

Wild Horse Consent Decree
Addendum to the
Scoping Report for the
Rock Springs Resource Management Plan
Revision and
Rawlins Resource Management Plan
Amendment and
Associated Environmental Impact Statement



Wyoming High Desert District – Rock Springs Field Office



January 2014

Mission Statement

The BLM's multiple-use mission is to sustain the health and productivity of the public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations. The Bureau accomplishes this by managing such activities as outdoor recreation, livestock grazing, mineral development, and energy production, and by conserving natural, historical, cultural, and other resources on public lands.

BLM/WY/PL-14/010+1060

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to the

Scoping Report

for the

Rock Springs Field Office

**Resource Management Plan Revision and
Rawlins Resource Management Plan Amendment
and Associated Environmental Impact Statement**

for

Public Lands Administered

by the

**Bureau of Land Management
Rock Springs Field Office, Wyoming
and the Rawlins Field Office, Wyoming**

January 2014

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report documents the public scoping process for the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) Rock Springs Field Office ongoing Rock Springs Resource Management Plan (RMP) and associated Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for additional management actions to implement the consent decree governing wild horse management. The public scoping also applies to Rawlins Field Office RMP wild horse management within the Adobe Town Herd Management Area (HMA). This report summarizes the BLM's public scoping efforts and comments provided by the public, as well as federal, state, and local government agencies. The purpose for the public scoping process is to collect input and identify issues regarding the management in the consent decree for wild horses in the Rawlins and Rock Springs field offices that should be considered in the RMPs.

Public meetings were held in Rock Springs and Rawlins, Wyoming, at BLM field offices. Comments were accepted in written, hard copy, fax, and electronic formats throughout the comment period to ensure that those who wished to participate were able to do so effectively.

Chapter 1 of this report describes the public scoping process and presents an overview of the current situation in the planning area. Chapter 2 reports the result of the public scoping process and provides a summary of the comments that were received during the public scoping period. Chapter 3 identifies issues that will be considered in the wild horse planning process. Chapter 4 identifies issues that will not be considered as part of the planning process and provides justification for not considering these issues. Chapter 5 identifies the planning criteria to be used throughout the planning process. Chapter 6 reports data identified by the BLM and the public during the public scoping process. Chapter 7 provides a general schedule of the planning process, identifying opportunities for public input.

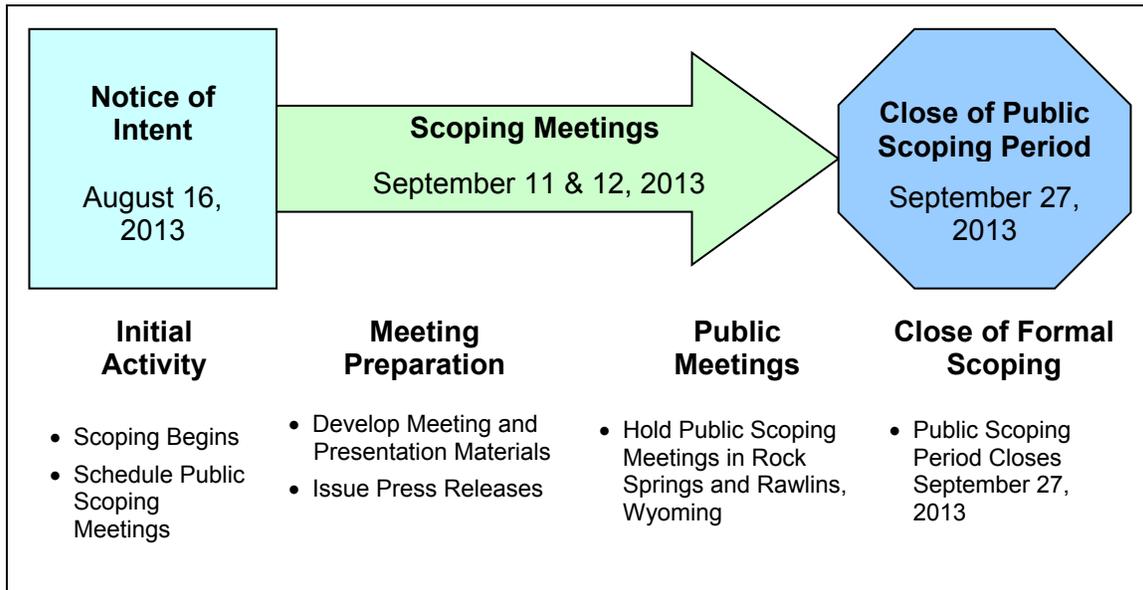
CONSENT DECREE OVERVIEW

The Consent Decree is the result of settlement discussions between the Rock Springs Grazing Association (RSGA) and the BLM to dismiss the lawsuit brought by RSGA to remove all wild horses from private lands within the checkerboard pattern of mixed land ownership. On April 3, 2013, the U.S. District Court for the District of Wyoming approved the Consent Decree "...as a fair, reasonable, equitable, and adequate settlement of RSGA's claims against the BLM, and which does not on its face violate the law or public policy."

PUBLIC SCOPING AND ISSUE IDENTIFICATION

The planning process and scoping period began with the publication of the Notice of Intent (NOI) in the *Federal Register* on August 16, 2013 (Appendix B). Two public scoping meetings were conducted during the scoping period. Figure 1 illustrates the scoping process timeline and associated scoping activities.

Figure 1: Public Scoping Process Timeline



Throughout the public scoping period, 15,013 individuals, agencies, and groups provided comment submissions concerning wild horse management of the planning area. Reading and analysis of these submissions identified 734 unique comments (Appendix A) which identified distinct issues to be addressed during development of the RMP/EIS (Chapter 3). The bulk of respondents submitted form letters that reiterated exactly the same text. These were analyzed as a single comment. Many of the comments expressed concern about wild horse reductions, over-population, conflict with other grazing uses, the manner and method of gathers, and the viability of herds at Consent Decree appropriate management levels (AML) levels.

CHAPTER 1—INTRODUCTION

The BLM Rock Springs Field Office is revising the existing Green River RMP and preparing an associated EIS. During the revision process, the litigation of the BLM by the RSGA was resolved through settlement discussions in the spring of 2013. The settlement decisions for the management of wild horses in the checkerboard land will be analyzed in the RMP/EIS currently being developed for the Rock Springs Field Office, and an RMP amendment with NEPA analysis will be prepared for a portion of the Adobe Town HMA in the Rawlins Field Office at the same time.

The consent decree requires considering proposed actions that would: (a) Change the Salt Wells Creek HMA to a Herd Area, which would be managed for zero wild horses, and if the BLM determines there are more than 200 wild horses within the herd area, the area will be re-gathered to zero wild horses; (b) Change the Great Divide Basin HMA to a Herd Area, which would be managed for zero wild horses, and if BLM determines there are more than 100 wild horses within the Herd Area, the area will be re-gathered to zero wild horses; (c) Change the Adobe Town HMA appropriate management level (AML) to 225–450 wild horses or lower, and that gathered wild horses will not be returned to the Salt Wells area; and (d) Manage the White Mountain HMA as a non-reproducing herd by utilizing fertility control and sterilization methods to maintain a population of 205 wild horses and to initiate gathers if the population exceeds 205 wild horses. Table 1 shows the current acres of each HMA included in the consent decree for Rock Springs and Rawlins.

Table 1. Herd Management Area (HMA) Acres

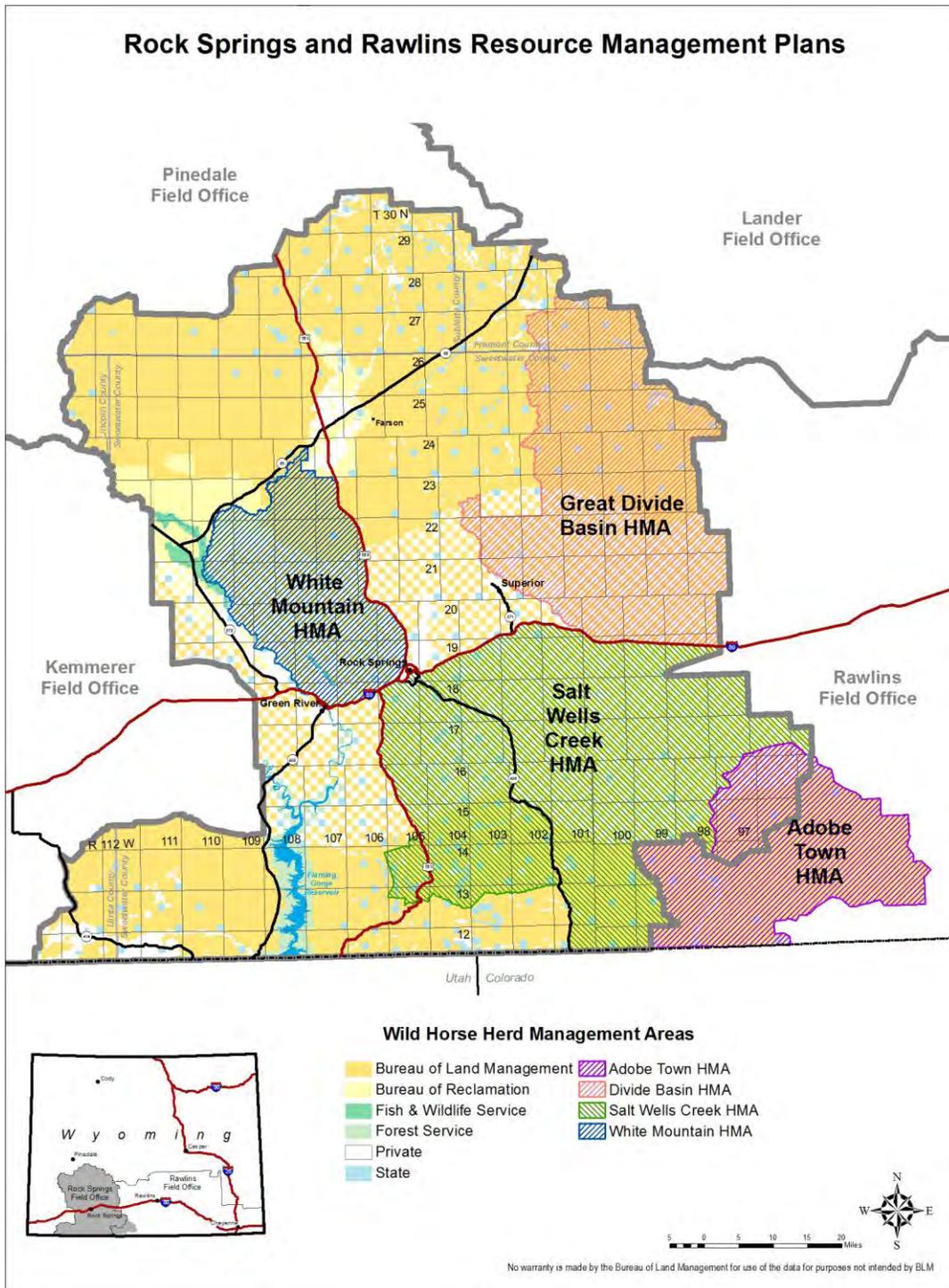
HMA	Private Ownership Acres	State Ownership Acres	Federal Ownership Acres	Total HMA Acres
Rock Springs				
Adobe Town	21,643	1,277	79,947	102,867
Great Divide Basin	196,149	20,707	559,820	776,676
Salt Wells Creek	440,635	39,299	690,025	1,169,959
White Mountain	151,302	3,245	207,585	362,132
Rawlins				
Adobe Town	4,682	7,063	363,012	374,757
Combined Acres for Adobe Town in Rawlins and Rock Springs				
Total Acres—Adobe Town	26,325	8,340	442,959	477,624

The analysis of the consent decree was initiated to run concurrently with the Rock Springs Field Office RMP revision. The analysis of the consent decree officially started with the publication of the Notice of Intent (NOI) in the *Federal Register* on August 16, 2013, which extended the scoping period that began in 2011 at the start of the RMP revision, officially opening a new 30-day comment period (Appendix C). The new comment period was later extended an additional 13 days and ended on September 27, 2013, after a total of 43 days.

The objective of public scoping is to involve the public in the planning process. The public scoping process is used to identify planning issues, develop planning criteria, evaluate the management from the consent decree, and evaluate the existing management of wild horses in the Rawlins and Rock Springs field offices. The BLM hosted public scoping meetings in Rock Springs, Wyoming, on September 11,

2013, at the Rock Springs Field Office; and in Rawlins, Wyoming, on September 12, 2013, at the Rawlins Field Office. These meetings provided an opportunity for the public to learn about the management laid out in the consent decree, ask questions of BLM staff, and to provide comments. This report describes the public scoping process, summarizes the comments received, and identifies issues raised in the comments.

Figure 2. Rock Springs Wild Horse Herd Management Areas (HMAs)



CHAPTER 2—PUBLIC COMMENTS

Public comment collection began with a news release on August 16, 2013, which extended the scoping period that began in 2011 at the start of the RMP revision, officially opening a new 30-day comment period (Appendix C). The new comment period was later extended an additional 13 day and ended on September 27, 2013, after a total of 43 days. Comments collected during this period are summarized and addressed in this report. However, the BLM will consider issues brought forward any time during the planning process.

Public input helps identify issues important to the management of the area, as well as issues and conflicts to be examined in the planning process and ultimately, decisions in the RMP. The scoping process is designed to encourage public participation and to solicit public input.

During the scoping period, many individuals; federal, state, and local land management agencies; and public interest groups submitted comments and suggestions, voicing concerns to the BLM regarding how wild horse management will be addressed in the RMP. The BLM offered various methods in which comments could be submitted. Comments were collected at the scoping meetings, mailed or faxed to the Rock Springs Field Office, and/or emailed to RockSpringsRMP_WY@blm.gov. A total of 15,013 submissions were collected during the scoping period, 3 hand-written submissions on forms provided at the scoping meetings, 27 hard copy submissions through mail or fax, and 14,983 submissions via email.

SCOPING MEETINGS

The BLM announced, via a press release on August 27, 2013 (Appendix C), they would hold local scoping meetings. Two scoping meetings were held, one each in Rock Springs and Rawlins, Wyoming, on September 11 and 12, 2013, respectively. The meetings were conducted in an open house format from 4:00 to 7:00 p.m., allowing attendees to arrive and depart freely during that time. Informational posters were displayed throughout the meeting room, which provided specific project-related information (Appendix D). Hardcopy comment forms were provided at the meetings to allow attendees to draft written comments, which could be submitted at the scoping meetings or mailed to the BLM Rock Springs Field Office at a later date.

Attendance at each of the scoping meetings was recorded using a sign-in sheet at the registration station. Table 2 shows the locations, dates, and registered attendance for each scoping meeting.

Table 2. Scoping Meeting Locations and Attendance

Meeting Location	Meeting Date	Registered Attendance
Rock Springs, Wyoming	September 11, 2013	7
Rawlins, Wyoming	September 12, 2013	12
Total		19

COMMENT ANALYSIS

After the public scoping period ended on September 27, 2013, the comment submissions were entered into a database. Each comment letter was read in its entirety, and all distinct comments were recorded and analyzed. From among the 15,013 respondents, 734 unique comments were identified (Appendix A). The

reason there were far fewer unique comments than respondents is because the majority of respondents submitted identical text as one of two form letters identified.

Individual comments were categorized by primary topic regardless of the position taken by the commenter. Several comments addressed more than one comment category or topic. These comments were categorized by the primary topic. Comments that did not discuss a resource or resource use issue addressed by the RMP, but instead provided input on planning or policy issues were categorized as “Planning Process and Policy.” The comment analysis process equally considered all comments, based on the issues raised and information provided. The outcome of these comments and subsequent analysis is the formulation of a list of planning issues (see Chapter 3) that the RMP will seek to address.

Table 3 shows the number of comments received by topic/issue category. This enumeration is not intended to show bias toward any particular issue; rather, its purpose is simply to convey the interest level in a specific issue/area.

Table 3. Unique Comments Received by Issue Category

Comment Category	Number of Unique Comments
Planning Process and Policy	39
General Comments	119
Adoption/Sales	13
Appropriate Management Level (AML)	32
Grazing	68
Habitat management	40
Herd Management Areas (HMAs)	19
Population Levels/Population Control	60
Roundup/Removal	344
Total Unique Comments identified from the 15,013 comment submissions.	734

SUMMARY OF COMMENTS

Before analyzing the written comments, comment categories were developed to organize the comments. Throughout the analysis process, the issue categories have been merged or divided based on the contents and concerns brought forward in the comments. Following is a summary of the comments received, organized by comment category. Appendix A includes all 734 unique comments identified from comment submissions received during the scoping period.

Planning Process and Policy (39 comments)

Comments placed in this category focused on general comments about the planning process or made suggestions that would be addressed by BLM policy. Some comments suggested that the BLM should engage in a cooperative process with state agencies and/or public interest groups. Comments also made suggestions regarding the NEPA process, suggesting specific alternatives that should be considered, such as a no action alternative. Comments also suggested types of impacts that should be included in the analysis, including cumulative effects and socioeconomic impacts. Some comments asked if the consent

decree could be appealed or if the BLM could manage wild horses in a manner contrary to the court's decision. Other comments suggested that the Consent Decree would violate BLM's multiple-use mandate in the Federal Lands and Policy Management Act (FLPMA), prioritizing grazing interests over other values. Some comments suggested the opposite; that the BLM should honor the Consent Decree and all other cooperative agreements it has entered into regarding management of the checkerboard lands. Many comments suggested the Consent Decree could not be implemented without violating the intent of the Wild Free Roaming Horse and Burro Act, while other comments conversely suggested the law required the BLM to manage wild horses in a way that would not impact private property. Some comments raised specific scientific references or reports, including a report by the National Academy of Sciences, which could be used in wild horse management and/or encouraged the BLM to use the latest science.

General Comments (119 comments)

Comments that dealt with wild horse issues that didn't fall under one of the other issue categories were placed under this general heading. Comments that made general statements of support or opposition regarding BLM's plans and the Consent Decree were included here. Some comments stated a love for wild horses and/or stated their opposition to the consent decree and BLM's proposed actions. Many comments cited portions of the Wild Free Roaming Horse and Burro Act, stating that wild horses are symbols of the spirit of the west and/or a symbol of the state of Wyoming and that they should be preserved for the enjoyment of the public. Several comments wanted to know if wild horses were being reduced due to budget constraints. Some comments suggested that horses should be managed for eco-tourism. Some comments stated that the economic impacts of wild horse removal to tourism in the state needed to be quantified or surmised that it would be a significant impact. A few comments suggested that wild horses should be managed as a special status species. Several comments accused the BLM of removing horses to lease more land for oil and gas or other mining operations. Also, comments that made broad suggestions of how to manage wild horses or wild horse areas within checkerboard lands were included. Some suggested that the BLM should make other arrangements with private landowners or that land swaps could be conducted that benefit both the BLM and private grazing interests. Other comments suggested fencing options to keep wild horses off of private lands.

Adoption/Sales (13 comments)

Comments made regarding the adoption or sale of wild horses included encouraging the BLM to allow more adoptions to reduce wild horse numbers in holding pens and/or reduce conflicts on the range, as well as comments encouraging fewer adoptions or limiting gathers based on the demand for adoptions. Some comments expressed concern that some wild horses were ending up in slaughter facilities. Several comments stated that holding facilities were inadequate and that many horses awaiting adoption were suffering or abused.

Appropriate Management Level (AML) (32 comments)

Comments that had to do with the AML or number of horses managed on public lands were counted under this category. This category is distinguished from the "population levels/population control" issue category below in that AML deals with issues related to target management levels rather than actual population levels. Many comments questioned the changes to AML levels prescribed in the Consent Decree. Many comments stated that the AML should not be reduced, while others stated that AMLs should be increased. Some comments suggested that the AML should stay the same or that decreases for HMAs within the checkerboard should be compensated for by AML increases in HMAs outside the checkerboard. A few comments contended that reducing AML lower than it already is will result in reducing the genetic variability of the herds below sustainable levels. One comment stated that AML

should not be lowered specifically in Adobe Town because most of the horses stay south of the checkerboard already. One comment stated that wild horse AMLs need to consider wildlife population objectives, which it claims have increased.

Grazing (68 comments)

Comments related to grazing in general, whether from wild horses or livestock, were placed in this category. Many comments weighed the amount of use from cattle versus wild horses. Some comments compared the impacts to rangeland and vegetation as they differed between the two types of forage use. Some comments suggested impacts from cattle were greater or that the number of cattle far outweighed the number of wild horses. Other comments suggested that impacts from wild horses were worse for rangelands, especially in relation to use of watering and riparian areas where horses congregate. Some comments suggested reducing the number of cattle grazing on public lands, or eliminating it entirely within the checkerboard or wild horse HMAs specifically. Further, some comments suggested that the acreage of public lands in the checkerboard is already skewed in favor of livestock over wild horses. Many comments stated that grazing permittees do not pay a fair price for the opportunity to use public lands or that the government is subsidizing the cattle industry at a financial loss to the public. Some comments suggested fencing or another new management approach be considered rather than reducing or removing wild horses from grazing in the checkerboard. Some comments claimed that livestock grazing was detrimental to sage-grouse, while others cited sources claiming grazing is compatible with sage-grouse conservation objectives. Lastly, a few comments suggested that cattle are detrimental to other grazing wildlife at the same time that other comments suggested the same is true of wild horses.

Habitat Management (40 comments)

Comments were sorted under this category if they addressed issues related to habitat management in general. Some comments claimed that wild horse herds damage habitat for other wildlife species, such as big game and sage-grouse in particular. Other comments implicated cattle in the destruction of natural habitats, claiming that wild horse herds are less detrimental because they are far fewer in number or because they fill a niche in the ecosystem. While some comments contended that wild horses are better for the environment because they break through ice with the hooves in winter, providing water for other wildlife, or roam farther from water sources, dispersing impacts; other comments claimed that wild horses congregate around water sources, unlike livestock which are moved around through herding practices. Some comments suggested the BLM should make water improvements to meet increased wildlife and wild horse needs. While some comments suggested growing populations of wild horses were causing environmental damage or more specifically causing rangeland health standards not to be met, other comments suggested that those problems are overstated or that herd numbers could be kept in balance through predation or that environmental damage was primarily coming from livestock grazing.

Herd Management Areas (HMAs) (19 comments)

Comments that addressed HMAs specifically were sorted into this category. Many of these comments contended that the changes to checkerboard HMAs as required by the Consent Decree should not be carried out. Several comments suggested leaving the AML for the Adobe Town and White Mountain HMAs the same as they have been managed in the past. Some comments suggested that it is impractical or inhumane to manage the White Mountain herd as a non-reproducing herd. Some comments suggested that managing more than 205 horses on the White Mountain HMA would create overflow onto private lands. A few comments suggested that the Salt Wells and Continental Divide HMAs should not be zeroed, nor be changed to Herd Areas (HAs). One comment suggested that the Fontenelle area should

have its own HMA. Lastly, a few comments agreed with the Consent Decree and encouraged BLM to make the prescribed changes.

Population Levels/Population Control (60 comments)

Comments were placed in this category if they brought up issues related to population levels, including over population and populations too small to maintain genetic diversity, as well as population control methods, such as contraception. This category is distinguished from the AML-issue category above in that it deals with actual population levels instead of the target management level. Many comments expressed concern about over-population of wild horses while others claimed that the problems were overstated. Many comments similarly expressed concern that if population levels were too low, there wouldn't be enough genetic variability to maintain a healthy herd. Other comments wondered about genetic traits such as the Spanish Colonial or New World Iberian and how those would be studied or managed similar to herds in the Pryor Mountain HMA. Many comments cited various livestock to wild horse ratios as evidence that the land could sustain current wild horse populations if it can sustain much larger livestock populations. Many comments expressed general concern regarding the over-population of wild horses without suggesting management alternatives. Some comments suggested actual population numbers were not known and survey methods were not scientific, suggesting that the BLM obtain more accurate figures before taking action. A few comments expressed concern for the older portion of the wild horse population, suggesting humane treatment or euthanasia of old, sick, or lame animals or suggesting leaving elder horses on the range to maintain natural herd dynamics. One comment stated that larger herd populations were necessary to maintain family dynamics within herds to encourage normal mating behavior. One comment stated that over-population of wild horses was a problem because of domestic horses let loose on public lands and suggested embedding identification chips in privately-owned horses to track them.

Some comments suggested wild horse populations should be self-limited, while others stated that self-limiting would exacerbate problems with over-population and environmental degradation. Some comments encouraged the use of fertility control such as Porcine Zona Pellucida (PZP), SpayVac, spaying, and gelding to maintain steady population levels while other discouraged fertility control or certain types of fertility control. Some comments condemned the use of sterilization of the White Mountain herd, stating that it would exterminate the herd. A few comments suggested that gelding and sterilization should be conducted on a limited basis, leaving part of the herd capable of maintaining a steady population. Some comments specifically addressed the gender ratio, suggesting that the BLM should not change natural ratios. Some comments suggested other alternatives to population control, such as natural predation from mountain lions or wolves.

Roundup/Removal (344 comments)

Comments that raised issues regarding the roundup or removal of wild horses were placed in this category. This was by far the most frequent concern voiced by public commenters. Most of the comments expressed the same or similar concern that wild horses not be removed from public lands. The next most common issue brought forward was the method used for roundups, stating that many current and past practices were inhumane. Many comments expressed concern about the post-roundup treatment of horses, both in pens and after sale or adoption. Several of these stated that wild horses are purposely being round up for slaughter or sold to "kill buyers." Many comments railed against specific roundup methods, especially from helicopters, stating that aerial roundups scare or traumatize wild horses. Related comments expressed concern over the length of time and the distance horses must run when roundups are conducted by helicopter. The timing of roundups was brought up in some comments, stating that winter

roundups would lead to problems due to diminished adoption demand and shortages of holding facilities. Comments also expressed frustration with inadequate holding facilities.

CHAPTER 3—ISSUES IDENTIFIED DURING SCOPING

The BLM planning handbook defines planning issues as disputes or controversies regarding existing and potential land and resource allocations, levels of resource use, production, and related management practices. Issues include resource use, development, and protection opportunities for consideration in the preparation of the RMP. Issues presented in this chapter will direct portions of the RMP analysis.

