

Environmental Assessment

Adobe Town – Salt Wells Creek Herd Management Area Complex Wild Horse Gather

Environmental Assessment WY-040-EA10-109

Finding of No Significant Impact

July 2010

High Desert District – Rock Springs and Rawlins Field Offices



Background

The proposed action is for removal of excess wild horses from the Adobe Town – Salt Wells Creek Complex of Herd Management Areas (HMAs).

The following alternatives were analyzed in detail:

- Alternative A (Proposed Action) – Remove Excess Animals to Lower Limit of AML range with Fertility Control and Adjustment of Sex Ratios.
- Alternative B – Remove Excess Animals to Lower Limit of AML Range
- Alternative C (No Action) – No Gather or Removal

Alternatives A and B were developed based on the need to remove excess animals in order to manage the range in a thriving natural ecological balance and multiple-use relationship and to prevent range deterioration. The removal of wild horses under these alternatives will ensure that the wild horses remaining within the HMAs have adequate forage and water to survive and maintain satisfactory physical condition. Removal of excess wild horses will also help to sustain the long-term productivity of the rangeland resources on the public lands that wild horses depend on. Although Alternative C (No Action) does not comply with the Wild Horse and Burro Act of 1971, as amended, nor meet the purpose and need for this action, nor complies with the 2003 Consent Decree Agreement with the State of Wyoming, it is included as a basis for comparison with the two action alternatives.

PLAN CONFORMANCE AND CONSISTENCY

The proposed action is in conformance with the land use plan terms and conditions as required by 43 CFR 1610.5-3(a). Any action in the Rock Springs or Rawlins Field Offices is subject to requirements established by the Green River Resource Management Plan (RMP) (1997) and the Rawlins Resource Management Plan (2008), respectively. The Adobe Town – Salt Wells Creek HMA Complex has been designated as suitable for long-term, sustained wild horse use in the Rock Springs and Rawlins field office areas. The proposed capture and removal conforms to the land use decisions and resource management goals and objectives of the Green River and Rawlins RMPs.

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT DETERMINATION

Based upon the information contained in the attached environmental assessment, *Wild Horse Gather for the Adobe Town-Salt Wells Creek Complex*, and all other information available to me, it is my determination that: (1) the implementation of Alternative A (Proposed Action) will not have significant environmental impacts beyond those already addressed in the Green River and Rawlins RMPs; (2) the Alternative A (Proposed Action) is in conformance with the RMPs; and (3) the Alternative A (Proposed Action) does not constitute a major federal action having a significant effect on the human environment. Therefore, an environmental impact statement is not necessary and will not be prepared.

This finding is based on my consideration of the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) criteria for significance (40 CFR 1508.27), both with regard to the context and to the intensity of the impacts described in the EA or as articulated in the letters of comment.

The Alternative A (Proposed Action) has been designed to avoid or minimize environmental impacts to the extent feasible. Additional mitigation measures that will be implemented for the proposed action are identified in Section 3.9, Cumulative Impacts, Mitigation Measures, and Suggested Monitoring of the EA.

Authorized Official:

Lance C. Porter
Rock Springs Field Manager

Date: _____

Patrick Madigan
Rawlins Field Manager

Date: _____