



FACT SHEET

BLM-MONTANA/DAKOTAS

BILLINGS FIELD OFFICE • 5001 SOUTHGATE DRIVE • BILLINGS, MONTANA 59101 • WWW.BLM.GOV/MT

Billings and Pompeys Pillar National Monument Resource Management Plan Revision

FACT SHEET: Pryor Mountain Wild Horse Range

Program Contact: Jared Bybee, RMS/State Wild Horse & Burro Specialist (406) 896-5223

The Billings Field Office (BiFO) is home to one herd of wild horses located within the Pryor Mountain Wild Horse Range (PMWHR). The PMWHR occupies an area of 37,494 acres in southeastern Carbon County, Montana and northern Big Horn County, Wyoming.

The BiFO protects and manages wild horses and burros within the PMWHR under the authority of the 1971 Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act (as amended by Congress in 1976, 1978, and 2004). One of the BLM's key responsibilities under the Wild and Free-Roaming Horse and Burro Act (as amended) is to manage for a "thriving natural ecological balance" (TNEB). This mandate is typically achieved by balancing the wild horse population within the available resources through the appropriate management level (AML) to protect the range from deterioration while maintaining multiple-use relationships.

The long-term average population of wild horses on the PMWHR has been 159 wild horses. The population has varied from 87 wild horses to 195 wild horses. Gathers and removals have been the most widely used tool to achieve a TNEB. Over 600 wild horses have been removed from the PMWHR since its establishment. Once an animal is removed it is typically offered for adoption. Every wild horse removed from the PMWHR has been adopted or placed in private care. Fertility control has been a tool used to control the horse population on the PMWHR since 2001 and beginning in 2009 the BLM has implemented a more aggressive fertility control program on the wild horses of the PMWHR.

PMWHR and the Billings and Pompeys Pillar National Monument Draft RMP/EIS

Over half of the comments received during the 2008 formal scoping process on the Billings and Pompeys Pillar National Monument RMP/EIS were comments on the PMWHR. Many of these comments on the PMWHR were beyond the scope of the RMP process (not under the jurisdiction of the Billings Field Office or beyond the capability of the BLM to resolve as part of the planning process), such as expansion of the PMWHR beyond the Herd Area.

Wild Horses and Burros and PMWHR Management Common to All Alternatives

- Initially, the wild horse population would be managed within a population range between 90 to 120 horses.
- Maintain a wild horse herd that exhibits a diverse age structure, genetic diversity, and any characteristics unique to the Pryor horses.
- Unless otherwise specified, implementation level planning through a Herd Management Area Plan (HMAP) or other activity level plans would identify and set objectives or , but not limited to, the following: herd composition, animal characteristics, genetics, and habitat development needs; soil, vegetation, and watershed characteristics; and establishment and adjustment to AML.
- Appropriate management levels would be adjusted as needed to ensure a thriving natural ecological balance through monitoring and data collection, including but not limited to: forage, utilization, trend, ecological condition, precipitation data, rangeland health assessments, population inventory, climate or habitat changes, and range availability.

Wild Horses and Burros and PMWHR Management Actions by Alternative

Alternative A

Alternative A, the No Action Alternative, continues current management of resources within the planning area under the existing plans.

- Manage wild horses on approximately 24,595 acres of BLM administered lands (37,494 acres all ownerships -BLM, NPS, USFS, private). Keep the administrative pastures closed as well as areas adjacent to private lands to reduce public/private conflicts.
- Within an HMAP, herd structure would be managed for all representation in the herd, not allowing specific colors or bloodlines to dominate from management manipulation.
- Appropriate management level (AML) determination would be made within the context of having the maximum amount of wild horses the range can sustain while preventing deterioration.
- Range improvements would be authorized through site-specific analysis. Vegetation conversion treatments would not be allowed.
- Wild Horse Protection: Public feeding – allowed, but discouraged.
- Wild Horse Protection: Harassment – not allowed, but harassment of wild horses not locally defined.
- Wild Horse Protection: Seasonal road closures – motorized travel limited to designated routes. There would be no seasonal road closure during foaling season or for habitat protection.
- Wild Horse Protection: Fencing – exclusion fences for study, riparian protection or rehabilitation would be allowed.
- Wild Horse Protection: Wild horse health – no current management decision provided.
- Wild Horse Habitat Enhancement: Considered on a site specific basis.
- Public Health and Safety: Target Shooting – no current management decision provided.
- Public Health and Safety: Speed limits for mechanized and motorized vehicles – no current management decision provided.
- Livestock Grazing: The PMWHR would be unavailable for livestock grazing, except for trailing through Bad Pass.
- Special Recreation Permits: Current levels of permitted use with approximately 1,200 visitor use days in the PMWHR would be managed per application, with no limit on commercial permits.