To generate the issues from public comments, all public comments were analyzed and key points were summarized. Each issue was identified as a position-neutral statement or question that sets the groundwork for development of alternative solutions to be analyzed in the EIS. The following sections present a compilation of all of the issues that were raised during the scoping period. Issues are subject to change throughout the planning process as new conditions and/or information are identified. Issues are organized by comment category. Similar issues were grouped where possible. The categories below are not ordered based on the number of comments received or perceived importance of the issues. Duplicate issues were listed only once.

Planning Process and Policy

- Will every scoping comment be read and considered?
- Do public comments have any influence on how public lands are managed?
- Does removal of wild horses violate the Wild Free Roaming Horse and Burro Act?
- Does the Wild Free Roaming Horse and Burro Act require wild horses to have a set amount of space to be wild and free-roaming?
- Will the RMP/EIS recognize issues that have no monetary benefit?
- Does the consent decree allow for higher wild horse populations than the BLM is managing for?

General Comments

- Wild horses are an American symbol and a symbol of the State of Wyoming.
- Is there a cultural bias in decisionmaking against grazing and/or wild horses?
- How do current budget and manpower constraints affect solutions for wild horse management and control?
- Are horses being removed to solve budget problems?
- Is the wild horse problem a question of enough room for them?
- Will Consent Decree requirements lead to extirpation?
- Could arrangements be made between private and public lands in the checkerboard?
- Are land exchanges possible?
- Are there places outside the checkerboard that would be more ideal for wild horses?
- Are there specific areas where wild horses should be protected?
- What are the social and economic impacts of removing horses and how would it affect tourism in the state?
- Should the BLM use adaptive management strategies to manage wild horses?
- How can stray horses be managed to keep them out of the checkerboard from neighboring HMAs?

- How does the BLM propose to destroy old, sick, or lame horses under consideration of the law and should older horses, beyond breeding age, be allowed to remain free-roaming?
- Should wild horses be managed as BLM special status species and/or endangered species under the Endangered Species Act?
- Is the BLM removing wild horses to allow for more oil and gas exploration?

Adoption/Sales

- Are adoptions overflowing the market with horses?
- Are wild horses in adoption programs being neglected or abused?
- Could the BLM provide special places for adopted horses to live?
- How will the BLM prevent illegal uses of horses following roundups?

Appropriate Management Level (AML)

- What are appropriate AML levels?
- Would AMLs need to be reduced if HMAs are in good health?
- Is a zero AML a violation of the Wild Free Roaming Horse and Burro Act or conflict with current BLM policy?
- How will the BLM manage future wild horse population increases to maintain designated AMLs?

Grazing

- What are priorities of grazing lands?
- Does the primary issue with wild horses revolve around competing uses of forage?
- How should the BLM address conflicting grazing uses?
- Are there rangeland benefits to grazing horses instead of cattle?
- Does the Wild Free Roaming Horse and Burro Act require that protection of wild horses take precedence over livestock grazing?
- Should grazing rates be raised and would raising grazing rates prevent conflict with the wild horse and burro program?
- How do diet and behavior differences between horses and cattle affect rangelands?
- Will the BLM consider adding more sources of water for wild horse herds?
- Are there other options for grazing cattle, such as buying hay?
- Will wildlife be removed as well as horses to allow more grazing?

Habitat Management

- What role to wild horses play as part of the entire ecosystem?
- What are the values for wild horses compared to wildlife?
- How much land is necessary for wild horse management?
- How much area is required for sustainable herd management?
- Does wild horse grazing benefit grasslands, such as through seed distribution, fire prevention, and soil protection?
- What affect do wild horses have on soil stability?

- What affect do wild horses have on riparian areas?
- Does current wild horse management conform to rangeland health standards?
- How do wild horses affect sage-grouse and sagebrush habitat?
- How does livestock grazing affect sage-grouse and sagebrush habitat?

Herd Management Areas (HMAs)

- How will the BLM manage horses within the HMAs in a sustainable manner?
- Will the BLM analyze an alternative that removes all HMAs from the planning area?
- Will closing the HMAs to livestock grazing be considered in the planning process?
- Should herds be managed as part of an HMA complex, or as individual herds?

Population Levels/Population Control

- Are rangelands overpopulated with wild horses?
- Does the BLM have accurate and scientific-based counts of wild horses?
- Do wild horse counts reflect accurate gender disparity and contraceptive influences?
- Would lower herd levels be genetically unsustainable and what minimum herd size is required to maintain genetic variability?
- Are larger populations of herds necessary for normal herd behaviors and dynamics to take place?
- What are the best methods for population control?
- Which method of contraception is best and will the BLM be analyzing a wide range of fertility control methods?
- Will the BLM be looking at the timing of birth control applications to prevent winter foaling?
- Can wild horse populations be self-limited?
- Can populations be managed through mountain lion or wolf predation?
- Is sex ratio skewing an effective method of population control?
- Could PZP be used to control populations without roundups?
- Should PZP be used to control mating behavior?

Roundup/Removal

- Are roundups a violation of the Wild Free Roaming Horse and Burro Act?
- Are holding facilities overcrowded?
- Do roundups lead to the abuse or slaughter of wild horses?
- How can the BLM prevent post-sale slaughter of wild horses?
- What roundup practices are used?
- If helicopter roundups occur, can limits be placed on timing and distance of the run?
- Is bait trapping more humane than helicopter roundups?
- How are roundups and removals funded?
- What are the impacts of roundups on the animals themselves, for example displacement stress?
- Do winter roundups create problems with adoption demand and shortages of holding facilities?
- Will post-roundup treatment of horses be addressed in the planning effort?

CHAPTER 4—ISSUES OUTSIDE THE SCOPE OF THE WILD HORSE CONSENT DECREE

Some of the issues raised during public scoping were outside the scope of the Wild Horse Consent Decree and therefore will not be considered in this scoping process. However, many broader issues are already being considered as part of the Rock Springs RMP Revision. The following are three justifications for removing these issues from consideration:

- **Justification 1:** The BLM does not have authority to resolve the issue raised. The BLM is granted certain authorities through federal law that are implemented by the *Code of Federal Regulations*. Issues falling under this justification are usually resolved through congressional or judicial action.
- **Justification 2:** The issue raised is not germane to the planning process. An issue is not germane to the planning process if it is beyond the scope of a particular planning effort, or if it involves a matter normally addressed in plan implementation. Issues that are not germane to the planning process will not be considered as issues but treated as comments.
- **Justification 3:** The issue raised is addressed through law, regulation, or other policy or administrative action. This includes BLM standard operating procedures and policies or federal laws or regulations.

The issues presented in this chapter do not include those presented in Chapter 3 and are being dismissed from further consideration due to the reasons listed in the bullets above.

Issue Raised	Justification for Dismissal	Reason
BLM has illegally elevated the interests of livestock grazing over the interests of wild horses, in violation of FLPMA's multiple-use mandate and the Wild Free Roaming Horse and Burro Act.	Justification 1 Outside BLM Authority	As stated by the District Court for the District of Wyoming "whether the Consent Decree adversely or illegally affects [wild horse herds and livestock grazing use]...rests upon contingent future events that may or may not occur as anticipated...therefore...[the] claim...is not ripe for adjudication."
How will funding of wild horse removals be addressed?	Justification 2 Not Germane	Funding to implement decisions contained in the RMP or RMP is not part of the planning process but is managed through congressional budget decisions, followed by BLM state and local field office yearly budget planning.
Can the BLM over rule or ignore the court's decision?	Justification 2 Not Germane	The Consent Decree is the result of settlement discussions between the RSGA and the BLM to dismiss the lawsuit brought by RSGA to remove all wild horses from private lands within the checkerboard pattern of mixed land ownership. On April 3, 2013, the U.S. District Court for the District of Wyoming approved the Consent Decree "...as a fair, reasonable, equitable, and adequate settlement of RSGA's claims against the BLM, and which does not on its face violate the law or public policy."
To what extent will wild horse removals be monitored after completion of Consent Decree actions?	Justification 3 BLM Policy	Monitoring actions are determined by national strategy and are authorized and managed through BLM policy.

CHAPTER 5—DRAFT PLANNING CRITERIA

Planning criteria are constraints or ground rules developed to guide and direct the planning effort. Planning criteria are based on laws and regulations; guidance that BLM leadership and counsel provide; results of consultation and coordination with the public, other agencies, governmental entities, and Indian tribes; and analysis of information pertinent to the planning area, public input, and professional judgment. The planning criteria focus on the development of management options and alternatives, analysis of the related effects, and selection of the Preferred Alternative and the Proposed RMP. Additional planning criteria may be identified as the planning process progresses. Preliminary planning criteria include the following:

- The BLM will consider actions to amend or revise the Rock Springs and Rawlins RMPs to fulfill the terms of the Consent Decree with the RSGA.
- The proposed RMP amendments or revisions occurring as a result of the Consent Decree will be in compliance with FLPMA, the Wild Free Roaming Horse and Burro Act and all other applicable laws, regulations, and policies.
- Impacts from the management alternatives considered for the Consent Decree will be analyzed in an EIS developed in accordance with land use planning regulations at 43 CFR 1610 and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) regulations at 40 CFR 1500.
- Lands covered in the Consent Decree planning area will consist of public surface estate managed by the BLM within four HMAs: Salt Wells Creek, Adobe Town, Great Divide Basin, and White Mountain.
- For program-specific guidance, the implementation planning process will follow the concurrent RMP revision and EIS, patterned after BLM Manual 1601, *Land Use Planning*; Appendix C of the BLM's *Land Use Planning Handbook* (H-1601-1).
- Broad-based public participation will be an integral part of the planning and EIS process.
- If the other agencies, tribes, and/or governments have officially approved or adopted resource-related plans, then the land use plan (i.e., the Rock Springs and Rawlins RMPs) must, to the maximum extent practical, be consistent with their officially approved and adopted resource-related policies and programs, so long as the land use plan is consistent with the policies, programs, and provisions of public land laws and regulations [see 43 CFR 1610.3-2 (b)].
- The RMP will recognize the state's responsibility and authority to manage wildlife. The BLM will consult with the Wyoming Game and Fish Department (WGFD).
- The RMP will recognize valid and existing rights.
- The planning team will work cooperatively and collaboratively with cooperating agencies and all other interested groups, agencies, and individuals.
- The BLM and cooperating agencies will jointly develop alternatives for resolution of resource management issues and management concerns.
- Geographic Information System (GIS) and metadata information will meet Federal Geographic Data Committee (FGDC) standards, as required by Executive Order 12906. All other applicable BLM data standards also will be followed.

- The planning process will involve American Indian tribal governments and will provide strategies for the protection of recognized traditional cultural uses.
- All proposed management actions will be based on current scientific information, research, technology, and existing inventory and monitoring information. Where practicable and timely for the planning effort, additional scientific information, research, and new technologies will be considered.
- The RMP will include adaptive management criteria and protocols as appropriate to deal with future issues.

CHAPTER 6—DATA SUMMARY/DATA GAPS

During scoping, the public was encouraged to identify issues to be considered in the Rock Springs RMP revision. Individuals, organizations, and agencies also were encouraged to provide the BLM with applicable data that could assist in alternatives development and/or alternatives analysis. New data and data gaps were required to be identified beyond casual reference. Public comments that simply made statements of preference (e.g., a map showing known routes the commenter desires to remain open) were not considered new data. Should there be data gaps, the BLM will comply with NEPA regulation 40 CFR 1502.22 (Incomplete or Unavailable Information).

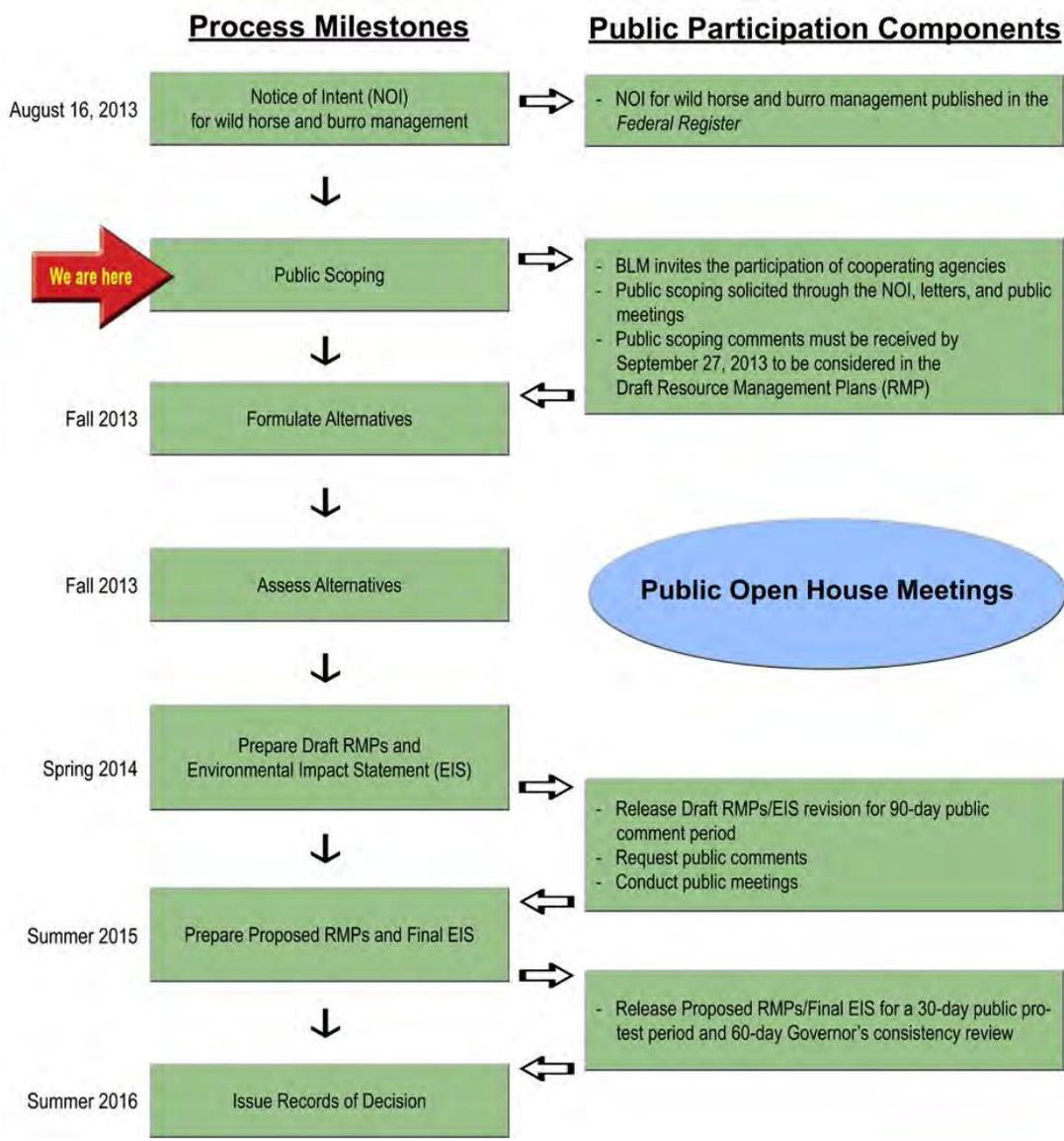
The public responded to requests for data by providing data in various formats along with their comments. All of the public-provided data will be available to the interdisciplinary team during the RMP planning process. Data that the public, organizations, and other agencies provided during scoping are as follows:

- Scientific research and reports
 - 1982 National Academy of Sciences/National Research Council report on BLM's wild horse and burro program
- Bibliographies and references
- News articles

CHAPTER 7—PLANNING SCHEDULE

The Rock Springs Field Office RMP interdisciplinary (ID) team will use the data collected during the scoping process and issues identified in this report to develop management decisions and generate a range of management alternatives for wild horse management that meet the terms of the Consent Decree. Following alternatives development, the ID team will evaluate the potential environmental consequences of implementing each alternative and select the Preferred Alternative. The BLM will issue a draft of these alternatives and the impact analysis as part of the ongoing Rock Springs Draft RMP revision and EIS and as a plan amendment for the existing Rawlins RMP, which will be followed by a 90-day public comment period. The BLM will review the public input on the draft document, make any needed revisions, and issue the Proposed RMP/Final EIS. Following a 30-day protest period and 60-day Governor’s consistency review, the BLM will resolve any protests, sign a ROD, and issue the Approved RMP. Figure 3 presents the general planning schedule for the RMP/EIS, including opportunities for public involvement.

Figure 3. RMP Planning Schedule



APPENDIX A—SCOPING COMMENTS SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

This appendix contains a summary of public comments received by the BLM during the scoping period for the Wild Horse Consent Decree. This includes all comment submissions received during the public scoping meetings as well as all hard copy letters and electronic submissions (email). Each comment submission was read and individual comments were identified and entered into a database. Each comment was categorized by the major resource/use raised in the comment. This appendix contains all the individual comments from that analysis process. As these comments are taken from public letters, they may contain inconsistencies in terminology, acronyms, references, or inconsistent or inaccurate policy statements. These were not corrected in this appendix. Terminology and acronyms were carried over from the original comments without an attempt to interpret or define them. In addition, comments that contained verbatim, duplicate comments were not duplicated in this appendix or in the comment or issue analysis, as the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) or the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) does not require or encourage accounting for the number of comments (e.g., votes), but addressing and identifying issues to consider in the environmental impact statement (EIS). The only changes made to the public comments below were the removal of line returns for the purpose of keeping comments together and compact, and the minor correction of obvious typos and spelling errors.

COMMENTS

Planning Process and Policy

Form Letter 1: Although the BLM is positioning this devastating plan as the implementation of a court-approved settlement of a lawsuit filed by the Rock Springs Grazing Association (RSGA), a court settlement cannot trump federal law. The proposed actions will turn the public lands portions of the Checkerboard over to RSGA members who enjoy taxpayer subsidized grazing, thus illegally elevating the interests of private landowners and livestock grazers over the mandatory duty to protect wild horses in this area, and over the interests of those who cherish the opportunity to observe, photograph, and otherwise enjoy what Congress has declared a “national esthetic treasure” when it enacted the Wild Horse Act.

Form Letter 1: An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is needed because the proposed plan is unprecedented and would have severe and negative impacts on nearly half of Wyoming’s remaining wild horse population, as well as on recreational uses of this public lands area, and on endangered, sensitive and threatened wildlife and plant species.

Form Letter 1: I request that the following alternatives be analyzed in the EIS: •Create contiguous habitat areas for federally protected wild horses out of the present checkerboard configuration in this area. According to the Congressional Research Service, “Exchanges can be used to change the “checkerboard” pattern of federal, state, and privately owned lands in the West that resulted from early land grants. Land consolidation can increase the efficiency of land management while decreasing management costs. . . . BLM typically completes dozens of exchanges each year under FLPMA.

Form Letter 1: In addition, the following impacts and issues must be analyzed in the EIS: •The lack of legal, biological or ecological basis for zeroing out populations of wild horses in an HMA that existed at the time the wild horse statute was passed in 1971. •The environmental impacts of the proposal to make livestock grazing the predominant use in the Checkerboard area, which would cause severe, long-term

damage to the resource. •The recreational use impacts due to lost opportunities for wild horse viewing, a popular activity particularly in the more accessible HMAs, which are scheduled to be zeroed out (Salt Wells Creek and Divide Basin) and in the White Mountain HMA where opportunity to view federally-protected wild free roaming behaviors of wild horses will be destroyed by BLM's plans to sterilize the herds. •The economic impacts of the proposed action, including lost revenues, costs for roundup and lifetime holding of horses vs. the economic benefits to American taxpayers of reducing or eliminating taxpayer subsidized livestock grazing in this area. •The social impacts of destroying the wild horse populations in this 2 million acre area on a public that is overwhelmingly supportive of protecting and preserving wild horses and interested in viewing them living naturally on protected public lands. •The cumulative impacts of the RMP amendments in conjunction with other past, present and future actions, including the lease of public land parcels for oil and gas exploration and extraction. I expect that the BLM will provide the level of detail and analysis described above in an EIS, which is necessary for informed decision-making, particularly for a proposal of this magnitude. I further expect that the BLM will provide a full accounting of how many members of the public submit comments on this Scoping and what their positions are, as the agency is legally required to do under the National Environmental Policy Act.

Form Letter 2: The actions proposed blatantly prioritize the interests of private landowners and livestock grazers over the protection of wild horses in this area.

Form Letter 2: I strongly urge the BLM to conduct an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) in relation to the proposed revisions since these actions would: -Drastically and negatively impact almost half of Wyoming's remaining wild horse population without a biological or ecological rationale for doing so. - Impose significant economic costs on the public (lost revenues, round-up and lifetime holding expenses). -Negatively affect recreational use of the land and social perception of the agency due to lost opportunities for viewing and preserving wild horse populations. It is imperative that the BLM operate with complete transparency throughout the scoping process. I urge the BLM to adopt policies that give horses their fair share of habitat and keep them on the range where they belong.

Alice Ahern: I oppose the Bureau of Land Management's plan to amend the Rawlins and Rock Springs Resource Management Plans to destroy the wild free-roaming horse herds of the Wyoming Checkerboard. Protection of wild and free-roaming horses is mandated by federal law.

Ann Crosby: Why are you planning to destroy the wild free-roaming horse herds of the Wyoming Checkerboard??? Don't you have to take into account the 1971 Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act?? This legislation MANDATES that wild horses and burros are to be sustained on ranges that are considered "principally though not exclusively for their welfare."

Barbara Cassel: Cross out the zero population - That is a no no! No to sterilization - let's have a little compassion! Can the checker-boarded areas simply be fenced out of the equation? The land that has no private property owners should be dedicated to the wild horses - no leases to livestock owners - just horses and whatever wildlife lives in the area. Wouldn't that simplify your job? No negotiation - what is theirs is theirs and what is for the horses - is just that - horses. W/O the horses on it, maybe you could up the rent on the checkerboard?

Carla Thrasher: Mustangs are federally protected by law and as such should not be "harvested". I have a choice and I choose to keep the mustangs safe even if the ranchers have to limit THEIR animals. The mustangs are our heritage and we owe them safety and a home. They are not ours to "manage" into extinction.

Charles Reed: The description of the environment should include 1. Soils and vegetation resources with present conditions documented. 2. Available water resources. 3. Riparian areas with current health

documented. 4. Wildlife populations and seasons of use along with anticipated interactions by species and proposed methods for identifying and resolving conflicts. 5. Proposed public access policies. Impacts to be analyzed should include 1. Grazing and trampling on soil, vegetative and riparian resources. 2. Use patterns of horses vs. cattle as a change agent. 3. Presence of large numbers of horses on use patterns of native wildlife. 4. Impacts of proposed animal management on wildness of horses. Specifically if horses are to be managed as a non-reproductive population will they retain wild behaviors or become a herd of semi domestic grazers and how will this be measured? 5. Impacts of this management tool on BLM (or Wyoming) wide achievement of Wild Horse program goals.

Christianna Capra: I expect the wild horses & burros to be managed in accordance with the wishes of the majority of the American people, not in accordance with the demands of the taxpayer subsidized industries that use my public lands for personal gain.

Deborah Wolford: If memory serves me correctly, the purpose of the BLM was to properly manage the wild horse population---not to eradicate it. Or, has the directive changed?

Ginger Kathrens - The Cloud Foundation: In addition to genetic viability, the BLM is also responsible for preserving the free roaming and wild nature of these horses. This involves providing the required open range space for wild horses to prosper, as is legally mandated by the Wild Horse and Burro Act. Again, removing horses and zeroing out herds in the Rock Springs HMAs would be in violation of the Act. In addition, the removal and potential long term holding of many of the older horses removed from the Rock Springs HMAs would compromise their legally protected free and wild natures.

Ginger Kathrens - The Cloud Foundation: Local communities are stakeholders too. Rawlins, Green River, Rock Springs and other communities near the wild horses ranges could boost their economy through wild horse ecotourism. Outfitter-led excursions, either on horseback or in tour-vehicles to see the Adobe Town and Salt Wells herds would fit in well with the area's recreational attractions. We note that the City of Rawlins features the portrait of Adobe Town's most famous mustang, Desert Dust, on its main Website as well as in its Tour Book. Yet, there is no link to information regarding where tourists can find the beautiful horses that continue Desert Dust's legacy. BLM acknowledges on its National Adoption Webpage that, "The public enjoys seeing wild horses roaming free in the Salt Wells Creek area." But promotional information is not available. In contrast, Tripadvisor.com reports that nearby Green River Wild Horse Tours and ECO Safaris is ranked # 1 among "things to do" in the area. We urge BLM to meet with city and county tourism officials regarding posting information on how tourists can visit the Adobe Town and Salt Wells Creek HMAs. Promoting this type of ecotourism could create jobs and generate income for the Rawlins and Rock Springs communities. The State of Wyoming's tourism budget included the promotion of wild horse viewing. This campaign money is wasted if there are ultimately few wild horses to see. The Pilot Butte Wild Horse Loop in White Mountain would become a farce if only non-reproducing horses were allowed to remain there. Tourists will know the difference between stallions and their mares versus geldings. The repercussions of spaying mares are still unknown and trials have resulted in a high mortality rate on mares subjected to this procedure. The NAS did not recommend ovariectomies or gelding as any invasion of the peritoneal cavity is dangerous and no follow up veterinary care is available and currently no studies exist that demonstrate their effectiveness as a population control agent. Implementing the extreme changes the BLM has proposed for the Adobe Town, Salt Wells and Divide Basin HMA would undermine the possible economic booster the wild horse herds provide. Managing them as such would not be a form of managing them for "We the People", as public lands are meant to be maintained, but rather as management for a specific interested party, the Rock Springs Grazing Association.

Ginger Kathrens - The Cloud Foundation: We urge BLM field offices to implement Adaptive Management per the Department of the Interior's initiative. The Adaptive Management model focuses on

learning and adapting, through partnerships of managers, scientists, and other stakeholders. Together, these parties learn how to create and maintain sustainable ecosystems. This holistic method promotes flexibility in management strategies, resulting in decisions that are more likely to be seen as fair by the affected stakeholders. Wild horse advocates are stakeholders.

