals at the holding facility in the capture area. If determined necessary at that time by all parties involved, horses would be sorted into three categories:

- a. Branded animals with offspring, including yearlings.
- b. Unbranded or claimed animals with offspring, including yearlings with obvious evidence of existing or former private ownership (e.g., geldings, bobbed tails, photo documentation, saddle marks, etc.).
- c. Unbranded animals and offspring without obvious evidence of former private ownership.

The COR/PI, after consultation with the District Brand Inspector, would determine if unbranded animals are wild and free-roaming horses. The District Brand Inspector would determine ownership of branded animals and their offspring and, if possible, the ownership of unbranded animals determined not to be wild and free-roaming horses.

Branded horses with offspring and claimed unbranded horses with offspring for which the owners have been identified by the District Brand Inspector would be retained in the custody of the BLM pending notification of the owner or claimant.

A separate holding corral would be set up near the temporary holding corral to house these horses until the owner/claimant or BLM can pick them up.

The animals would remain in the custody of the BLM until settlement in full is made for impoundment and trespass charges, as determined appropriate by the Manager for Renewable Resources in accordance with 43 CFR Subpart 4710.6 and provisions in 43 CFR Subpart 4150. In the event settlement is not made, the horses would be sold at public auction by the BLM.

Branded horses with offspring whose owners cannot be determined, and unclaimed, unbranded horses with offspring having evidence of existing or former private ownership would be released to the Nevada Department of Agriculture (District Brand Inspector) as estrays.

The District Brand Inspector would provide the COR/PI a brand inspection certificate for the immediate shipment of wild horses to Palomino Valley (Reno), and for the branded or claimed horses where impoundment and trespass charges have not been offered or received, for shipment to public auction or another holding facility.

Desert Tortoise

The contractor and all employees will be informed about the desert tortoise (which will include information provided by the BLM on the life history of the desert tortoise, its protected status, protocols for dealing with tortoises if and when they are encountered, and the definition of "take" via informational handout provided by the BLM. Each shall be advised of the potential impacts to desert tortoises and potential penalties (up to \$50,000 in fines and one year in prison) for taking a Federally protected species.

The contractor shall ensure that all personnel associated with he gather shall acknowledge receipt of the tortoise information through the signing of an acknowledgment for which shall be returned to the BLM upon completion of circulation to all employees.

Trap sites and holding corral locations and helicopter staging areas will be selected with the input of a BLM biologist to ensure that impacts to tortoise habitat are avoided.

Trap sites, holding corral and staging areas will be surveyed for desert tortoise and tortoise burrows before use by a BLM biologist. If an active tortoise burrow is located on the proposed site a new site will be selected.

To the extent possible, all traps, holding corrals and staging areas will be located in previously disturbed areas which are devoid of perennial vegetation and will be located adjacent to existing roads and trails.

To the extent possible, vehicular travel will be restricted to existing roads, trails and washes. If off-road vehicular travel is necessary, the route will be surveyed for the presence of desert tortoise before use.

Garbage and similar items will be placed in appropriate contains and not allowed to accumulate in order to discourage the attraction of ravens to the area.

If a desert tortoise should wander onto the trap, holding corral or staging area, all activities with the potential to harm the tortoise will cease until the tortoise moves out of harms way under its own volition.

The discharge of firearms will be prohibited at all trap and holding facilities except in the case of euthanasia of a captured animal (wild horse, mule or burro) by an authorized BLM employee.

No Action Alternative

Under no action, wild horses and burros would not be removed from the Red Rock HMA. Animals would be allowed to become severely stressed and perhaps die of dehydration, a lack of forage and/or from vehicle incidents. This alternative would not be acceptable to the Bureau nor most members of the public. The Bureau realizes that some members of the public advocate "letting nature take its course", however allowing horses to die from a lack of resources clearly indicates that an overpopulation of horses exists in the pasture. The Wild Horse and Burro Act of 1971 directs the Bureau to "remove excess horses in order to preserve and maintain a thriving natural ecological balance and multiple-use relationship in that area".

ALTERNATIVE CONSIDERED BUT ELIMINATED FROM DETAILED ANALYSIS

Water Trapping Alternative

Due to the time necessary for construction of complex water traps and the prolonged period it would take for the animals to become accustomed to using the traps, water trapping is not being considered. It is possible that some horses would die of dehydration before becoming

acclimated to the trap. Additionally, water traps would prevent native wildlife from obtaining water due to the increased human activity and prolonged period of time the activity would be taking place. This would cause increased stress to native wildlife and water trapping also causes increased stress to wild horses.

Horseback Trapping Alternative

Bands of horses are not controlled effectively with horseback herding, therefore, many bands are spilled or individual horses separated from the band. This results in increased social structure disruption and/or orphaned foals, which requires attempts to capture these separated animals. The number of animals captured per day versus the proposed action is significantly fewer, therefore, it is very time consuming resulting in very high capture costs.

Relocation of Wild Horses

Relocation of the wild horses and burros was considered. Due to a greater demand for water and forage than is available the wild horses can not be relocated. However the jennies gathered will be relocated to correct a sex ratio imbalance and the jacks will be shipped to the adoption program.

Hauling Water Alternative

Hauling water to 140 head of wild horses and burros was considered. It was not considered further in this analysis due to the following reason: The BLM does not have the resources (manpower/equipment/funding) available to haul the amount of water needed to fulfill the horses needs on a daily basis. At least one full time employee would have to be devoted to this effort until the drought cycle breaks.

CHAPTER III - AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

General Setting

The gather area is located approximately 20 miles west of Las Vegas, Nevada. The terrain within the area is characterized by a high rolling hills underlain by basalt flows which are occasionally cut by deep, vertically walled canyons. Elevation ranges from about 4,500 to 5,600 feet. In general the vegetation consists of eight major community types, derived from the floristic classifications of Bradley & Deacon (1965) and Leary & Niles (1996). Except for the riparian community, all are *terrestrial* types characterized by the absence of permanent surface water. As the sole *hydric* vegetative type present, RRCNCA's riparian areas are both a generic resource type and a definitive plant community type. In terms of distribution, four are *zonal* community types (creosote bush; blackbrush; juniper-pinyon; pine-fir); four are

transzonal (riparian; desert wash; chaparral; cliff communities). Species composition and occurrence in the former is determined by elevation gradients; in the latter by other environmental factors such as shade or soil moisture. The result is that the zonal vegetative communities demonstrate a clear pattern of stratified terrain distribution, while the transzonal communities are more variably and diffusely situated in the Red Rock Canyon landscape. In terms of vegetative structure, two of the community types are woodlands (juniper-pinyon; pine-fir), two are desert shrub types (creosote bush; blackbrush) and the rest are intermediate shrub/woodlands (desert wash; chaparral; cliff and riparian). Temperatures range from 115 degrees in the summer to 20 degrees in the winter.

Critical Elements of the Human Environment

The following critical elements of the human environment are not present or are not affected by the proposed action or alternatives:

Areas of Critical Environmental Concerns

Cultural Resources - A cultural resources investigation by an archaeologist or an archaeological technician would be conducted prior to trap or holding facility construction. If cultural resources are found, an alternative site would be selected.

Environmental Justice

Farm Lands (prime or unique)

Flood Plains

Native American Religious Concerns - Various tribes and bands of the Western Shoshone have stated that federal projects and land actions could have widespread effects to their culture and religion because they consider the landscape as sacred and as a provider. However, the proposed action has a low potential to negatively impact any specific Native American religious aspect or Traditional Cultural Property. Native American consultation was deemed unnecessary at this time.

Paleontology

Wastes (hazardous or solid)

Water Quality (drinking/ground)

Wilderness

Environmental Justice

Noxious weeds

Bureau Specialists have further determined that the following resources, although present in the project area, are not affected by the proposed action: Range (livestock operations), Lands, Recreation, Geologic Resources, Forestry and Social and Economic Resources.

Resources Present and Brought Forward for Analysis:

Air Quality

Part of the management area falls within the LV serious non attainment area for PM 10 and CO. The BLM will comply with all applicable laws, regulations and standards.

Soils

The majority of soils in Red Rock HMA are desert soils developed under low precipitation with minimal topsoil development –Aridisols and Entisols. The soils are mainly coarse textured with minor areas of fine textured soils. The soils have a high potential for soil erosion when disturbed. Loss of soil from these desert soils leads to an irreplaceable loss in soil productivity.

Wetlands/Riparian Zones

There are few wetland/riparian zones in the area of the proposed gather. Most of the wetland/riparian zones have been protected from use by fencing.

Vegetation

The RRCNCA vegetative communities can be grouped into eight major community types, derived from the floristic classifications of Bradley & Deacon (1965) and Leary & Niles (1996). Except for the riparian community, all are *terrestrial* types characterized by the absence of permanent surface water. As the sole *hydric* vegetative type present, RRCNCA's riparian areas are both a generic resource type and a definitive plant community type. In terms of distribution, four are *zonal* community types (creosote bush; blackbrush; juniper-pinyon; pine-fir); four are *transzonal* (riparian; desert wash; chaparral; cliff communities). Species composition and occurrence in the former is determined by elevation gradients; in the latter by other environmental factors such as shade or soil moisture. The result is that the zonal vegetative communities demonstrate a clear pattern of stratified terrain distribution, while the transzonal communities are more variably and diffusely situated in the Red Rock Canyon landscape. In terms of vegetative structure, two of the community types are woodlands (juniper-pinyon; pine-fir), two are desert shrub types (creosote bush; blackbrush) and the rest are intermediate shrub/ woodlands (desert wash; chaparral; cliff and riparian).

Wildlife

Within the proposed project area, numerous species of wildlife may occur. Mule deer, desert sheep, mountain lions, coyotes, bobcats and kit foxes are the main game and fur bearer species present. Chukar, mourning doves, and cottontail rabbits constitute the major upland game species. In addition, a variety of non-game mammals, birds, and reptiles occur in the project area.

Threatened, Endangered, Candidate or Sensitive Species

See Appendix 1 for definitions. (1): Peregrine Falcon (above 600 feet, endangered sp.) (2): Desert tortoise (threatened sp.) occur in the Red Rock. However, based on consultation with NDOW regarding 1995 input submitted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and BLM file data, one threatened species, one candidate species, twelve BLM sensitive species and seven State of Nevada Listed Species have been identified as potentially occurring on a seasonal or year long basis (Appendix 1).

Visual Resources

Visual resources are identified through the Visual Resource Management (VRM) inventory. This inventory consists of a scenic quality evaluation, sensitivity level analysis and a delineation of distance zones. Based on these factors, BLM administered lands are placed into four visual resource inventory classes. Class I and II are the most valued, Class III representing a moderate value, and Class IV being of least value. The proposed project area consists of Class IV. Visual resource classes serve two purposes: (1) an inventory tool that portrays the relative value of visual resources, and (2) a management tool that portrays the visual management objective. The Class IV objective is to provide for management objectives which require major modification of the existing character of the landscape. The level of change to the characteristic landscape can be high. These management activities may dominate the view and be the major focus of viewer attention.

Wetlands/Riparian Zones

There are few wetland/riparian zones in the area of the proposed gather. Most of the wetland/riparian zones have been protected from use by fencing.

Wild Horses

Wild horses exist in North America, have few natural predators and are long-lived. Few natural controls act upon wild horse herds making them very competitive with native wildlife and other living resources. Wild horses have been shown to be capable of 18 to 25% increases in numbers annually. With horses, this can result in a doubling of the population about every 3 years. In the Red Rock HMA, population growth rates are relatively low for wild horses at 10-15%. Population of the Red rock HMA is estimated to be approximately 140 wild horses and burros.

