



U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management

News Release

BLM Nevada, Battle Mountain District, Mount Lewis Field Office

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Bureau of Land Management to begin the 2020 Diamond Complex Wild Horse Gather

BATTLE MOUNTAIN, Nev. – The Bureau of Land Management, Battle Mountain District Office, Mount Lewis Field Office will begin a wild horse gather on or about September 10, 2020 within the Diamond Complex located just north of Eureka, Nevada on the Diamond Mountain Range. The gather is expected to last 20-25 days.

The Diamond Complex encompasses over 258,000 acres of public and private lands. The gather operation includes three Herd Management Areas (HMAs) administered by three BLM Districts in three Nevada Counties. The HMAs and BLM Districts include the Diamond HMA (Battle Mountain District), Diamond Hills North HMA (Elko District) and the Diamond Hills South HMA (Ely District).

The combined Appropriate Management Level (AML) for the Diamond Complex is 123-210 wild horses. As of March 1, 2020, the estimated population was 1,495 wild horses, which does not include foals born this year. The current population estimate, including the 2020 foals, puts the HMA at approximately 712 percent of the established high end of AML.

The BLM plans to gather approximately 1,225 wild horses, remove 1,165, treat up to 30 mares with the fertility control vaccine, PZP-22, and release them back to the complex with an equal number of studs. The BLM will conduct gather operations using the helicopter-assisted method. Once gather operations are complete, approximately 300 wild horses will remain in the HMA.

The purpose of the gather is to prevent undue or unnecessary degradation of the public lands associated with excess wild horses and burros, to restore a thriving natural ecological balance and multiple-use relationship on public lands, consistent with the provisions of Section 1333(b) of the 1971 Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act. In addition, the action is also necessary to protect the range from impacts associated with herd overpopulation especially considering severe drought conditions throughout Central Nevada.

By balancing the herd size with what the land can support, the BLM aims to protect habitat for other wildlife species such as sage grouse, pronghorn antelope, and mule deer. Removing excess animals would also enable significant progress toward achieving the Standards for Rangeland Health identified by the Sierra Front-Northwestern Great Basin Resource Advisory Council also alleviating private land issues.

“The gather is critical to ensuring the health of rangelands within the complex as well as the wild horses in the area, both of which are at risk due to herd overpopulation and severe drought conditions,” said **Doug Furtado, Battle Mountain District Manager**. “We are committed to conducting safe and

humane gather operations as we work to protect animal health by reducing overpopulation and bringing herd size more in line with what the resources of the area can support.”

The BLM’s priority is to conduct safe, efficient, and successful wild horse and burro gather operations while ensuring humane care and treatment of all animals gathered. The BLM and its contractors will use the best available science and handling practices for wild horses and burros while meeting overall gather goals and objectives in accordance with the Comprehensive Animal Welfare Policy.

All horses identified for removal will be transported to the Palomino Valley Off-Range Corrals, located in Reno, Nevada. Upon arrival to the facility, all animals will be checked by a veterinarian and readied for the BLM’s wild horse and burro Adoption and Sale Program.

Members of the public are welcome to view the gather operations, provided that doing so does not jeopardize the safety of the animals, staff and observers, or disrupt gather operations. The BLM will escort the public to gather observation sites located on public lands. Once gather operations have begun, those wanting to view gather operations must call the gather hotline nightly at (775) 861-6700 to receive specific instructions on each days’ meeting location and time.

The following COVID-19 guidelines will apply:

- Facemasks are required for daily safety briefings and in the observation areas.
- Always stay at least six feet from others. Avoid gathering with others outside of your household.
- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Bring hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol to use if soap and water are not available.
- Do not attend the gather if you are sick, recently exposed (within 14 days) to someone with COVID-19 or are not feeling well.

The BLM is conducting the gather under the DOI-BLM-NV-B010-2012-0045-EA Diamond Complex Wild Horse Gather Decision signed December 11, 2012. Access the Decision Record and Environmental Assessment at <https://eplanning.blm.gov/eplanning-ui/project/34561/570>.

Gather reports and additional information will be posted on the BLM website at <https://go.usa.gov/xG2yx>. For technical information, contact Shawna Richardson, Wild Horse and Burro Specialist at (775) 635-4181 or s1richar@blm.gov.

Photos from the Diamond Complex and the 2020 gather can be downloaded from the album at <https://www.flickr.com/photos/blmnevada/albums/72157715802388581>.

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The BLM manages more than 245 million acres of public land located primarily in 12 Western states, including Alaska. The BLM also administers 700 million acres of sub-surface mineral estate throughout the nation. In fiscal year 2018, the diverse activities authorized on BLM-managed lands generated \$105 billion in economic output across the country. This economic activity supported 471,000 jobs and contributed substantial revenue to the U.S. Treasury and state governments, mostly through royalties on minerals.