Joan Black: I also suggest hope and expect that BLM will provide a full accounting of how many members of the public submit comments and what their positions are while understanding that the agency is legally required to do so.

Joan Black: I request alternatives be looked at and something chosen to stop this cruel and unnecessary action. It also seems that there should be some reduction of livestock grazing. There could also be management of wild horse populations at current or expanded levels using fertility control, as recommended by the National Academy of Sciences in its June 2013 report.

Joan Bykonen: I might also add that the judge in this case is just plain wrong and I suspect that somehow has an interest or is involved with the ranchers.

Joan Cornett: The only reason wild horses are being rounded up is livestock owners, energy producers, mining companies all are getting to use public lands and are pushing out the wild horses, which are supposed to be federally protected and their natural predators are being killed off for the same reason.

John Hay III - Rock Springs Grazing Association: RSGA supports the elimination of the Salt Wells and Great Divide Basin HMAs and their management for zero wild horses, and the reduction in AML for the Adobe Town HMA after revising the boundaries to eliminate Checkerboard lands. Wild horses must be regularly removed from within and outside of the HMAs to maintain the AMLs. These actions will permit BLM to more efficiently and effectively manage wild horses in southwestern Wyoming and protect private property and rangeland resources consistent with the WHA, FLPMA and federal rules. BLM must protect and respect private property rights by removing all wild horses from private property when requested pursuant to the WHA, 16 U.S.C. §1334, and the proposals provided for in the Consent Decree are consistent with this mandate. Consent Decree and Joint Stipulation for Dismissal, at 4-6, W1-7 (Apr. 3, 2013) [hereinafter 2013 Consent Decree]. In order to achieve the removal of wild horses from RSGA lands, BLM committed to consider revising the HMA classifications and zeroing out wild horses on the Checkerboard pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Id. at 6 1]6. As part of the changes in the HMAs, BLM also agreed to (1) adjust its gather and removal schedule to remove excess wild horses from the Adobe Town HMA down to the revised low AML as necessary to maintain AML, (2) remove wild horses from the Checkerboard when the population on the Checkerboard in the Adobe Town-Salt Wells (ATSW) Complex exceeds 200 wild horses, (3) remove wild horses from the Checkerboard in the Great Divide Basin Area if wild horse numbers exceed 100 wild horses, and (4) recognize that wild horses are prohibited on RSGA lands outside of historical HMAs. 2013 Consent Decree at W6a-d. The 2013 Consent Decree recognizes RSGA's right to notify BLM to remove all wild horses from its private lands pursuant to the WHA, 16 U.S.C. §1334. Id. at 1]7. RSGA strongly encourages BLM to adopt as the preferred alternative, and ultimately as the chosen management action, the following Consent Decree provisions to be implemented as part of the Rock Springs and Rawlins RMPs: 1. Manage the White Mountain HMA as a non-reproducing herd by utilizing fertility control and sterilization methods to maintain a population of 205 wild horses and to initiate gathers if the population exceeds 205 wild horses. Id. at 6- 7. 2. Classify Salt Wells HMA as a herd area to be managed for zero wild horses and re-gather wild horses within the herd area back to zero whenever there are more than 200 wild horses within the HMA Id. at 6-7. 3. Revise the boundaries of the Adobe Town HMA to exclude the Checkerboard, revise the AML to 225-450 wild horses or lower, and prohibit any gathered wild horses from being returned to the Salt Wells area. Id. at 6-7. 4. Classify the Great Divide Basin HMA as a herd area to be managed for zero wild horses and re-gather wild horses within the herd area back to zero

whenever BLM determines that there are more than 100 wild horses. Id. at 6-7. These proposals will ensure that wild horses do not immediately return to the Checkerboard and will protect resources in the Adobe Town area. They should be the preferred alternative, and ultimately chosen, for the Rock Springs and Rawlins RMPs. The adoption of the proposals into the RMPs is a necessary step to implementing the terms of the 2013 Consent Decree. The proposal has substantial merit apart from the 2013 Consent Decree, because it prevents environmental degradation in conformance with the WHA, Federal Land Policy [text in verbatim comment trails off at this point]]

Judith Walker: TO ME THIS IS NOT A FORM LETTER TO BE LUMPED AS "ONE" RESPONSE BY THE BLM, AS IF MY OPINION DOESN'T COUNT FOR ANYTHING. I CARE DEEPLY ABOUT MY RIGHT TO VOTE AND TO PETITION THE GOVERNMENT.

Justin Williams: We believe this issue is important to address and support a thorough analysis of a broad range of alternatives.

Lida Gregory: The BLM is, in my opinion, failing at a very important task, which is management of public lands. Wild horses are protected under federal law, and from what I've seen recently in Nevada and elsewhere, the BLM is completely disregarding this.

Lisa Rodriguez: I very strongly oppose the proposed actions against the Rock Springs wild horse herds in the checkerboard. These actions also violate the multiple use rules.

Mark Konishi - USFWS: We recommend that the scoping process should include an analysis of the existing wild horse management goals, objectives and management actions in the 2008 Record of Decision and Approved Rawlins RMP (p. 2-51), and the associated goals, etc. proposed for the Rock Springs RMP. Ensure that they are unambiguously worded and properly titled.

Mark Konishi - USFWS: We request that a thorough analysis of impacts to wildlife populations and habitat (i.e. pronghorn, sage-grouse, forage, water sources and associated living space) should be conducted in relation to the number of horses and bands that would remain after scheduled gathers. The results of this analysis should clearly identify whether the remaining numbers of horses will threaten the maintenance of a thriving ecological balance between wild horses and wildlife in this desert landscape.

Moving Cloud Productions: Accordingly, as part of this proposed action, the BLM must freshly analyze and adjust the AML based upon its knowledge of genetic viability, recent data concerning rangeland health, and the specific effects of horses vs. ruminants on that rangeland health.

Moving Cloud Productions: I would expect that the types of cumulative effects that would be considered here include: a. The impacts of livestock grazing b. The impacts of oil & gas c. The impacts of fences and access to forage and water d. The genetic viability of the herd e. Lack of predation f. The systematic reduction in herd area and AMLs over the year

Moving Cloud Productions: The 1971 Wild Horse Act states that the Secretary “shall consider the recommendations of qualified scientists in the field of biology and ecology, some of whom shall be independent of both Federal and State agencies.” Here, I propose that the BLM consult with the following experts with respect to the proposed gather alternatives: Craig C. Downer Biologist and member of IUCN Species Survival Commission Karen Sussman President International Society for the Protection of Mustangs and Burros Bruce Nock, PhD Washington University School of Medicine I also strongly recommend that any BLM action concerning wild horses, including this one, consider the book “The Wild Horse Conspiracy” by Craig C. Downer © 2011. This paperback book should surely be within the BLM’s budget.

Moving Cloud Productions: The BLM has regularly given preference to the mineral, oil and gas extractive and grazing industry interests to the detriment of the wild horses, in abrogation of its duties under the 1971 Wild Horse Act.

Moving Cloud Productions: the BLM is required to manage wild horses as an integral part of the natural system of the public lands where they were found in 1971

Moving Cloud Productions: Under the 1971 Wild Horse Act, "(A) The Secretary shall order old, sick, or lame animals to be destroyed in the most humane manner possible." Is this mandate reflected in the proposed actions?

No Name: Commercial farming is also the largest pollutant of the water supply & surely would follow with current BLM policy.

No Name: I feel like Government & BLM is working against the "will of the people" on this issue and exclusively for special interest groups that have PAID OFF politicians in WDC.

Rick O'Bryan: I oppose the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM's) plan to amend the Rawlins and Rock Springs Resource Management Plans (RMPs) to destroy the wild free-roaming horse herds of the Wyoming Checkerboard. Uphold the federal law that mandates their federal protection.

Robert Jasper: The Bureau of Land Management's (BLM's) plan to amend the Rawlins and Rock Springs Resource Management Plans (RMPs) to destroy the wild free-roaming horse herds of the Wyoming Checkerboard is embarrassing and shameful. Is there any official REASON for this war on OUR wild horses? Except to serve the fat-cat cattle barons who are pulling the strings of the top level directors of these corrupt agencies?

Suzanne Roy - American Wild Horse Preservation: BLM should account for the significant public opposition to the specific proposed changes to the Rock Springs RMP pursuant to the 2013 Consent Decree. BLM should engage with the public in ways that allow public input to influence agency decisions. BLM should incorporate the recommendations and requests made by the public into the environmental analysis and final plan for the wild horses of the Wyoming checkerboard.

Suzanne Roy - American Wild Horse Preservation: BLM should consider the findings in the NAS report.

General Comments

Form Letter 2: I care deeply about the future of our wild horses, wildlife and public lands, and urge the BLM to reject the proposed actions that would eradicate horses from the Great Divide Basin and Salt Wells Creek Herd Management Areas, reduce the allowable number of wild horses on the Adobe Town Herd Management Area from 610-800 to 225-450 wild horses, and convert the horse population on the White Mountain Herd Management Area to a sterilized, non-reproducing herd.

Form Letter 2: I strongly urge the BLM to consider management options that provide maximum protection for American mustangs and wild burros, such as: -Brokering agreements between adjacent landowners and the BLM to allow wild horses to roam freely throughout the checkerboard in exchange for the landowners' continued use of the public lands for livestock grazing. -Exchanging land parcels within the checkerboard to establishing contiguous habitat areas for wild horses. -Reducing livestock grazing instead of wild horse populations in the Wyoming Checkerboard. -Utilizing fertility control

methods, as recommended by the National Academy of Sciences in its June 2013 report, to manage wild horse population levels in the checkerboard.

Alice Simpson: I want wild horses, not cattle, on MY public lands. Removing wild horses from public lands where they were granted a right to exist, just so ranchers can continue to graze their cattle at below-market rates on MY land, is a violation of federal law. The Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burro Act trumps any court settlement.

Amelia Marshall: Allegedly Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell said that she would abide by the scientific finding of the NAS panel whose report was issued this past June. Instead, it would see that the BLM is once again in bed with the slaughter kill industry.

Anne Avery: I understand that the checker-board land ownership is challenging to manage, but the public lands are not intended for and should not be used by private interests. Cattle management should not take precedent over the wildlife and wild horse needs. In my opinion, the best solution for the checker-board situation is to work with the private landowners to consolidate the private land together and consolidate the public land together, reduce the wild horse herd numbers slightly and relocate them all to public lands, while restricting cattle grazing to the newly designated private land.

Anne Valdez: Quit wasting my taxes chasing horses. Move the ranchers' cows, deny the energy companies' roads. Do what you are paid to do, namely protect public lands, not rent them out for nothing to welfare ranchers and parasitic energy companies.

Ava Reynolds: We know why the BLM is removing all our Wild Horses. They are trying to make room for OIL and GAS exploration.

Ava Reynolds: Why aren't you following the laws that protect these animals? Why aren't you protecting them?

Berniece Thornton: Horses on the Endangered Species List. That's what this plan really means.

Billie Mitchell: Horses are part of our history part of the American way of life. They should be out there for all of us to enjoy watching.

Brooke Stark: The only reason I would ever visit Wyoming all the way from the UK would be to see these beautiful wild mustangs doing what they do best which is roaming freely by eradicating them you are destroying not only the future of a beautiful historic American icon but completely damaging tourist prospects from Equine lovers like myself.

Carol Dodson: These horses belong to the American people and deserve to live on public lands, is there not space enough in our beautiful country for a few examples of freedom? Please know that a lot of us admire their tenacity to survive, their beauty, and see them as an example of what this country is all about,,,,,people would love to be able to watch these horses,,,there are opportunities here, not just the option for slaughter.

Castle Ballad: what reason could possibly be honorably and spiritually legitimate for extinction of these species? it's happening everywhere. wild mustangs, etc. a national disgrace.

Catherine Hughes: I want these horses treated with kindness and respect and I want your agency to work with The Cloud Foundation and other horse experts to achieve these goals.

Chrysteen Anderson: For 40 years I have watched the BLM destroy every wild horse and burro herd on our public lands so that the richest people and corporations in the world could have their livestock expenses paid for by taxpayers. This is another case of Welfare Ranching where the wishes of the American people mean nothing compared to the wealthy livestock owners and their grazing permits. The BLM suggests that they only waste a couple hundred million on grazing permits, but if you count all the federal lands and programs that supply fencing, Wildlife Services killing all the predators, water resources polluted, overgrazing, etc. the costs would be in the billions. If you actually counted every cow and sheep on public lands and accurately counted the remaining wild equines, instead of privately owned livestock outnumbering wild equines by 50 to 1, it is really more like 500 to one. We would save the taxpayers billions of dollars by simply ending livestock grazing on public lands and returning the wild horses now sitting in feedlots to the open spaces where they belong. When the environment is allowed to recover and the fences removed, predators and other wildlife will control the number of wild horses just like they did for millions of years. Horses evolved here, cattle did not. It is not a coincidence that horses and other large mammals disappeared when humans arrived in North America. The only difference is that now it is the BLM destroying species for stupid short-term profits.

Cora Healy: The only impression that one can have is that the BLM cares only for the cattle industry....the public and the horses be damned.

Craig Downer: I have visited these HMAs, most recently the Adobe Town wild horses on Memorial Day weekend, and found them to be a wonderful sight to behold amid the colorful hills there. However these hills had many oil and gas drilling platforms and sign of many livestock, including actual animals. It is so wrong that you are planning to zero out or overly compromise these areas. This runs entirely counter to the overwhelming will of the General Public. We are talking about a Quality of Life issue here and you should also acknowledge the many positive benefits that accrue from the wild horses' presence, including preventing fire, building soils, dispersing seeds, and their wonderful presence most of all!

de Rolon Rosalind: I am writing to urge the BLM to preserve the wild-horse herds on our public lands in the four subject Wyoming herd areas. The animals are national treasures and their habitat should be protected for their use and not turned over to private interests for commercial grazing.

Deborah Wolford: And, of course, let us not forget that the farmers, ranchers, and the oil, gas and mining folks will have exactly what they want--grazing land, and land for oil and gas drilling and mining rights for next to nothing. The few will profit. I have no issue with their wish to have an opportunity to make a living and a profit, but it does not have to be at the expense of the horses. And let us not forget that disposing of the wild horses will eliminate the expense of managing them for the BLM. Poof, gone, budget line \$-0-.

Diane Nushawg: Please reconsider this horrific plan Get them fixed to not kill them.

Don Kent: Please do your job and allocate resources to nature, including our free-ranging wild horses. Have the guts to stand up to special interests such as low-cost grazers and do the job the public expects of you. Protect my rangelands and let nature run its course. Please do not violate the Wild Free Roaming Horses and Burros Act or it's spirit.

Dr. Monika Fisher: I AM UTTERLY DISGUSTED WITH BLM & USFWS !!

Elissa Kline: How about making some changes when the NAS report said that the BLM Wild Horse & Burro Program is a failure?

Euletta Seaton: These horses need a home to be safe in. They were here before the rich ranchers. Now is the time that the wild horses of the Wyoming checkerboard must be protected for future generations, not destroyed at the behest of ranchers who receive tax subsidies to graze their livestock on our public lands. Public lands livestock grazing is a privilege not a right, while protection of wild horses is mandated by federal law!

Evelyn Kimber: I write with urgency that the BLM uphold the Wild Free Roaming Horses and Burros Act and DO NOT KILL even a single horse in the Wyoming Checkerboard. The notion that tax-subsidized cattle ranchers get precedence over our precious American wild horses is outrageous. Federal law protects these horses and there is no escaping that fact. These wild horses are a national treasure, beloved by our citizenry. They must not be sacrificed for private businesses to profit from their slaughter. Private cattle ranchers should not be grazing their stock on public lands in the first place, causing soil erosion and desertification of our American west. It is their numbers that should be reduced, not wild horses. The BLM needs to set priorities that are in the best interests of the American public, not the cattle ranchers. Protect our wild horses. This is the priority.

F&D Hunt: I do understand that there is much pressure to use the land for other means (i.e., lease to ranchers), and create revenue; but I am asking that you do not succumb to this pressure. The public including myself do not want to see you do this. We want to see that wild horses and burros have a place, a home as they have the right to.

Francine Meinelschmidt: I oppose the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM's) plan to amend the Rawlins and Rock Springs Resource Management Plans (RMPs) to destroy the wild free-roaming horse herds of the Wyoming Checkerboard.

Ginger Kathrens - The Cloud Foundation: Management of Checkerboard The management of checkerboard land is a struggle throughout the West as public land is mixed with private land. Wyoming horses have wandered on private lands as part of their HMAs since 1979 allowed through an agreement with the Rock Spring Grazing Association in which wild horses share their public lands with private cattle and sheep that also wander back and forth from public to private lands. Wild horses are a protected species that are granted legal rights to HMAs, while cattle grazing is a privilege and is a leasing program under the jurisdiction of the BLM. The BLM has the legal authority to decrease the amount public grazing that occurs. Rather than removal, the BLM should seek to resolve the problem in a way that allows horses access to private lands adjacent to public lands, just as private cattle routinely wander across public and private borders. If a compromise cannot be reached, the BLM should then consider changing the management of the checkerboard as a whole. Land swaps, consolidating sections of checkerboard into parcels, allowing ranchers to consolidate their holdings into single properties by exchanging some of their land to become public while an equivalent amount of public acreage is released into their possession is a viable option. Such swaps have been successfully negotiated in California, Oregon and Nevada.

Giovanni Conti: Please, I am asking you to not even consider doing this.

Grace Neff: Wild horses are just that (Wild) and should have protection from mismanagement and abuse.

Ingrid E. Albrecht: Ecotourism is another option for those who are horse lovers, wildlife enthusiasts, history buffs who have an interest in the old West to enjoy wild horse excursions year-round. A unique experience for visitors would be to observe wild horse behavior and herd dynamics, as well as in-the-wild management that could all become a unique experience in the herd management areas. The American wild horse could establish itself as an economic resource on the Western range and better its chances of long-term survival.

Janet Carabello: I have a serious problem with the proposal, laid out under the April 2013 Consent Decree, to remove Federally protected wild horses from all the private lands of the Rock Springs Grazing Association in the Checkerboard area and to create in some part of it sterile, non-producing herds. Why should this commercially oriented group of cattlemen be able to dictate what happens to horses owned by the American public when they agreed long ago to share their lands with the grazing horses in exchange for being able to lease at a concessional rate the adjoining Federal lands?

Jeanene Arrington-Fisher: I know you are under a lot of pressure from the Grazing Association and there in supposedly no money in the "mustangs" - but these amazing creatures are the only reason I was planning to visit the area - if you would focus on eco-tourism and not the fact that you have to get rid of these beautiful animals you would find you have the money and the backing to get these cattle associations off you back.

Joan Black: I oppose the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM's) plan to amend the Rawlins and Rock Springs Resource Management Plans (RMPs) to destroy the wild free-roaming horse herds of the Wyoming Checkerboard. The proposed action will illegally allow the interests of private landowners and livestock grazers to trump over the mandatory duty to protect wild horses in this area enacted by the Wild horse Act.

Joan Gove: I implore BLM and to find other ways to manage our horses and burros to preserve wild horses on our public lands in these four herd areas, and not submit to pressure from the Rock Springs Grazing Association to virtually wipe them out.

John Hay III - Rock Springs Grazing Association: RSGA recommends that the preferred alternatives for the Rawlins and Rock Springs Resource Management Plans (RMPs) include the following measures: (1) Implement the RSGA v. Salazar, Consent Decree fully; (2) Reclassify the herd management areas (HMAs) for Salt Wells and Great Divide Basin to herd areas to be managed for zero wild horses; (3) Revise the Adobe Town HMA boundaries to remove the Checkerboard lands, including private land interests held by RSGA; (4) Reduce the number of wild horses to be managed at appropriate management levels (AMLs) in Adobe Town to between 225 to 450 wild horses; (5) Manage the White Mountain HMA for not more than 205 wild horses and take all necessary steps to ensure that this becomes a non-reproducing herd; and (6) Commit to regular removal of all wild horses located outside of the HMA boundaries.

Jude Evans: The answer is to STOP THE ROUNDUPS!!!! USE PZP and take down the fences that BLM put up to keep the horses out of the watering holes.

Julie McDonough: Re: the Wild Horse Scoping proposal for the Rock Springs Resource Management Plan - is complete herd eradication the best answer to herd management? Wild horse and burro preservation lands have been dedicated for their survival since 1971 and it is good news that they are flourishing. According to current statistics, livestock outnumbers wild horses and burros 50:1 and that is simply unjust. There are many other choices to herd management other than annihilation.

Julie McDonough: The mass destruction of an American Icon - the Wild Horse and what it stands for = Freedom is metaphorically an attack on the Freedom of America.

Justin Williams: WDA believes the BLM should develop a much broader analysis for wild horse HMAs and AMLs. We recommend developing one alternative to remove all HMAs and zero out all AMLs in both Rocks Springs and Rawlins RMPs. BLM regularly analyzes a no grazing alternative for livestock grazing. While WDA fully opposes no livestock grazing, we believe a thorough analysis will provide the public more opportunity to provide comments for the Preferred Alternative.

Kathleen Hayden: Since USFWS and BLM have failed to implement all of the legal available options, they have threatened, endangered and extinguished herds, thus necessitating the listing. At the very least they are mandated to amend RMPs and provide sufficient habitat to the herds as a special status species candidate for listing. The Free Roaming wild horse and burro act is the only Congressional Act passed to protect a disappearing threatened special status species of Wildlife, BUT is MANAGED to limit herd's migratory ranges. The migratory ranges are necessary and imperative habitat to the survival of distinct population segments that have been segregated between geographic regions for hundreds of years BLM and USFWS neglects to amend their RMPs to ensure sufficient habitat (ACECs) to conserve and maintain healthy distinct population segments. Both agencies are liable to manage Wild horse and Burro herd as a special status species candidate for ESA listing.

Kathy Coffman: Who do you represent? The Public, like me, where you are trusted to manage wildlife in and for the Public? Or, is it the ranchers.....and their interests? It sure seems like you are in the pocket of Big Ranchers. Not for the good of Wild Mustangs or the Public. Why can't I pay for a grazing right for a mustang like the rancher does and make money off of our public lands from their cattle? I have as much right to use that land and pay for an animal as Big Ranching does. Shame on your for taking the Wild Mustangs out of Rock Springs. Do they right and honorable thing....leave them there. Don't kill predators off and nature will keep the herd in check, as well as Mother Nature.

Kathy Dulnoan: The wild horses are worth saving and treasuring as a link to our history and the wonderful past that happened in Wyoming and the Rocky Mountain West. They are such a symbol of the American West and deserve to be saved.

Kirk Donley: This is no more or no less the slaughter of an American Icon than any other protected animal be it a state bird or Bald Eagle. Beyond removing the beauty that the creature resembles you are also destroying wildlife that exists in its natural habitat. Proper city planning and better zoning laws would take care of wildlife interference far better than senseless killing.

Kyra Odabashian: Move them to another space that isn't occupied by wild horses, maybe National Parks? Let them build bands there, instead of over-populating one place to the point where you have to rip apart the bands.

Laurinda Reinhart: The keep zeroing out herd management areas in favor of other uses is in violation of the wild and free roaming burro and mustang act. Other herd management areas or sanctuaries need to be created where the horses can be managed in a compassionate and sustainable way, where they won't be in conflict with other uses. The continued roundups, stockpiling in feedlots, and zeroing out of herd management areas is illegal, inhumane, and an affront to all who treasure this American icon. Let them roam with Bison once more. The prairies supported many more herds of wild animals two hundred years ago than they do now under the government's bureaucratic sorry excuse for rangeland 'management'.

Leann Frizzell: Wild horses are an American icon of freedom. With over 245 million acres of BLM land out there, there MUST be space for these beautiful creatures. We are Americans...the most creative, dynamic people in the world. We should be able to come up with SOME solution to save our wild horses.

Pamela Libby - VBSDGO: Please preserve the wild horses on our public lands in these four herd areas (Adobe Town, Salt Wells Creek, Great Divide Basin and White Mountain), and do not submit to pressure from the Rock Springs Grazing Association to virtually wipe them out.

Lida Gregory: I still hope you can zoom out and see that your current plan of removal is disregarding protection of wild horses and there are other solutions if you really look beyond the money side of things.

Lisa Cronin: Wild horses of the Checkerboard must be protected, not wiped out.

Liza Elliott: No question at all here who holds sway over the use of public grazing lands... it's private business, using taxpayer subsidized livestock grazing in this area.

Lori Hadley: Leave the mustangs alone in Wyoming!!!

Lynn Goodwin: Please mark me as against the plan to destroy the wild free-roaming horse herds of the Wyoming Checkerboard. I can't even believe, in this day and age, that the BLM would dare cater to the moneyed interests, the tax moneyed interests. The public lands grazing is a privilege not a right and it seems that those who are fortunate to be able to utilize this privilege have gotten so used to it that it has become an entitlement to them. And that is in direct contradiction to the aim and purpose of the BLM to protect and manage ALL of the public resources and is in violation of the Wild Free Roaming Horses and Burros Act. I fully support the thoughtful and reasonable accommodations proposed by the American Wild Horse Preservation Campaign and other groups working to right this wrong.

Lynn Huebner: The NAS Report offers so many alternatives to your current processes that it is difficult to understand why BLM is still in existence.

M Judd: Our public lands should not be for sale to oil companies miners and slaughter house dealers.

Marcie Newman-Perskin: WE HAVE MANAGED TO EXTINCTION

Margaret Lewis: WHAT HAPPENED TO MANAGEMENT ON THE RANGE??? The hell with your checkerboard land ownership. That was set up to set the horses up for failure from the start. How about real management? Not removals. Not gelding every stud and spaying all the mares.

Marian Heath: Can we not extend our compassion for all living beings? Maybe we should just get rid of the humans.