The Red Rock HMA was last gathered in 1996. This removal did not incorporate any type of removal strategies other than to get to a more appropriate level. Wild horses in the Red Rock HMA have light to moderate builds, averaging approximately 900-1000 pounds (this is a rough estimate). Horse colors are predominantly Palomino, bay, and sorrel but a good variation in colors exist. Sex ratios for the horses in the HMA are not representative of other HMAs in the

west at large. At birth, sex ratios are roughly equal. This balance shifts to favor studs throughout all age classes.

Field observations throughout the spring of 2000 have shown that the horses were in fair condition. However, the condition of the horses may deteriorate rapidly when the water and forage sources becomes critically low.

Invasive, Non-native Species

Noxious weeds and invasive non-native species introduction and proliferation is a growing concern among local and regional interest. Noxious weed surveys including invasive and non-native species in the HMA have been partially completed.

CHAPTER IV - ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

Proposed Action and No Action Alternative

Air Quality

The impacts to air quality would be moderate increases in, dust, and combustion engine exhaust generated by mechanical equipment. Impacts would be temporary, small in scale, and dispersed throughout the proposed capture. Impacts would be kept to a minimum.

No Action Alternative - The air quality would be the same as described in the affected environment section.

Soils

An area less than one acre in size at each trap location would be severely trampled during gathering operations. This trampling would lead to compaction and pulverization of the topsoil leading to a possible loss of soils. Adverse impacts to soils would be minimized, by staying on existing roads and using previously disturbed sites for traps.

No Action Alternative - The severe localized trampling associated with trap sites would not occur, however, as wild horse populations continue to grow, soil erosion would increase. Increased use throughout the HMA would adversely impact soils and vegetation health, especially around the water locations. As native plant health deteriorates and plants are lost, soil erosion will increase. The shallow desert topsoil can not tolerate much loss without losing productivity and thus the ability to be revegetated with native plants. Invasive non native plant

species would increase and invade new areas following increased soil disturbance and reduced native plant vigor and abundance. This would lead to both a shift in plant composition towards weedy species and an irreplaceable topsoil and productivity loss from erosion.

Vegetation

Impacts to vegetation with implementation of the Proposed Action would consist of direct and indirect impacts. Direct impacts would include disturbance of native vegetation immediately in and around temporary trap sites, and holding, sorting and animal handling facilities. Impacts are created by vehicle traffic, and hoof action of penned horses, and can be locally severe in the immediate vicinity of the corrals or holding facilities. Generally, these activity sites would be small (less than one half acre) in size. Since most trap sites or holding facilities are re-used during recurring wild horse gather operations, any impacts would remain site specific and isolated in nature. In addition, most trap sites or holding facilities are selected to enable easy access by transportation vehicles and logistical support equipment and would therefore generally be near or on roads, pullouts, water haul sites or other flat spots which were previously disturbed. These common practices would minimize the cumulative effects of these impacts.

No Action Alternative - No vegetation trampling would occur as a result of trapping and holding horses in a small area, however, overall, the vegetation in the HMA would not be rested from grazing pressure. Utilization levels would be in excess of Rangeland Program Summary objectives and this increased utilization would not help maintain desirable, perennial native plant communities nor would it allow the burned area to recover.

Wildlife

Some mammals, reptiles, and birds would be temporarily displaced from the trap sites and holding facilities. Animals may also be disturbed by the low-flying helicopter; this disturbance would be of very short duration. A slight possibility exists that non-mobile or site specific animals would be trampled. The proposed action would result in an increase in quantity and quality of forage and water available to wildlife.

No Action Alternative - Wildlife would not be displaced or disturbed under the no action alternative, however, there would be continued competition with wild horses for water and forage resources and because wild horses are very aggressive around water sources, some wildlife species may not be able to compete. The continued competition for resources may lead to increased stress and possible dislocation or death of native wildlife species.

Threatened, Endangered, Candidate or Sensitive Species

There is a possibility that BLM sensitive species could be displaced by the gathering activities. The most likely species that would be affected by the proposed action is the desert tortoise. Prior to trap site selection, the area would be inventoried for the presence of tortoise.

No Action Alternative - The ground disturbing impacts of gathering wild horses would not occur, however, continued habitat degradation resulting from an overpopulation of wild horses would continue to occur.

Visual Resources

The proposed project activities would result in minimal, temporary impacts. For the duration of the proposed gather, traps and corrals would introduce weak horizontal lines to the foreground. No obvious changes in texture due to vegetation disturbance would be produced since traps and corrals would be located in previously disturbed areas. Visual resource management objectives for Class IV VRM areas would be met.

No Action Alternative - Under the no action alternative, the wild horse gather would not take place. There would be no temporary impacts related to the proposed action.

Wetlands/Riparian Zones

The proposed project would not impact wetlands or riparian zones as no traps or holding facilities would be built in these areas. Overall, the gather and removal of wild horses would have a positive impact to the recovering wetlands and riparian zones.

No Action Alternative - Under the no action alternative, the wild horse gather would not take place. This would lead to heavy to severe utilization of wetland/riparian zones. This would lead to increased erosion and decreased watershed health and function.

Invasive, Non-native Species

The proposed gather may spread existing noxious weeds species. This would occur if vehicles drive through infestations and spread seed into previously weed free areas. The contractor together with the COR/PI would examine proposed trap sites and holding corrals prior to construction. If noxious weeds are found, the location of the facilities would be moved.

No Action Alternative - Under this alternative, the wild horse gather would not take place. The chance that noxious weeds would be spread by the contractor, his personnel and equipment would not exist. However, overgrazing of the present plant communities could lead to an expansion of noxious weeds.

Wild Horses

Impacts to wild horses under the proposed action take the form of direct and indirect impacts and may occur on either the individual or the population as a whole. Direct individual impacts are those impacts which occur to individual horses and are immediately associated with implementation of the proposed action. These impacts include: handling stress associated with the roundup, capture, sorting, animal handling, and transportation of the animals. The intensity of these impacts vary by individual, and are indicated by behaviors ranging from nervous agitation to physical distress. Mortality of individuals from this impact is infrequent but does occur in one half to one percent of horses gathered in a given round-up. Following the SOPs outlined in the Proposed action would minimize impacts associated with handling stress. There are no indications that these direct impacts persist beyond a short time following the stress event. They would be expected to completely dissipate following release.

Indirect individual impacts are those impacts which occur to individual horses after the initial stress event. Indirect individual impacts may include spontaneous abortions in mares, and increased social displacement and conflict in studs. These impacts, like direct individual impacts are known to occur intermittently during wild horse gather operations. An example of an indirect would be the brief skirmish which occurs with most older studs following sorting and release into the stud pen which lasts less than two minutes and ends when one stud retreats. Traumatic injuries do not occur in most cases, however, they do occur. These injuries typically involve a bite and/or kicking with bruises which don't break the skin. Like direct individual impacts, the frequency of occurrence of these impacts among a population varies with the individual. Spontaneous abortion events among mares following captures is rare.

The effect of removal of horses from the population would not be expected to have adverse impact on herd dynamics or population variables, as long as the selection criteria for the removal ensured a "typical" population structure was maintained. Obvious potential impacts on horse herds and populations from exercising poor selection criteria not based on herd dynamics includes modification of age or sex ratios to favor a particular class of animal.

Effects resulting from successive removals causing shifts in sex ratios away from normal ranges are fairly self evident. If selection criteria leaves more studs than mares, band size would be expected to decrease, competition for mares would be expected to increase, recruitment age for reproduction among mares would be expected to decline, and size and number of bachelor bands would be expected to increase. On the other hand, a selection criteria which leaves more mares than studs would be expected to result in fewer and smaller bachelor bands, increased reproduction on a proportional basis with the herd, lengthening of the time after birth when individual mares begin actively reproducing, and larger band sizes.

Effects resulting from successive removals causing shifts in age dynamics away from normal ranges are likewise, fairly obvious. Herd shifts favoring older age horses (over 15 years) have been observed resulting in a favoring of studs over mares in some herds. Explanations include sex based differences in reproductive stress (relative demand for individual contributions to reproduction) and biological stress (timing the most physically demanding period of the annual cycle).

For studs, reproductive stress is based on dominance in the herd and by definition is confined to a fairly narrow period in their life span when they are capable of defending a mare group. For mares, recurrent reproductive stress starts as early as age 2 and continues until as late as age 15 or 16, and sometimes as late as 20. Biological stress in wild horses tends to indicate a selection against mares. Biological stress is based on the degree, duration, and timing of biologically demanding activities during the annual reproductive cycle.

For mares, the greatest biological stress is during pregnancy and lactation. In wild horse populations, this occurs in late winter or early spring when forage availability is at its lowest level, and body condition is at its poorest. For studs, biological stress is at its peak during the breeding season. This peak biological demand is in the late spring and early summer and is more suited to a rapid recovery and a lower energy deficit than for mares.

The susceptibility of the older herd to extreme climatic events would depend on the age of the dominant class in the group. Generally, survival rates of horses are very high (exceeding 98%) for mature animals and lower for very young. This survivability declines again at some older age. Similarly, reproductive success also declines at some age. The threshold age at which susceptibility to extreme events and reproductive senescence has not been established. It is reasonable to conclude that the older the population, the more prone it would be to a catastrophic die-off as a result of reduced resistance to disease, lowered body condition, and/or reduced reproductive capacity.

The effects of successive removals on populations causing shifts in herd demographics favoring younger horses (under 15 years) would also have direct consequences on the population. These impacts are not thought of typically as adverse to a population. They include development of a population which is expected to be more biologically fit, more reproductively viable, and more capable of enduring stresses associated with traumatic natural and artificial events.

No Action Alternative - Under this alternative, wild horses would not be removed from the Red Rock HMA. The horses would not be subject to any individual direct or indirect impacts

as described above as a result of a gather operation. However, there would be individual direct and indirect impacts as a result of the absence of water and there would be a direct impact on the population as a result of the death of most, if not all, of the horses within this pasture.

Cumulative Impacts

Cumulative impacts are impacts on the environment which result from the incremental impact of the action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions regardless of what agency or person undertakes such other actions. Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor but collectively significant actions taking place over a period of time.

Past present and reasonably foreseeable activities which would be expected to contribute to the cumulative impacts of implementing the proposed action include: Past wild horse removals which may have altered the structure and composition of the Red Rock HMA, and continued development of recreational activities. These past present and reasonably foreseeable activities would be expected to generate cumulative impacts to the proposed action by influencing the habitat quality abundance and continuity for the Red Rock HMA wild horse and burros.

The past events in this area have created the current population with its associated structure and composition, and have shaped the patterns of use found today in the herd. Continued development of these parameters would be expected to result in small annual changes in herd structure and behavior with small changes in habitat use over time.

These impacts would be expected to be marked by relatively large changes occurring rather slowly over time. The Bureau would continue to identify these impacts as they occur, and mitigate them as needed on a project specific basis to maintain habitat quality. At the same time, horse herds would be expected to continue to adapt to these small changes to availability and distribution of critical habitat components (food, water, shelter, space). The proposed action would contribute to the cumulative impacts of these past and foreseeable future actions by maintaining the herd at AML, and establishing a process whereby biological and/or genetic issues associated with herd or habitat fragmentation would become apparent sooner and mitigating measures implemented quicker.

