



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

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DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF STAFF
BUDGET AND PLANNING DIVISION

In Reply Refer to:
4700 (NV052)

DEC 18 2007

Dear Interested Party:

This letter is to inform you that the Nevada Wild Horse Range (NWHR) gather proposed for December 2007 has been postponed until December 2008. This decision was based on the need to conduct emergency removals of wild horses in other areas of Nevada. Extreme drought conditions have impacted a large portion of north central and northeastern Nevada leaving too little food and water for the current populations of wild horses in these areas to survive. The gathers in the drought-impacted herd management areas are being carried out to prevent the animal's suffering from starvation during the coming months and to prevent a catastrophic loss of life over the coming winter.

Currently, wild horses within the NWHR are in good condition after having moved off their summer range (where food and water were becoming limited) and onto their winter range following heavy fall rains. Adequate food and water is available on their winter range to carry the animals through the winter in healthy condition.

To address concerns about limited water available for use by wild horses on the summer range, the Las Vegas Field Office (LVFO) tried to install six water storage tanks at Cedar Well. However due to frozen ground conditions completion of this project is on hold. The LVFO is monitoring the ground condition and will complete the installation of the tanks when the weather will permit. Upon completion, the tanks will hold approximately 12,000 gallons of water. Plans are also being developed to extend the pipeline and add water storage at the Cactus Springs development, and to add water storage capability in the Silverbow Pipeline.

At the present time, BLM has incorporated all the public comments received in response to review of the preliminary gather plan environmental assessment (EA). These comments will be carefully considered prior to finalizing the EA and issuing a decision in about December 2008.

Additional environmental testing, in an effort to determine the source and extent of the nitrates which were the likely cause of the death of 71 wild horses in late July 2007, is expected to commence in late January 2008. The pond which was the point source for the suspected nitrate toxicity remains fenced. No further deaths have occurred since the pond was fenced on July 26, 2007.

Thank you for your interest in wild horse and burro management on public lands managed by the LVFO. If you have any questions please call Jerrie Bertola, Wild Horse and Burro Specialist, at (702) 515-5024.

Sincerely,

Patrick Putnam
Assistant Field Manager
Recreation and Renewable Resource