Mark Kot - Planning and Zoning: The Sweetwater County Board of County Commissioners supports the public scoping and review process that has been initiated by the Consent Decree to revise the Wild Horse Management Sections of the Resource Management Plans (RMP) for the Rock Springs and Rawlins BLM Field Offices. Within the RMP review process, Sweetwater County encourages the BLM to select the Consent Decree's wild horse management stipulations as the BLM's Preferred Alternative for managing wild horses. The Coalition of Local Governments has submitted scoping comments related to the Consent Decree and the proposed RMP amendments. As a member of the CLG, Sweetwater County agrees with and supports the CLG's scoping comments.

Maryl Simpson: Don't dare to wipe out wild horses in Wyoming. Just don't. It's wrong.

Maureen Barrett: Try compassion for a change and let OUR HORSES be. After all, it is OUR LAND they roam on, not yours.

Maureen Barrett: You are killing tourism in Wyoming. The West is famous for its wild horses. People from all over the world to see wild horses, spending thousands of dollars every year in Wyoming alone.

Mia Boyle: The government has consistently and increasingly eradicated our forests and wild lands of their sanctity by selling off to corporate interests and private businesses. We expect to be respected, to have our laws obeyed and our wild places preserved but all we get is rhetorical device and back door deals from our supposed leaders.

Mindy Beardsley: As for The Rock Springs Scoping - We need to preserve wild horses on our public lands in these four herd areas, and not submit to pressure from the Rock Springs Grazing Association to virtually wipe them out.

Moving Cloud Productions: I noticed that you lock the gates to some of the area's where the oil/gas installations are. This raises the question: Are you going to close down the area in which the wild horses roam for oil and gas?

Moving Cloud Productions: The BLM currently faces a very real problem: too many captured wild horses in short term and long term holding.

Moving Cloud Productions: The BLM has been caught time and again selling horses out of long-term holding (which in and of itself is illegal), to "kill buyers" who transport the horses to Mexico for slaughter.

No Name: Big Ag and Big Oil you should be making them pay for sanctuaries for the wild horses where they can live in freedom and safety.

No Name: I am against your plans to wipe out the majority of wild horses in this area. The wild horse population is part of our heritage and, beyond that, penning them up for the very few appropriate adoptions, the risk of slaughter, or a life of boring captivity is wrong wrong wrong.

No Name: I just don't understand how we can ignore the necessity of leaving wild life to its own habitat. We are dependent on all of the wild life and their contribution to our (God's world). Human existence is challenged more and more as we continually encroach on the other species that we share space with. And their contributions to this world is not just for us (humans) but for the whole of the created order, and each species be it animal or plant or whatever has a need and contributes to every other species existence. We must leave the wild horses to share space and the land owners should be required to give precedence to the wild horses. This is not about our (human) needs and demands, but instead about our survival, and we have pushed the boundaries so far that we might not have what we need to survive if we do not recognize the contribution the wild life and all other parts of creation have a need to exist so we too can exist in this universe.

No Name: I think wild horses deserve the right to live on their land Kaos and everything should come second wild animals deserve the sanctuary.

No Name: I'm so tired of helping the farmers and cattlemen at the expense of wildlife including horses, bear, wolves and coyotes. We've taken over so much land that was meant for animals that we at least need to not get rid of them!!!

No Name: Just quit & leave the horses be. Let winter, predators and injuries manage the wild horses.

No Name: Mustangs should be protected like all other endangered species! They are a huge part of our American heritage! They have the right to run free! There has to be a happy medium somewhere between both parties. I do know we owe them the right to exist! No one has the right to destroy them or sterilize them into non-existence!

No Name: Please allow the wild horses to remain in the Wyoming Checkerboard. These horses are icons of our American heritage. If you do not believe the horses can coexist with the livestock that is allowed by the public allotments, perhaps the livestock should be reduced. 7,000 cow/calf pair and 66,817 sheep seems quite excessive when compared with 1,965 wild horses.

No Name: Please consider these animals a treasure! No more killing of these magnificent creatures.

No Name: Please DO NOT DO THIS!!! Millions and millions of us are against this action Please listen to us.

No Name: Please do not reduce or remove the wild horses from the Rock Springs or Rawlins herds. I am no expert, but I am a horse person who lives in Wyoming. They aren't hurting anything and they are a symbol of our freedom. They do not look skinnier than any other wild horses and they are surviving just fine.

No Name: PLEASE find a way to WORK IT OUT to let the wild horses and burros stay on their designated land. Thousands of other people enjoy viewing, photographing, spotting, these animals that have been there for hundreds of years.

No Name: Please leave the horses alone. It costs a bloody fortune to "manage" them--and I pay taxes so I resent it on that very basic level.

No Name: Please save our American icons, the wild mustang! We are talking about our heritage versus the livestock industry making money - you can't put a price on our heritage.

No Name: Please spend your energies on the job you were given...to protect our land and its animals. You were not created to help developers destroy them.

No Name: Preserve wild horse habitat, it's part of American history that we still have a piece of. I'm on the horses' side not livestock grazing private interests', and for the humane treatment and maintenance of wild horses.

No Name: Shouldn't we look at the intent behind the 1971 law Congress passed ordering BLM to care for these wild horses as "cultural icons"? Was their intent to abuse and jail these animals at the expense of the American taxpayers? BLM represents all Americans, not just private landowners. Let's invest some time in trying to create a compromise with landowners rather than throwing more money at the problem.

No Name: Sorry but with the numbers of horses already in holding and the money needed to keep yet another stockpile of horses is too much. BLM has to manage on the horses on the range as they were directed to by the 1971 law.

No Name: The unwanted beach grass on the North Spit area of BLM land is taking over the land. Horses love to eat it so why not send some of the wild horses to our area to rid the unwanted grass?

No Name: This checkerboard pattern was a disaster the day it was even conceived. From the start it set the horses up for failure.

No Name: To whom this concerns in making the decisions on our wild horses of Wyoming I beg you to reconsider and come to a solution that is in favor of the continuing protection of our own American heritage in the wild horses rights to continue their lives as intended...nothing is more important than the protection and fair care for these horses.

No Name: We need to let these horses live free. They represent our ties to the Wild West and our unique way of life in the United States of America.

No Name: WE THE PEOPLE DO NOT WANT THE WILD HORSES ELIMINATED THEY REPRESENT OUR COUNTRY AND OUR FREEDOMS ALL OF WHICH WE WANT TO HANG ONTO. we want to preserve wild horses on our public lands in these four herd areas, and not submit to pressure from the Rock Springs Grazing Association to virtually wipe them out.

Pamela Towne: As a U.S. taxpayer I vehemently oppose any action that will eliminate horses so that more cattle can be grazed on my dime. It is unacceptable as well as in direct opposition to federal legislation to eliminate the Salt Wells Creek and Great Divide Basin herds.

Pat Doherty: I oppose the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM's) plan to amend the Rawlins and Rock Springs Resource Management Plans (RMPs) to destroy the wild free-roaming horse herds of the Wyoming Checkerboard. It is your mandatory duty to protect wild horses in this area NOT KILL THEM .

Paula Saraceno: Protection of wild horses is mandated by federal law. Uphold our laws. Don't kill our horses.

Peggy Jennings: Wild horses are part of our legacy in America and also a part of the foundation upon which this country was built. Preservation of our heritage requires the protection of our wild spaces and wild creatures!

Phyllis Kelly: I strongly oppose the plan to reduce and eliminate wild horses from Wyoming! Herds can be managed by judicious, prudent sterilization programs, not universal elimination plans such as you are proposing! What are you people thinking? Ask for donations to properly conduct the striation program and you will get them. Why are you taking the quick, easy, cheap way out of preserving the national treasure we have in the herds of wild horses? Cattle ranchers have plenty of resources, land and dollars to feed and manage their herds. They simply do not want to do what they should do as responsible ranchers.

Rachelle Zocco: I have a decent understanding of the politics behind this, but let me you remind you that the cattle industry is NOT the Government of the American people - what you are proposing is wrong and is out of line and is a direct violation of the 1971 Wild Horse and Burro Free Roaming Act.

Ray and Christine Eide: BLM to Wipe Out Wild Horses in the Wyoming Checkerboard can you explain to me an owner of one of these magnificent animals why we must destroy such a beautiful piece of history. I would as a tax payer like to know why you are destroying these animals, I feel since I pay your salary I deserve an answer. It's wrong, I think you all know it's wrong but you just don't want to deal with them anymore what is the truth?

Rebeca Khoury: These horses must be saved!! Leave them to roam as they did before we overpopulated and took over!! To slaughter these beautiful animals for no reason that is acceptable does not make sense! Let the horses be!

Rothery Gensel: Analysis of the impacts and issues need to be included in an Environmental Impact Statement: There is a lack of ecological, biological, and legal basis for eliminating the populations of WILD horses in an HMA that existed at the time the wild horse statute was passed in 1971. The recreational use impacts due to loss for watching the WILD horses, a popular activity particularly in the more accessible HMAs, which are scheduled to be zeroed out (Salt Wells Creek and Divide Basin) and in the White Mountain HMA where opportunity to view federally-protected wild free roaming behaviors of wild horses will be destroyed by BLM's plans to sterilize the herds.

Rothery Gensel: Re-map or exchange areas of checkerboard. According to the Congressional Research Service, "Exchanges can be used to change the "checkerboard" pattern of federal, state, and privately

owned lands in the West that resulted from early land grants. Consolidation of the land would increase efficiency of land management.

Rothery Gensel: The economic impacts of the proposed action, including lost revenues, costs for roundup and lifetime holding of horses vs. the economic benefits to American taxpayers of reducing or eliminating taxpayer subsidized livestock grazing in this area.

Sally Jamir: Please preserve the wild horses on our public lands and in the four major herd areas. They are our national heritage just like the bald eagle, the black bear, the polar bear and others.

Sandra Goodwin: BLM is supposed to be multiple use. Once the extraction industry moves in, there is no other use, the real reason for the removal. Congress decreed that these horses have a "right" to use this land. Stop allowing one use to dictate the removal of our horses.

Sara Duane-Gladden: Stop removing the wild horses from their natural habitats. This systematic destruction of America's natural and animal heritage needs to stop. We must preserve wild horses on our public lands in Adobe Town, Salt Wells Creek, Great Divide Basin and White Mountain herd areas, and not submit to pressure from the Rock Springs Grazing Association to virtually wipe them out.

September Raine: I do not understand why we can't just leave the wild herds alone to live in peace. They were there long before man and his livestock were but man is so greedy that he feels he can't share with the wild ones. The land belongs to them and should be kept that way. America was built on the back of a horse and the horse should be treated with respect, not eradicated as the BLM is trying to do. Please do not allow this atrocity to continue, the wild ones deserve to be on the land that God placed them on. That is their home and we have no right to say they can't be there because of man's selfish greed!

Sevim Perry: Take an hour and go meet one of these herds you are going to break apart and watch their family dynamics and see the love they share. We can learn a lot from them about honor, trust and family.

Sheelagh Matthews: Please take this opportunity to protect the wild horses of the Wyoming Checkerboard for future generations. There is nothing more inspiring to humankind than to witness a horse in the wild as it grazes or gallops away. We need to protect their habitat, and we need to protect them.

Shirley White: The majority of Americans admire and love our iconic wild horses. These horses have run on this land for hundreds of years and should never be removed to stock pens or slaughter houses (God Forbid) to provide range for ranchers and cattlemen to run their herds. This is still public lands and we would rather see our horses and burros than thousands of private cattle! Don't sell out history or our wild horses to placate special interest groups! Americans want and deserve much more from the BLM!!!

Sue King: I am writing to you (from South Africa) to implore you to please leave the wild horses of the Wyoming Checkerboard alone to live in peace. To remove the horses in order to assist ranchers to graze their livestock is wrong. Livestock grazing on public lands is a privilege, not a right, while the horses are protected by federal law!

Susan Cable: I have followed the wild horse plight for some years now and to this very day I have yet to have anyone on either side explain why we are trying to manage a number of horses that is so small compared to the acreage they inhabit.

Susette Gaghagen: I would hope you abide by the laws regarding your handling of the American People's wild and Free Mustangs.

Suzanne Bennett: CORPORATE RANCHERS, GAS, OIL AND COAL CORPORATIONS, URANIUM MINING OPERATIONS AND ALL THE OTHER CORPORATE ENTITIES THAT WANT TO STEAL OUR LAND HAVE NO RIGHT!

Suzanne Roy - American Wild Horse Preservation: Alternatives for eliminating livestock grazing altogether in HMAs, and for equitably distributing (50-50) forage resources between wild horses and livestock in HMAs should be included. At a minimum, wild horse AMLs should be maintained in all HMAs.

Suzanne Roy - American Wild Horse Preservation: BLM should undertake land swaps to resolve conflicts in checkerboard areas.

Teresa Shively: The wild horse originated on this continent over 58 million years ago. There were over 2 million free roaming wild horses and burros in 1900. Now, there are an estimated 12,000 – 15,000 in the wild, and over 40,000 warehoused in holding facilities, costing the American tax payer over \$120,000/DAY. Most of the herds that are targeted are thriving prior to the round-ups, contrary to the disinformation spread by the Department of the Interior, and the Bureau of Land Management. Moreover, on these same lands, in 2010, the BLM sold over 12.5 million grazing permit units, which translates into even more animals allowed to graze on these same lands that you claim cannot sustain small herds of 30 or more horses. Our government LOSES millions of dollars each year on this grazing for cattle, sheep and goats, for such things as range improvement and grazing management, along with the horse holding facilities costs. Horses crop of the tops of grasses and shrubs, making the grass roots stronger, and fortifying the land. Cows, as an example, pull grass up from the roots. The round-ups themselves are also expensive. This makes no sense at all from any type of financial or sustainability standpoint, and it is brutal and horrific as well. You are selling out our public lands to corporate ranchers, and to mineral, oil and gas extraction, and eradicating our wild horse to this effect.

Tom Rossi: Wild American Horses are a part of our country's history, and so are the American Indians.

Virginia Holmes: These wild horses have always represented a symbol of freedom in these United States. The BLM caters to ranchers and big business, i.e., oil, coal. Have you forgotten that this is OUR land and OUR tax dollars being used for such an inhumane purpose. Why have you not set sanctuaries for these beautiful, majestic creatures as Idaho has done.

Wanda Weir: Let's follow the law and the will of the People. Our agencies (BLM) need to act according to the tenets and purpose for which they were established. Let's not eradicate the beautifully diverse wild horses which enhance our pleasure and stimulate our senses. There are private groups that would erase an important era of American history for their own benefit. (Sort of a land grab.)

Wendy Tico: I am opposed to the significant reduction of wild horses in the Rock Springs HMA.

Adoption/Sales

Arleen Rooney: The adoption programs seem to be only open to the foals or those born in the holding areas after roundups. If it wasn't for the numerous, but far too few, sanctuaries that take some of the older horses, they would languish in holding pens as the others do.

Donna Jones: Despite studies that show no scientific basis for your removal of the horses, the agency continues to capture and sell the wild horses to slaughter agents, or attempt to adopt them out. BLM's policy is responsible for continuing to glut the market for recreational horses, which contributes to the overwhelming landslide of horses in rescues and sanctuaries. Leave them where they are!!!

Kyra Odabashian: Adopt them out! Find them nice homes, people who will break them, use them, teach them.

M Judd: I cannot even adopt a mustang unless I have a shelter and a 40 x 40 pen. Yet the government allows the BLM to hold them without shelter in pens so crowded they step on each other and fight.

Montie Adamson: Instead of killing off one of our Nation's heritages, there are numerous people, myself included, who would love to adopt these beautiful animals. The problem is finding the land in the area I would like for this purpose. If you have any suggestions please let me know. Please do not kill these most precious animals.

Montie Adamson: There are numerous people, including myself, who would love to adopt these most magnificent horses. The problem is finding the land in the area of the country that I want to make this happen.

Montie Adamson: Try to think of others ways, such as having program(s) for those who very much want to have some of their own but cannot at present due to finding the proper land.

Moving Cloud Productions: I am adamantly opposed to the following actions: Removing horses for which there is no proven determination of adoption demand

Moving Cloud Productions: I support the following: Removing only horses for which there is a provable determination of adoption demand, as described in Scenario 2 of the scoping letter.

Moving Cloud Productions: The 1971 Wild Horse Act requires that, "The Secretary shall cause such number of additional excess wild free- - roaming horses and burros to be humanely captured and removed for private maintenance and care for which he determines an adoption demand exists by qualified individuals, and for which he determines he can assure humane treatment and care (including proper transportation, feeding, and handling)." Little if any adoption demand exists for any of the horses you propose to round up. Sending horses directly to long-term holding, is illegal. Although there are more horses in BLM holding facilities and private long-term holding facilities than there are on the range, wholesale removal and stockpiling of wild horses on private lands was not the intent of, and violates, the 1971 Wild Horse Act. The illegality of long-term holding is made clear by the act itself, and even the General Accounting Office acknowledges that long-term holding illegal.

No Name: It's not management--it's INTERMENT. Realistically, it's a prison sentence to a wild animal. Very few horse get adopted. Besides, ADOPTION is a tenuous solution at best. I have adopted mustangs--and these are not animals for the inexperienced. Bad for the horse--and bad for the owner. I love our Mustangs--and wish I could have more. I have a limit on my budget.

Sally Jamir: Where possible constructed barriers can be used to channel some activity of the horses. Expand the programs which provide wild horses to trainers to ready horses for civilian ownership. The horses and ranchers can share the land.

Vikki Wise: Have you never once considered having a huge horse sale?? You could make some money, some good will and get the horses to good homes, of course you would have to check out potential homes, which should be easy for the federal government. You tend to oversee everyone and everything, but please consider some creative solutions.

Appropriate Management Levels (AML)

Ada Inbody: GRAZING SHEEP AND CATTLE AT EXTREMELY HIGH NUMBERS AND LOW FEES TO SACRIFICE WILD HORSES IS NO WHAT REPRESENTATIVES INTENDED WITH LEGISLATION. IF HORSES NUMBERS ARE TO BE REDUCED, CERTAINLY CATTLE AUMS SHOULD BE REDUCED IN EQUAL NUMBERS.

Anne Avery: I completely disagree with the intention of the BLM to reduce the herd sizes in Southern WY so dramatically and to such low levels, that will not be viable for population sustainability. This management suggestion is a slow death sentence for these southern Wyoming herds.

Charles Reed: With regard to the basic assumptions used to project population numbers for the Adobe Town HMA some important factual errors have been employed. First, as stated in the Great Divide Wild Horse Management Area Evaluation and Capture Plan on page 9 in the penultimate paragraph, the AML does not include the unweaned colts of the year. This is consistent with the way livestock numbers are portrayed. Second, in the 2006 Evaluation and Monitoring Report for the Adobe Town HMA, the long term recruitment rate for the Adobe Town HMA is stated as 16% not 20%. Given that that does not reflect mortality in age classes greater than 2, it is extremely unlikely that the 2013 population level will even approach 610 plus unweaned colts and therefore a removal action is not only unwarranted but highly questionable given the recent release of the NAS report. If the proposed action were to be rebranded as a fertility control exercise, the guidelines for selection of mares for vaccination should include clear standards that would be used to select mares of desirable characteristics that would be allowed to reproduce unhindered. This is one place where the BLM would have the opportunity to increase desirable traits amongst the horses. Just a few generations of selective management in the use of removal and fertility control in the Pryor Mountain herd produced noticeable, desirable results.

Christianna Capra: I support Alternative 4 in the Rock Springs EA that will set the AML for the wild horses at 100-121 animals & reduce livestock numbers so that the forage allocations are more in balance with wild horse & livestock use in the limited size, legal HMA. This allocation follows the original intent of the 1971 Wild Free-Roaming Horses & Burros Act.

Doris McQuiddy: Keeping the fewer and fewer remaining wild horses away from the appropriate grazing and water habitat cannot by any stretch of the imagination be considered balancing the public interest. This is especially so when so many of the tax paying citizens (who are required by your decisions to finance the cattlemen's welfare) object to your lowering the allowed numbers of reproducing wild horses and burros on the worst grazing areas. Meanwhile, the cattle and sheep gain more and more land to degrade and destroy.

Ginger Kathrens - The Cloud Foundation: 2. Herd sizing of Adobe Town, Salt Wells and Divide Basin The proposed removals would significantly deplete the Adobe Town herd and erase the Salt Wells herd populations through inhumane helicopter roundups. Such actions would render the few remaining horses a genetically non-viable herd. The proposed changes would involve the removal of entire herds if the herd exceeded the 200-horse limit for Salt Wells or the 100-horse limit for Divide Basin. This indicates that the BLM is already aware that the herds exceed the intended limits and, with this knowledge, is proposing what will become full-scale removals rather than legitimate herd management strategies. This is a direct contradiction of functional HMAs.

Ginger Kathrens - The Cloud Foundation: Even the Consent Decree repeatedly stipulates that BLM retains the discretion to manage the wild-horse program as it deems proper, meaning the BLM is still charged with maintaining healthy, genetically viable herds. Removing such a high number of horses from the range would not achieve this goal. The goal should not be to manage down to the minimum viable

population but rather up from it. The goal is not to keep the wild horse population as low as possible but as high as possible to ensure genetic viability. This is stated repeatedly in Cothran's genetic studies, in which he concludes that a Genetic Effective Population (active breeding population) size is 50 at a bare minimum. This number represents approximately one third of the total herd size. Cothran's research has been consistently misunderstood and misrepresented by BLM. The 2013 study by Cothran of the Pryor Mountain Wild Horse Herd (PMWHR) should be a wakeup call to wild horse herd managers. This most recent assessment indicates that a larger population is required in order to avoid inbreeding. The Pryor Herd has been managed between 135 and 210 wild horses for the past 20 years. So, one can conclude that any herds managed at less than 200 total horses would be in jeopardy of losing genetic viability and could slide into inbreeding, a precursor to a complete population collapse.

Ginger Kathrens - The Cloud Foundation: The BLM cited that changes would include the following directives in compliance with the consent decree: change the Salt Wells HMA to a Herd Area, which would be managed for zero wild horses; and if BLM determines there are more than 200 wild horses within the Herd Area, the area will have subsequent roundups to zero out wild horses. Great Divide Basin (GDB) HMA would be changed to a Herd Area, to be managed for zero wild horses, and if BLM determines there are more than 100 wild horses within the Herd Area, the area will be re-gathered to zero wild horses. Adobe Town HMA AML would be reduced to 225–450 wild horses or lower, and gathered wild horses will not be returned to the Salt Wells area. Management of the White Mountain HMA would maintain a non-reproducing herd by utilizing fertility control and sterilization methods to maintain a population of 205 geldings and/or spayed mares and to initiate roundups if the population exceeds 205 wild horses. We reject the implementation of the above changes in the RMPs, as it would bring the herds down to genetically unsustainable levels and the maintenance of a non-reproducing herd would be ultimately unsuccessful.

John Hay III - Rock Springs Grazing Association: AMLs Must Account for Wildlife Management Decisions The Wyoming Game and Fish Department (WGFD) sets wildlife population objectives for game animals. In both the Rawlins and Rock Springs Districts, the population objectives for pronghorn antelope and elk have increased since 1982 when the AMLs were set. The WHA requires BLM to consult with WGFD on all management activities and to consider wildlife needs in determining numbers of wild horses and ecological balance. 16 U.S.C. §1333(b). The WGFD reports show that WGFD objectives have increased for pronghorn antelope from populations remain stable. In the hunt areas south of 1-80 the objective was and still is 10,000 and there were 10,557 in 2012. The hunt areas north of 1-80 have increased the population objectives from 19,400 to 48000. Antelope numbers have also increased from 30,000 in 1986 to 40,770 in 2012. WGFD has increased the elk herd objectives but elk numbers remain much the same as they were in 1982, except for the Steamboat and Petition elk herds, both of which have increased. The Petition elk herd was established in 1990s and has an objective of 300. There is no official count but some elk move between Wyoming and Colorado. The Colorado Division of Wildlife estimates the elk in this area to range from 750 to 900. pers. comm. Findley. The Steamboat elk herd objective has increased from 500 to 1200 and there were 982 in 2012.

Joy Vancos: Those passing the 1971 Act undoubtedly did so thinking the horses were worthy of protection, and provided areas where they thought the horses could live free of harm under that protection. The numbers given in the EA are approximate and does not take into account actual numbers of horses which may be deceased. The BLM is fully aware of recent studies and reports suggesting AML numbers need to be kept on the high side.

Justin Williams: WDA fully supports BLM analyzing and implementing the Rock Springs Grazing Association Consent Decree (Decree). This is primarily due to past history and current conditions showing an increasing population of wild horses, and BLM's inability to consistently manage wild horses at the AMLs designation and agreed upon in the 2003 Consent Decree, or previously agreed levels.

Justin Williams: WDA urges BLM research oil and gas development, wildlife populations, wild horse populations, and livestock Animal Unit Months (AUMs) from the early 1980's when the HMAs and AMLs were originally proposed and implemented. BLM should compare the 1980's numbers to current oil and gas development, wildlife populations, wild horse populations and livestock AUMs.

Justin Williams: We are disappointed the 2003 Consent Decree between the State of Wyoming and the BLM is no longer viable. Throughout the history and passing of the Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burro Act in 1971, the BLM has developed HMAs with Appropriate Management Levels and Populations (AMLs). Unfortunately, the BLM fails to adhere to the AMLs within the HMAs for Wyoming's wild horse populations.

Lenore Mullaney: I am not against reducing the AML of the Adobe Town HMA wild horse population unless this will be accomplished via helicopter round-up.

Lenore Mullaney: Zeroing out the Salt Wells Creek and Great Divide Basin HMA's and converting the White Mountain HMA to a sterilized, non-reproducing herd sound more like the goals of the Rock Springs Grazing Association rather than the goals of an agency entrusted with the protection of a viable wild horse population.

Mark Konishi - USFWS: Based on potentially serious environmental effects, we recommend the inclusion of an alternative that analyzes the need to reduce horse numbers to a level below that which is considered the low-end of the BLM's current AML.

Mark Konishi - USFWS: We recommend formulation of an emergency action proposal for inclusion in one of the Environmental Assessment alternatives that would analyze a reduction of horse numbers by at least 25-30% below the lower range of the BLM's AML for each HMA. We recommend this alternative based on potential long-term drought and concurrent adverse effects on forage and water availability for wildlife.