Monitoring Needs

Monitoring procedures to address specific habitat variables have been established in the Bureau's 4400 series handbooks. These monitoring protocols are the excepted Bureau methodologies for collecting habitat based information to determine achievement of habitat based objectives and the standards for rangeland health as developed by the Northeastern Great Basin Area Resource Advisory Council. Specific habitat monitoring procedures and key

area selection has already occurred. These methodologies and sites will continue to be used under this proposed action. Species monitoring protocols and data collection methods have been established by equine professionals and researchers who initiated the first round of these studies (animal handling techniques). Bureau practices are based on these procedures which are incorporated into both the proposed action and alternative as animal handling techniques. These animal handling techniques would be sufficient to determine the short- and long-term effects of implementing the proposed action or alternative.

CHAPTER V - CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

List of Preparers

Gary McFadden	Wild Horse Specialist	Lead Preparer
Jeff Steinmetz	Environmental Protection Specialist	
Donn Siebert	Outdoor Recreation Planner	Visual Resources
Stan Rolf	Archaeologist	Cultural Resources,
Sid Sloan	Wildlife Biologist	T&E Species

Persons, Groups of Agencies Consulted

Billie Young	National Wild Horse Association
Craig Leets	National Wild Horse association
Dave Tattam	Nevada Commission for the preservation of Wild Horses

APPENDIX 1: SPECIAL STATUS SPECIES

Part A: Federal Endangered Species List [50 CFR 17 (10/31/96)]

LISTING STATUS	Taxon and (Common Name)
Global Distribution	RRCNCA Population Estimate & Occurrence Records
ENDANGERED SPECIES-01	<u>Falco peregrinus anatum</u> ① (American peregrine falcon)
Western Hemisphere	01 adult male; 01 adult unknown (suspected female)
	-Bridge Mtn, 08/95: unknown adult (02?), rapid flight
	-Bridge Mtn, 10/95: adult ♂, cliff perched*
	-Bridge Mtn, 05/96: unk adult, perched then repeated cacking/ swooping at one specific cliff top site
	-Blue Diamd, 06/97: unk adult, preyed on a dove; flew to NW
Biological Significance:	-Suspected nesting pair (due to cliff site fidelity)
RRCNCA Priority: <u>High</u>	-Nest pairs are key to FWS Pacific Coast Recovery Plan
Additional Comments:	-See Appendix 2: Priority Management Areas
	-Also cited in undocumented field reports from 1970-80's
LISTED THREATENED-01	<u>Gopherus agassazii</u> ① (Desert tortoise)
CA, NV, AZ, UT; Mexico	400-1760 animals (= 40 mi ² habitat @ 10-44 tortoises/mi ²)
	-Creosote habitat (low density) throughout the NCA
	-Ten Mile Cyn survey, 05/96: 02-11 tortoises (indices est.)
	-13 Mile Cyn survey, 07/96: 09-39 tortoises (indices est.)
Biological Significance:	-Important reptile species within desert ecosystem
RRCNCA Priority: <u>Low</u>	-Minimal threats or problems; in low density range
CANDIDATE SPECIES-01	<u>Opuntia whipplei</u> v. <u>multigeniculata</u> ① (Blue Diamond cholla)
Red Rock Canyon NCA	6250 individuals
	-Blue Diamond Hill, 05/91: Occupies 269 acres in a 1000-acre portion of southern Blue Diamond Hill [J.Morefield survey]
Biological Significance:	-Known global population
RRCNCA Priority: <u>High</u>	-Subject to FWS Conservation Agreement see Appendix 2)
Additional Comments:	-Taxonomy not fully resolved (species or variety?)

RRCNCA Total:

(3) Federally Listed/Candidate Species

① Covered Species, Clark County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP)

APPENDIX 1: SPECIAL STATUS SPECIES

Part B: Nevada Spp. of Concern [FWS 01/09/97] and Nevada Sensitive Spp. [BLM 04/23/97]

Taxon (Common Name)	Citation	Occurrence (*Unconfirmed)
MAMMALS-10		
<u>Euderma maculatum</u> * (Spotted bat)③	Ramsey/97	White Rock Spring (heard*)
<u>Myotis ciliolabrum</u> (Small-footed myotis)②	Ramsey/94	White Rock Spring
<u>Myotis evotis</u> (Long-eared myotis)①	Ramsey/94	White Rock Spring= WR Spg
<u>Myotis thysanodes</u> (Fringed myotis)②	Ramsey/94	Calico Hills; WR Spg; Pine Creek; Grapevine Spring
<u>Myotis volans</u> (Long-legged myotis)①	Ramsey/94	Calico Hills= CH's; WR Spg
<u>Myotis yumanensis</u> * (Yuma myotis)③	Ramsey/94	Potosi Spg (on NCA border)
<u>Nyctinomops macrotis</u> (Big free-tailed)③	RRHMP/69	No subsequent confirmation
<u>Idionycteris phyllotis</u> ③ (Allen's big-eared bat)	Ramsey/94	Calico Hills; White Rock Spring; Pine Creek
<u>Plecotus townsendii pallescens</u> ② (Pale Townsend's big-eared bat)	Ramsey/94 Ramsey/97	CH's; WR Spg; Tea Kettle & Wounded Knee & Desert Cave
<u>Tamias palmeri</u> * (Palmer's chipmunk)① [Spring Range endemic]	n/a	Suitable fir-pine habitat on La Madre Mountain
BIRDS-02		
<u>Accipiter gentilis</u> (Northern goshawk)③	RRRL/86	Not recorded
<u>Phainopepla nitens</u> (Phainopepla)①	RRAS/96	Wheeler Camp Spring
REPTILES-02		
<u>Heloderma suspectum cinctum</u> ② (Banded Gila monster)	NDOW/96	Widespread but uncommon, Calico to Bonnie Springs
<u>Sauromalus obesus obesus</u> ① (Western chuckwalla)	NDOW/95	Widespread but uncommon

INVERTEBRATES-09

<u>Pyrgulopsis deaconi</u> ① (formerly nov.1a) (Spring Mountains springsnail) [Spring Range endemic]	Sada/96	Red Spring; Willow Spring population extirpated but pending re-introduction
<u>Pyrgulopsis turbatrix</u> ① (formerly nov.58) (Southeast Nevada springsnail) [Southern Nevada endemic]	Sada/96	Lost Creek; La Madre Spg {Willow Spg: extirpated pending re-introduction}
[Endemic Spring Range butterflies]		
<u>Chlosyne acastus</u> *② (Spring Mtns acastus checkerspot)	Weiss/95	Widespread hostplant is <u>Chrysothamnus nauseosus</u>
<u>Euphilotes enoptes</u> ssp.*② (Dark blue butterfly)	Weiss/95	Suspected to be widespread throughout Spring Range
<u>Euphydryas anicia morandi</u> *② (Morand's checkerspot)	Weiss/95	Widespread hostplant is <u>Castilleja lineriaefolia</u>
<u>Hesperia comma</u> spp.* (Spring Mountains comma skipper)②	Weiss/95	Wide distribution among woodlands and forests
<u>Limenitus weidemeyerii nevadae</u> ② (Nevada admiral) [Southern NV endemic]	NNHP/78	Pine Creek Canyon (File # IILEPL3031-002)
<u>Plebejus icarioides</u> ssp.*② (Spring Mountains icarioides blue)	Weiss/95	Wide distribution among woodlands and forests
<u>Speyeria zerene carolae</u> *② (Carole's silverspot)	Weiss/95	<u>V. purpurea charlestonensis</u> hostplant on Bridge Mtn
PLANTS-20		
<u>Angelica scabrida</u> (Rough angelica)① [Spring Range endemic]	Nachlinger /94	Wide distribution among main escarpment/canyons
<u>Arctomecon merriamii</u> (White bearpoppy)①	RRCNCA/94	Calico Spring
<u>Astragalus aequalis</u> (Clokey milkvetch)① [Spring Range endemic]	Deacon/64 Creek Cyn	North Fork, Pine No subsequent confirmation
<u>Astragalus mohavensis</u> var. <u>hemigyris</u> ② (Curve-podded Mojave milkvetch)	NNHP/83	Lucky Strike Canyon -Very rare species in NV
<u>Astragalus remotus</u> (Spg Mtns milkvetch)① [Spring Range endemic]	Leary/96	Widespread near ephemeral washes and riparian areas

<u>Calochortus striatus</u> ^① (Alkali mariposa lily)	Babcock/97	Red, Calico, Ash Springs & 2 seeps; Lone Willow Spg
<u>Eriogonum heermannii</u> var. <u>clokeyi</u> ^② Clokey buckwheat) [Southern NV endemic]	Leary/96	Blue Diamond Hill, Kyle & Lee Canyon (3 populations)
<u>Glossopetalon pungens</u> var. <u>glabra</u> ^① (Smooth dwarf greasebush)	Leary/96	La Madre Mtn to Cottonwood (Scattered populations)
<u>Ionactis caelestis</u> ^① (Red Rock Canyon aster) [RRCNCA endemic]	Leary/96	Bridge Mtn; Brownstone Cyn (=Known global population)
<u>Ivesia jaegeri</u> (Jaeger ivesia) ^①	Leary/96	Scattered populations (8)
PLANTS (Cont.)		
<u>Pedicularis semibarbata</u> v <u>charlestonensis</u> ^① (Charl. pinewood lousewort) [Southern NV end.]	Leary/96	La Madre Mountain (Single RRCNCA population)
<u>Penstemon bicolor</u> ssp. <u>bicolor</u> ^② (Yellow twotone beardtongue) [S.NV endemic]	Babcock/97	Very common in RRCNCA (20+ known populations)
<u>Salvia dorrii</u> var. <u>clokeyi</u> ^① (Clokey mountain sage) [Southern NV endemic]	Nachlinger /94	Mt. Wilson; Bridge Mtn (2 RRCNCA populations)
<u>Townsendia jonesii</u> var. <u>tumulosa</u> ^① (Charleston grounddaisy) [S.NV endemic]	Leary/96	Mt. Wilson; Bridge Mtn; Cottonwood ridge (3 pop's)
<u>Arenaria kingii</u> var. <u>rosea</u> * ^② (Rosy king sandwort) [Spring Range endemic]	Leary/96	Suitable dry, +5900' pine habitat on La Madre Mtn
<u>Astragalus funereus</u> * ^② (Black woolypod)	Leary/96	Suitable +7200' ponderosa habitat on La Madre Mtn
<u>Astragalus oophorus</u> var. <u>clokeyanus</u> * ^① (Clokey's eggvetch) [Southern NV endemic]	Leary/96	Adjacent USFS populations in Lucky Strike Canyon
<u>Epilobium nevadense</u> * ^① (Nevada willowherb)	Leary/96	Suitable +7400' ponderosa habitat on La Madre Mtn
<u>Glossopetalon clokeyi</u> * ^① (Clokey's greasebush) [Spring Range endemic]	Leary/96	Kyle Canyon USFS pop's. in close proximity
<u>Phacelia parishii</u> * ^① (Parish's phacelia) occurrence	Leary/96	Region-wide

RRCNCA Total:

(43) NV Spp. of Concern/Sensitive Spp.

