



Introduction: Tim Smith, acting Deputy State Director for Resources

Topics for the update:

The update will focus on the Wild Horse and Burro program, Sage Grouse, Grazing and SNPLMA Round 16

How were the topics for the update chosen?

The past few years we have covered the same topics in these updates. This year RAC members and BLM staff were polled to see what they wanted to include. The topics in this presentation were a result of that poll. SNPLMA Round 16 was added since it was a new item to be brought to the attention of the RACs.

Introduction of presenters:

Kim Dow, Branch Chief, Renewable Resources, Nevada State Office

This presentation is posted to the BLM Nevada RAC website
http://www.blm.gov/nv/st/en/res/resource_advisory.html



Photo: 2014 Humboldt Herd Area Wild Horse Gather

In this picture, the horses are just outside the water/bait trap corral. There is a large water trough in the center of the corral.



Wild Horse and Burro Program National Overview

- As of March 2015, BLM estimates approximately 58,150 wild horses and burros roam BLM land, an increase of 18% over 2014 population estimates
- As of February 2016, nearly 48,000 animals were housed in holding facilities (16,400 in corrals, 30,600 in pastures, and 500 in eco-sanctuaries).
- Removals are being limited to about 2,500 to 3,000 per year, about the number that can be adopted, to avoid increasing holding costs.
- Since the early 2000's, adoptions have steadily declined from nearly 8,000 to 2,600 in 2015.

Wild horse and burro populations can double every 4 to 5 years if left unmanaged.

Existing wild horse and burro populations on the range far exceed what the land can sustain. Overpopulation, in addition to prolonged drought conditions, can lead to the deterioration of the land and of the animals' health.

The estimated population exceeds Appropriate Management Levels (AMLs) by more than 31,000, and another year of foal production has now added to those numbers.

Holding costs for FY 2015 were \$49 million – 65% of enacted appropriations for the program. The total lifetime cost for caring for an unadopted animal in corrals is nearly \$50,000.

These removals are being conducted in response to public health and safety issues (i.e., animals on the highway); private land encroachment; emergencies; Greater sage-grouse Focal Areas; research; and court orders



Wild Horse and Burro Program Research

- The NAS indicated that successful population growth suppression is critical.
- BLM initiated 20 new research projects in 2015 to develop new and improve existing tools to limit population growth and reduce the number of animals that need to be removed from the range.
- Research being launched in FY 2016 includes
 - pen trials to develop and evaluate spay methods for mares,
 - two field studies to determine effects of spaying or neutering a portion of a wild horse herd,
 - laboratory studies aiming to develop new or improved contraceptive vaccines. Researchers include USGS and five universities that submitted proposals in response to BLM's 2014 Request for Applications, which were reviewed by NAS.

More information about the BLM's wild horse and burro research can be found at http://www.blm.gov/wo/st/en/prog/whbprogram/science_and_research.html



Wild Horse and Burro Program Nevada

- Number of WH&B Specialists in Nevada: 9
- Fiscal Year 2015 Budget Allocation: \$5.2 million
- Fiscal Year 2016 Budget Allocation: \$5.0 million
- 83 Herd Management Areas
- Current project population = 34-37,000
- (includes horses & burros)
- State-wide Appropriate Management Level = 12,688 (includes horses & burros)
- Number of HMAs at or over AML: 74



Wild Horse and Burro Program FY 15/16 Accomplishments and Targets

- **2015 Accomplishments**
- Removed 1,640 excess wild horses and burros
- Conducted 43 population inventories
- Monitored 59 HMAs
- Adopted 120 animals

- **2016 Targets/Accomplishments**
- Remove 280 excess wild horses/burros (FY16 National priorities not finalized)
- Conduct 42 population inventories
- Monitor 50 HMAs
- Adopt 100 animals



Photo: Karysa Septien and her once wild horse "Gambler" competing inn the Freestyle Finals Class at the 2015 Reno Rodeo



Wild Horse and Burro Program Extreme Mustang Makeover

- The Extreme Mustang Makeover is a competitive event, produced by the Mustang Heritage Foundation in partnership with the BLM Wild Horse and Burro Program.
- 35 trainers from 5 states will compete for \$25,000 in cash and prizes on June 18-19
- The trainers have approximately 100 days to gentle and train their wild horses which have virtually been untouched prior to pickup.
- All wild horses that compete at the event will be offered for adoption through a competitive bid process