Moving Cloud Productions: Horses The BLM has a current internal policy of “zeroing out” wild horse herds, including those within herd management areas like the Spring Creek HMA, in direct contravention of the 1971 Wild Free- - Roaming Horse Act.

Moving Cloud Productions: I greatly appose and disagree with zeroing out the Salt Wells Creek and Great Divide Basin wild horse herds! I greatly disagree with reducing Adobe Town herd's Appropriate Management Level (AML) to 225 horses and managing the White Mountain herd as a non-reproducing herd!

Moving Cloud Productions: I support an alternative that favors in- - the- - wild management, including:
1. Setting the AML at genetically viable levels of at least 150, preferably over 200 horses

Moving Cloud Productions: I support an alternative that favors Increased rangeland to the areas wild horses were found in 1971, including areas where wild horses have been “zeroed out”

Moving Cloud Productions: NEPA requires the BLM to consider cumulative impacts and base its decisions on current science. Accordingly, as part of this proposed action, the BLM must freshly analyze and adjust the AML based upon its knowledge of genetic viability, recent data concerning rangeland health, and the specific effects of horses vs. ruminants on that rangeland health.

No Name: I am writing this to please urge you to reconsider the management of the mustang populations. Especially the White Mountain Herd. If the herd is forced into a non-reproductive state they WILL

BECOME EXTINCT! The proposed amount of horses to be rounded up is TOO MUCH. The genetics pool of these horses is going to be forced into a "bottleneck" effect which will eventually lead to their demise. Diversity of the bloodlines is an absolutely vital role in the survival of this country's greatest heritage. The wild mustang is iconic to the heritage of America and they must be protected.

Pamela Towne: Reducing the AML of wild horses for the Adobe Town Herd from 610-800 to just 225-450 horses will jeopardize the genetic viability of this herd.

Rachel Reeves: There is no justification for lowering the AML for Adobe Town. The amount of private land that exists in Adobe Town is minimal, as it comprises only 5.5% of the total acreage in Adobe Town. Most Adobe Town wild horses stay south of the private acres. Lowering the AML so it is 360-385 less than the current AML is entirely unreasonable - there are not that many horses in the checkerboard portion of Adobe Town. I understand that the BLM's reasoning is to prevent potential overpopulation where the checkerboard exists. However, the RSGA does not have the right to make demands about the population of herds in regions that are outside of the checkerboard.

Rachelle Zocco: The BLM is planning to zero out the Salt Wells Creek and Great Divide Basin Herd Management Areas, planning to cut the Allowable Management Level of the Adobe Town HMA by more than half, and convert the wild horse population in the White Mountain HMA to a non-reproducing herd - this violates the Wild Free Roaming Horses and Burros Act.

Shelly Simpson: I oppose the BLM's plans to zero out the Salt Wells Creek and Great Divide Basin Herds, and the reduction of the AML for Adobe Town to 225 - 450 horses and turning the White Mountain Herd into a sterile, non-reproducing herd.

Suzanne Roy - American Wild Horse Preservation: BLM should decrease livestock AUMs and increase wild horse AMLs.

Suzanne Roy - American Wild Horse Preservation: BLM should increase the AML in the Little Colorado Management Area and maintain current or increased AML in the Adobe Town HMA.

Suzanne Roy - American Wild Horse Preservation: BLM should not change the white mountain herd to a non-reproducing one.

Suzanne Roy - American Wild Horse Preservation: BLM should not reduce AMLs in Salt wells Creek, Great Divide Basin and Adobe Town HMAs.

Wendy Tico: I am a supporter of wild horses and want the BLM to ensure that wild horses continue to have grazing rights that support a herd size capable of maintaining genetic viability.

Grazing

Form Letter 1: I request that the following alternatives be analyzed in the EIS: •Continue ranchers' PRIVILEGE of public lands livestock grazing at taxpayer- subsidized, below-market rates IN EXCHANGE FOR tolerating the presence of wild horses on the private lands in the checkerboard and on the public lands where they have a RIGHT to exist. If ranchers do not agree to this arrangement, then their PRIVILEGE to graze livestock on the public lands at taxpayer subsidized rates, which is given solely at the DISCRETION of the Interior Secretary – shall be REVOKED.

Form Letter 1: I request that the following alternatives be analyzed in the EIS: •Reduce livestock grazing instead of wild horse numbers in the Wyoming Checkerboard. Presently tens of thousands of

sheep and cattle are permitted to graze the public lands portions of the Wyoming checkerboard while fewer than 2,000 wild horses are authorized.

Alison A. Moceri: I understand that wild animals must share the land with grazing livestock, but at what cost? I believe it is time for private ranchers to take a back seat to wild animals. I think the Federal Government should hold up their, our, commitment to both the environment and their constituents. I understand the huge pressure and financial incentives from the Cattle industry are hard to resist, but I am concerned that you are all crossing the line.

Arleen Rooney: The problem with any of these analyses is that they are slanted. They only concentrate on what the wild horse supposedly is doing to the natural habitat. The commercial cattle outnumber the horses 50 to 1 and represent a commercial, non-native use of our public lands. They are far more destructive to the natural plant and terrain than horses.

Barbara Leonard: We want WELFARE cattle/sheep REMOVED from our western public lands

Belinda Eastmond: The fact that ranchers have been allowed to use public lands for grazing does not give them the right to dictate the management of these lands. Yes, I am aware that mustangs are a non-native species, introduced to the Americas from Europe. By now, though, they have become thoroughly entrenched in America's image of itself. If the ranchers find that the mustangs are interfering with their use of the public lands, then I suggest that they be restricted from using those lands. The mustangs were there first, and the mustangs belong to the people of the United States.

Carla Thrasher: I am concerned that the BLM is considering a plan that will effectively wipe out the existing mustangs in the area under consideration. I am totally opposed to the plan because: 1. It is a right, not an obligation to provide land for grazing at a subsidy rate to ranchers in the area.

Cheryl Casati: I'm not sure why you're set on eliminating these horses, they take little feed and DO not interfere with cattle, but promote range balance. This has been proven scientifically.

Christel Sparks: The wild horses are a national treasure, and the business profits of a few shouldn't be more important than what joy our children and grandchildren and so on would reap from keeping wild horses safe. Please protect the herds!

Derek Wessner: This is so wrong those ranchers need to be the ones to cut back their herds. Such greedy people. Yeah and I can see our government not helping these beautiful horses their not into Past living history, their into destruction of our future history. This is so sad, they need to leave the wild horses alone once and for all the wild horses was here first.

Diane Vandermark: I can't state strongly enough that I would much rather have wild horses running free on my public lands than grazing livestock from private farms. These ranchers have never paid their way, and they have no right to evict my horses that are federally protected.

Dolly @ Rebel Oil Company: Please less cattle...they are not needed and only serve the purpose to make a rancher richer at the tax payer's expense and the expense of the Protected Wild Horse and Burro's very existence.

Doris McQuiddy: I understand that the BLM must maintain a balance of interest on public lands. However, ensuring that grazing by cattle and sheep over more than 80% of the public land area and a shrunken 17.5% allocated for wild horses cannot be considered a balance. Nor can it be considered implementing the federal law to protect the wild horses and burros.

Doris McQuiddy: Why is it that the cattleman's association is allowed this subsidy that other cattlemen on the east coast and in the southern states cannot be entitled to receive? It is not a balance but an unfair advantage over those not receiving such government welfare. Yet it should be acknowledged that other competitors (not on the grazing leases/welfare) have competed and earned profits without destroying the habitat for wild animals including the wild horses and burros.

Evelyn Buchardt: Please leave these beautiful wild animals alone, and stop the overproduction of cattle. So much meat is never consumed and goes to waste anyway. Lives are lost in vain. Produce less cattle, or purchase their food, but do not use free public lands for anything other than wild life.

Everett Halligan DVM: Not like the ranchers, that just take and take the taxpayers' dollars and live on the extra subsidies.

Frances Ottinger: Public lands livestock grazing is a privilege not a right, while protection of wild horses is mandated by federal law!

Ginger Kathrens - The Cloud Foundation: It must be noted that if BLM were to misguidedly remove large numbers of wild horses, it would also remove the benefits these animals provide to the range and to the other wildlife that share the HMAs with them. A significant amount of forage passes undigested through a horse's system, thereby reseeding the land and building nutrient-rich humus, a critical component of healthy soils.

Gloria Lee: Since the cattle allowed now vastly outnumber them, perhaps a few less cows is a better choice.

Julie McDonough: According to current statistics, livestock outnumbers wild horses and burros 50:1 and that is simply unjust.

Justin Williams: Wild horses are no longer remaining in the HMAs for crucial winter range, but are instead increasing in population and utilizing the developed water and rangeland resources season-long. This is in direct conflict and contrast with livestock grazing, which is strictly limited primarily to rotational systems on a designated season-of-use.

Karen-Kathy Harris: THE WILD HORSES NOW THEY DO NOT EAT THE RANGELAND. AND LIVESTOCK OWNERS DO NOT GRAZE THEIR LIVESTOCK IN THE DESERT THE CATTLE EAT HAY OR GO TO FEED LOTS.

Kat Turro: Halt the wild horse roundup, get rid of the cattle instead! The cattle industry has taken over our public lands! They have already removed most of the predator animals from our public lands such as the wolf, coyote, bear and lion and now they are hell bent on removing the rest of the grazing animals as well. There is a handful of ranchers benefiting from this, the rest of us in this country are tired of it. The cattle industry has degraded our streams, wiped out our wildlife, and made our people fat and disease ridden. Do the right thing for once... be a leader for a better future for all of us not just a handful of ranchers!

Kate Dougherty: Remove the cattle.

Kenneth Reed: The BLM should get out of the cattle and sheep grazing business in the checkerboard area of Wyoming which they aren't doing very well and use for wild horse grazing. Use the money that is being used to hold wild horses in long term holding pens to lease grazing rights on private land in the checkerboard area of Wyoming.

Kim Hart: As far as the Rock Springs Grazing Association, they should keep their cattle on their own privately leased land and off BLM! It is time for these so called ranchers who lease grazing rights for practically nothing start paying "fair" market price for grazing rights or get the cattle off public land (and quit bitching about the horses!). I can't run cattle in Oklahoma for those prices. If I had my way the number of cattle could not exceed the number of horses on the range.

Kyra Odabashian: If people are angry about the wild horses going on private property then BUILD A FENCE.

Laurie Allen: What are you going to do nexteliminate the Elk, Moose, Bison and Deer? Your cattle is not the only thing that needs to graze!!! Buy some hay or better yet grow it on your own land and graze your animals! If you can't feed your cattle without exterminating another living creature who needs grazing and been here longer than all of us then downsize, move to better grazing options or don't do it!

Lenore Mullaney: To use public land primarily for welfare ranchers gives them an unfair advantage in the marketplace over those in other parts of the country.

Lida Gregory: And let's face it, cows in fact graze much more intensively and leave a much heavier impact on the range than the horses, who move and graze in a less impactful way.

Lisa Cronin: Stop catering to ranchers who receive tax subsidies to graze their livestock on our public lands. This is a privilege not a right and it's being abused!

Lola Haus: It's terrible the small prices that ranchers pay to graze their cattle/sheep on public lands compared to what they would pay if it were private. It think one way to help everyone out is to raise the grazing rates.

Lorraine Forston: Keep private livestock on private land owned by the private ranchers, public lands belong to the people not the ranchers.

Lynette Dumont: These animals support bio-diversity, not the slow moving cattle that graze on our dimes and produce vast amounts of methane.

Maggie Frazier: Isn't it time the horses & burros welfare was given a higher priority? Why is it necessary to bow to these ranchers who have had their own way for far too long.

Mary Mosher: These horses are healthy and fine where they are. there is no better wild horse habitat anywhere in the US. Leave them alone.

Moving Cloud Productions: Domestic livestock grazing is more detrimental to the rangeland than wild horses. They have a long-term effect on the type of vegetation available to wild horses and other wild animals, and a detrimental effect on the rangeland and its ability to recover. For example, over trampling by cattle increases the dust load levels on the rangeland.

Moving Cloud Productions: I support an alternative that favors Cancelling all grazing leases in the herd management area If horses must be gathered

Moving Cloud Productions: I support an alternative that favors Providing additional water sources

Moving Cloud Productions: I support an alternative that favors Removing fencing to increase rangeland resources

Moving Cloud Productions: If the concern is rangeland health in Wyoming then based on the foregoing, the BLM should decrease or eliminate livestock permits, as provided for existing regulations. Under the BLM's Wild Horses and Burros Management Handbook ("WHBM Handbook"), the BLM has authority to cut off grazing rights, and to authorize "closure to livestock grazing," which "may be temporary or permanent (43 CFR 4710©)." As well, the BLM could convert cattle AUMs to wild horse AUMs (Page 9 - - "BLM Alternative Management Report").

Moving Cloud Productions: Wild horses and burros have become the scapegoat for range deterioration, yet the BLM's own data, as well as that of independent experts, confirms that the majority of rangeland deterioration is caused by livestock.

Nancie McCormish: If ranchers need subsidizing we can find better ways than to eliminate entire herds of public wildlife. I see no efforts at finding better solutions here, only the same tired thinking which has led to the situation we all face today.

No Name: For better land management i.e.: grazing, etc. perhaps the whole scope of over grazing should be considered and reconsidered.

No Name: How about forced PZP vaccine for the over populated cattle herds over grazing, hoof eroding and manure contaminating the open range.

No Name: I do not want my tax dollars supporting commercial grazing at the cost of losing the genetic diversity and viability of these herds.

No Name: Since I am a citizen of the US & I pay taxes – I would much prefer my tax money was not spent on making up the difference between what the cattlemen actually pay per cow & calf grazing on PUBLIC lands.

No Name: There is obviously enough land for them to graze and renew themselves

No Name: There would be enough food for the mustangs and burros if the cattle and sheep were limited to their own grazing lands-the farmers' own ranches. These government lands were set aside strictly to protect the wild mustangs and that is what they are to be used for.

No Name: These horses are icons of the west. I do hope that you plan on taking livestock off as well. I would rather see the wild horses than a bunch of cows and sheep.

No Name: This widespread eradication of the wild horses & burros certainly damages the environment as much as turning thousands of cattle & sheep out on them. The only difference being the horses & burros can live with nature – unlike the cows & sheep. Perhaps it would be advantageous for someone at the BLM to actually read the NAS report.

No Name: Wild horses belong on public lands. The ranchers should not be allowed to decimate public lands for pennies an acre while the rest of us pay for the removal, imprisonment and annihilation of all wildlife.

Paula Holden: Remember grazing is grazing, so let's be good stewards of the land and share.

Paula Saraceno: You need to decrease the cattle herds.

Phillips: Leave the wild horses alone. I see the BLM land near me devastated by cattle that need a high maintenance diet just to survive! They eat it to dirt. Areas where mustangs graze look far better because horses live on stuff that cattle would die eating. And horses don't stand in one place all day making a wallow the way cows do.

Rachelle Zocco: It is fiscally irresponsible to continue subsidized grazing on our public lands - The Center for Biological Diversity estimates and states a loss to the tax payer of a total of 1/2 billion dollars

Raelynn Miller: REMOVE THE CATTLE, NOT the American Wild Horses!!!!

Robert Jasper: Can't somebody in a leadership role show the courage to tell them to just go out and buy some hay like the family farmers have to do?

Rothery Gensel: There is MORE than enough land to support their numbers in the proposed reduction areas! Just because the Grazing Association wants to feed more livestock on tax subsidized grazing of the public lands portions of the checkerboard, they request the wild horse herds be removed, reduced, or sterilized!? This is so unfair to a national treasure and a tremendous loss to the people who wish to watch and photograph these wonderful animals. Create a solution for the livestock and our WILD horses to cohabitate on the lands. Why should the livestock be more entitled than our WILD horses? Propose an agreement with the Grazing Association to do this or they lose their grazing privileges in this area. The PRESERVATION & PROTECTION of our WILD horses is MANDATED by LAW!! The grazing of livestock on public & private land is a privilege that can be REVOKED by the Secretary of the Interior.

Sharon James: Your job as I see it is to protect them from livestock over grazing of their land. The 1971 Act was not called the Wild Free-Roaming Livestock Act. A little common sense in the use of their land which belongs to the American people needs to be used. If you cull 1 horse you need to cull 20 head of livestock. Removing the Wild Horses should be your last resort. If you are trying to find a middle ground the removal of livestock, from the land would be just as important as the Wild Horses.

Susan Setzke: It is due to this mismanagement by the BLM that these lands are now suffering from the over-grazing of cattle and sheep and the destruction caused by fracking and the such! The wild horses have been unfairly blamed for this damage and removed under false pretenses by the BLM in an attempt to misinform and sway public opinion to support their eradication.

Suzanne Roy - American Wild Horse Preservation: BLM cannot elevate the needs of livestock over wild horses.

Suzanne Roy - American Wild Horse Preservation: BLM should undertake range improvements including water developments/restoration, fencing removal, etc. to maximize habitat for wild horses.

Suzanne Roy - American Wild Horse Preservation: The removal and reduction of the wild horse population in this area will make more forage available for private livestock grazing, creating the likelihood that livestock grazing levels will increase in this area. All impacts of livestock grazing on the environment must be evaluated in the EIS, including the potential for exacerbated environmental impacts due to increased livestock grazing.

Teresa Shively: We are asking that our government, the Department of the Interior, and the Bureau of Land Management institute a shift in resources to focus on range management, range enhancements such as water improvements, and the limitation of livestock grazing on HMA's per Federal Code 43 C.F.R. Section 4710.5, and we are asking for an end to the stockpiling of wild horses and burros as a

management method. We want to protect the herds and restore the legal lands given to them by the 1971 Wild and Free-Roaming Horse and Burro Act.

Tonna Yutze: Please take the Cattle Ranchers off of welfare that is the free range.

Valerie Traina: These animals belong in this habitat, which you seek to destroy in favor of giving it to ranchers. The animals that ranchers allow to graze are exotics. They don't belong there, and are despoiling the environment. I urge you to halt the removal of wild equines.

Wanda Weir: Why should the demands of the Rock Springs Grazing Association determine the fate of publically managed wild horses of Wyoming or anywhere else? Government funds don't subsidize my private "herd" so why should industry expect subsidies (inexpensive leases), plus use of national lands at our expense AND the destruction of that which we cherish?

Habitat Management

Elizabeth Graser-Lindsey: Wild horses are important on our federal lands. As North American natives, they represent a distinct part of the ecosystem balances.

Evelyn Ball: Ranchers had better get it through their heads that this land belongs to all animals, not just their cattle.

Ginger Kathrens - The Cloud Foundation: In winter, horses use their hooves to break through ice that has blocked water sources, thereby enabling not only themselves but also other wildlife—pronghorn, deer, smaller mammals, and birds—to drink. In this same way, they open up seeps that have become clogged during the dry season. It should be remembered that wild horses stay on the move day and night to facilitate digestion. This dispersion protects the range from overgrazing. Rather than competing with cattle, wild horses prefer upland grazing habitat. They venture 10 miles or more from water sources, allowing for healthy riparian zones. BLM should focus on the beneficial impacts of wild horses.

Ingrid E. Albrecht: A current example of this self-regulating model can be found with the Montgomery Pass herd, located on the California/Nevada border. For the past 25 years, these horses and burros have survived unmanaged, and through natural attrition have maintained stable population levels of roughly 150 to 200 animals.

Ingrid E. Albrecht: Solutions to this problem are for self-stabilizing herds. Dedicated wilderness areas should be established to allow density-dependent population regulation, that involve natural boundaries wherever possible, including artificial horse-proof barriers. These wilderness areas should feature restored ecosystems, including wild horse predators such as mountain lions. The stipulation should be that wild horses and burros be the principal species in these areas, in conjunction with all naturally occurring wildlife.

Ingrid E. Albrecht: The Act calls for dedicated areas to be "devoted principally" to wild horses and burros. The current policy of the Bureau of Land Management violates this mandate by favoring PRIVATE LIVESTOCK and GAME ANIMALS on the very areas that were legally allocated to wild horses and burros, steadily reducing wild horse management levels, sometimes to the point of eradication, as in the case of several states.

John Hay III - Rock Springs Grazing Association: BLM manual guidance also mandates that it adopt conservation measures to protect sage grouse and its habitat. BLM Manual 6840.02. BLM adopted 1M 2010-71,2012-43 to define conservation measures for sage grouse habitat and is revising the nine

Wyoming RMPs. So far, however, BLM has not documented the adverse impacts of excess numbers of wild horses on sage grouse habitat or whether the Wyoming AMLs need to be reduced to protect sage grouse habitat. BLM assumes the current AMLs are sufficient without addressing the fact that AMLs were determined without considering the impact of wild horse use on sage grouse habitat and long before sage grouse was the subject of a listing petition. Sage grouse core habitat areas make up substantial portions of the White Mountain, Salt Wells and the Great Divide Basin HMAs. See WGFD, Wyoming Sage grouse Core Area Maps' Many sage grouse leks and associated nesting habitat are found outside the core areas and throughout the HMAs and the surrounding lands. See e.g., EA, Adobe Town and Salt Wells Creek HMAs (Complex) Wild Horse Gather. WY-040-EA13-82, at 25 (May 2013). Wild horses are ungulates and will initially graze the forbs and grasses that provide the crucial understory for healthy sagebrush. Mcinnis & Vavra, Dietary relationships among Feral horses, cattle and pronghorns in southeastern Oregon J. RANGE MGMT. 40:0 (1987) (88% overlap between cattle and horses for consumption of grasses and forbs). As noted above, wild horses clip most of the annual growth of a plant and, thus, excess numbers of wild horses will more significantly impact the sagebrush ecosystem at key times of the year during nesting and rearing seasons through removal of the understory. These threats are Identified by the USFWS. USFWS Conservation Objectives at 7, 10,44-45. Excess numbers of unmanaged wild horses disproportionately impact sage grouse habitat, because they remove more of the plant's annual growth and this limits vegetation recovery and shrub canopies, fragments habitat, and allows for the spread of invasive plant species. USFWS Conservation Objectives at 46. Horses "reduce grass, shrub, and forb cover" and increase "unpalatable forbs and exotic plants including cheatgrass" in sage grouse habitats. BLM, Sage grouse National Technical Team, A Report on National Greater Sage grouse Conservation Measures, at 18 (Dec. 21, 2011) [hereinafter NTT Report]. Drought exacerbates the grazing impacts of excess numbers of wild horses. Id. Where excess numbers of wild horses graze year-round, there is greater pressure on range resources that may recover slowly and only after grazing use is removed or reduced. In 2002, the Wyoming conservation districts, particularly the Little Snake River Conservation District, demonstrated that about 20% of the wild horse diet consisted of sagebrush stems and leaves. This is even more true during drought or winter when other forage is less available. Studies show that wild horse diets vary throughout the year. K. Crane, Habitat selection patterns of feral horses in south-central Wyoming, J. Range Mgmt. 50:374-380 (1997). Wild horses favor grasses in the spring and forbs and shrubs in winter. Adjusting wild horse AML numbers to ensure a thriving sagebrush habitat and to accommodate drought conditions should be a priority on public lands. NTT Report at 18; USFWS Conservation Objectives at 10, 38, 46-47, 75, 83-86. If the proposed considerations are not adopted and AMLs not reduced accordingly, excess numbers of wild horses will continue to modify sage grouse core habitat areas throughout the affected field offices.

John Hay III - Rock Springs Grazing Association: Both the Salt Wells and Divide Basin HMAs fall within sage grouse core habitat areas, which require special management. BLM Manual 6840; Instruction Memorandum (1M) 2010-71, 2012-43; Wyoming Executive Order (E.O.) 2011-5, supp. 2013-3.

John Hay III - Rock Springs Grazing Association: Public rangeland management criteria changed in 1995 when BLM adopted the rangeland health standards and guidelines pursuant to 43 C.F.R. §§4180.1, 4180.2. See BLM Wyo., Standards for Healthy Rangelands & Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management for the Public Lands Administered by the Bureau of Land Management in the State of Wyoming (Wyoming Standards for Healthy Rangelands).' If the rangelands do not meet, maintain or make progress towards meeting the standards provided for in Wyoming and grazing is determined to be a significant cause, BLM must modify livestock grazing operations when the rangeland health standards are not being met. 43 C.F.R. §4180.2(c); H-4180-1 at 1-4,7, 11 (evaluation of significant causal factors other than livestock grazing and determination). BLM must also revise any other program that contributes to the failure to meet range health, including wild horse numbers. Id. at 111-15 (for other significant causal factors consult program direction). Wild horse management including the establishment of AMLs should

conform to the healthy rangeland standards and must be modified when it is a causal factor in the public lands not meeting or maintaining range health.

John Hay III - Rock Springs Grazing Association: Standard #1 provides that rangelands should exhibit soil stability and water infiltration to provide for optimal plant growth and minimal surface runoff. Excess numbers of unmanaged wild horses may result in bare ground exposure. Wild horses graze most, if not all, of the annual growth of individual plants, thereby disrupting annual plant growth. Further, wild horse territories are defined by water sources, such as riparian areas, and are used at least twice a day or more when it is hot. Ganskopp & Vavra, *Habitat Use by Feral Horses in Northern Sagebrush Steppe*, J. RANGE MGMT. 39:207-212 (May 1986). Feral horses demonstrate a preference for riparian habitat. Crane, *Habitat selection patterns of feral horses in south-central Wyoming*, J. RANGE MGMT. 50:374-380 (July 1997). Excess numbers of unmanaged wild horses may reduce soil stability and water infiltration, particularly at water sites and along trails.

John Hay III - Rock Springs Grazing Association: Standard #2 provides that "riparian and wetland vegetation has structural, age, and species diversity characteristic of the stage of channel succession and is resilient and capable of recovering from natural and human disturbance in order to provide forage and cover, capture sediment, dissipate energy, and provide for groundwater recharge." This is often measured using proper functioning condition (PFC) protocols as the base measurement for riparian area conditions. Wild horse territories are defined by proximity to riparian and wetland areas near water sources, which wild horses use at least twice or more during the day. Ganskopp & Vavra (1986). Year-round use by excess numbers of unmanaged wild horses that results in removal of vegetation, invasive species, and compacted soils will interfere with [actual text in verbatim comment trails off here]

John Hay III - Rock Springs Grazing Association: Standard #3 provides for upland vegetation which is resilient, diverse, and able to recover from disturbances. Excess numbers of unmanaged wild horses may result in fragmented habitat and facilitate the spread of noxious weeds/invasive vegetation species. The impacts differ from livestock, because the wild horse bite cuts most of the plant's annual growth and it is more difficult for plants to recover.

