



Date: April 7, 2006
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The Bureau of Land Management Billings Field Office (BiFO) is asking the public to review and comment on an environmental assessment (EA) of activities planned for the Pryor Mountain Wild Horse Range. The BLM plans to continue fertility control on wild horse mares this summer and to gather and remove 24 animals from the range.

In 2006, the BLM proposes to apply a fertility control (Porcine Zona Pellucida or PZP) vaccine to 24 older wild mares in order to suppress herd growth rates and manage for healthy horses on healthy rangelands. The proposed fertility control is scheduled to begin no earlier than July 10, 2006, and will continue until all selected mares have received a booster vaccine conferring one year of infertility.

Fertility control will continue annually through 2010. All mares that are 11 years of age would be added to the treatment program each year (four mares in 2006 and an estimated five mares in 2007, six mares in 2008, six mares in 2009 and four mares in 2010). Fertility control research began on the Pryor herd in 2001 and has continued every year since then.

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Comments on the EA must be submitted in writing, with original signatures, and be postmarked by May 5, 2006, to: Bureau of Land Management, Billings Field Office, 5001 Southgate Drive, Billings, MT 59101. The EA is available at <http://www.mt.blm.gov/bifo/index.html> or by contacting the BiFO at 406/896-5013.

In addition, the BiFO is proposing to capture and remove up to 24 age-specific wild horses from the PMWHR. As with previous selective removals, the intent is not to remove any horses that are currently harem stallions or core breeding-age mares (6-10 years old) from the herd. An estimated 12 bachelor stallions (four-eight years old) and 12 yearlings (no more than 50% of any age class), have been determined excess and would be removed due to deteriorating range conditions. The method of capture will be bait-trapping. All removed horses will be available for adoption by a sealed-bid competitive process to qualified and pre-approved individuals as determined by the BiFO.

A public hearing for the use of motorized vehicles in the management of wild horses will be held at the Bighorn Canyon National Recreation Area Visitors Center in Lovell, Wyoming, on Thursday, June 8, 2006, from 7-8 p.m. Public comments will be heard and recorded regarding the use of motorized vehicles in PMWHR management efforts only.

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