

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FONSI)

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
DOI-BLM-MT-0010-2012-0001-EA
*(Pryor Mountain Wild Horse Range Non-Helicopter Gather
Preliminary Environmental Assessment
Tiered to the
Pryor Mountain Wild Horse Range/Territory Environmental Assessment
And Herd Management Area Plan May 2009)*

This unsigned FONSI and EA (DOI-BLM-MT-0010-2012-0001-EA) is for the gather and removal of excess wild horses utilizing non-helicopter capture techniques on the Pryor Mountain Wild Horse Range (PMWHR) in order to help maintain the appropriate management level of 90-120 wild horses. The BLM has determined through the Pryor Mountain Wild Horse Range/Territory EA and HMAP and subsequent FONSI and DR that 90 to 120 wild horses (excluding current year's foals) are needed in order to ensure and achieve a thriving natural ecological balance. A gather operation would begin in 2012 and continue until objectives are met. The proposed action should protect the range from deterioration associated with an over-population of excess wild horses and help maintain a thriving natural ecological balance and multiple use relationship as described in the HMAP. The method of capture would be through a combination of bait trapping, water trapping and limited herding or bait trapping alone. The EA is available for a 30-day public review and comment period beginning on December 8, 2011, and will end on January 6, 2012. The documents are available on the Billings Field Office website at http://www.blm.gov/mt/st/en/fo/billings_field_office/wildhorses/pryorherd.html.

Based on the analysis of potential environmental impacts in the attached EA and consideration of the significance criteria in 40 CFR 1508.27, I have determined that with proposed mitigating measures incorporated as part of the proposed action this would not result in significant impacts on the human environment. An environmental impact statement (EIS) is not required.

The decision to approve or deny a wild horse gather utilizing non-helicopter methods, and if appropriate a signed FONSI with rationale, will be released after consideration of public comments and completion of the EA.