Alternative B

Alternative B emphasizes conservation of physical, biological, heritage, and visual resources with constraints on resource uses.

- Manage wild horses only within the boundaries of the original Secretarial Orders from 1968 (23,204 acres BLM-administered lands and 31,153 acres all ownerships). The rest of the Herd Area would be closed to wild horse use in order to maximize protection of plant species of concern, sub-alpine meadows and to protect wild horses from commercial uses.
- Within an HMAP, herd structure would be managed through natural selection with no promotion of any characteristics or preservation of colors or bloodlines.
- Appropriate management level (AML) determination would be made within the context of having a minimum amount of wild horses to improve ecological conditions, protecting other resources and individual animals.
- Range improvements and/or vegetation treatments would not be authorized in wild horse habitat; only natural processes would be allowed to occur.
- Wild Horse Protection: Public feeding – not allowed.
- Wild Horse Protection: Harassment – Interrupting their behavior or disruption of their daily activities, outside of management activities, such as moving animals to take photos or filming, feeding, or touching or attempting to do these things would not be allowed.
- Wild Horse Protection: Seasonal road closures – Motorized routes within the PMWHR would be designated according to the Pryor TMA. Burnt Timber Road from the East Pryor Mine (the abandoned uranium mine) to the USFS boundary and Sykes Ridge Road from the Sykes horse trap to the USFS boundary would be closed to provide protection during the primary foaling season and protecting habitat when roads are not ready for travel due to moisture content in soils (March 1-June 30).
- Wild Horse Protection: Fencing – No exclusion fences would be allowed within the HMA.
- Wild Horse Protection: Wild horse health – Domestic horse use would not be allowed except for special recreation permits or livestock trailing.

- Wild Horse Habitat Enhancement: No vegetation treatments would be conducted in wild horse habitat, only allow natural processes to occur.
- Public Health and Safety: Target Shooting – not allowed (approximately 8,301 acres).
- Public Health and Safety: Speed limits for mechanized and motorized vehicles – Not to exceed 15 miles per hour.
- Livestock Grazing: The PMWHR would be unavailable for livestock grazing.
- Special Recreation Permits: No commercial special recreation permits (SRPs) would be authorized in the PMWHR. Non-commercial organized group events would be considered per application dependent on site specific analysis and monitoring.

Alternative C

Alternative C emphasizes resource uses opportunities within the planning area and reduces constraints on resource uses.

