



# United States Department of the Interior



## BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Elko District Office

3900 Idaho Street

Elko, Nevada 89801-4211

[http://www.blm.gov/nv/st/en/fo/elko\\_field\\_office.html](http://www.blm.gov/nv/st/en/fo/elko_field_office.html)

In Reply Refer To:  
4700(NVE0200)

April 20, 2010

Dear Reader:

The Preliminary Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Owyhee, Rock Creek, and Little Humboldt Herd Management Areas (HMAs) Wild Horse Gather (DOI -BLM-NV-N020-2010-0014) will be available to be viewed on April 23, 2010 online at [http://www.blm.gov/nv/st/en/fo/elko\\_field\\_office.html](http://www.blm.gov/nv/st/en/fo/elko_field_office.html). Hardcopies are available upon request from the Elko District Office.

The Bureau of Land Management is proposing to gather up to 1,438 wild horses in the Owyhee, Rock Creek, Little Humboldt HMA's and adjacent areas in the summer of 2010. Of the 1,438 wild horses the BLM is proposing to gather, approximately 953-1,039 excess wild horses (595 in the Owyhee HMA, 358 from outside the Rock Creek HMA and 26-86 weanlings to four year old mares from the Rock Creek and Little Humboldt HMAs.) Additionally, approximately 399 wild horses would be gathered and returned to the HMAs. Fertility control drugs would be administered to mares prior to release. Stud to mare ratio may also be adjusted to a 60% male 40% female populace prior to wild horses being released back into the Owyhee HMA.

The appropriate management levels (AMLs) for the Owyhee HMA is 139-231 wild horses, Rock Creek HMA is 150-250 wild horses, and the Little Humboldt HMA is 48-80 wild horses. There are an estimated 734 wild horses in the Owyhee HMA, 618 wild horses in and adjacent to the Rock Creek HMA, and 86 in the Little Humboldt HMA. The Owyhee, Rock Creek, and Little Humboldt HMAs are located in northwestern Elko County, about 90 miles northwest of the City of Elko, Nevada. The proposed gather is tentatively scheduled to begin in July.

The gather is needed to:

- Remove excess wild horses, and wild horses that are permanently residing outside areas designated as HMAs.
- To reduce potential impacts to Lahontan cutthroat trout (LCT) habitat within the Little Humboldt HMA and on areas adjacent to the Rock Creek HMA where wild horses have expanded outside the HMA boundary.
- The gather is also expected to reduce drought concerns and wild horse impacts to limited perennial water resources within the Owyhee HMA.

The BLM will be able to improve vegetation, habitat, watershed health; removing excess animals will continue to make significant progress toward achieving Northeastern Great Basin Resource

Advisory Council Standards for Rangeland Health. The BLM will collect information on herd characteristics and determine herd health during the gather.

Comments will be accepted until May 21, 2010. Interested individuals should mail written comments to the BLM Elko District Office, 3900 Idaho Street, Elko, NV 89801 Attn: David Overcast, Tuscarora Field Manager or an e-mail to: tuscarora\_horse\_gathers@blm.gov.

All comments received during the public comment period will be fully considered and evaluated for preparation of the Final EA. If you have any questions on this matter, please contact Bruce Thompson, BLM Elko District Wild Horse and Burro Specialist, at (775) 753-0200.

Sincerely,

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David Overcast  
Field Manager  
Tuscarora Field Office