① Covered Species, Clark County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP)

② Evaluation Species, Clark County MSHCP

③ Watch List Species, Clark County MSHCP

APPENDIX 1: SPECIAL STATUS SPECIES

Part C: Clark County MSHCP (excluding species already cited in Parts I.A & I.B)

Taxon	(Common Name)	Citation	Occurrence {*Unconfirmed}
<input type="checkbox"/> COVERED SPECIES			
{Plants}			
<u>Erigeron uncialis</u> var. <u>conjugans</u>	(Inch High Fleabane)	Leary/96	La Madre Mtn; Cottonwood [Southern NV endemic]
<u>Penstemon thompsoniae</u> var. <u>jaegeri</u>	(Jaeger beardtongue)	Sada/97	Bootleg Spg; Rainbow Spg [Southern NV endemic]
<u>Viola purpurea</u> var. <u>charlestonensis</u>	(Limestone violet)	Leary/96	Bridge Mtn (Appendix 2) - <u>Speyeria</u> sp. hostplant
<u>Castilleja martinii</u> var. <u>clokeyi</u>	(Clokey paintbrush)	NNHP/60 NNHP/70	Pine Creek Canyon Lost Creek Canyon
{Birds}			
<u>Guiraca caerulea</u>	(Blue grosbeak)	RRAS/96	Wheeler Camp Spring
<u>Pyrocephalus rubinus</u>	(Vermillion flycatcher)	RRAS/96	Wheeler Camp Spring
<u>Piranga rubra</u>	(Summer tanager)	RRAS/96	Wheeler Camp Spring
{Reptiles & Amphibians}			
<u>Coleonyx variegatus</u>	(Banded gecko)	NDOW/93	Loop Drive (Night Survey)
<u>Dipsosaurus dorsalis</u>	(Desert iguana)	RRHMP/69	Not recorded

EVALUATION SPECIES

{Mammals}

<u>Vulpes macrotus</u> (Kit fox)	Various/97	Throughout the NCA
<u>Dipodomys deserti</u> (Desert kangaroo rat)	RRHMP/69	Not recorded
<u>Dipodomys microps occidentalis</u> (Chisel-toothed kangaroo rat)	RREIS/75	Not recorded

Sylvilagus nuttallii (Nuttall's cottontail) RRHMP/69 Not recorded

{Birds}

Toxostoma bendirei (Bendire's thrasher) RRRL/86 Not recorded

EVALUATION SPECIES (Cont.)

Toxostoma crissale (Crissal thrasher) RRAS/95 Wheeler Camp

Toxostoma lecontei (Le Conte's thrasher) RRRL/86 Not recorded

Vireo vicinior (Gray vireo) RRRL/86 Not recorded

Lanius ludovicianus (Loggerhead shrike) NCA/93 Mud Spring #1

Sialia mexicana (Western bluebird) RRRL/86 Not recorded

{Reptiles/Amphibians}

Phyllorhynchus descortatus
(Western leaf-nosed snake) RRHMP/69 Not recorded

Crotalus scutulatus
(Mojave green rattlesnake) NDOW/95 Wheeler Camp

Trimorphodon biscutatus lamda
(Sonoran lyre snake) RRHMP/69 Not recorded

Bufo punctatus (Red-spotted toad) NDOW/93 Not recorded

Xantusia vigilis (Desert night lizard) NDOW/93 Not recorded

WATCH LIST SPECIES

{Plants}

<u>Coryphantha vivipara</u> ssp. <u>rosea</u> (Clokey pincushion)	Leary/96	Lost Creek to Cottonwood (Scattered populations)
<u>Selaginella utahensis</u> (Utah spikemoss)	Pinzl/84	Pine Creek Canyon -Very rare in Nevada
<u>Penstemon bicolor</u> ssp. <u>roseus</u> (Rosy twotone beardtongue)	Leary/96	Lost Creek to Cottonwood (Scattered populations)
<u>Ferocactus acanthoides</u> var. <u>lecontei</u> (Barrel cactus)	Leary/96	Widespread and common
<u>Cryptantha tumulosa</u> (New York Mountains catseye)	Leary/96	Lucky Strike Canyon to Cottonwood (Scattered)

{Mammals}

<u>Chaetodipus penicillatus</u> <u>sobrinus</u> (Desert pocket mouse)	RREIS/75	Not recorded
--	----------	--------------

WATCH LIST SPECIES (Cont.)

{Birds}

<u>Aquila chrysaetos</u> (Golden eagle)	RRAS/95	Wheeler Camp
<u>Buteo regalis</u> (Ferruginous hawk)	RRRL/86	Not recorded
<u>Otus kennicottii</u> (Western screech owl)	RRHMP/69	Not recorded
<u>Butorides striatus</u> (Green-backed heron)	RRAS/94	Wheeler Camp
<u>Campylorhynchus brunneicapillus</u> (Cactus wren)	NCA/93	Juniper Canyon
<u>Catherpes mexicanus</u> (Canyon wren)	RRRL/86	Not recorded
<u>Icterus parisorum</u> (Scott's oriole)	RRRL/86	Not recorded

{Reptiles/Amphibians}

<u>Pseudacris regilla</u> (Pacific tree frog)	various	Escarpment canyons
<u>Callisaurus draconoides</u> <u>draconoides</u> (Common zebra-tailed lizard)	NDOW/94	Loop Drive (Night survey)

RRCNCA SPECIES (Management Concern)

Phacelia hastata var. charlestonensis
(Cordilleran phacelia) [Southern NV endemic]

Leary/96

Icebox Canyon; Bridge Mtn

Asplenium resilens (Ebony spleenwort)

Leary/96

Pine Creek Cyn (NV rarity)

.....

Subtotal, Appendix 1.C 09 Covered/15 Evaluation/15 Watch List

Subtotal, Appendix 1.A/B 24 Covered/18 Evaluation/04 Watch List Species

RRCNCA Total: 33 Covered/33 Evaluation/19 Watch List = 85 MSHCP Species

NNHP: Nevada Natural Heritage Program database.

RRAS: Red Rock Canyon Audubon Society, Wheeler Camp Spring Sanctuary records.

Definitions

Threatened Species: Any species which is likely to become an endangered species within the foreseeable future throughout all or a significant portion of its range.

Candidate Species: Plant and Animal taxa considered for possible addition to the List of Endangered and Threatened Species. **BLM Sensitive Species:** Species that are currently 1.) Under status review by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; or 2.) whose numbers are declining so rapidly that Federal listing may become necessary; or 3.) With typically small and widely dispersed populations; or 4) those inhabiting ecological refuge or other specialized or unique habitats.

State of Nevada Listed Species: Only those State-protected animals that have been determined to meet BLM's Manual 6840 policy definition (shown above).

**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
AND
DECISION RECORD**

**RED ROCK HERD MANAGEMENT AREA
EMERGENCY WILD HORSE GATHER AND REMOVAL
BLM(NV-052-00-061)**

Finding of No Significant Impact

Based on the analysis of potential environmental impacts contained in Environmental Assessment BLM (NV-052-00-061), I have determined that the action will not have a significant effect on the human environment, and therefore, an environmental impact statement will not prepared.

Decision

It is my decision to approve the emergency gather and removal of wild horses from the Red Rock Herd Management Area (HMA) as described in the proposed action of BLM (NV-052-00-061). Each of the Standard Operating Procedures described in the Proposed Action will be strictly followed.

Monitoring

The monitoring described in the proposed action of BLM (NV-052-00-061) is sufficient for the proposed action.

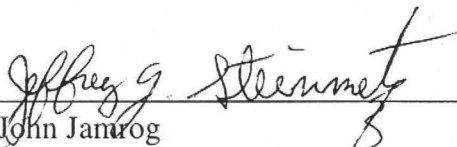
Rationale

This action will allow for the gather of wild horses and burros in the Red Rock HMA. The water, forage, and vehicle incident situation for the wild horses and burros (approximately 80 hd), has become critical. The proposed action will prevent stress and possible death by dehydration, lack of feed and vehicle incident of a substantial number of wild horses and burros.

The Water Hauling Alternative was not selected because it is not feasible for the BLM to haul water to 140 wild horses and burros in remote locations.

No Action Alternative was not selected because it would not allow for the removal of wild horses and would allow for the potential death and suffering of a substantial number of wild horses.

The proposed action is in conformance with the objectives of the Las Vegas Resource Management Plan and is consistent with Federal, State and local laws, regulations and plans to the maximum extent possible.

for 

John Jamrog
Assistant Field Manager
Renewable Resources

7-22-00
Date

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

LAS VEGAS FIELD OFFICE

RED ROCK HERD MANAGEMENT AREA

WILD HORSE REMOVAL PLAN AND ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

DROUGHT EMERGENCY

2000

NV-052-00-061

CHAPTER I - INTRODUCTION/PURPOSE AND NEED

Introduction

The water and forage situation in the Red Rock HMA has been closely monitored because the lack of precipitation over the winter of 1999-00 provided no recharge for the springs and limited forage production within the HMA. Currently 50% of the springs available in the area where wild horses and burros overlap have gone dry. The LVFO is planning to develop wells to help but the wells cannot be developed in time to correct the situation. Water is being hauled to the animals involved. The National Wild Horse Association (NWA) is assisting in the water hauling operation. The wild horses and burros are currently in fair condition, but the water and forage needed for their survival is very limited. As the forage and water supply becomes critically low, their condition will deteriorate very rapidly and the gather operation will be much more difficult. In addition to the resource problem a number of burros (3 in 30 days) have been killed on HWY 160 which runs through the HMA and is unfenced with a 60 MPH speed limit. A number of burros are presently residing on the roadside creating a hazard to motorists and themselves. In order to prevent a loss of wild horses and burros and potential harm to motorists, a gather is requested immediately. Approximately 40 burros and 50 wild horses will remain in the Red Rock HMA. The NWA has been briefed concerning this emergency gather and is in agreement with the action. The horses gathered of adoption age will be retained, prepared and adopted in Las Vegas at our October 8, 2000 adoption in conjunction with the NWA Wild Horse Show. NWA members will assist in preparation, care, training and adoption of these animals.

Purpose and Need

The proposed action is to gather wild horses and burros in the Red Rock HMA to reduce use and the possibility of vehicle incidents. Approximately 90 wild horses and burros would remain in the HMA.

The purpose of this capture/removal plan is to outline the methods and procedures to be used in the capture/removal process and to discuss the disposition of the older unadoptable horses removed from the area.

The need for this action is to prevent the stress and possible death of wild horses and burros from a lack of water, forage and protection from vehicles and to allow the water and forage resources a chance to recover.

The wild horse gather would be conducted by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Las Vegas Field Office through the use of the Great Basin Wild Horse and Burro Gather Contract. The removal operation would begin after issuance of the final gather plan and environmental assessment by the Las Vegas Field Office.

The proposed action(s) would: (1) prevent stress and the possible death of wild horses and burros (2) prevent the over utilization of forage and water and (3) reduce or eliminate the incident level between wild horses and burros.

Land Use Plan Conformance Statement

The proposed action and alternatives described below are in conformance with the Las Vegas Resource Management Plan (RMP), this action is consistent with Federal, State and local laws, regulations, and plans to the maximum extent possible.

Relationship to Planning

The Las Vegas Field Office has prepared several environmental assessments which address the capture and removal of wild horses. The Red Rock HMA was last gathered in 1996. There was an environmental assessment record prepared at that time (NV-054-94-89), but due to the age of that document, this environmental assessment is being prepared.

The capture area is not covered by a herd management area plan (HMAP). IBLA has ruled "...that it is not necessary that BLM prepare an HMAP as a basis for ordering the removal of wild horses, so long as the record otherwise substantiates compliance with the statute. Indeed, 43 CFR 4710.3-1 does not require preparation of an HMAP as a prerequisite for a removal action. Thus, we are not persuaded that preparation of an HMAP must in all cases precede the removal of wild horses from an HMA/WHT, and decline to order preparation of HMAP's." (IBLA 88-591, 88-638, 88-648, 88 679, at 127).