Bullet 1: The event was created in 2007 to promote the "Mustang's" versatility, trainability, and worth as an equine companion. This is the second year it will be held at the Reno Rodeo

Information on 2015 EMM event:

- In 2015, 17 trainers from CA, NV and OR competed
- All 17 horses were adopted
- The 2015 EMM-Reno Rodeo Champion was Matt Zimmerman from Caldwell, OR riding "Iceman", a 4-year old, Sorrel Gelding from the Paisley Desert HMA located in OR.
 - "Iceman" was adopted for \$3,100; he currently resides in Wellington, NV
- The 2015 EMM-Reno Rodeo Champion was Willow Newcomb from Napa, CA riding "Donner", a 4-year old, Black Gelding from the Diamond HMA located in NV.
 - "Donner" was the high adoption bid, taking in \$5,700 and currently resides in Reno, NV
- The 2015 EMM-Reno Rodeo Fan Favorite was Andrew Rempp from Minden, NV riding "Oh my Heck", a 5-year old, Bay Gelding from the Wassuk HMA located in NV.
 - "Oh my Heck" was adopted for \$3,500 and currently resides in Reno, NV.

Additional information- Mustang Heritage Foundation

The mission of the MHF is to increase adoption of wild horses held in the Bureau of Land Management's corrals and long term holding facilities. Over 5,000 Wild Horses have been adopted through the Mustang Heritage Foundation since 2007. Every horse that is successfully adopted, equates to an average lifetime cost savings to the American people of approximately \$50,000 per horse.



Greater Sage Grouse





Greater Sage Grouse Directives and Guidance

Several national level Instruction Memorandums and Information Bulletins are still being developed. The table below lists the IMs and IBs that will eventually be released relative to BLM's implementation of its sage grouse plans. (Yellow = Priority Release, Green = released)

Sage Grouse Plan Effectiveness Monitoring	Surface Disturbance Calculation, Tracking and Operator interface	NEPA Compliance and Planning, Consistent with Sage-Grouse Plans	Sec Order 3336 Guidance
Completing Implementation Planning Targets for Amendments	Prioritizing the Review and Processing of Grazing Authorizations in Sage Grouse Habitat	Incorporating Thresholds and Responses into Grazing Permits/Leases	3809 Application for SFA Segregated Lands
HAF	Sage-Grouse Related Activities Funding Policy FY16. (IM 2016-038)	Developing an Integrated Program of Work	Mitigation Manual and Handbook
Expenditures, Accomplishments Tracking and Reporting	Travel & Transportation Prioritization (IM 2016-040)	Oil and gas leasing prioritization (Smart from the Start)	Implementation of Adaptive Management Hard and Soft Triggers
FIAT prioritization (IB 2016-027)	Sage Grouse Habitat 2017-2021 POW	Release of the Terrestrial AIM Database Strategy (IB 2016-029)	Fire Assessments in Sage Grouse Habitat (FA IM 2016-021)

There are several national level Information Memorandums (IMs)/Information Bulletins (IBs) in the works. The Washington Office recently developed an Implementation Management Team to facilitate the completion of these IMs and to facilitate the successful outreach with internal and external parties, which be discussed in the next slide.

The IBs/IMs highlighted in green are those IMs that have been released to date, which include the Sage Grouse Funding Policy IM, Travel and Transportation Management Prioritization IM, FIAT prioritization IM, Large Fire Assessments for Wildfires Occurring in Greater Sage Grouse Habitat IM, and the release of the AIM strategy database later in our presentation.

The policies/guidance highlighted in yellow are those that are of the highest priority for completion and will be released within the next two weeks.