John Hay III - Rock Springs Grazing Association: Standard #4 provides for the rangelands being capable of sustaining viable populations of threatened, endangered, species of special concern, or sensitive species. Excess numbers of unmanaged wild horses will likely impact sensitive species habitat, including the sage grouse habitat, which is designated a candidate species by the USFWS. *Infra* at 11. While wild horses prefer grasses, which form part of the understory of sage brush. In drought they will eat shrubs and forbs. Fecal samples collected in 2002 in the Adobe Town area revealed that the wild horse diet was 20% sage leaves and 10% stems.

John Hay III - Rock Springs Grazing Association: Standard #5 calls for rangeland water resources to meet state water quality standards. Wild horses regularly use riparian habitats and water sources, which are central to the territories. Excess numbers of wild horses may lead to overuse of these areas as part of the herds' territories, resulting in soil compaction, vegetation removal, and increased erosion. This in turn may alter the chemical, physical, and biological characteristics of water sources contrary to Standard #5.

John Hay III - Rock Springs Grazing Association: The RSGA permit area generally meets, maintains or is making progress towards meeting Wyoming Standards for Healthy Rangelands. During periods of drought, RSGA shareholders have taken voluntary reductions even when wild horses exceeded the numbers previously set in the 1982 Order and AMLs in land use plans. As a testament to the efficacy of the RSGA conservation program, most of the Checkerboard remains rich in native vegetation and stable soils. Continued pressure from excess numbers of wild horses will expand trouble spots, degrade the resources and override other wildlife use. Wild horse grazing has been documented as a significant causal

factor in the failure to meet, maintain or make progress towards meeting rangeland resource standards elsewhere in Wyoming. Excess wild horses certainly contributed to management issues in the Green Mountain Common Allotment which hosts three HMAs. EA: Green Mountain Common Allotment Proposed Grazing Management Environmental Assessment, WY050-EA07-153, at App. 9 (2001 Range Health Assessment). A 2002 BLM range health conformance assessment for the RSGA permit concluded that 15% of the riparian areas did not meet PFC and there were invasive species along banks. This was a significant improvement from two years earlier when only 36% of the riparian areas met PFC. The review attributed failure to meet riparian standards to industrial uses, wildlife and wild horses, invasive species, mining, irrigation, sewage treatment, and mine dewatering, as well as year-round cattle use, which is less than 8% of the AUMs on the RSGA permit. The assessment did not identify grazing as the significant causal factor but only proposed management changes for livestock grazing, rather than proceeding to specify management changes for the other causal factors. Because the riparian areas had noticeably improved, the allotment conforms to the rules, because the change in riparian areas meeting PFC demonstrates that management is making progress towards meeting standards.

John Hay III - Rock Springs Grazing Association: Well managed livestock grazing has been determined to be compatible with sage grouse conservation. Wyo. E.O. 2011-7, supp. 2013-3. BLM 1M 2012-043 recognizes that "depending on design and application, [livestock] grazing practices can also be used as a tool to protect intact sagebrush habitat and increase habitat extent and continuity which is beneficial to Greater Sage grouse and its habitat." Livestock can be managed to not only reduce impacts on sage grouse habitat, but enhance the habitat. See also Wyo. E.O. supp. 2013-3 (concluding that livestock grazing is compatible with sage grouse conservation and that "grazing management practices maintain or enhance Wyoming rangelands"). Wild horses cannot be managed in terms of changing their movements or herding them from pasture to pasture, because that would be harassment, which is prohibited. 43 C.F.R. §4770.1. Fencing is impractical in the Rock Springs and Rawlins Field Offices due to wildlife migration, topography, and climate. There is less, if any, opportunity to use wild horse grazing to improve vegetation and it is impractical in southwestern Wyoming where most allotments are unfenced. Historically RSGA shareholders grazed sheep during the winter when rangeland vegetation is dormant, which results in little to no adverse impact to forage plants and native perennial grasses. See *RSGA v. Salazar*, Dec. Dr. Burkhardt, Doc. 89-1,1115 (Mar. 11,2013). While more RSGA shareholders have converted to cattle, most grazing occurs in winter. Year-round grazing by wild horses interrupts physiologic processes of growing plants by consuming the annual growth. *Id.* m12, 15. Active sheep herding prevents sheep from congregating in a single area and from threatening riparian habitat and water sources. *Id.* Conservative management by RSGA shareholders prevents overgrazing during crucial plant growth periods, fragmentation of wildlife habitat, including sage grouse habitat, compaction of soils resulting in increased erosion, degradation of riparian habitats and water sources, and spread of invasive and noxious vegetation. Grazing by RSGA shareholders is compatible with conservation of sage grouse habitat.

Joy Vancos: If the horses are a problem for traffic along the highway, use the money which would be spent for round-ups and holding, and build/repair fences or even one of the new wildlife overpasses. Or, if that is not in your purview, at least provide the funding to those who can make this happen. Individuals and organizations have volunteered to help with management of the horses in many ways, including the disbursement of water when the need arises. Please continue to accept the help which these volunteers provide.

Karen Brokken: BLM land is public land and needed for wildlife, not commercial land for the profit of a few to the detriment of wildlife.

Ken Decker: There is More Than Enough land for the wild horses to roam and feed on.

Margaret Southwell: Are the Wild Horses at Rock Springs having an ecological impact or is it the ranchers and their livestock that is the cause for concern? I do not believe you. I believe you are an agency that is little more than an army for special interests. I think the long term use by livestock of the ranges will degrade them considerably, not the Wild Horses.

Mark Konishi - USFWS: The designation of sage-grouse core habitat within the HMAs further supports the need to consider reducing horse numbers below existing levels.

Marsha Bland: Removing them all will only destroy the natural ecosystem. You should know that. Destroying one part of the food chain in the environment will only affect all of the environment in time.

Melanie Bellamore: Leave the wild horses alone. Let there be some vestige of a natural ecosystem. Those horses deserve the right to live free and unmolested as much as any other man or beast.

Moving Cloud Productions: Horse bands take years to establish. Removing a band stallion for even a few hours, can disrupt the delicate control the ban stallion has over his mares and rival stallions.

Moving Cloud Productions: I have personally photographed of some of the HMA's in question, which appears to be in excellent condition, especially given the recent drought. Having toured a variety of rangelands throughout the West this summer and given the recent increase in precipitation in the west I would argue that these mention range areas are in good health.

Moving Cloud Productions: I support an alternative that favors Prohibiting hunting predators, especially mountain lions and introducing additional predators, especially mountain lions

Moving Cloud Productions: If there is a lack of adequate water to support a genetically viable herds of at least 150 to 200 horses, such lack of water has been created by the BLM's own management policies, including fencing that makes water unavailable, and failure to use financial resources for water mitigation. Rather than remove wild horses with flimsy excuse of drought, the BLM should be exploring what additional water sources can be created, protected or secured for these horses in order to fulfill the BLM's mandate to actively manage their health and well- - being rather than focusing on reducing the herd and trying to meet an arbitrarily low AML that is not based on recent or substantiated science.

Moving Cloud Productions: Predation by mountain lions is a proven, natural method of keeping wild horse herd numbers in check. For example, in the Pryor Mountain Wild Horse range, for years the horse population was not only kept in check, but also reduced through mountain lion predation. Later on, removals of mountain lions from the area led to an "apparent correlative increase in the wild horse population."

Moving Cloud Productions: There are not too many wild horses, rather, there are too few. Wild horses increase diversity in rangeland ecosystem. Horses are a native species to the North America, and equids fill an important grazing niche that actually helps improve rangelands.

No Name: They stop the hunting on the lands of Mountain Lyons, so as there are still predators. Because between the severe weather and the predators the bands are managed without man. So leave the wild horses and burros alone, in fact you need to release all the wild horses and burros you have in captivity and return them to the home land where they were before they were hostilely rounded up and taken away to never be free again, which is not right.

Pat Elder: Please reconsider your plan for the wild horses of WY. These horses are part of the heritage of this country and to sacrifice this for the grazing of domestic animals is not right. Studies show that the

horses are much less detrimental to the land than the herds of cattle and can easily share the land with them. Do not let money and big business cause the loss of a national treasure.

Rothery Gensel: The environmental impacts of the proposal to make livestock grazing the predominant use in the Checkerboard area, which would cause severe, long-term damage to the resource.

Susan Setzke: Probably the most evident being that the ranchers must remove the excess cattle and sheep which are destroying the eco-system entirely. This is the true reason for the destruction to the forage and areas surrounding the water sources.

Susan Setzke: We need to return the wild horses back to the lands that were protected for them and let nature take its course. We need to remove all the excess cattle and sheep from these lands and limit their access entirely.

Suzanne Roy - American Wild Horse Preservation: As BLM undertakes the detailed process of amending the Rock Springs and Rawlins RMP's, it should consider several issues that impact the health of the range.

Suzanne Roy - American Wild Horse Preservation: Drastically reducing the wild horse AML within the HMA's covered by the Rock Springs and Rawlins RMP's would likely be devastating for the vegetation because the primary use would be by cattle and sheep in a highly concentrated and vegetative damaging manner. This is especially true in the Salt Wells Creek, Adobe Town and Divide Basin HMA, because livestock would be by far the predominant use in this area.

Tom Rossi: But in our country we have ample space for building and grazing, even if it has to be in other states less used but sufficient. Let's get creative people.

Tom Rossi: Wild horses have no impact on the land, not like developers and ranchers.

Vallee Johnson: Please do your research. Studies have shown that we need wild herd grazing to save our grasslands and the environment. We need more wild herds of horses and buffalo roaming.

Yvette Tapp: As a person of indigenous descent and one who sees the devastation to Mother Earth caused by the cattle having taken over the range of the buffalo, wolf, prairie dog, forests, rivers, watersheds, atmosphere and tribes, I am for eradicating cattle and sheep on our lands and allowing controlled numbers of wild horse to roam, and to see a return of roaming lands for the indigenous who were here first.

Herd Management Areas (HMAs)

Charles Reed: ADOBE TOWN HMA Private land within the HMA is 5.5% of the total surface within the area, how can this paltry amount justify a 44% reduction in the HMA? In addition the checkerboard lands (only a portion though a large one of that 5.5% total) are all located within the portion of the HMA known as the Horseshoe Bend and it provides little use for all classes of animals as it has very little water. It is available for use some winters when it receives the appropriate kinds and amounts of snowfall. Year around sources are limited to seeps and springs in steep drainages on the south side of the haystacks. Horses generally avoid these areas as they are good ambush sites for the occasional mountain lions found in the area.

Charles Reed: Zeroing out the Salt Wells and Continental Divide HMAs and significantly reducing the AML in the Adobe Town HMA is a disproportionate response. In these tight fiscal times it also seems a bit irresponsible and unrealistic to expect the adoption pipeline which is already overflowing to absorb an

additional flood of horses of the size that those kinds of actions would produce. If the BLM actually fulfills its obligation under the settlement it can only do so by diverting funds from other important endeavors. In addition, I fail to see how BLM could enter into an agreement that basically changes the land use allocation of vast public acreages without amending the respective Land Use Plans and allowing the appropriate public input. What kind of feeble defense did BLM mount in the lawsuit? Were any alternative courses of action considered other than the complete capitulation that resulted? Why has there been no mention of this significant (if the newspaper account was true) development on the Wyoming public web site? No wonder that much of the public thinks that the livestock industry exerts disproportionate control over the use of public lands.

Christianna Capra: I support the herd being managed as an individual herd, not as part of a 'complex' with nearby HMAs, to preserve its integrity for scientific research. I support the herd being managed in family units to preserve its most natural state if animals need to be removed by water/bait trapping to obtain the AML of 100-121.

Cindy Belcher: It is time to fulfill this commitment to these animals and find a solution that allows coexistence in these HMA's

Ginger Kathrens - The Cloud Foundation: Across Salt Wells and Adobe Town HMAs, livestock outnumber wild horses 14 to 1. If BLM firmly believed that there were too many animals on the range, it would surely focus on reducing the number of livestock rather than the number of wild horses in these legal wild horse HMAs.

Ginger Kathrens - The Cloud Foundation: Downgrading HMAs to HAs is simply semantic and is not explicitly defined in the Wild Horse and Burro Act of 1971 (the Act), as the Act demands wild horses and burros be managed on historical ranges, which is defined by “the amount of land necessary to sustain an existing herd or herds of wild free-roaming horses and burros, which does not exceed their known territorial limits, and which is devoted principally but not necessarily exclusively to their welfare in keeping with the multiple-use management concept for the public lands.”

Ginger Kathrens - The Cloud Foundation: The checkerboard pattern has been in place for nearly 150 years, during which time cattle, wild horses, and other wildlife have successfully shared resources. Furthermore, as wild horses are considered a protected natural resource, they have legal rights to exist on their rangelands in sustainable herds as established by the 1971 Wild Horse & Burro Act.

John Hay III - Rock Springs Grazing Association: As of October 4, 2010, RSGA officially notified BLM that it had withdrawn its consent, pursuant to Section 4 of the WHA, to allow wild horses on its land. BLM acknowledged its obligation to remove the wild horses in a declaration filed with the Wyoming court. BLM committed to a series of gathers to remove the wild horses from RSGA lands. The affected HMAs of AT-SW, White Mountain, and Divide Basin were established based on the original RSGA case and the 1982 Order, which incorporated the RSGA agreement to tolerate wild horses on its land. The HMAs include substantial areas of the Checkerboard. In light of RSGA's withdrawal of its consent to have wild horses on its land, the HMAs need to be reclassified as herd areas, or in the case of Adobe Town, the HMA boundary needs to be modified to exclude the Checkerboard lands. Without the Checkerboard and RSGA's privately owned or leased lands, the Salt Wells HMA is reduced in size by 80% and the Great Divide Basin is reduced by half. It is impossible to keep wild horses from straying back onto the Checkerboard if the remaining public lands were to retain the HMA classification with the same or similar AML. Thus, these areas can no longer be managed as HMAs and need to be managed for zero wild horses.

John Hay III - Rock Springs Grazing Association: In consideration of the above changes, RSGA agrees to allow wild horses in the White Mountain HMA, which is entirely in the Checkerboard. It is also within a sage grouse core habitat area. The White Mountain HMA provides the most accessible sites for the public to view the wild horses and is small enough to be managed efficiently. In the 2013 Consent Decree, Wyoming BLM agreed to amend its annual work plan to gather and remove excess wild horses from the HMA to the low AML of 205 whenever a census and projected reproduction rate indicates that the HMA is likely to exceed the AML. BLM also agreed to manage the White Mountain HMA as a non-reproducing herd by utilizing fertility control and sterilization to maintain the population of 205 wild horses. Fertility control and sterilization methods should be utilized once the wild horse numbers are below AML. If the wild horse population is not constrained to 205 wild horses, the wild horses will trespass to nearby private lands and non-HMA public lands in search of forage and water. Therefore, the White Mountain HMA should be actively managed by BLM as a non-reproducing herd at an AML below 205 wild horses. Other factors, such as the overlapping sage grouse core habitat areas, support this proposal.

John Hay III - Rock Springs Grazing Association: With the removal of Checkerboard lands, the Adobe Town HMA will be approximately 85% of its original size. RSGA supports reducing the AML in the Adobe Town HMA to 225-450 wild horses or lower. The reduced AML will limit return of wild horses to the Checkerboard, especially Salt Wells HMA, and will respond to documented resource impacts due to excess numbers of unmanaged wild horses in the Adobe Town area. It will also reduce wild horses leaving the HMA boundaries and establishing territories outside of the HMAs. Several wild horse bands migrate between Colorado and Wyoming and run outside of the HMA boundaries. At least one band is so territorial that its stallion has charged domestic horses, injuring them. One time the stallion charged a domestic horse when the rider was mounted.

Moving Cloud Productions: In keeping with this mandate, if rangeland health is a concern, then the mentioned HMA's, since it is devoted principally to wild horses, should be closed to livestock grazing, which does more damage to the range than wild horses. Livestock grazing is available on millions of other acres of public lands.

No Name: Eradicating the herds is not a "Herd Management Area" function. There is no Management when the horse herd is gone!

No Name: These HMAs – Herd Management Areas – were meant principally for the wild horses. Continuing to wipe out one herd after another certainly does more ecological damage than keeping them in these areas – where they do far more good than cattle.

Rachel Reeves: I also have concerns regarding the intentions to maintain a non-reproducing herd in White Mountain. This plan is disingenuous. The BLM would take away what makes the mustang wild, but still keep a “non-reproducing herd” to encourage tourism in Sweetwater County which regularly promotes the wild horses in this herd. It cannot be both ways. Either horses are not allowed on checkerboard land or they are. If the BLM has decided that wild horses do not belong in the checkerboard, then they should be honest about that and take all of them rather than rendering all stallions and mares infertile and leaving a “token herd” to fool tourists into visiting the region under the assumption that truly wild horses still exist there.

Rachel Reeves: Salt Wells should not be converted to an HA and zeroed out. Ideally, this very important herd should be allowed to remain in the currently established boundaries. At the very least, the southern regions which are outside the checkerboard should still be allowed to maintain a population of horse herds.

Rachel Reeves: There has also been no discussion of what will happen to Little Colorado. Under the original 2011 decision record for the herd, the BLM originally planned for Little Colorado to be maintained as non-reproducing alongside White Mountain. Little Colorado does not exist in the checkerboard but like Divide Basin, the ability for the horses to migrate south is not only possible but probable. This does not mean that the BLM has the right to zero out Little Colorado. And what of the horses who may exist outside of the checkerboard in White Mountain? Why will all the horses in White Mountain be sterilized regardless of their location? There is an overall lack of transparency for the plans surrounding the White Mountain herd.

Rachelle Zocco: I am writing you as a tax payer - an informed tax payer, and my increasing concerns about our wild horses and burros, and with specific regard to the Adobe Town, Salt Wells Creek, Great Divide Basin and White Mountain, herds - 4 of our largest remaining wild horse herds in the country Americans are in opposition of the Bureau of Land Management's plan to amend the Rawlins and Rock Springs Resource Management Plans to destroy the wild free-roaming horse herds of the Wyoming Checkerboard.

Suzanne Roy - American Wild Horse Preservation: BLM should restore herd area boundaries. The revised RMPs should contain amendments to restore some of this zeroed out acreage to HMA status. BLM should consider relocation of any horses deemed "excess" or found to be outside designated HMAs to zeroed out HA territory in order to avoid adding more horses to the holding system, which is already at capacity.

Zane Cassel: 1) First: Total removal of horses in checkerboard areas like Salt Wells Creek and Great Divide Basin is not acceptable! 1/2 of that land is "ours". Having said that it appears that this a done deal so... These areas need to be redefined so that the BLM can manage the areas that are nearly 100% BLM (the areas north and south of I-80 (approx. 30 miles)). 2) Adobe town should remain the same as it is. 3) White MT should stay the same. 4) Fontenelle should have its own HMA. 5) Final Concession: Stay with 1997 agreement. Finally - money is the issue. Really \$1.35/head/month? If the BLM had funding they would be able to manage the horses with the current plan and the private owners would not be mad and throwing their weight around.

Population Levels/Population Control

Form Letter 1: I request that the following alternatives be analyzed in the EIS: • Manage wild horse populations at current or expanded levels using fertility control, as recommended by the National Academy of Sciences in its June 2013 report. Converting populations to non-reproducing herds should be rejected as inconsistent with the Wild Horse Act.

Amy Lev: The buffalo, and many other wild animals have been extinguished from public lands. I don't want my tax money contributing to decimating populations of wild horses.

Arleen Rooney: Instead of spending all the taxpayers' dollars to just feed the 50,000 wild horses and burros currently housed in barren, non-shaded holding facilities, the money should be spent on getting the horses and burros that aren't adopted back to free ranges. I concur that most of the stallions/colts are gelded once they are rounded up and that is a good thing. If the mares are returned to free ranges, then they can be started on the proven birth control program. Eventually and even in shorter due course, the herd management would take care of itself.

Billie Mitchell: The public will stand up and fight for these horses. They have a right to live on this earth free and wild. Why don't you spend your money in a much better way like birth control

Carol Nudell: I believe the number of wild horses on range lands HAS TO BE MANAGED to allow all species there to thrive equally. I love horses, but realize they are not native to the areas, but then neither are cattle and sheep.

Charles Reed: Deerwood Ranch Wild Horse Eco sanctuary There is no reference in the scoping notice to the project proposal. Absent a specific listing of the management actions that will take place, the proposed monitoring regime, nor any quantitative description of the other land uses that will be taking place, it is difficult to provide the degree of specificity called for in the notice but I will try. The following issues should be quantified to the greatest degree possible in the proposed action: 1. The age/sex ratio of the horses to be included in the 250 and 400 population levels. 2. The criteria by which it would be determined to increase the population level from 250 to 400. 3. If the population is to be totally or partially reproductive, what would be the methods employed for management of the foal crop and what would be its ownership status. 4. If all or a portion of the herd is to be reproductive, what would be the criteria and procedure for maintaining genetic health and what would be the criteria for selection of the breeding element of the population. 5. What would be the supplemental feeding practices, if any. 6. The number of pastures and proposed seasons of use. 7. The animal health practices to be employed. 8. Required physical facilities, perimeter fencing, handling practices, acclimation, capture and removal, and euthanasia policy and procedures. 9. Detailed description of the Ecotourism practices to be employed. 10. Degree and type of oversight to be provided.

Charles Reed: The effect of past actions, the proposed action and alternatives on the relative abundance of Spanish Colonial or New world Iberian characteristics and individuals within these herds should be analyzed. A few generations of selective removal (actually should be practiced as selective retention) was able to concentrate the Spanish Mustang characteristics significantly in the Pryor Mountain HMA and eliminate other 'undesired' traits from the population. Why has this level of proactive management not been employed in any Wyoming herds?

Charles Reed: The project description in the Scoping Statement suggests that the decision has not yet been made whether or not to administer PZP or adjust sex ratios. If that decision has actually not been made then the criteria that will be used to make that decision should be made known and utilized in formulating the range of alternatives. If it has, in fact, already been made then the project description should be revised to reflect that. It is quite possible that these practices have been employed previously in these HMAs and, if so, they should come under additional, detailed scrutiny in the cumulative impacts section of the EA. PZP is far from cheap and easy to use and cannot be effectively delivered by darting or jabbing in the field in these large western HMAs where the horses are truly wild in every sense of the word and not habituated to close, human presence. In these conditions the horses must be rounded up in order to administer it and that increases the cost dramatically. If, in fact PZP has been employed previously, annual monitoring of populations and the relative size of the several age classes that have been born should be included. The combined effect of these two practices on band integrity and stallion health should be examined. Mares that do not get pregnant and thus continue cycling until fall or even early winter could contribute to a chaotic atmosphere and have negative effects on these key elements. It is time to take a more comprehensive look at the cumulative impacts of multiple cycles of PMAs and the management of the other public resources on the wild, free roaming nature of the herds.

Dana Rue: AND WHO THINKS STERILIZING MUSTANGS IS NORMAL?

Deborah Joyce: When you round up horses, why not geld most of the males? All that get adopted and most of the others, then release them? Or geld all the males for a few years. Like we do with TNR cats.

Doris McQuiddy: The numbers in many herds of wild horses are now proposed to be maintained at lower than what is genetically viable to insure healthy herds. Just look at the disastrous effect of lowering

the numbers in the Corolla wild horses on the eastern coast. The foals are born deformed and the herds will not be able to survive.

Elissa Kline: How about bait trapping & using birth control? How about getting some of the cattle off the range?

Ginger Kathrens - The Cloud Foundation: Finally, we would like to address the management of older wild horses. Elder horses tend to rank higher in the dominance hierarchy. Removing dominant members would further destabilize herd dynamics. BLM should consider allowing aged horses to remain on the range as an option instead of sending them straight to long-term holding. Many of the seniors are past reproductive age and should be allowed to live out the remainder of their lives in freedom rather than enduring the grueling, oftentimes lethal process of roundup, transportation, and incarceration. Letting them stay would be in keeping with the goal of having fewer horses placed in holding and would decrease the costs borne by the American taxpayer. We recommend that you allow elderly horses to die a natural death on their home ranges.

Ginger Kathrens - The Cloud Foundation: Gender skewing may be a part of the proposed action. Having significantly more males than females in a herd is a recipe for increased fights among stallions. This is particularly the case when the mares are cycling monthly because of PZP treatments. The mares do not "settle" and the stallions keep fighting over them. Due to exhaustion from excessive battles, a dominant band stallion that would otherwise have been able to defend his family band could be ousted and replaced by a new stallion, who would likely breed with all yearling fillies present. Equine society should not have to endure such chaos. The NAS study did not condone the use of sex ratio skewing as an effective method by which to control the herd populations, rather the study found that it led to increased violence between stallions, with mares being caught in the cross fire. Regardless of the effect of sex skewing on band dynamics, it will not effectively control the population as mares reproduce constantly in an attempt to bolster their numbers. Anecdotally, White Mountain really saw the effects of gender skewing in favor of stallions, and BLM officials saw a horrendous increase in major stallion injuries during sex skewing in the North Lander Complex. Sex skewing also increases the opportunity of gang raping mares, as seen by livestock permittees in eastern Nevada wild horse herds.

Ginger Kathrens - The Cloud Foundation: The scoping notice states that during the proposed 2013 roundup, fertility control may be used. In 2010, PZP-22 was administered to 99 mares. Research on PZP has found higher infidelity rates between mares and stallions, compounded by increased breeding activity because the mares continue to cycle past the normal season. When the fabric of the equine family unit begins to fray and members switch bands with abnormally high frequency, yearling fillies lose the guardianship of their sire. In their new band, under a stallion that is not their father-protector, the yearling fillies are bred and, as two-year olds, they give birth. These inappropriate matings could be compared to teen pregnancies in humans. For this reason, whenever PZP is in use, we now recommend that all fillies one year and older receive the native PZP vaccine (the one-year formulation) to prevent their conceiving as yearlings and giving birth as two-year-olds.