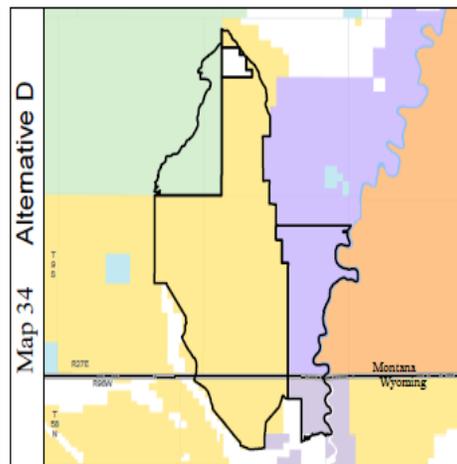
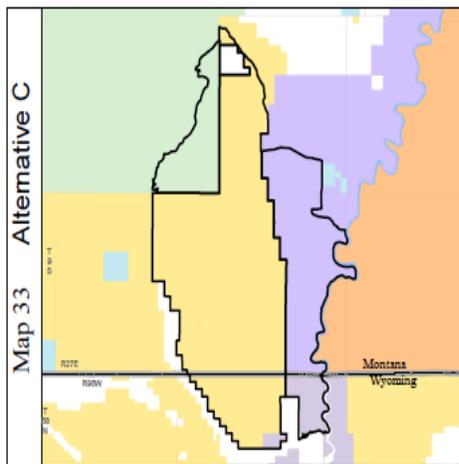
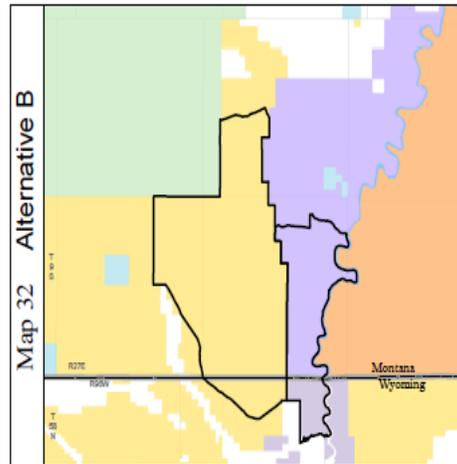
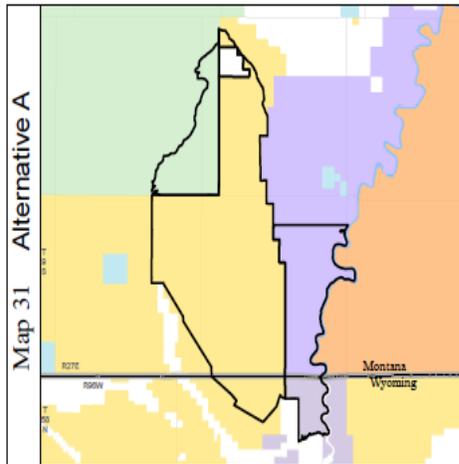
- Manage wild horses on approximately 28,622 acres of BLM-administered lands (44,855 acres all ownerships). Designate the entire Herd Area as the Herd Management Area.
- Within an HMAP, herd structure would be managed for and to promote the public perception of the quintessential Pryor horse that is Dun or Grulla with striping and line back markings.
- Same as Alternative A - Appropriate management level (AML) determination would be made within the context of having the maximum amount of wild horses the range can sustain while preventing deterioration.
- Maximize the amount of acres available for vegetation treatments and/or water developments that potentially increase forage availability for wild horses that is compliant with other multiple-use decisions and restrictions.
- Wild Horse Protection: Public feeding – allowed as long as no moving or chasing of horses.
- Wild Horse Protection: Harassment – Same as Alternative A - not allowed, but harassment of wild horses not locally defined.
- Wild Horse Protection: Seasonal road closures – motorized routes within the PMWHR would be designated according to the Pryor TMA. There would be no seasonal road closure during foaling season or for habitat protection.
- Wild Horse Protection: Fencing – Same as Alternative A - exclusion fences for study, riparian protection or rehabilitation would be allowed.
- Wild Horse Protection: Wild horse health – Domestic horse use would be allowed during overnight camping (16 day limit). Recreational domestic horse use would require proof of a free-use permit to ensure animals have health certifications to protect wild horses from disease transmission.
- Wild Horse Habitat Enhancement: Maximize the amount of acres for vegetation treatment and water developments that would increase forage availability for wild horses, to maximize and/or increase wild horse numbers within other multiple uses and restrictions.
- Public Health and Safety: Target Shooting – allowed (approximately 32,767 acres).
- Public Health and Safety: Speed limits for mechanized and motorized vehicles – no speed limit.
- Livestock Grazing: Bad Pass Trail would be managed as a livestock grazing allotment for a trailing use only. The remainder of the PMWHR would be closed to livestock grazing.
- Special Recreation Permits: An Outfitter Permit Area (OPA) would be established in the PMWHR in order to protect wild horses, resources within the range, and minimize conflicts based on site specific analysis and monitoring. Visitor use days for both commercial and non-commercial permits would be analyzed through a site-specific analysis and monitoring and would also consider other commercial permitted uses.