The removal also implements the Strategic Plan for Management of Wild Horses and Burros on Public Lands, issued on 6/92; U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management. The Strategic Plan states that only animals between the ages of 1 and 3 years should be removed. However, current National and Nevada policy is to remove animals up to nine years of age from HMAs and from horse free areas, and to adjust the removal criteria somewhat in cases of emergency.

CHAPTER II - PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES

PROPOSED ACTION

The proposed action is a Bureau initiated action which would be carried out by a contractor. The proposed action is to gather approximately 80 wild horses and burros found within the Red Rock HMA.

Those horses that are determined to be suitable for the adoption program would be prepared locally in Las Vegas and adopted at our October 8, 2000 event. Mares and studs age 15 and over would be placed into a pasture like setting or "long-term holding" facilities to live out their days. Horses within the ages of 6-9 would be targeted for gelding (in the case of the studs), training, and eventually the adoption program. Horses within the ages of 1-5 would be placed directly into the adoption program after being prepared locally.

Time and Method of Capture

The water resources in the HMA are being carefully monitored as is the condition of the wild horses in the pasture. A gather would have to commence before horse and burro condition begins to deteriorate. The purpose of the proposed action is to alleviate pain and suffering of the animals and ultimately to prevent the death of animals.

The method of capture would be to use a helicopter to herd the animals to portable wing traps. It is the intention of the BLM to conduct the removal through a private contractor under the current requirements contract. At least one qualified Bureau employee would be supervising the capture operation and one Bureau employee would be supervising the sorting and shipping operations at all times. It is estimated that 2 trap locations would be required to accomplish the work.

The terrain in the proposed removal area consists of flat desert with a few rolling hills. Annual precipitation is approximately 6 inches per year, occurring during November, December and January. Average daytime high temperatures range from 95 -105 degrees F.

Administration of the Contract

BLM would be responsible for overseeing a contract for the capture, care, aging and temporary holding of approximately 80 wild horses and burros from the capture area. BLM would also be responsible to oversee the transportation of the wild horses to the adoption preparation facility as specified in the removal contract, which is expected to be Kingman Arizona.

The contractor would be briefed on duties and responsibilities before the notice to proceed is issued. There would also be an inspection of the contractor's equipment at this time to ensure that it meets specifications and is adequate for the job. Any equipment that did not meet specifications would be replaced within 36 hours. The contractor would also be informed of the terrain involved, the condition of the animals, the condition of the roads, potential trap locations, motorized equipment limitations, and the presence of fences and other dangerous barriers. The contractor would be provided with a topographic map of the capture area which shows acceptable trap locations and existing fences and/or physical barriers prior to any gathering

operation. The contractor would also be informed of existing conditions in the capture area and would be given direction regarding the capture and handling of animals to assure their health and welfare is protected.

At least one authorized BLM employee, a Contracting Officer's Representative (COR) or Project Inspector (PI), would be present at the site of captures/removals. The COR/PI would be directly responsible for the capture/removal. Other BLM personnel may be needed to assist the operation (i.e., an archaeologist or an archaeological technician to conduct cultural inventories, and a BLM law enforcement agent to protect BLM personnel and property from unlawful activities).

The CORs/Pis would be directly responsible for the conduct of the capture/removal operation and for reporting progress to the Las Vegas Field Office Managers and the Nevada State Office.

All publicity, public contact, and inquiries would be handled through the Managers for Renewable Resources. The managers would also coordinate the contract with the National Wild Horse and Burro Program Office, the adoption preparation facility, to assure there is space available in the corrals for the captured horses, animals are handled humanely and efficiently, and animals being transported from the capture site are arriving in good condition.

The COR/Pis would constantly evaluate the contractor's ability to perform the required work in accordance with the contract stipulations. Compliance with the contract stipulations would be ensured through issuance of written instructions to the contractor, stop work orders and default procedures should the contractor not perform work according to the stipulations.

To assist the COR/PI in administering the contract, the BLM would have a helicopter available, if needed, at the roundup site. This helicopter would be used with discretion to minimize disturbance to horses that would make capture more difficult. In addition, it would be used as needed to assure that the contractor is complying with the specifications of the contract and to ensure the humane capture of animals. In the event an additional helicopter is not available to observe the project helicopter, other methods would be utilized to observe the removal operations, such as using observers on horseback or in vehicles, or by placing stationary observers in strategic locations.

If the contractor fails to perform in an appropriate manner at any time, the contract would not be allowed to continue until problems encountered are corrected to the satisfaction of the COR/PI.

Standard Operating Procedures

The Standard Operating Procedures will consist of sections, C.4 thru C.7 of the Great Basin Wild Horse and Burro gathers contract to ensure the welfare, safety and humane treatment of the wild horses.

Government Furnished Property

The government would provide a portable "Fly" restraining chute at each pre-work conference, to be used by the contractor for the purpose of restraining animals to determine the age of specific individuals or other similar practices. The government may also provide portable 2-way radios, if needed. The contractor would be responsible for the security of all government furnished property.

Branded and Claimed Animals

A notice of intent to impound would be issued by the BLM prior to any capture operations in this area. The Nevada Department of Agriculture and the District Brand Inspector would receive copies of this notice, as well as the Notice of Public Sale, if issued. The COR/PI would contact the District Brand Inspector and make arrangements for dates and times when brand inspections will be needed.

When horses are captured, the COR/PI and the District Brand Inspector would jointly inspect all animals at the holding facility in the capture area. If determined necessary at that time by all parties involved, horses would be sorted into three categories:

- a. Branded animals with offspring, including yearlings.
- b. Unbranded or claimed animals with offspring, including yearlings with obvious evidence of existing or former private ownership (e.g., geldings, bobbed tails, photo documentation, saddle marks, etc.).
- c. Unbranded animals and offspring without obvious evidence of former private ownership.

The COR/PI, after consultation with the District Brand Inspector, would determine if unbranded animals are wild and free-roaming horses. The District Brand Inspector would determine ownership of branded animals and their offspring and, if possible, the ownership of unbranded animals determined not to be wild and free-roaming horses.

Branded horses with offspring and claimed unbranded horses with offspring for which the owners have been identified by the District Brand Inspector would be retained in the custody of the BLM pending notification of the owner or claimant.

A separate holding corral would be set up near the temporary holding corral to house these horses until the owner/claimant or BLM can pick them up.

The animals would remain in the custody of the BLM until settlement in full is made for impoundment and trespass charges, as determined appropriate by the Manager for Renewable Resources in accordance with 43 CFR Subpart 4710.6 and provisions in 43 CFR Subpart 4150. In the event settlement is not made, the horses would be sold at public auction by the BLM.

Branded horses with offspring whose owners cannot be determined, and unclaimed, unbranded horses with offspring having evidence of existing or former private ownership would be released to the Nevada Department of Agriculture (District Brand Inspector) as estrays.

The District Brand Inspector would provide the COR/PI a brand inspection certificate for the immediate shipment of wild horses to Palomino Valley (Reno), and for the branded or claimed horses where impoundment and trespass charges have not been offered or received, for shipment to public auction or another holding facility.

Desert Tortoise

The contractor and all employees will be informed about the desert tortoise (which will include information provided by the BLM on the life history of the desert tortoise, its protected status, protocols for dealing with tortoises if and when they are encountered, and the definition of "take" via informational handout provided by the BLM. Each shall be advised of the potential impacts to desert tortoises and potential penalties (up to \$50,000 in fines and one year in prison) for taking a Federally protected species.

The contractor shall ensure that all personnel associated with he gather shall acknowledge receipt of the tortoise information through the signing of an acknowledgment for which shall be returned to the BLM upon completion of circulation to all employees.

Trap sites and holding corral locations and helicopter staging areas will be selected with the input of a BLM biologist to ensure that impacts to tortoise habitat are avoided.

Trap sites, holding corral and staging areas will be surveyed for desert tortoise and tortoise burrows before use by a BLM biologist. If an active tortoise burrow is located on the proposed site a new site will be selected.

To the extent possible, all traps, holding corrals and staging areas will be located in previously disturbed areas which are devoid of perennial vegetation and will be located adjacent to existing roads and trails.

To the extent possible, vehicular travel will be restricted to existing roads, trails and washes. If off-road vehicular travel is necessary, the route will be surveyed for the presence of desert tortoise before use.

Garbage and similar items will be placed in appropriate contains and not allowed to accumulate in order to discourage the attraction of ravens to the area.

If a desert tortoise should wander onto the trap, holding corral or staging area, all activities with the potential to harm the tortoise will cease until the tortoise moves out of harms way under its own volition.

The discharge of firearms will be prohibited at all trap and holding facilities except in the case of euthanasia of a captured animal (wild horse, mule or burro) by an authorized BLM employee.

No Action Alternative

Under no action, wild horses and burros would not be removed from the Red Rock HMA. Animals would be allowed to become severely stressed and perhaps die of dehydration, a lack of forage and/or from vehicle incidents. This alternative would not be acceptable to the Bureau nor most members of the public. The Bureau realizes that some members of the public advocate "letting nature take its course", however allowing horses to die from a lack of resources clearly indicates that an overpopulation of horses exists in the pasture. The Wild Horse and Burro Act of 1971 directs the Bureau to "remove excess horses in order to preserve and maintain a thriving natural ecological balance and multiple-use relationship in that area".

ALTERNATIVE CONSIDERED BUT ELIMINATED FROM DETAILED ANALYSIS

Water Trapping Alternative

Due to the time necessary for construction of complex water traps and the prolonged period it would take for the animals to become accustomed to using the traps, water trapping is not being considered. It is possible that some horses would die of dehydration before becoming

acclimated to the trap. Additionally, water traps would prevent native wildlife from obtaining water due to the increased human activity and prolonged period of time the activity would be taking place. This would cause increased stress to native wildlife and water trapping also causes increased stress to wild horses.

Horseback Trapping Alternative

Bands of horses are not controlled effectively with horseback herding, therefore, many bands are spilled or individual horses separated from the band. This results in increased social structure disruption and/or orphaned foals, which requires attempts to capture these separated animals. The number of animals captured per day versus the proposed action is significantly fewer, therefore, it is very time consuming resulting in very high capture costs.

Relocation of Wild Horses

Relocation of the wild horses and burros was considered. Due to a greater demand for water and forage than is available the wild horses can not be relocated. However the jennies gathered will be relocated to correct a sex ratio imbalance and the jacks will be shipped to the adoption program.

Hauling Water Alternative

Hauling water to 140 head of wild horses and burros was considered. It was not considered further in this analysis due to the following reason: The BLM does not have the resources (manpower/equipment/funding) available to haul the amount of water needed to fulfill the horses needs on a daily basis. At least one full time employee would have to be devoted to this effort until the drought cycle breaks.

CHAPTER III - AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

General Setting

The gather area is located approximately 20 miles west of Las Vegas, Nevada. The terrain within the area is characterized by a high rolling hills underlain by basalt flows which are occasionally cut by deep, vertically walled canyons. Elevation ranges from about 4,500 to 5,600 feet. In general the vegetation consists of eight major community types, derived from the floristic classifications of Bradley & Deacon (1965) and Leary & Niles (1996). Except for the riparian community, all are *terrestrial* types characterized by the absence of permanent surface water. As the sole *hydric* vegetative type present, RRCNCA's riparian areas are both a generic resource type and a definitive plant community type. In terms of distribution, four are *zonal* community types (creosote bush; blackbrush; juniper-pinyon; pine-fir); four are

transzonal (riparian; desert wash; chaparral; cliff communities). Species composition and occurrence in the former is determined by elevation gradients; in the latter by other environmental factors such as shade or soil moisture. The result is that the zonal vegetative communities demonstrate a clear pattern of stratified terrain distribution, while the transzonal communities are more variably and diffusely situated in the Red Rock Canyon landscape. In terms of vegetative structure, two of the community types are woodlands (juniper-pinyon; pine-fir), two are desert shrub types (creosote bush; blackbrush) and the rest are intermediate shrub/woodlands (desert wash; chaparral; cliff and riparian). Temperatures range from 115 degrees in the summer to 20 degrees in the winter.