Ginger Kathrens - The Cloud Foundation: There is also the question with BLM statistics on herd sizes. Following is the BLM's population growth estimates for Salt Wells and Adobe Town, combined. 2010 — 2,811 — pre-gather population census 2010 — 860 — post-gather population estimate 2011 — 1,038 — 21-percent increase — assumes 178 foals from 99 mares 2012 — 1,246 — 20-percent increase — assumes 208 foals from 99 mares on PZP 2012 — 1,005 — 19-percent decline — per census Below is the 2013 scoping letter's population projections for the two herds, whose mares are still under the contraceptive influence of PZP-22 and whose membership is still skewed to favor stallions. Here is the estimate BLM projected for wild horses in 2013: 2013 — 1,206 — 20-percent increase — assumes 201 foals from 99 mares on PZP This pattern of wide swings in population make the make the projections

suspect. These claims of 20-percent population growth despite contraception and gender skewing are not valid. There is little confidence in BLM wild horse population statistics, which was noted, in the recent National Academies of Sciences report on the WHB Program. Such low confidence in BLM statistics calls into question setting BLM limits on herds when there is not a legitimate, verifiable herd count. The recent NAS review supports the above concerns with the BLM's statistics, determining that, "...most HMAs did not use inventory methods or statistical tools common to modern wildlife management. Survey methods used to obtain sequential counts of populations on HMAs were often inconsistent and poorly documented and did not quantify uncertainty related to estimates." Roundups should not proceed if there are not better statistics as to which horses are in fact over the BLM limit or if the herds are at genetically stable levels. In addition, the NAS report also concluded that the process by which AMLs, "... are established, monitored, and adjusted is not transparent to stakeholders, supported by scientific information, or amenable to adaptation with new information and environmental and social change." These findings illuminate the need for a new system of resource allocation, as it is apparent that the current methodology is based on very loose science and scant wildlife inventory data.

Ginger Kathrens - The Cloud Foundation: We advocate using native predators to control wild horse populations. Mountain lions (cougars) are natural predators of wild horses, primarily of foals. Unfortunately, BLM in consort with USDA Wildlife Services has a history of eliminating predators for the convenience of farming, ranching, and hunting interests. Eradicating predators on public lands in the West is no longer acceptable to the majority of Americans. Recent studies have confirmed that mountain lions prey on wild horses more frequently than previously believed. For instance, Canadian biologists found that cougars "... tended to kill younger animals, especially when preying on feral horses ... for which nearly all predation events (86%) involved animals <2 years old." In an interview with the Billings Gazette, the study's lead researcher, Kyle Knopf, described observing a cougar that brought down a feral horse in less than 30 yards from where it attacked. Mountain lions are quite capable, all by themselves, of keeping wild horse populations in check. Here are some examples: The Montgomery Pass Wild Horse Territory, on the California/Nevada border, has had its population managed by cougars alone. An eleven-year study concluded that the growth of this herd was limited by cougar predation. In fact, the population actually decreased over the course of the research. The Pryor Mountain herd, in southern Montana, averaged no population growth over a four-year period due to predation by mountain lions. Only when those lions were killed, at the behest of the BLM, did the wild horse population begin to grow. The Nevada Wild Horse Range (current designation) averaged negative population growth due to cougar predation from 1989 to 1998 (Greger and Romney, 1999). While the NAS dismissed the effectiveness of predation of wild horse herds to lower populations, the above studies indicate that a considerable impact was made by mountain lions. The NAS felt that it was unlikely that mountain lions inhabit enough HMAs to make a difference because their current home ranges extend into only a few HMAs. However, one must take into account the diminished mountain lion population and realize that fewer individuals will be occupying the most prime habitat. If their numbers are allowed to increase, they will begin to disperse into habitat that the NAS deemed less preferred, providing valuable population control. We recommend that native predators be conserved to fulfill their role in the ecosystem. The effectiveness of natural, top down predator control on prey species for both ecosystem and genetic health has been proven in well-known studies, such as the Isle Royale work regarding wolf and moose population dynamics. We suggest that the Rawlins and Rock Springs Field Offices enter into a memorandum of understanding with the Wyoming Game and Fish Department to prohibit the hunting of mountain lions within the Adobe Town and Salt Wells Creek HMAs. Suspending the issuance of hunting tags would allow these native predators to replenish their numbers and begin to exert population-control effects on the two herds. We do not claim that the Adobe Town, Salt Wells Creek, White Mountain, and Divide Basin herds can be managed solely through predation right away. However, BLM should transition to predation as its management strategy for controlling the wild horse populations. BLM is charged with managing wild horses and burros at the minimum feasible level. Predation meets that standard. It requires little if any management intervention by BLM. Predation is the no-cost option. No expensive helicopter contractor required.

Ginger Kathrens - The Cloud Foundation: We recommend the native PZP instead of PZP-22. The one-year PZP formulation is the only contraceptive that has been thoroughly tested for safety and efficacy. It is less expensive than PZP-22 and offers an additional advantage: it is the only fertility drug that we are aware of which can be administered remotely by dart. There is no need to restrain the mares for inoculation. We advise that a remote shot of native PZP be administered to all mares returned to the range, so that in future, the herd will become a one-shot population. This primer dose ensures that any subsequent booster shot of PZP will render the mares infertile for one to two years or longer. We refer you to Jay F. Kirkpatrick, Ph.D., Director, The Science and Conservation Center at Zoo Montana, for details and advice on managing the herd through the use of this vaccine. While the primer can be given at any time of year, the booster must be delivered during late winter/early spring window to be the most effective. BLM cannot hope to see positive results from delivering PZP or PZP-22 in the fall – that sets the vaccine up for failure.

Ginger Kathrens - The Cloud Foundation: Wild horses are social creatures, not solitary ones, unique among hoofed animals in our hemisphere. They live in small bands of 2 to 20 or even more. This social structure includes a father-protector, a stallion that guards and keeps the family band together year-round. There is an established order in equine society, and interactions are complex and nuanced. Understanding and appreciating the dynamics of wild horse society can lead to more enlightened management. Because the Adobe Town and Salt Wells mustangs are widely dispersed across more than 2,603 square miles, and Divide Basin is similarly isolated, encounters among bands is limited. But fillies need to be within a reasonable distance of unrelated bands from which they can select a mate. Colts need to leave their family of origin, join other bachelors for a while, and then attempt to win a mare of their own. The wild horses of these HMAs need a substantially larger population to permit these normal behaviors.

Jeanene Arrington-Fisher: Also - administering birth control to all the mares at the same time is not always good - if some are at different points in their breeding cycle the birth control can wear off at the wrong time of year causing foals to be born near winter with almost a 100% chance of death (feeds the wolves and coyotes though and keeps them off the cattle.)

Jeanene Arrington-Fisher: The ATSW Complex's current wild horse population is nearly 1,447. This decision authorizes gathering approximately 85 percent, or roughly 1,229 wild horses, and removing 586, leaving 861 mustangs in the complex. Removing the mustangs would reduce the current population to the low AML of 861-1,165 wild horses. All released mares would be treated with the Porcine Zona Pellucida vaccine. These are not the numbers needed to keep a diverse gene pool

Joan Cornett: There have been birth control methods that could have been used for years, but, again, there is NO overpopulation of wild horses and their natural predators should be protected also.

Joan Cornett: You've had birth control methods for years but again, there is NOT a wild horse overpopulation.

John Hay III - Rock Springs Grazing Association: As part of the 2011 Wild Horse Strategy, BLM funded the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) to evaluate the wild horse program. NAS released its findings in May 2013. Natl. Research Council of the Natl. Academies, Board on Agriculture and Natural Resources Division of Earth and Life Sciences, Committee to Review the BLM Wild Horse and Burro Management Program, Using Science to Improve the BLM Wild Horse and Burro Program: A Way Forward (2013) [hereinafter NRC Report]. News reports gave disproportionate weight to the suggestion that BLM allow wild horse numbers to 'self-limit' or reach a point of equilibrium where wild horse numbers stabilize due to the lack of forage and water or space. NRC Report at 5-6,73-107. Even the NRC Committee concluded that "it is equally evident that the consequences of simply letting horse populations, which increase at a mean annual rate approaching 20 percent, expand to the level of "self-limitation" -

bringing suffering and death due to disease, dehydration, and starvation accompanied by degradation of the land - are also unacceptable." *Id.* at vii. The NRC Committee acknowledged that "the [WHA] charges BLM with establishing AMLs and managing populations to protect and restore a thriving natural ecological balance of all wildlife species, particularly endangered species, and to protect rangelands from deterioration." *Id.* at 33. The NRC Committee also concluded that allowing wild horse numbers to reach a level of "self-limitation" would conflict with other multiple-uses that define management of public rangelands pursuant to FLPMA, the WHA, and the Public Rangelands Improvement Act of 1978. *Id.* at 23-24,66. Therefore, even the NRC admits that this proposal is unlawful and impractical in southwestern Wyoming and thus should not be considered as an alternative management direction. The "self-limitation" method to reduce the growth rate of wild horses would violate current law and regulations. AMLs are not set to allow for the maximum amount of wild horses on the range given the resources available, but are set in consideration of the other resource uses available in the area, such as livestock grazing, mineral and energy development, native wildlife habitat conservation, forage for big game, and to maintain rangeland health standards. "The [WHA] charges BLM with establishing AMLs and managing populations to protect and restore a thriving natural ecological balance of all wildlife species, particularly endangered species, and to protect rangelands from deterioration." NRC Report at 33. The impacts of wild horses on native wildlife species and rangeland conditions is documented in Sections O, E, and F, *supra*. Permitting wild horses to overtake the range is contrary to the plain language of the WHA. See also 43 C.F.R. §§4180.1, 4180.2 (rangeland health standards); BLM Manual 6840.01, .02.B, .2 (special status species management). BLM must also manage the public lands for multiple use and sustained yield, to preserve and protect the public lands in their natural condition, and to provide food and habitat for fish, wildlife, and domestic animals. 43 U.S.C. §§1701(a)(7), (8), 1702(c), (h). FLPMA identifies the major or principal uses of the public lands to include "livestock grazing, fish and wildlife development and utilization, mineral exploration and production, rights-of-way, outdoor recreation, and timber production." *Id.* §1702(1). Unchecked population growth of nonnative wild horses would destroy the natural condition of the public rangelands in Wyoming and eliminate food and habitat for native species. The principal uses identified in FLPMA would likely be infeasible in order to compensate for the degradation caused by the wild horses, especially for livestock grazing and wildlife which depend on healthy rangelands. The "self-limitation" theory is also impractical in southwestern Wyoming where the land is relatively undeveloped. Neither BLM nor private landowners can fence the Checkerboard without violating the Unlawful Enclosures of Public Lands Act, 43 U.S.C. §§1061-1066; 43 C.F.R. §9239.2-2 (prohibiting fences that enclose public lands). Therefore, the wild horses can readily expand to neighboring private and public lands if resources or water sources are depleted within the HMA NRC Report at 80 ("Where populations are spatially unbounded, dispersal can forestall density-dependent control as long as there are places where populations are small and individuals in crowded locations can disperse."). Permitting non-native wild horses to reach a "self-limitation" level would also reduce habitat for native wildlife, such as sage grouse, deer, elk, and antelope. Further, wild horse grazing patterns would permit increased introduction and spread of noxious weeds and nonnative vegetative species. See Section D, *supra*. If BLM were to permit wild horses to reach the "self-limitation" threshold, the native species and ecosystems would be destroyed, before any self-limiting impacts would be seen.

John Hay III - Rock Springs Grazing Association: RSGA recognizes that there are limited solutions to the management of wild horses on the Wyoming Checkerboard but believes that the 2013 Consent Decree provides sound and principled remedies. Fencing of private land in the Checkerboard would unlawfully exclude others from the public land. 43 U.S.C. §§1061-1066; 43 C.F.R. §9239.2-2. Wild horse populations increase an average of 20% per year due to the lack of natural predators. Fertility controls (Porcine Pellucida or PZP) require that the mares be gathered every one to two years for inoculation or to administer a booster. The intensive gather and inoculation requirements cannot be implemented or sustained under current agency budget and manpower constraints. Thus, fertility control remains experimental and ineffective in slowing reproductive rates of wild horses. A Canadian fertility control called SpayVac reports 10 year effective rates in deer. It is, however, more expensive. Fertility control

does not address the impacts of excess numbers of unmanaged wild horses on resources and wildlife habitat. Adoption of wild horses has also slowed due to the 2008 Great Recession and market saturation. BLM's use of long-term holding facilities or payments to landowners to keep wild horses permanently continues to be costly and cannot be expanded or sustained in the current budget environment. Thus, regular gathers to manage wild horse populations remain the most reliable solution.

John Parker: I think all horse owners should be required to have an identification chip embedded in their horses. I'm sure that most of the "wild" horses have just been abandoned because the owners find that they are a lot of work and expense. They should have to pay a fine when their horse is found in the wild just like dog owners. I think this would go a long way in solving the horse overpopulation problem.

Jude Evans: It is proven that PZP controls the population of any herd increases yet THIS DOES NOT SEEM TO BE A PRIORITY, instead you chose to remove, roundup and destroy as family life that they have. If this is due to BIG OIL then there is really no need to remove the horses. The horses will adapt to the environment as they always have. PLEASE USE PZP and keep the population where there is NO NEED TO REMOVE or ROUNDUP any more of these beautiful Wild Horses. They do FEEL PAIN, FEAR, DEPRESSION, ANXIETY and all the other feelings that humans experience. WHY WHY WHY would you put any LIVING BEING THRU THAT KIND OF HORROR????

Judy Prisoc: It is necessary to limit wild horse populations through birth control but the situation for wild horses in this country is becoming critical. Current practice threatens to wipe out our wild horses!

Justin Williams: In addition to an alternative for HMAs and AMLs, WDA requests BLM to develop a broad analysis for fertility control. The control methods should include, PZP, SpayVac, spaying and gelding, as well as any new scientifically identified methods. We are seeking a broad spectrum of fertility control in order to provide BLM with options to control wild horse populations above and beyond herding and removal of excess horses.

Karen Fager: Set up a program to control the amount of breeding.

Kathy Walsh: WHY would you sterilize the herd? The idea is to have a constant in wild horses, not doom them to extinction

Kenneth Larsen: I respectfully ask you to stop reducing the number of wild horses in any manner from running freely. The wild horses do not belong to any person or entity & should be left wild in numbers that nature allows.

Kim Cavanagh: The wild horse herds may have increased in size (no reliable documentation to prove it) simply because we have removed wolves from the equation. First the cattle ranchers did not want wild horses grazing on public land and they killed thousands but these ranchers also did want sheep grazing on the lands so they killed them. Then they got the federal government to remove wolves from the public lands. If all the predators are removed, what do you think will happen to the number of prey- the population will go up.

Kim Hart: How do you expect the horse herds to not keep increasing? You keep their numbers down and do not let nature take its course. When there is more than enough food, the horses will keep multiplying at maximum numbers. So, if you are going to do that... and keep numbers below what the range will handle, use the Porcine Zona Pellucida vaccine to slow the growth and administer it in the field (or better vaccines if available.

Kyra Odabashian: Geld SOME of the stallions, and make SOME of the mares not able to foal.

Laurie Newmyer: There has to be a way to set birth controls on the mares so that many more are not being born but to me to wipe them completely out are or is not the answer.

Lynn Huebner: We all know that effective range management needs to be initiated and some form of birth control, preferably PZP which is 90% effective and reversible, is going to be done as well, however BLM continually disregards the concern of the public and continues to contract with unknowledgeable, untrained and sadistic employees for its gathers.

Lynn Huebner: Your job is to protect and manage them, not kill them out as species. There should be a study and a selection of what animals need to be brought in for birth control and then they should be released back to the range.

Mark Konishi - USFWS: We are also concerned about the potential impacts of an over-abundant population of wild horses on the habitat particularly as how they may affect native game species and other endemic wildlife. While we applaud the BLM's efforts to remove wild horses during the last capture effort, these concerns have not abated, and we strongly encourage maximum removal rates in these HMAs.

Moving Cloud Productions: Fertility control of mares has its risks. I would ask that the BLM consider all of the risks, including the effects of PZP on the timing of fertility of mares throughout the year, and its potentially dangerous consequences of mares foaling in mid- - winter.

Moving Cloud Productions: I support an alternative that favors Fertility control treatment of mares

Moving Cloud Productions: I support the following: Destruction of old, sick and lame animals in the most humane way possible in accordance with the 1971 Act

Moving Cloud Productions: The application of a 60/40 stud to mare ratio is not supported by science. In the wild, there are equally, or more, mares than stallions. By "adjusting" the ratio, it interferes with the natural herd dynamics and leads to younger stallions having bands of mares and fathering colts that they would not normally. This can lead to temporary population spikes. It can also lead to other unintended consequences such as colts being neglected and trampled because they are not under the watchful eye of a mature and experienced stallion.

No Name: Allow wild horses to graze on Wyoming's Checkerboard range. Do not convert the free-roaming herd to a sterilized, non-reproducing herd. These are America's horses, symbol of freedom as sure as the American Eagle, to be protected for future generations.

No Name: I ask that you reconsider removing wild horses from Wyoming. Utilize PZP vaccines and allow nature to balance the number of wild horses.

No Name: I disagree with birth control of these wonderful wild heritage creatures as it appears to be another means of wiping them out completely.

No Name: It is past time for BLM to start working with advocates for a better solution. There has to be one. You can't geld every stud out there. And spaying the mares? It isn't even recommended in the domesticate world.

No Name: Maybe branding each wild horse with what HMA and year of birth might help. This way down the road the next time you do a roundup you will know precisely how many horses are in, alive, dead. No more estimates.

No Name: Please let the horses stay free. Control births, but no more round ups.

No Name: The GAO report on wild horse management by the BLM was not kind to your methods of population control, perhaps you and your staff should read it again and learn from it.

No Name: The public will never back wild horse sterilization and other population culling methods in this national preserve so it is imperative other measures discussed or the subject and horses left alone.

No Name: Your WinEqquus program is flawed and that was mentioned in the NAS study.

Peggy Conroy: All informed citizens oppose the BLM with its lies of wild horse overpopulation. How can a few thousand wild horses on millions of acres of public land be too many? There are 10's of MILLIONS of cattle, sheep, elk, mines, oil/gas wells with pipelines ruining miles of land, housing developments, etc. all using more resources, mostly water, which is the scarce resource remember????

Rachel Reeves: There is no reason for the BLM to not try implementing new strategies for managing these populations.

Ronna Rault: I don't understand why the horses cannot stay on their land and maybe something be done to control their breeding? The gentleman that just retired from the Bureau states that there is enough land to maintain both the herd and the cattle?? These animals are majestic and make up our heritage.

Rothery Gensel: Balance the grazing between the livestock and the WILD horses. REDUCE the number of livestock, NOT the WILD horses! What is that ratio right now? The National Academy of Sciences in its June 2013 report recommended managing WILD horse populations at current or expanded levels using fertility control. Converting populations to non-reproducing herds should be rejected as inconsistent with Wild Horse Act.

Sharon Truax: PLEASE CONSIDER USING PZP TO CONTROL THEM IF NEED BE IT IS 90% USEFUL, SAFE AND REVERSIBLE. I WANT MY HARD EARNED MONEY TO FUND TO SAVE WILD HORSES NOT TO ERADICATE THEM .

Sheryl Barnes: It is my opinion that these horses should be left alone. Horses numbers are dwindling despite what the BLM is saying and The Grazing Association is just that and should buy their own land for cows to graze and leave the horses that are protected by The Free Roaming Horse and Burro Act alone. Making herds unable to reproduce IS the end of a species and not in any way an answer!

Suzanne Roy - American Wild Horse Preservation: BLM should manage wild horses using fertility control in accordance with NAS guidelines with the goal of reducing/eliminating removals. BLM should explore the methods recommended by the NAS.

Tami Hottes: I strongly protest this idiocy and how dare you start a non-reproductive herd to dupe the public out of money, believing they are seeing wild horses when in fact they will not be seeing anything more than critters in a petting zoo!

Roundup/Removal

Adrienne Buschling: I WANT wild horses on MY public land. I want them safe and protected, as they SHOULD be. Please consider alternatives to rounding up all these wild horses. Alternatives, like making ranchers more accountable for their livestock, who are stealing food from horses, not vice versa.

Alan Fowler: They were here first. Leave the horses alone. Just because they can't pay rent like the ranchers, they belong there.

Alison A. Moceri: I am once again deeply disturbed by the news of yet another roundup of America's Wild Mustangs. I am concerned at both the scope of this unnecessary roundup and the long term results. You ordered a study which said that the roundups are hurting the land. The land needs the horses and the horses need the land. What is your long term plan? To slaughter every remaining wild mustang.

Allison Bourdlaies: Please protect ALL of the horses in these areas of Wyoming. It is up to you and it isn't right that America's legacy of wild horses and their survival is left up to a few individuals here and there. Won't you please be the people that make changes for good and preservation instead of money in the pocket and greed?

Amanda Rudisill: More than 60% of the American public opposes your so called management of these iconic animals. To continue these roundups in the in spite of the law of the land and the will of the people is unacceptable.

Amy Elben: You know, a lot of us are getting SICK AND TIRED of you doing the bidding of the welfare farmers and ranchers in this state getting consideration over the rights and needs of our FEDERALLY protected wild horse and bison herds. The database of who gets how much from the government for not growing crops, for land set asides, for crop subsidies etc. is disgusting, and reads like a "who's who" in every county I have investigated. People with money throwing their weight around to get the result they want, while ignoring the wishes of the people of Wyoming.

An Educated Dog: Let the horses be free. Anything but would be a travesty for all.

Angel Dolph Dobson: Consider the idea of feeding the wild horses in one area and make it a paid tourist attraction. Horses go where the food is. People pay to see wildlife in their natural habitat. It is a win win situation.

Ann McWilliam: Please protect these magnificent horses. Allow them to remain free.

Ann Tomme: Please do not destroy wild horses on these public lands. They must be preserved for future generations. This proposition to destroy is totally inhumane.

Anne Bingham: I believe that wild horse herds in Wyoming should remain at their current numbers and that they should be protected for future generations. The proposed allocation of reducing the populations violates current laws that protect wild horses and burros. They are part of our American culture!

Anne Grime: I want to know why MY taxpayer money is being used against my wishes to eliminate MY horses!

Anne Pointer: I AM EXTREMELY OPPOSED TO SUCH DRASTIC WILD HORSE REDUCTIONS BEING PROPOSED BY BLM FOR THE CHECKERBOARD AREA OF WYOMING. I understand that BLM has to maintain these grazing areas and limit the account of free-roaming wild horses, but I believe that these proposed actions are too drastic. Please listen to the public and reassess this area and make the horses' long term presence more of a priority in the decision.

Anne Valdez: I am a taxpayer vehemently opposed to the removal of horses for the sake of ranchers and energy companies.

Anne Watson: PLEASE QUIT KILLING THE WILD HORSES & BURROS!!

Anne Woods: If you care anything about the Antelope, Mule Deer, Sage Grouse, Pygmy Rabbits, and several other wild animals using these same lands that the horses are denuding the feed and plants on, you would be saying, let's get with the removal and adoption programs, especially since you and others' tax monies are going to be paying the support of these horses after adoption right now, and in the future. If you want some changes to be made by Congress, FAT CHANCE! They can't fix the nation's budget, so the horses will continue to be given vaccinations, other shots, wounds sewn & dressed, and fed better feed than they would be getting out on the range for a long time to come.

Annie Heffner: Please don't remove the Mustangs from their homes...They are a very important part of our country's history and they need to remain so. I can't believe this is even under consideration. If you need to thin the herd, do that and put them up for adoption.

Arleen Rooney: There are far too many roundups and far too much brutality.

Ashley Cloud: Please stop this senseless killing of our, MY, heritage. I am a tax payer and I absolutely do not condone using my tax dollars for this barbaric nonsense. Do not bully innocent animals using helicopters.

Ashley O'Brien: The plans to remove up to 4 herds from 4 different management areas is completely unjust and not based on scientific methods or analysis.

Barbara Cassel: Absolutely no horses to be slaughtered!!

Barbara Culver: Stop killing horses! One of my greatest memories of visiting Wyoming in my 20's was seeing a large herd of wild horses. Leave them alone!

Barbara Evans: I am very angry that the horses have to be eliminated to enable private citizens to graze their animals on public property. Let these private citizens reduce their use of public lands. The wild horses are an important part of our American heritage and I am outraged at the cavalier attitude of the federal government when it comes to these treasures. LET THE HORSES ALONE!!!!!!

Barbara Leonard: Leave the wild horses & burros ALONE and leave them on their rightful legal lands.

Barbara Wright: We know the interests of the cattle industry drive the BLM's plan to annihilate the American Mustang.

Belle Grimaud: WE THE PEOPLE know what you are really doing and it's not land management! It is profiting off wild horse meat. You should all be replaced because of what you are doing! You are killing a National Treasure for your own gain.

Beth Levine: The wild horses of the Wyoming checkerboard must be protected for future generations, not destroyed at the behest of ranchers who receive tax subsidies to graze their livestock on our public lands. Public lands livestock grazing is a privilege not a right, while protection of wild horses is mandated by federal law!

Beverly Gray: What exactly is the PROBLEM that these roundups are trying to solve? None of the photos I have seen of these beautiful animals shows horses malnourished, so obviously there is no overcrowding on the range. So why are herds being eliminated unless it's for the financial gain of a few?

Billie Mitchell: Horses are part of our history part of the American way of life. They should be out there for all of us to enjoy watching.

Billy Angus: Leave our wild horses and burros alone or face the ultimate wrath from the Great Spirit!!

