



United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Surprise Field Office
PO Box 460
Cedarville, CA 96104
www.ca.blm.gov/surprise

In Reply Refer To:
4700 (N0700) P

August 19, 2009

Dear Reader:

The Decision Record (DR) and Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the environmental assessment (EA)# CA-N070-2009-011, “The Buckhorn, Coppersmith, and Carter Reservoir Wild Horse Herd Management Areas (HMAs) Wild Horse Capture and Removal Plan”, can be reviewed online at <http://www.blm.gov/ca/st/en/fo/surprise.html>. In the interest of conserving resources, hardcopies of the above listed documents are available upon request or you may visit the Surprise Field Office to obtain a paper copy.

The EA’s Proposed Action would implement maintenance of current Appropriate Management Levels (AML) within each Herd Management Area by gathering and removal of excess wild horses, as shown in the following table.

HMA	Appropriate Management Range	Estimated July 2009 Population	Estimated Excess horses to Remove	Low AML Range: horses in HMA following removal
Buckhorn	59-85	496	437	59
Coppersmith	50-75	136	86	50
Carter Reservoir	25-35	150	125	25

The proposed action would accomplish the following objectives: (1). Restore herd numbers to levels consistent with the AML to maintain healthy self- sustaining wild horse populations, (2) Protect the range from deterioration associated with the overpopulation of wild horses, (3) Implement fertility control on mares returned to the HMAs, and (4) gather and remove wild horses outside the herd management area in the Crooks Lakes Allotment. The management of these wild horse populations is authorized under Section 3(b) (2) of the 1971 Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act (WFRHBA) and Section 302(b) of the Federal Land Management and Policy Act of 1976. The proposed action conforms to the Surprise Resource Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), approved Record of Decision (ROD) of April 2008.

Scoping letters were sent out on September 27, 2007 and May 15, 2009 notifying the interested publics of record, of the proposal to maintain established AMLs by the removal of excess wild horses. The BLM received comment letters from a number of individuals, organizations and agencies. There were comments in support and opposed to the gather and removal of wild horses from the HMAs. Several letters contained lengthy comments and questions. Most comments supported the proposed action, in the context of maintaining or improving rangeland health. There were several comments that addressed issues outside the scope of the EA. Appendix D of the EA, contains summary of comments, issues and BLM's responses to the comments, and questions.

Pursuant to Title 43 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) at 4770.3(c), the Buckhorn, Coppersmith, and Carter Reservoir Wild Horse Herd Management Areas (HMAs) Wild Horse Capture and Removal Plan is approved for implementation upon the date of this letter. If you do not agree with and feel that you are adversely affected by this decision, you may file an Appeal, within 30 days of the date of letter as provided for in the DR and FONSI.

The effective date of the decision (and the date initiating the appeal period) will be the date this notice of decision is posted on BLM's internet website, <http://www.blm.gov/ca/st/en/fo/surprise>.

If you have any questions or need additional information please contact Steve Surian at 530-279-6101 or at the above address.

Sincerely,

Shane DeForest,
Surprise Field Manager