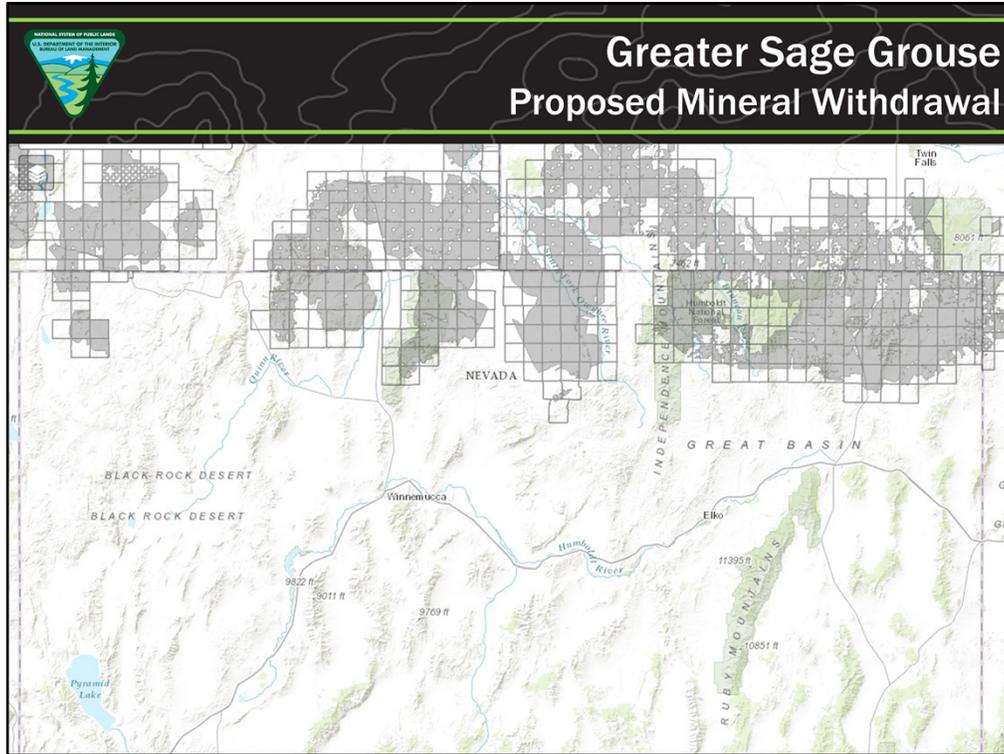


Photo: Map of proposed mineral withdrawal areas in Nevada

More information on the proposed mineral withdrawal can be found at http://www.blm.gov/nv/st/en/prog/wildlife/greater_sage-grouse.html



Greater Sage Grouse Proposed Mineral Withdrawal

- Proposal to withdraw 10 million acres of public and National Forest System Lands in ID, MT, NV, OR, UT and WY
- Impacts approximately 2.9 million acres in NV
- Segregation prohibits entry of new mining claims for up to 2 years
- Ongoing or future exploration and extraction are not affected on valid, existing claims