Critical Elements of the Human Environment

The following critical elements of the human environment are not present or are not affected by the proposed action or alternatives:

Areas of Critical Environmental Concerns

Cultural Resources - A cultural resources investigation by an archaeologist or an archaeological technician would be conducted prior to trap or holding facility construction. If cultural resources are found, an alternative site would be selected.

Environmental Justice

Farm Lands (prime or unique)

Flood Plains

Native American Religious Concerns - Various tribes and bands of the Western Shoshone have stated that federal projects and land actions could have widespread effects to their culture and religion because they consider the landscape as sacred and as a provider. However, the proposed action has a low potential to negatively impact any specific Native American religious aspect or Traditional Cultural Property. Native American consultation was deemed unnecessary at this time.

Paleontology

Wastes (hazardous or solid)

Water Quality (drinking/ground)

Wilderness

Environmental Justice

Noxious weeds

Bureau Specialists have further determined that the following resources, although present in the project area, are not affected by the proposed action: Range (livestock operations), Lands, Recreation, Geologic Resources, Forestry and Social and Economic Resources.

Resources Present and Brought Forward for Analysis:

Air Quality

Part of the management area falls within the LV serious non attainment area for PM 10 and CO. The BLM will comply with all applicable laws, regulations and standards.

Soils

The majority of soils in Red Rock HMA are desert soils developed under low precipitation with minimal topsoil development –Aridisols and Entisols. The soils are mainly coarse textured with minor areas of fine textured soils. The soils have a high potential for soil erosion when disturbed. Loss of soil from these desert soils leads to an irreplaceable loss in soil productivity.

Wetlands/Riparian Zones

There are few wetland/riparian zones in the area of the proposed gather. Most of the wetland/riparian zones have been protected from use by fencing.

Vegetation

The RRCNCA vegetative communities can be grouped into eight major community types, derived from the floristic classifications of Bradley & Deacon (1965) and Leary & Niles (1996). Except for the riparian community, all are *terrestrial* types characterized by the absence of permanent surface water. As the sole *hydric* vegetative type present, RRCNCA's riparian areas are both a generic resource type and a definitive plant community type. In terms of distribution, four are *zonal* community types (creosote bush; blackbrush; juniper-pinyon; pine-fir); four are *transzonal* (riparian; desert wash; chaparral; cliff communities). Species composition and occurrence in the former is determined by elevation gradients; in the latter by other environmental factors such as shade or soil moisture. The result is that the zonal vegetative communities demonstrate a clear pattern of stratified terrain distribution, while the transzonal communities are more variably and diffusely situated in the Red Rock Canyon landscape. In terms of vegetative structure, two of the community types are woodlands (juniper-pinyon; pine-fir), two are desert shrub types (creosote bush; blackbrush) and the rest are intermediate shrub/ woodlands (desert wash; chaparral; cliff and riparian).

Wildlife

Within the proposed project area, numerous species of wildlife may occur. Mule deer, desert sheep, mountain lions, coyotes, bobcats and kit foxes are the main game and fur bearer species present. Chukar, mourning doves, and cottontail rabbits constitute the major upland game species. In addition, a variety of non-game mammals, birds, and reptiles occur in the project area.

Threatened, Endangered, Candidate or Sensitive Species

See Appendix 1 for definitions. 1). Peregrine Falcon (above 600 feet, endangered sp.) 2). Desert tortoise (threatened sp.) occur in the Red Rock However, based on consultation with NDOW regarding 1995 input submitted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and BLM file data, one threatened species, one candidate species, twelve BLM sensitive species and seven State of Nevada Listed Species have been identified as potentially occurring on a seasonal or year long basis (Appendix 1).

Visual Resources

Visual resources are identified through the Visual Resource Management (VRM) inventory. This inventory consists of a scenic quality evaluation, sensitivity level analysis and a delineation of distance zones. Based on these factors, BLM administered lands are placed into four visual resource inventory classes. Class I and II are the most valued, Class III representing a moderate value, and Class IV being of least value. The proposed project area consists of Class IV. Visual resource classes serve two purposes: (1) an inventory tool that portrays the relative value of visual resources, and (2) a management tool that portrays the visual management objective. The Class IV objective is to provide for management objectives which require major modification of the existing character of the landscape. The level of change to the characteristic landscape can be high. These management activities may dominate the view and be the major focus of viewer attention.

Wetlands/Riparian Zones

There are few wetland/riparian zones in the area of the proposed gather. Most of the wetland/riparian zones have been protected from use by fencing.

Wild Horses

Wild horses exist in North America, have few natural predators and are long-lived. Few natural controls act upon wild horse herds making them very competitive with native wildlife and other living resources. Wild horses have been shown to be capable of 18 to 25% increases in numbers annually. With horses, this can result in a doubling of the population about every 3 years. In the Red Rock HMA, population growth rates are relatively low for wild horses at 10-15%. Population of the Red rock HMA is estimated to be approximately 140 wild horses and burros.

The Red Rock HMA was last gathered in 1996. This removal did not incorporate any type of removal strategies other than to get to a more appropriate level. Wild horses in the Red Rock HMA have light to moderate builds, averaging approximately 900-1000 pounds (this is a rough estimate). Horse colors are predominantly Palomino, bay, and sorrel but a good variation in colors exist. Sex ratios for the horses in the HMA are not representative of other HMAs in the

west at large. At birth, sex ratios are roughly equal. This balance shifts to favor studs throughout all age classes.

Field observations throughout the spring of 2000 have shown that the horses were in fair condition. However, the condition of the horses may deteriorate rapidly when the water and forage sources becomes critically low.

Invasive, Non-native Species

Noxious weeds and invasive non-native species introduction and proliferation is a growing concern among local and regional interest. Noxious weed surveys including invasive and non-native species in the HMA have been partially completed.

CHAPTER IV - ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

Proposed Action and No Action Alternative

Air Quality

The impacts to air quality would be moderate increases in, dust, and combustion engine exhaust generated by mechanical equipment. Impacts would be temporary, small in scale, and dispersed throughout the proposed capture. Impacts would be kept to a minimum.

No Action Alternative - The air quality would be the same as described in the affected environment section.

Soils

An area less than one acre in size at each trap location would be severely trampled during gathering operations. This trampling would lead to compaction and pulverization of the topsoil leading to a possible loss of soils. Adverse impacts to soils would be minimized, by staying on existing roads and using previously disturbed sites for traps.

No Action Alternative - The severe localized trampling associated with trap sites would not occur, however, as wild horse populations continue to grow, soil erosion would increase. Increased use throughout the HMA would adversely impact soils and vegetation health, especially around the water locations. As native plant health deteriorates and plants are lost, soil erosion will increase. The shallow desert topsoil can not tolerate much loss without losing productivity and thus the ability to be revegetated with native plants. Invasive non native plant

species would increase and invade new areas following increased soil disturbance and reduced native plant vigor and abundance. This would lead to both a shift in plant composition towards weedy species and an irreplaceable topsoil and productivity loss from erosion.

Vegetation

Impacts to vegetation with implementation of the Proposed Action would consist of direct and indirect impacts. Direct impacts would include disturbance of native vegetation immediately in and around temporary trap sites, and holding, sorting and animal handling facilities. Impacts are created by vehicle traffic, and hoof action of penned horses, and can be locally severe in the immediate vicinity of the corrals or holding facilities. Generally, these activity sites would be small (less than one half acre) in size. Since most trap sites or holding facilities are re-used during recurring wild horse gather operations, any impacts would remain site specific and isolated in nature. In addition, most trap sites or holding facilities are selected to enable easy access by transportation vehicles and logistical support equipment and would therefore generally be near or on roads, pullouts, water haul sites or other flat spots which were previously disturbed. These common practices would minimize the cumulative effects of these impacts.

No Action Alternative - No vegetation trampling would occur as a result of trapping and holding horses in a small area, however, overall, the vegetation in the HMA would not be rested from grazing pressure. Utilization levels would be in excess of Rangeland Program Summary objectives and this increased utilization would not help maintain desirable, perennial native plant communities nor would it allow the burned area to recover.

Wildlife

Some mammals, reptiles, and birds would be temporarily displaced from the trap sites and holding facilities. Animals may also be disturbed by the low-flying helicopter; this disturbance would be of very short duration. A slight possibility exists that non-mobile or site specific animals would be trampled. The proposed action would result in an increase in quantity and quality of forage and water available to wildlife.

No Action Alternative - Wildlife would not be displaced or disturbed under the no action alternative, however, there would be continued competition with wild horses for water and forage resources and because wild horses are very aggressive around water sources, some wildlife species may not be able to compete. The continued competition for resources may lead to increased stress and possible dislocation or death of native wildlife species.

Threatened, Endangered, Candidate or Sensitive Species

There is a possibility that BLM sensitive species could be displaced by the gathering activities. The most likely species that would be affected by the proposed action is the desert tortoise. Prior to trap site selection, the area would be inventoried for the presence of tortoise.

No Action Alternative - The ground disturbing impacts of gathering wild horses would not occur, however, continued habitat degradation resulting from an overpopulation of wild horses would continue to occur.

Visual Resources

The proposed project activities would result in minimal, temporary impacts. For the duration of the proposed gather, traps and corrals would introduce weak horizontal lines to the foreground. No obvious changes in texture due to vegetation disturbance would be produced since traps and corrals would be located in previously disturbed areas. Visual resource management objectives for Class IV VRM areas would be met.

No Action Alternative - Under the no action alternative, the wild horse gather would not take place. There would be no temporary impacts related to the proposed action.

Wetlands/Riparian Zones

The proposed project would not impact wetlands or riparian zones as no traps or holding facilities would be built in these areas. Overall, the gather and removal of wild horses would have a positive impact to the recovering wetlands and riparian zones.

No Action Alternative - Under the no action alternative, the wild horse gather would not take place. This would lead to heavy to severe utilization of wetland/riparian zones. This would lead to increased erosion and decreased watershed health and function.

Invasive, Non-native Species

The proposed gather may spread existing noxious weeds species. This would occur if vehicles drive through infestations and spread seed into previously weed free areas. The contractor together with the COR/PI would examine proposed trap sites and holding corrals prior to construction. If noxious weeds are found, the location of the facilities would be moved.

No Action Alternative - Under this alternative, the wild horse gather would not take place. The chance that noxious weeds would be spread by the contractor, his personnel and equipment would not exist. However, overgrazing of the present plant communities could lead to an expansion of noxious weeds.

Wild Horses

Impacts to wild horses under the proposed action take the form of direct and indirect impacts and may occur on either the individual or the population as a whole. Direct individual impacts are those impacts which occur to individual horses and are immediately associated with implementation of the proposed action. These impacts include: handling stress associated with the roundup, capture, sorting, animal handling, and transportation of the animals. The intensity of these impacts vary by individual, and are indicated by behaviors ranging from nervous agitation to physical distress. Mortality of individuals from this impact is infrequent but does occur in one half to one percent of horses gathered in a given round-up. Following the SOPs outlined in the Proposed action would minimize impacts associated with handling stress. There are no indications that these direct impacts persist beyond a short time following the stress event. They would be expected to completely dissipate following release.

