

## **Protocol and Ground Rules for the Silver King Wild Horse Gather Non-Observation Days**

BLM recognizes and respects the right of interested members of the public and the press to observe the Silver King Gather. At the same time, BLM must insure the health and safety of the public, BLM's employees and contractors, and America's wild horses. Accordingly, BLM developed these rules to maximize the opportunity for reasonable public access to the gather while insuring that BLM's health and safety responsibilities are fulfilled. Failure to maintain safe distances from operations at the gather and temporary holding sites could result in members of the public inadvertently getting in the path of the wild horses or gather personnel, thereby placing themselves and others at risk, or causing stress and potential injury to the wild horses.

- BLM will establish one or more observation areas, in the immediate area of the gather and holding sites, to which individuals will be directed. These areas will be placed so as to maximize the opportunity for public observation while providing for a safe and effective horse gather. The utilization of such observation areas is necessary due to the use and presence of heavy equipment and aircraft in the gather operation and the critical need to allow BLM personnel and contractors to fully focus on attending to the needs of the wild horses while maintaining a safe environment for all involved. In addition, observation areas will be sited so as to protect the wild horses from being spooked, startled or impacted in a manner that results in increased stress.
- BLM will delineate observation areas with yellow caution tape (or a similar type of tape or ribbon) that will be held on the ground using stones or held in position using stakes.
- When BLM is using a helicopter or other heavy equipment in close proximity to a designated observation area, members of the public may be asked to stay by their vehicle for some time before being directed to an observation area once the use of the helicopter or the heavy machinery is complete.
- Individuals will be directed to the designated observation area by BLM personnel and informed of behavioral rules (such as remaining quiet and still to ensure a safe and effective gather operation).
- Individuals attempting to move outside a designated observation area will be requested to move back to the designated area or to leave the site. Failure to do so may result in citation or arrest. It is important to stay within the designated observation area to safely observe the wild horse gather.
- BLM reserves the right to alter these rules based on changes in circumstances that may pose a risk to health, public safety or the safety of wild horses (such as weather, lightening, wildfire, etc.).