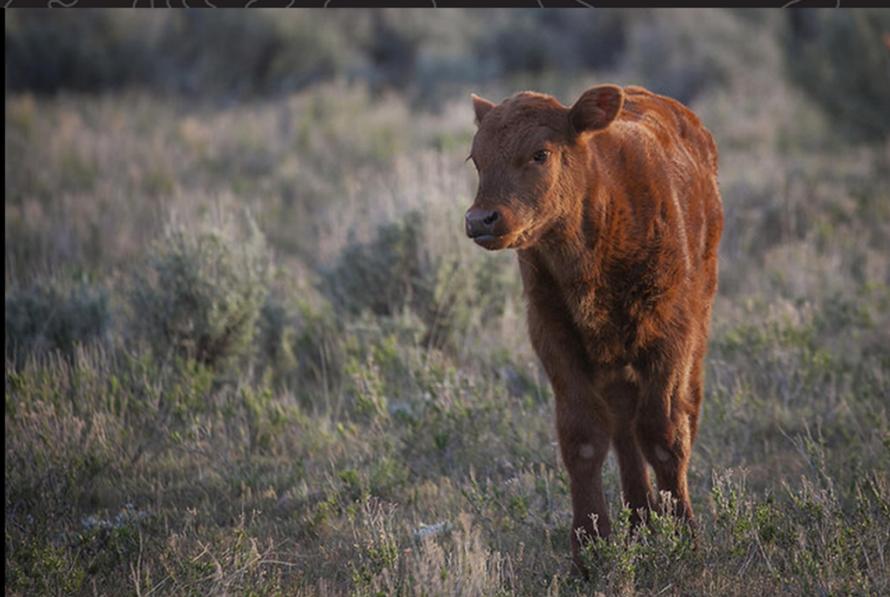


Greater Sage Grouse Proposed Mineral Withdrawal

- Public comment period ended in January
- Letters have been sent to cooperating agencies and tribes and MOUs are being developed
- Governor's comments were taken into consideration and further coordination is occurring with the Department, WO BLM and solicitors.
- Draft EIS expected early 2017



Grazing





Grazing 2015 Accomplishments

In 2015 BLM Nevada:

- Processed 21 grazing permits
- Monitored 334 allotments
- Completed 29 rangeland health assessments
- Conducted 676 grazing permit compliance inspections



Grazing Nevada Permit Renewal Team

- The team was fully staffed in Dec. 2015
- Priorities for the team include completing grazing permit renewals associated with:
- greater sage grouse habitat (within Sagebrush Focal Areas, Priority and General Habitat Management Areas),
- litigation and court orders,
- Threatened and Endangered Species, and
- other high priority resource value areas as identified.



Grazing Nevada Permit Renewal Team

- A 10-year schedule was developed for all districts minus southern Nevada
- First group of permit renewals include Argenta and Battle Mountain Complex and will be completed before start of 2018 grazing year
- 2nd group includes 23 allotments in the Winnemucca District



What is SNPLMA?

The **Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act (SNPLMA)** became law in October 1998. It allows the Bureau of Land Management to sell public land within a specific boundary around Las Vegas, Nevada. The revenue derived from land sales is split between the State of Nevada General Education Fund (5%), the Southern Nevada Water Authority (10%), and a special account available to the Secretary of the Interior to support a variety of projects.

Since the inception of SNPLMA, land sales, interest and other transactions related to SNPLMA have generated over \$3.3 billion in revenue and funded over 1,200 projects including parks, trails, conservation initiatives and plans, environmentally sensitive land acquisitions and hazardous fuels reduction and wildfire prevention.

For more information go to
<http://www.blm.gov/publish/content/nv/en/snplma.html>

Photo: Clark County Wetlands Park, one of the many projects funded by SNPLMA



Round 15 Facts

- \$39.1 million funded more than 43 projects
- Entities receiving funding in Round 15 include City of North Las Vegas, Lincoln County, Southern Nevada Water Authority, Clark County, BLM, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Park Service, Bureau of Reclamation, U.S. Forest Service, North Lake Tahoe Fire Protections District, California State Parks, State of Nevada, Tahoe Douglas Fire Protection District and Lake Valley Fire Protection District.

Round 15 project photos

Upper right: *Kyle Canyon Historic District (Photo: Outside Las Vegas)* – U.S. Forest Service will receive funding to repaint, repair and make more energy efficient six structures at the historic U.S. Forest Service Civilian Conservation Corps Administrative Facility.

Upper left: Keil Ranch Historic Park (photo: Las Vegas Review Journal) City of North Las Vegas will receive funding to design and construct a boardwalk with overlooks that protect the sensitive habitat of an active artisan spring while providing a tranquil educational setting at the National Register of Historic Places’ listed Kiel Ranch.

Lower right: *Clark County Wetlands Park Education/Nature Connection Center (Photo: Outside Las Vegas)* – Clark County will receive funding to construct an outdoor education and nature connection center in the Nature Preserve of the Clark County Wetlands Park.

Lower left: *Caliente Mountain Bike Trail System (Photo: BLM)* – Lincoln County and BLM will receive funding to construct up to 45 miles of multi-purpose trails as well as signage and a trailhead with amenities.



Southern NV Public Land Management Act Round 16

- Expedited Round
- Public Comment Period scheduled for July 13-
August 11
- Information will be sent to RACs on
preliminary project recommendations in July
- There will also be a Round 17 in 2017

What is SNPLMA?

SNPLMA Accomplishments/ Highlights

Where to get more information

Tim will provide an overview of Round 16 projects if available by the Tri-RAC.