Indirect individual impacts are those impacts which occur to individual horses after the initial stress event. Indirect individual impacts may include spontaneous abortions in mares, and increased social displacement and conflict in studs. These impacts, like direct individual impacts are known to occur intermittently during wild horse gather operations. An example of an indirect would be the brief skirmish which occurs with most older studs following sorting and release into the stud pen which lasts less than two minutes and ends when one stud retreats. Traumatic injuries do not occur in most cases, however, they do occur. These injuries typically involve a bite and/or kicking with bruises which don't break the skin. Like direct individual impacts, the frequency of occurrence of these impacts among a population varies with the individual. Spontaneous abortion events among mares following captures is rare.

The effect of removal of horses from the population would not be expected to have adverse impact on herd dynamics or population variables, as long as the selection criteria for the removal ensured a "typical" population structure was maintained. Obvious potential impacts on horse herds and populations from exercising poor selection criteria not based on herd dynamics includes modification of age or sex ratios to favor a particular class of animal.

Effects resulting from successive removals causing shifts in sex ratios away from normal ranges are fairly self evident. If selection criteria leaves more studs than mares, band size would be expected to decrease, competition for mares would be expected to increase, recruitment age for reproduction among mares would be expected to decline, and size and number of bachelor bands would be expected to increase. On the other hand, a selection criteria which leaves more mares than studs would be expected to result in fewer and smaller bachelor bands, increased reproduction on a proportional basis with the herd, lengthening of the time after birth when individual mares begin actively reproducing, and larger band sizes.

Effects resulting from successive removals causing shifts in age dynamics away from normal ranges are likewise, fairly obvious. Herd shifts favoring older age horses (over 15 years) have been observed resulting in a favoring of studs over mares in some herds. Explanations include sex based differences in reproductive stress (relative demand for individual contributions to reproduction) and biological stress (timing the most physically demanding period of the annual cycle).

For studs, reproductive stress is based on dominance in the herd and by definition is confined to a fairly narrow period in their life span when they are capable of defending a mare group. For mares, recurrent reproductive stress starts as early as age 2 and continues until as late as age 15 or 16, and sometimes as late as 20. Biological stress in wild horses tends to indicate a selection against mares. Biological stress is based on the degree, duration, and timing of biologically demanding activities during the annual reproductive cycle.

For mares, the greatest biological stress is during pregnancy and lactation. In wild horse populations, this occurs in late winter or early spring when forage availability is at its lowest level, and body condition is at its poorest. For studs, biological stress is at its peak during the breeding season. This peak biological demand is in the late spring and early summer and is more suited to a rapid recovery and a lower energy deficit than for mares.

The susceptibility of the older herd to extreme climatic events would depend on the age of the dominant class in the group. Generally, survival rates of horses are very high (exceeding 98%) for mature animals and lower for very young. This survivability declines again at some older age. Similarly, reproductive success also declines at some age. The threshold age at which susceptibility to extreme events and reproductive senescence has not been established. It is reasonable to conclude that the older the population, the more prone it would be to a catastrophic die-off as a result of reduced resistance to disease, lowered body condition, and/or reduced reproductive capacity.

The effects of successive removals on populations causing shifts in herd demographics favoring younger horses (under 15 years) would also have direct consequences on the population. These impacts are not thought of typically as adverse to a population. They include development of a population which is expected to be more biologically fit, more reproductively viable, and more capable of enduring stresses associated with traumatic natural and artificial events.

No Action Alternative - Under this alternative, wild horses would not be removed from the Red Rock HMA. The horses would not be subject to any individual direct or indirect impacts

as described above as a result of a gather operation. However, there would be individual direct and indirect impacts as a result of the absence of water and there would be a direct impact on the population as a result of the death of most, if not all, of the horses within this pasture.

Cumulative Impacts

Cumulative impacts are impacts on the environment which result from the incremental impact of the action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions regardless of what agency or person undertakes such other actions. Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor but collectively significant actions taking place over a period of time.

Past present and reasonably foreseeable activities which would be expected to contribute to the cumulative impacts of implementing the proposed action include: Past wild horse removals which may have altered the structure and composition of the Red Rock HMA, and continued development of recreational activities. These past present and reasonably foreseeable activities would be expected to generate cumulative impacts to the proposed action by influencing the habitat quality abundance and continuity for the Red Rock HMA wild horse and burros.

The past events in this area have created the current population with its associated structure and composition, and have shaped the patterns of use found today in the herd. Continued development of these parameters would be expected to result in small annual changes in herd structure and behavior with small changes in habitat use over time.

These impacts would be expected to be marked by relatively large changes occurring rather slowly over time. The Bureau would continue to identify these impacts as they occur, and mitigate them as needed on a project specific basis to maintain habitat quality. At the same time, horse herds would be expected to continue to adapt to these small changes to availability and distribution of critical habitat components (food, water, shelter, space). The proposed action would contribute to the cumulative impacts of these past and foreseeable future actions by maintaining the herd at AML, and establishing a process whereby biological and/or genetic issues associated with herd or habitat fragmentation would become apparent sooner and mitigating measures implemented quicker.

Monitoring Needs

Monitoring procedures to address specific habitat variables have been established in the Bureau's 4400 series handbooks. These monitoring protocols are the excepted Bureau methodologies for collecting habitat based information to determine achievement of habitat based objectives and the standards for rangeland health as developed by the Northeastern Great Basin Area Resource Advisory Council. Specific habitat monitoring procedures and key

area selection has already occurred. These methodologies and sites will continue to be used under this proposed action. Species monitoring protocols and data collection methods have been established by equine professionals and researchers who initiated the first round of these studies (animal handling techniques). Bureau practices are based on these procedures which are incorporated into both the proposed action and alternative as animal handling techniques. These animal handling techniques would be sufficient to determine the short- and long-term effects of implementing the proposed action or alternative.

CHAPTER V - CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

List of Preparers

Gary McFadden	Wild Horse Specialist	Lead Preparer
Jeff Steinmetz	Environmental Protection Specialist	
Donn Siebert	Outdoor Recreation Planner	Visual Resources
Stan Rolf	Archaeologist	Cultural Resources,
Sid Sloan	Wildlife Biologist	T&E Species

Persons, Groups of Agencies Consulted

Billie Young	National Wild Horse Association
Craig Leets	National Wild Horse association
Dave Tattam	Nevada Commission for the preservation of Wild Horses

APPENDIX 1: SPECIAL STATUS SPECIES

Part A: Federal Endangered Species List [50 CFR 17 (10/31/96)]

LISTING STATUS	Taxon and (Common Name)
Global Distribution	RRCNCA Population Estimate & Occurrence Records
ENDANGERED SPECIES-01	<u>Falco peregrinus anatum</u> ① (American peregrine falcon)
Western Hemisphere	01 adult male; 01 adult unknown (suspected female)
	-Bridge Mtn, 08/95: unknown adult (02?), rapid flight
	-Bridge Mtn, 10/95: adult ♂, cliff perched*
	-Bridge Mtn, 05/96: unk adult, perched then repeated cacking/ swooping at one specific cliff top site
	-Blue Diamd, 06/97: unk adult, preyed on a dove; flew to NW
Biological Significance:	-Suspected nesting pair (due to cliff site fidelity)
RRCNCA Priority: <u>High</u>	-Nest pairs are key to FWS Pacific Coast Recovery Plan
Additional Comments:	-See Appendix 2: Priority Management Areas
	-Also cited in undocumented field reports from 1970-80's
LISTED THREATENED-01	<u>Gopherus agassazii</u> ① (Desert tortoise)
CA, NV, AZ, UT; Mexico	400-1760 animals (= 40 mi ² habitat @ 10-44 tortoises/mi ²)
	-Creosote habitat (low density) throughout the NCA
	-Ten Mile Cyn survey, 05/96: 02-11 tortoises (indices est.)
	-13 Mile Cyn survey, 07/96: 09-39 tortoises (indices est.)
Biological Significance:	-Important reptile species within desert ecosystem
RRCNCA Priority: <u>Low</u>	-Minimal threats or problems; in low density range
CANDIDATE SPECIES-01	<u>Opuntia whipplei</u> v. <u>multigeniculata</u> ① (Blue Diamond cholla)
Red Rock Canyon NCA	6250 individuals
	-Blue Diamond Hill, 05/91: Occupies 269 acres in a 1000-acre portion of southern Blue Diamond Hill [J.Morefield survey]
Biological Significance:	-Known global population
RRCNCA Priority: <u>High</u>	-Subject to FWS Conservation Agreement see Appendix 2)
Additional Comments:	-Taxonomy not fully resolved (species or variety?)

RRCNCA Total:

(3) Federally Listed/Candidate Species

① Covered Species, Clark County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP)

APPENDIX 1: SPECIAL STATUS SPECIES

Part B: Nevada Sp. of Concern [FWS 01/09/97] and Nevada Sensitive Sp. [BLM 04/23/97]

Taxon (Common Name)	Citation	Occurrence (*Unconfirmed)
MAMMALS-10		
<u>Euderma maculatum</u> * (Spotted bat)③	Ramsey/97	White Rock Spring (heard*)
<u>Myotis ciliolabrum</u> (Small-footed myotis)②	Ramsey/94	White Rock Spring
<u>Myotis evotis</u> (Long-eared myotis)①	Ramsey/94	White Rock Spring= WR Spg
<u>Myotis thysanodes</u> (Fringed myotis)②	Ramsey/94	Calico Hills; WR Spg; Pine Creek; Grapevine Spring
<u>Myotis volans</u> (Long-legged myotis)①	Ramsey/94	Calico Hills= CH's; WR Spg
<u>Myotis yumanensis</u> * (Yuma myotis)③	Ramsey/94	Potosi Spg (on NCA border)
<u>Nyctinomops macrotis</u> (Big free-tailed)③	RRHMP/69	No subsequent confirmation
<u>Idionycteris phyllotis</u> ③ (Allen's big-eared bat)	Ramsey/94	Calico Hills; White Rock Spring; Pine Creek
<u>Plecotus townsendii pallescens</u> ② (Pale Townsend's big-eared bat)	Ramsey/94 Ramsey/97	CH's; WR Spg; Tea Kettle & Wounded Knee & Desert Cave
<u>Tamias palmeri</u> * (Palmer's chipmunk)① [Spring Range endemic]	n/a	Suitable fir-pine habitat on La Madre Mountain
BIRDS-02		
<u>Accipiter gentilis</u> (Northern goshawk)③	RRRL/86	Not recorded
<u>Phainopepla nitens</u> (Phainopepla)①	RRAS/96	Wheeler Camp Spring
REPTILES-02		
<u>Heloderma suspectum cinctum</u> ② (Banded Gila monster)	NDOW/96	Widespread but uncommon, Calico to Bonnie Springs
<u>Sauromalus obesus obesus</u> ① (Western chuckwalla)	NDOW/95	Widespread but uncommon