Alternative D

Alternative D represents the BLM's 'Preferred Alternative' at this stage of the planning process. The Preferred Alternative seeks to balance resource protection with resource uses/production.

- Manage wild horses on approximately 27,094 acres of BLM-administered lands (39,994 acres all ownerships). Designate the closed portions of the Herd Area known as the administrative pastures to be included in the Herd Management Area. Due to private property conflicts, the "buffer" area would remain closed.
- Same as Alternative A - Within an HMAP, herd structure would be managed for all representation in the herd, not allowing specific colors or bloodlines to dominate from management manipulation.
- Same as Alternative A - Appropriate management level (AML) determination would be made within the context of having the maximum amount of wild horses the range can sustain while preventing deterioration.
- Same as Alternative C - Maximize the amount of acres available for vegetation treatments and/or water developments that potentially increase forage availability for wild horses that is compliant with other multiple-use decisions and restrictions.

- Wild Horse Protection: Public feeding – Only allowed for management purposes.
- Wild Horse Protection: Harassment – Same as Alternative B – Interrupting their behavior or disruption of their daily activities, outside of management activities, such as moving animals to take photos or filming, feeding, or touching or attempting to do these things would not be allowed.
- Wild Horse Protection: Seasonal road closures – Motorized routes within the PMWHR would be designated according to the Pryor TMA. Burnt Timber Road from the East Pryor Mine (the abandoned uranium mine) to the USFS boundary and Sykes Ridge Road from the horse trap to USFS boundary would be closed to wheeled vehicles and motorized vehicles to protect wild horse foaling and their habitat (April 15 to June 15) providing consistency with the USFS seasonal closures.
- Wild Horse Protection: Fencing – Exclusion fences for study, range improvements, riparian protection or rehabilitation would be allowed through site-specific analysis.
- Wild Horse Protection: Wild horse health – Domestic horse use would be limited to day use only. Recreational domestic horse use would require a free-use permit to ensure animals have health certifications to protect wild horses from disease transmission.
- Wild Horse Habitat Enhancement: Same as Alternative C - Maximize the amount of acres for vegetation treatment and water developments that would increase forage availability for wild horses, to maximize and/or increase wild horse numbers within other multiple uses and restrictions.
- Public Health and Safety: Target Shooting – Not allowed on T. 8 S., R. 28E., Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day weekend (approximately 6,720 acres). Allowed in remainder of PMWHR.
- Public Health and Safety: Speed limits for mechanized and motorized vehicles – Not to exceed 15 miles per hour within T. 8 S., R. 28 E.
- Livestock Grazing: Same as Alternative C - Bad Pass Trail would be managed as a livestock grazing allotment for a trailing use only. The remainder of the PMWHR would be closed to livestock grazing.
- Special Recreation Permits: SRPs for wild horse viewing would be initially limited to existing SRPs. Additional (new) wild horse centered SRPs would be permitted only when determined not to result in congestion, wild horse displacement, or cause an adverse experience for members of the public viewing wild horses outside of an SRP experience through monitoring of existing SRPs and visitation.



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
Bureau of Land Management
Billings & Pompeys Pillar
National Monument RMP / FIS

Legend

- Herd Management Boundary
- - - Montana/Wyoming State Border
- Public Lands Survey System
- Bureau of Indian Affairs
- Bureau of Land Management
- Division of State Lands
- National Park Service
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- U.S. Forest Service
- Water
- Private

**Wild Horse and Burro
Herd Management Area
Alternatives A, B, C, & D**

Location Map

Map scale 1:600,000
Map generated by the Billings Field Office in July 2011
Albers Equal Area, NAD83 Projection

This map is intended for display purposes. No warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management as to the accuracy, reliability or completeness of the data for individual or aggregate use with other data, or for purposes not intended by BLM. This map may not meet National Map Accuracy Standards. This product was developed through digital means and information may be updated without notification.

Maps 31, 32, 33, 34