INVERTEBRATES-09

<u>Pyrgulopsis deaconi</u> ① (formerly nov.1a) (Spring Mountains springsnail) [Spring Range endemic]	Sada/96	Red Spring; Willow Spring population extirpated but pending re-introduction
<u>Pyrgulopsis turbatrix</u> ① (formerly nov.58) (Southeast Nevada springsnail) [Southern Nevada endemic]	Sada/96	Lost Creek; La Madre Spg {Willow Spg: extirpated pending re-introduction}
[Endemic Spring Range butterflies]		
<u>Chlosyne acastus</u> *② (Spring Mtns acastus checkerspot)	Weiss/95	Widespread hostplant is <u>Chrysothamnus nauseosus</u>
<u>Euphilotes enoptes</u> ssp.*② (Dark blue butterfly)	Weiss/95	Suspected to be widespread throughout Spring Range
<u>Euphydryas anicia morandi</u> *② (Morand's checkerspot)	Weiss/95	Widespread hostplant is <u>Castilleja lineriaefolia</u>
<u>Hesperia comma</u> spp.* (Spring Mountains comma skipper)②	Weiss/95	Wide distribution among woodlands and forests
<u>Limenitus weidemeyerii nevadae</u> ② (Nevada admiral) [Southern NV endemic]	NNHP/78	Pine Creek Canyon (File # IILEPL3031-002)
<u>Plebejus icarioides</u> ssp.*② (Spring Mountains icarioides blue)	Weiss/95	Wide distribution among woodlands and forests
<u>Speyeria zerene carolae</u> *② (Carole's silverspot)	Weiss/95	<u>V. purpurea charlestonensis</u> hostplant on Bridge Mtn

PLANTS-20

<u>Angelica scabrida</u> (Rough angelica)① [Spring Range endemic]	Nachlinger /94	Wide distribution among main escarpment/canyons
<u>Arctomecon merriamii</u> (White bearpoppy)①	RRCNCA/94	Calico Spring
<u>Astragalus aequalis</u> (Clokey milkvetch)① [Spring Range endemic]	Deacon/64 Creek Cyn	North Fork, Pine No subsequent confirmation
<u>Astragalus mohavensis</u> var. <u>hemigyris</u> ② (Curve-podded Mojave milkvetch)	NNHP/83	Lucky Strike Canyon -Very rare species in NV
<u>Astragalus remotus</u> (Spg Mtns milkvetch)① [Spring Range endemic]	Leary/96	Widespread near ephemeral washes and riparian areas

<u>Calochortus striatus</u> ^① (Alkali mariposa lily)	Babcock/97	Red, Calico, Ash Springs & 2 seeps; Lone Willow Spg
<u>Eriogonum heermanni</u> var. <u>clokeyi</u> ^② Clokey buckwheat) [Southern NV endemic]	Leary/96	Blue Diamond Hill, Kyle & Lee Canyon (3 populations)
<u>Glossopetalon pungens</u> var. <u>glabra</u> ^① (Smooth dwarf greasebush)	Leary/96	La Madre Mtn to Cottonwood (Scattered populations)
<u>Ionactis caelestis</u> ^① (Red Rock Canyon aster) [RRCNCA endemic]	Leary/96	Bridge Mtn; Brownstone Cyn (=Known global population)
<u>Ivesia jaegeri</u> (Jaeger ivesia) ^①	Leary/96	Scattered populations (8)

PLANTS (Cont.)

<u>Pedicularis semibarbata</u> v <u>charlestonensis</u> ^① (Charl. pinewood lousewort) [Southern NV end.]	Leary/96	La Madre Mountain (Single RRCNCA population)
<u>Penstemon bicolor</u> ssp. <u>bicolor</u> ^② (Yellow twotone beardtongue) [S.NV endemic]	Babcock/97	Very common in RRCNCA (20+ known populations)
<u>Salvia dorrii</u> var. <u>clokeyi</u> ^① (Clokey mountain sage) [Southern NV endemic]	Nachlinger /94	Mt. Wilson; Bridge Mtn (2 RRCNCA populations)
<u>Townsendia jonesii</u> var. <u>tumulosa</u> ^① (Charleston grounddaisy) [S.NV endemic]	Leary/96	Mt. Wilson; Bridge Mtn; Cottonwood ridge (3 pop's)
<u>Arenaria kingii</u> var. <u>rosea</u> * ^② (Rosy king sandwort) [Spring Range endemic]	Leary/96	Suitable dry, +5900' pine habitat on La Madre Mtn
<u>Astragalus funereus</u> * ^② (Black woolypod)	Leary/96	Suitable +7200' ponderosa habitat on La Madre Mtn
<u>Astragalus oophorus</u> var. <u>clokeyanus</u> * ^① (Clokey's eggvetch) [Southern NV endemic]	Leary/96	Adjacent USFS populations in Lucky Strike Canyon
<u>Epilobium nevadense</u> * ^① (Nevada willowherb)	Leary/96	Suitable +7400' ponderosa habitat on La Madre Mtn
<u>Glossopetalon clokeyi</u> * ^① (Clokey's greasebush) [Spring Range endemic]	Leary/96	Kyle Canyon USFS pop's. in close proximity
<u>Phacelia parishii</u> * ^① (Parish's phacelia) occurrence	Leary/96	Region-wide

.....

RRCNCA Total:

(43) NV Spp.of Concern/Sensitive Spp.

- ① Covered Species, Clark County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP)
② Evaluation Species, Clark County MSHCP
③ Watch List Species, Clark County MSHCP

APPENDIX 1: SPECIAL STATUS SPECIES

Part C: Clark County MSHCP (excluding species already cited in Parts I.A & I.B)

Taxon	(Common Name)	Citation	Occurrence {*Unconfirmed}
<input type="checkbox"/> COVERED SPECIES			
{Plants}			
<u>Erigeron uncialis</u> var. <u>conjugans</u>	(Inch High Fleabane)	Leary/96	La Madre Mtn; Cottonwood [Southern NV endemic]
<u>Penstemon thompsoniae</u> var. <u>jaegeri</u>	(Jaeger beardtongue)	Sada/97	Bootleg Spg; Rainbow Spg [Southern NV endemic]
<u>Viola purpurea</u> var. <u>charlestonensis</u>	(Limestone violet)	Leary/96	Bridge Mtn (Appendix 2) - <u>Speyeria</u> sp. hostplant
<u>Castilleja martinii</u> var. <u>clokeyi</u>	(Clokey paintbrush)	NNHP/60 NNHP/70	Pine Creek Canyon Lost Creek Canyon
{Birds}			
<u>Guiraca caerulea</u>	(Blue grosbeak)	RRAS/96	Wheeler Camp Spring
<u>Pyrocephalus rubinus</u>	(Vermillion flycatcher)	RRAS/96	Wheeler Camp Spring
<u>Piranga rubra</u>	(Summer tanager)	RRAS/96	Wheeler Camp Spring
{Reptiles & Amphibians}			
<u>Coleonyx variegatus</u>	(Banded gecko)	NDOW/93	Loop Drive (Night Survey)
<u>Dipsosaurus dorsalis</u>	(Desert iguana)	RRHMP/69	Not recorded

EVALUATION SPECIES

{Mammals}

<u>Vulpes macrotus</u> (Kit fox)	Various/97	Throughout the NCA
<u>Dipodomys deserti</u> (Desert kangaroo rat)	RRHMP/69	Not recorded
<u>Dipodomys microps occidentalis</u> (Chisel-toothed kangaroo rat)	RREIS/75	Not recorded

Sylvilagus nuttallii (Nuttall's cottontail) RRHMP/69 Not recorded

{Birds}

Toxostoma bendirei (Bendire's thrasher) RRRL/86 Not recorded

EVALUATION SPECIES (Cont.)

Toxostoma crissale (Crissal thrasher) RRAS/95 Wheeler Camp

Toxostoma lecontei (Le Conte's thrasher) RRRL/86 Not recorded

Vireo vicinior (Gray vireo) RRRL/86 Not recorded

Lanius ludovicianus (Loggerhead shrike) NCA/93 Mud Spring #1

Sialia mexicana (Western bluebird) RRRL/86 Not recorded

{Reptiles/Amphibians}

Phyllorhynchus descortatus
(Western leaf-nosed snake) RRHMP/69 Not recorded

Crotalus scutulatus
(Mojave green rattlesnake) NDOW/95 Wheeler Camp

Trimorphodon biscutatus lamda
(Sonoran lyre snake) RRHMP/69 Not recorded

Bufo punctatus (Red-spotted toad) NDOW/93 Not recorded

Xantusia vigilis (Desert night lizard) NDOW/93 Not recorded

WATCH LIST SPECIES

{Plants}

<u>Coryphantha vivipara</u> ssp. <u>rosea</u> (Clokey pincushion)	Leary/96	Lost Creek to Cottonwood (Scattered populations)
<u>Selaginella utahensis</u> (Utah spikemoss)	Pinzl/84	Pine Creek Canyon -Very rare in Nevada
<u>Penstemon bicolor</u> ssp. <u>roseus</u> (Rosy twotone beardtongue)	Leary/96	Lost Creek to Cottonwood (Scattered populations)
<u>Ferocactus acanthoides</u> var. <u>lecontei</u> (Barrel cactus)	Leary/96	Widespread and common
<u>Cryptantha tumulosa</u> (New York Mountains catseye)	Leary/96	Lucky Strike Canyon to Cottonwood (Scattered)

{Mammals}

<u>Chaetodipus penicillatus</u> <u>sobrinus</u> (Desert pocket mouse)	RREIS/75	Not recorded
--	----------	--------------

WATCH LIST SPECIES (Cont.)

{Birds}

<u>Aquila chrysaetos</u> (Golden eagle)	RRAS/95	Wheeler Camp
<u>Buteo regalis</u> (Ferruginous hawk)	RRRL/86	Not recorded
<u>Otus kennicottii</u> (Western screech owl)	RRHMP/69	Not recorded
<u>Butorides striatus</u> (Green-backed heron)	RRAS/94	Wheeler Camp
<u>Campylorhynchus brunneicapillus</u> (Cactus wren)	NCA/93	Juniper Canyon
<u>Catherpes mexicanus</u> (Canyon wren)	RRRL/86	Not recorded
<u>Icterus parisorum</u> (Scott's oriole)	RRRL/86	Not recorded

{Reptiles/Amphibians}

<u>Pseudacris regilla</u> (Pacific tree frog)	various	Escarpment canyons
<u>Callisaurus draconoides</u> <u>draconoides</u> (Common zebra-tailed lizard)	NDOW/94	Loop Drive (Night survey)

RRCNCA SPECIES (Management Concern)

Phacelia hastata var. charlestonensis Leary/96 Icebox Canyon; Bridge Mtn
(Cordilleran phacelia) [Southern NV endemic]

Asplenium resileans (Ebony spleenwort) Leary/96 Pine Creek Cyn (NV rarity)

.....

Subtotal, Appendix 1.C 09 Covered/15 Evaluation/15 Watch List
Subtotal, Appendix 1.A/B 24 Covered/18 Evaluation/04 Watch List Species
RRCNCA Total: 33 Covered/33 Evaluation/19 Watch List = 85 MSHCP Species

NNHP: Nevada Natural Heritage Program database.
RRAS: Red Rock Canyon Audubon Society, Wheeler Camp Spring Sanctuary records.

Definitions

Threatened Species: Any species which is likely to become an endangered species within the foreseeable future throughout all or a significant portion of its range.

Candidate Species: Plant and Animal taxa considered for possible addition to the List of Endangered and Threatened Species. **BLM Sensitive Species:** Species that are currently 1.) Under status review by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; or 2.) whose numbers are declining so rapidly that Federal listing may become necessary; or 3.) With typically small and widely dispersed populations; or 4) those inhabiting ecological refuge or other specialized or unique habitats.

State of Nevada Listed Species: Only those State-protected animals that have been determined to meet BLM's Manual 6840 policy definition (shown above).