Bobbi Baskerville: Please preserve the wild horses on our public lands in the four herd areas. Please do not submit to the pressure of the Rock Springs Grazing Association that would wipe out all of these animals. There is no reason to roundup and auction off or otherwise rid these lands of these animals, other than for cattle... These wild horses need to be left alone to roam at will and not be injured, maimed, or destroyed by the BLM whose job it is to protect these animals....

Bonnie Powers: I know you are planning on removing all the horses from the Rock Springs/Adobe Town area. I wish you wouldn't. These horses are significant historical monuments to the horses that served our US military.

Bonnie Powers: If you do remove the horses please treat them humanely and let the public watch.

Boyd, Nancy C. (KSC-ISC-6300)[URS Federal: This blatant destruction of our wild mustang has got to stop!!! These descendants of our American heritage must be preserved. I cannot believe that of the two million acres of land....some of which is public ...there is not room to let these horses run free. If this is public land then it belong to the public....I AM ONE OF THE PUBLIC....and I DEMAND that these wonderful creatures be allowed to roam free.

Brenda Byler: I urge you to reconsider the actions of this department and abide by the laws in place in the Wild Horse and Burro Act. Get OUT of the pockets of cattle ranchers, abide by the law and do the right thing.

Brooke Nelson: These animals were here first, living and striving off the land, they earned their place. It is survival of the fittest, and they have adapted through hundreds of thousands of years to simply be capable of surviving. We will never understand what they have gone through, and to take them away from what they have naturally conquered; is to potentially play the role of a higher power. Why do we as man, feel the need to control aspects of nature? for it is very precious, and is single handedly yet the only favor mother nature asks of us.. to leave it be, we are not meant to be the rulers over the land. The horses have grown to be their own rulers, and their own heroes. The horses and wildlife, are what make ROCK SPRINGS. If they were to take that away, they are indeed taking away from Rock Springs itself.

Carla Gentry: Please reconsider the whole idea of these round ups. They are in-humane and sad. Please allow these horses to co-exist among us, after all if this continues I'm afraid another American Tradition will disappear.

Carol Coons: PLEASE DO NOT REMOVE THE WONDERFUL WILD HORSES FROM THIS LAND!!

Carol Coons: Please do not send wild horses in any of the listed areas to pens or slaughter houses!

Carol Coons: Please do not send wild horses in any of the listed areas to pens or slaughter houses!

Carol Nudell: I think a far better method of managing numbers would be to set coral traps over waterholes and salt blocks and leave them open year round. In the fall, close the traps and take all the foals off. Each year enough foals would avoid capture to maintain herd size, but foals are much easier for people to adopt, gentle and train.

Carol Nye: I am concerned about the ATSW Complex's current wild horse scoping plan. Though the population is hardly huge at nearly 1,447, his plan for destroying all four herds, which are four of the largest in the country must not be passed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). There is no appropriate reason for removing the mustangs. An icon and treasure of our nation, these horses must be preserved along with their habitat.

Carol Walter: These horses belong to us, the taxpayers and voters that backed the orig. bill to protect them.

Catherine Ensley: Please let these horses live in peace and in the wild. They don't deserve to be chased down moved and very likely injured and killed. Let groups that really care about their welfare manage them. They are a real treasure and should be treated as such.

Catherine Forsling: These are our wild horses! We do not want any of them to be removed. No more roundups! These horses are a great asset for their beauty and our tourist trade.

Catherine Hughes: I am deeply frustrated and disappointed to hear about dangerous "helicopter" roundups of wild horses and other activities your agency has been conducting.

Catherine Hughes: I urge you to protect and humanely manage our nation's wild horses not remove them. As a taxpayer I support wild horses living free on our public lands.

Cathy Thornburn: I look forward to protection for wild horses, not eradication.

Cathy Wasson: The endless roundups need to STOP!

Charmaine Wardrop: I was recently to the South Steens HMA, and it seems to me that there are more cattle on the land than the wild horses. Why not kill the cattle and leave the horses?

Cheryl Burchell Goldsmiths: Please leave our Wild Horses alone. Stop decimating our wild herds so that cattle and other non-native livestock have more grazing land. Stop wasting our taxpayer money will the roundups.

China Altman: To keep killing the wild horses of the west is to kill an integral part of the American birthright. It blocks forever the ability of our children and future descendants to know an identity and a richness that will be found quite soon only in computer accounts and dusty books.

Christel Szopieray: Doesn't what we as citizens want matter at all? Why does business come first and destroy irreplaceable resources and beauty for the rest of us who don't benefit by those business interests at all or indirectly where there is another way to get there?

Christianna Capra: I support the herd being preserved for scientific research studies & as a 'sentinel herd' as recommended by the NAS Committee recently, since it is one of the last herds in the ten Western states to be non-manipulated since 1988.

Christina Williams: This country has plenty of (too many) cows. Not so wild horses. The wild horse is an endangered natural legacy which is incumbent upon us to preserve for subsequent generations. Those generations will still have plenty of cows to eat. Protect, not eliminate, wild horse herds.

Christine Hendricks: STOP! These horses are on public lands. The public lands belong to us, tax payers, me. Leave our freedom in peace.

Christine Lesko: Our mustangs are disappearing every year more and more as they are sold at auction and slaughtered. Let nature take its course not our nature, mother nature.

Cindy Belcher: Furthermore, I would like to know what the plans are for the horses being removed. Will they be relocated to another protected area or penned in crowded corrals with no shelter and limited water?

Cindy Belcher: I would like to state my objection to these revisions, specifically the removal of all wild horses from this HMA within RSGA lands.

Connie Nelson: We the People of the United states of America Support our wild horses and will mobilize in ways you have never thought of to get the idiots that want to place this atrocity into policy OUT of office, and hopefully a change of leadership will trickle down to the BLM

Cynthia Myalt: I'm disappointed that the BLM is not upholding laws created to protect our wild horses - federally protected horses and burros. It seems ranchers demands for grazing land (public land) are trumping laws (federal).

Dana Smith: You don't have the funds nor the inclination to properly CARE FOR the horses you are planning to remove from THEIR natural habitat. Which has been proven time and again. The only option for most of them is to wind up at slaughter houses. We already know that the real reason for their removal is to satisfy ranchers so that they can graze their livestock cheaply on BLM lands. THESE MUSTANGS were given protection under the law. Obviously be people more concerned about preservation than putting money in their own pockets.

Danie Hamilton: The so called rescue of these horses from their suffering on the free range is replaced by imprisoning them in corrals with no shade and little real upkeep...they stand in their own feces...their hay is moldy....and worst of all...horses meant to RUN are penned up...caged....removing these horses for mineral rights and livestock grazing...there really are no words....this is a tragedy and a travesty and the sheldon horses...the descendants of the War Horses....who carried the US troops to victory....is a crowning humiliation to the American spirit

Danie Hamilton: You are set, thru the guise of land management...to take out and eliminate the two largest herds of wild mustangs. Our wild horses. This is not a car. These creatures are flesh and blood and feelings. All you seem to see is MONEY. Money not of the tax payer but the special interests. Do I need to list them here in all their wonder? Mineral rights and livestock...which does not include horses. You go thru this staged events while the boards are STOCKED with those who advocate for the slaughter of this national treasure.. the wild mustangs....

Darcy Tyer: Please stop the round ups of wild horses. These wild horses are a symbol of America and deserve to be free, protected and respected. Horses should not be removed from public lands so that private cattle can graze on it. The round ups are just wrong.

Darleen Alkhalili: These horses are connected to history...if they were a building they'd be put on the national registry of historic buildings. These beautiful animals are related to the horses brought over by the Spanish Conquistadors. They belong to the public...their land is MY LAND and the rest of the AMERICAN PEOPLE. DO NOT cater to those who wish to graze their sheep/cattle on public land.

Deb Vase: Please do not eliminate our wild mustang herds. The Wyo mustang are our national treasure. Please keep them free.

Deborah Fox: The right thing to do is to take responsibility for these destructive decisions and policies and reconsider the path you have taken while you still have time. Sticking with the horses, they must be returned to their rightful land, the roundups need to stop now! You cannot continue to imprison 50,000 horses nor can you send 50,000 to slaughterhouses behind Americans' backs. What is your plan BLM? I urge you to do the right thing and follow the recommendations of the National Academy of Sciences immediately.

Deborah Wolford: The proposal to eliminate the wild horses is not a sound decision. Perhaps it makes the work of BLM easier and less complicated, but it does not serve the purposes and protections the Wild Horse Act was supposed to fulfill. Quite frankly, I am appalled at the lack of leadership and focus. I am appalled at the lack of concern for the horses' welfare. I suppose it is easier to dispose of the horses and eliminate the issue altogether.

Debra Tracy: I am totally against taking any more Wild Horses OFF their Land

Denise Tatum: Wyoming won't be so wild if you kill off the wild horses.

Diane Kastel: An outpouring of public support for Wyoming's mustangs and in opposition to the BLM's destructive plans is essential.

Diane Stewart: AND AS A TAX PAYING AMERICAN, I WANT THE ROUND UPS AND HOLDING PENS DONE AWAY WITH. THIS IS COSTING US MORE THAN JUST LEAVING THE HORSES TO THE LAND THAT IS THEIR'S AND HAS BEEN FOR 100'S OF YEARS. I WILL NOT ALLOW MY TAX MONEY TO PAY FOR THIS TOMFOOLERY.

Dolly @ Rebel Oil Company: I want to preserve wild horses on our public lands in these four herd areas, and not submit to pressure from the Rock Springs Grazing Association to virtually wipe them out. Please Stop the roundups, Stop the holding pens, and leave the Horses and Burros on the public lands unmolested.

Donna Farrow: How can you do this? Why would you do this! My damn tax dollars better not be paying for the murder of these animals!

Donna Gasbarro: Please stop rounding up the wild horses in the Checkerboard area of Wyoming, let them remain living free in their home. If the roundups are to sustain public lands for past & future generations then let them be. You are not doing the public any favors by gathering these horses to put them in holding pens or shipping them off to be slaughtered.

Donna Parker: The wild horses can be moved, or the option of leaving them alone comes to mind. The Mustang is as much a part of the environment as the deer or Antelope, Thin them out to break for riding if you want, but there is no excuse for this kind of abuse!!

Doris McQuiddy: I keep hearing that the herds are growing beyond what is sustainable, yet it is another perk for the cattlemen that the wild horses and burros are penned up in deplorable conditions while we taxpayers must pay for contracts for allowing the wild horses and burros to keep breathing under this inhumane circumstance. When advocates try to see the wild horses and burros in their allotted habitats, there are no teeming herds, but the smaller and smaller herds must be searched for. The census numbers are simply multiplied factors of a guess estimates rather than based on anything that could be considered a scientific estimate much less a true census. Tourist go to see wild horses and burros as an advertised glimpse of wild horses, but return home not having seen them in real life, but instead bring home photographs as souvenirs.

Dove Bear: Wild horses are a beautiful American symbol, and have been for a very long time. There is no sense in killing all wild horses, whether it's just in Wyoming or everywhere.

Elaine Balgemann: STOP KILLING OUR WILD HORSES AND GET THE LIVESTOCK "ORR OF THEIR DESIGNATED WILD RANGES, NOW,PERMANENTLY.

Elaine Farris: These horses are our heritage. In the old days the wolves would have controlled the population, but the ranchers and sport hunters want to kill all of those, too...

Elatia Grimshaw: Please just leave the wild horses alone. They are not harming anyone. They are as much a part of nature as wolves, deer, bears, etc.

Elatia Grimshaw: Please stop all mustang and burro roundups. These animals are a living heritage and are supposed to be protected on their land, not removed to make room for cattle grazing, oil drilling and fracking.

Elissa Kline: Please stop destroying wild horse herds. With over 50,000 formerly wild horses stockpiled in long term holding, clearly there is something wrong with the way you are managing wild horses.

Ellen McGrath-Mamone: DO NOT SPEND MY TAX DOLLARS IMPRISONING WILD HORSES!

Everett Halligan DVM: WE vehemently oppose the Bureau of Land Management's SLAUGHTER (BLM's) plan to amend the Rawlins and Rock Springs Resource Management Plans (RMPs) to destroy the wild free-roaming horse herds of the Wyoming Checkerboard. WE, the taxpayers are sickened by the never ending abuse on the animals .(The wild horses). Stop the torture, killings, massacres, and slaughter of these majestic animals that rightly BELONG here.

F&D Hunt: I am writing in regards to your plan to remove all wild horses and burros from the private and public lands of Wyoming Checkerboard. I was very sad to hear this, and am asking that you reconsider this plan of action, and do not remove all wild horses and burros from these lands. I am positive that removing them completely off the land or eliminating a majority of them is not managing in a manner designed to achieve and maintain a thriving balance.

Fran Ottinger: It is time the BLM stops lying about the impact of the wild horses and stops their effort to eliminate the herds.

Frances Ottinger: The wild horses of the Wyoming checkerboard must be protected for future generations, not destroyed at the behest of ranchers who receive tax subsidies to graze their livestock on our public lands. The American public demand that our wild horses be protected.

Jodi Garbarino: STOP THIS SENSELESS KILLING/ROUNDUPS....LET THEM LIVE FREE!!

Gaye Pollitt: I oppose the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM's) plan to amend the Rawlins and Rock Springs Resource Management Plans (RMPs) to destroy the wild free-roaming horse herds of the Wyoming Checkerboard. These creatures deserve better and are a part of the beauty and wonder of our country. I understand there are management issues -- for the protection of the herds. BUT THAT'S YOUR JOB -- TO PROTECT AND MANAGE THEM, NOT TO MAKE THEM EXTINCT.

George Payerle: I just want to say that the ongoing war against mustangs is TOTALLY un-American.

Gina Chronowicz: I oppose the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM's) plan to amend the Rawlins and Rock Springs Resource Management Plans (RMPs) to destroy the wild free-roaming horse herds of the Wyoming Checkerboard. IS THERE NOTHING YOU WON'T DO FOR LIVESTOCK GRAZERS WHO ARE PARASITES FEEDING ON PUBLIC LANDS, WHERE THERE ARE 35 TO 40 TIMES THE NUMBER OF CATTLE THAN HORSES? WOLVES, HORSES, WHAT NEXT?

Ginger Kathrens - The Cloud Foundation: If there must be a roundup, we recommend the bait trapping method. Bait trapping has long been regarded as a cost-effective roundup method. While this area is vast, so are the road networks for oil and gas development, thus providing better accessibility. If bait trapping is conducted in late winter/early spring (the optimum time for application of the PZP booster), horses will be in their most depleted state and will be more susceptible to the offer of supplemental nutrition. This would give the BLM complete flexibility because the agency will no longer be dependent on the availability of the helicopter contractors. Bait trapping would be a slower process than that of a helicopter roundup, but it would be humane. Another advantage is that bait trapping keeps wild horse family units together. Intact bands are essential to the stability of equine society. When the wild horse social order is preserved, a slower population growth rate ensues. Switching to bait trapping would enable BLM to avoid the exorbitant costs involved in helicopter roundups, removals, and subsequent holding for likely many years. We recommend the adoption of bait trapping for wild horse roundups to the exclusion of the helicopter-drive method. Bait traps could be set up at sites in the HMAs where the horses congregate. The wild horse specialist would know where those places are. To offset the longer process, you could short-cut your field work by recording the makeup of each band captured, and—if necessary—dart the mares with PZP at the same time. Darting the mares with the native PZP booster while they are in the trap is logical, less expensive, and more humane. (Note that the PZP primer can be delivered at any time of the year and is good for the life of the mare. Once all mares are primed, the entire population of females becomes a one shot herd.) This method can be employed using a very small crew that work during the entire year for priming, but would focus on the second booster shot from January through April.

Ginger Kathrens - The Cloud Foundation: The scoping notice advises that a helicopter-drive roundup is anticipated to start in October 2013 or into November. The technique is expensive and inhumane and the timing of roundups is unlikely to produce successful adoptions. We do not support the use of the helicopter-drive method. Being chased by a helicopter is stressful for foals still nursing mares, and elderly horses, and may act as an energy depleter for animals preparing for winter. If a roundup is held and this inhumane method is used despite our objections, we ask that the Contracting Officer's Technical Representative specify limits on how far the wild horses are forced to run. We also ask that the COTR set and enforce a humane temperature range and to cancel operations if the footing is poor due to rain and snow.

Ginger Kathrens - The Cloud Foundation: The wild horses of the West belong to "We the People." The American people come from all across the country and the 50 states. The People want their wild horses and burros free on the range, in self-sustaining herds, with priority to forage in those areas designated as wild horse HMAs. BLM should honor the wishes of the greater public. It's time for a change.

Ginger Kathrens - The Cloud Foundation: There is concern of what will happen to the horses being permanently removed from the range, especially when roundups occur later in the year. It is less likely for a horse to be adopted going into winter, when they will need to be fed large amounts of hay and grain, than it is for them to be adopted in spring or summer, when a prospective owner can rely in part on natural forage to meet a horse's dietary requirements. However, this time of year is dangerous for wild horses with small foals and likely still in a depleted state from winter. This is just another reason not to use helicopters but opt for bait trapping if removals are truly needed. As it is unlikely that the majority of horses will be successfully adopted, they will be sent to short and long term holding facilities, facilities

that are currently running at capacity in terms of both available space and resources. Committing this number of additional horses to the already strained holding facilities would push many over the brink and could result in less than humane care for the captive horses, something the Act specifically protects against. This incarceration would also generate additional financial strain on the BLM, an issue given over half of the Wild Horse & Burro Program's budget is already consumed by those horses in holding.

Gloria Lee: Wild horses are essential to the very idea of the Wild West preservation and these public lands were created to provide space for them. But to completely remove horses from some of these areas as planned is simply wrong. I want to know wild horses still roam free for my grandchildren to see someday.

Hannah Robertson: I am sending this to take a stand against your brutal tactics to remove the wild horses from our country! I urge you to reconsider your plan.

Holly Daza: PLEASE STOP THIS, THE HORSES NEED TO STAY!!!!

Illegible Name: The Rock Springs Grazing Association, may have the right to ask for Wild Horses to be removed from private lands, but NOT from OUR PUBLIC LANDS! These are OUR WILD HORSES! We DO NOT, want any of them to be removed. NO MORE ROUNDUPS! They are cruel, and totally unnecessary! Humane Society has been working with you to control Wild Horse Population, by darting mares with anti-pregnancy drugs. That and regular mortality, should, eliminate the need for anymore roundups! Please cancel this roundup, and anymore removals of wild horses from ranges in WY. These horses are a great asset for their beauty and our tourist trade.

Ingrid E. Albrecht: Also, PLEASE work on the redirection of federal resources to in-the-wild management of wild horses and burros, which would keep these animals ON THE RANGE and SAVE taxpayers millions annually by avoiding the mass removal and stockpiling wild horses in government holding facilities.

Ingrid E. Albrecht: Why is it that over 270,00 wild horses and burros have been removed by these cruel roundups from their federally protected lands to languish in government holding facilities at the taxpayers' expense or shipped off for slaughter? How could the BLM knowingly sell at least 1700 wild horses to the known horse slaughterer, Tom Davis?

Irene H: I am a Nun who lives in Washington State who recently heard about the proposed plan to diminish the Wild Horse herds in Wyoming by 46%. This is completely outrageous considering how that move could very easily mean the end to the Wild Horse species as we know it. Yes, we all know this could mean extinction.

J.L. Cone: Does the BLM serve the majority of citizens or just a few with lobbyists? Americans repeatedly contact your agency over a period of multiple years to support the existence of wild mustangs. And yet, over and over again, we hear of the BLM's intent to destroy the herds because of ranching interests. Most other wildlife throughout the West is in danger of being poisoned or shot or gassed for the benefit of profitable industries like cattle ranching, ON PUBLIC LANDS.

Jackie Dove: America's horses belong to ALL the people and they must be protected from abuse and slaughter.

Jackie Evans: You have not and will not listen to what the people are telling you in emails and petitions, and hearings, and lawsuits, and social media about keeping our horses on the land and stopping the roundups. You will not listen nor comply with other alternatives. You have done a poor job and I don't

foresee you doing any better in the future. Turn in your resignations please, WE THE PEOPLE no longer want you to manage our wild horses, nor our land and water.

Jacqueline Land: We are opposed to the Bureau of Land Management's plan to amend the Rawlins and Rock Springs Resource Management Plans in an attempt to eliminate the wild horse herds currently roaming the Wyoming Checkerboard. These horses are protected under the Wild Free Roaming Horses and Burros Act and should not be removed to benefit private livestock owners.

James Quinn: We are opposed to the Bureau of Land Management's plan to amend the Rawlins and Rock Springs Resource Management Plans in an attempt to eliminate the wild horse herds currently roaming the Wyoming checkerboard. These horses are protected under the Wild Free Roaming Horses and Burros Act and should not be removed to benefit private livestock owners.

Janet Carabello: We American tax payers want the wild horses and burros to remain free and undisturbed. If the herds are deemed overpopulated (difficult to understand how when the cattle far outnumber them), then some measures of population control should be considered, but never the complete annihilation of all of them! Given that the Checkerboard area is problematical for livestock management, and fences are impractical to keep the horses on Federal land, a better solution might be the swapping of land parcels to have larger Federal and private blocks of land. Has this been given serious consideration?

Janet Friedman: I am saddened to learn that the BLM continues to oppose the wishes of the public in regard to taking care of America's horses.

Janet Pentis: Please do not get rid of the American Wild Horse population on the Wyoming Checkerboard. They are so much a part of our history and we, the people, want them to remain there.

Jaxi West: Stop the roundups!

Jeanne Bradbury: WIPING OUT WILD HERDS IS NOT "LAND MANAGEMENT" -- it's SLAUGHTER!!!!!!! You have no moral or legal right to exterminate the wild horse herds!

Jenny Stewart: The Bureau of Land Management's (BLM's) plan to amend the Rawlins and Rock Springs Resource Management Plans (RMPs) to destroy the wild free-roaming horse herds of the Wyoming Checkerboard is wrong.

Jess Burger: We believe strongly in more humane management than the gathers and would like our voice be counted for the herds to remain on the public lands where they belong. The BLM needs to remain an organization that also serves in the interest of the people in managing their public lands and not succumb to the never ceasing demands for grazing cattle or other livestock and farming issues. Please preserve these most important herds and their genetic heritage to the world.

JN Dauterive: Please follow the rules established by Wild Horse & Burro Act, and manage this area so the horses, and our public grasslands can continue to thrive.

Joan Cornett: Stop the roundups. They kill the horses and they show a total disregard for the law and the horses that are supposed to be protected.

Joan Cornett: There is no overpopulation of wild horses, 30,000 of them compared to millions of livestock owners and other special interest groups who are allowed to use public lands and push out what are supposed to be federally protected wild horses and killing off their natural predators.

Joan Cornett: These wild horses deserve to be on public lands along with their natural predators like the law says. Roundups that kill these horses show a total disregard for the horses and the law.

Joan Gove: As a US Tax payer and concerned citizen, I am extremely concerned with BLM's continuation of business-as-usual with continued round-ups and removal of Our Wild Horses and the dramatic increase of horses to be removed from the Adobe Town/Salt Wells Creek Checker.

Jodi Dinsmore de Lopez: Those horses are not yours to pull off the ranges. They are not yours to give to middlemen who will sell them off to horrifying deaths. These horses belong to the American public, unlike the cattle which you allow to graze for minimal fees on the land the horses have occupied for centuries. Not ONE MORE HORSE or BURRO should come off their lands. NOT ranchers' lands. Leave the RED DESERT HERDS ALONE!

Joe Carter: Why on earth do you insist on breaking up herds and destroying them? These are not cows! Leave them alone!

Joe Carter: Wild horses are being destroyed. There are more in captivity than free. This is wrong! Return the horses.

Joette Snyder: Please do not take any more wild horses from public lands! They have the right to this land cattle do so much more harm to grass lands and water holes than these wild horses! Do not waste anymore tax payer money on this cruel practice!

Johnston, Laura: DO NOT ALLOW THE CAPTURE OF WILD HORSES!

Jonathan Jeffer: Mustangs, although and introduced species have been here for about 500 years and are emblematic of the wild, western United States. I think the decision to remove horses is wrong headed, and demonstrates all of the worst priorities.

Joy Vancos: Regardless of the AML argument, this is really not about that but is about removing horses to the advantage of the ranchers who pay a minimum amount to graze their cattle on public land. I strongly oppose the removal of these horses from public land which was designated for them.

Judy Prisoc: I understand that the BLM is planning to remove large numbers of wild horses in an upcoming Wild Horse Scoping project. I hope you will reconsider. So many horses are being removed that the genetic diversity is being undermined, family units and herds, entire social structures are destroyed. The horses being removed have no place to go because removal has been used excessively without consideration for the consequences. Please think carefully about how many people care about these horses and act in ways that will benefit the horses not just wipe them out or compromise their viability.

Julie Long Gallegos: As a taxpayer and US Citizen, I'm denying permission for you to wipe out the wild horses to allow cattle grazing on Public Land.

Julie McDonough: There are many other choices to herd management other than annihilation.

K Hood: I think they have been removed illegally & inhumanely, laws & treaties have been ignored all for the sake of the almighty \$

Karen Fager: Leave the horses on their land and the government should be protecting them. Give them more land to live on.

Karen McKinney: Please, Please, Please! Leave the wild horses! They are our treasure! All the stuff going on in this country that needs righting and the wild horses are fine. They will take care of themselves. This madness must stop. It is a huge part of the American Legacy.

Karen McKinney: Protect these incredible animals!

Karen Sykes: It has come to my attention that you are planning to remove and extinguish the wild horses from the area known as Adobe Town, Salt Wells Creek, Great Divide Basin and White Mountain. Please reconsider this action and leave the horse so that they may continue to live and grow there.

Karen-Kathy Harris: BLM. WY ROCK SPRINGS WYOMING SAVE THE WILD HORSES/BURROS
END THE SCHEDULED ROUNDUPS. AUCTIONS THANK YOU VERY MUCH

Karen-Kathy Harris: Please HALT IMMEDIATELY ALL FURTHER SCHEDULED
ROUNDUPS/AUCTIONS

Karen-Kathy Harris: PLEASE SAVE THE WILD HORSES/BURROS.. PLEASE HALT THE
SCHEDULED ROUNDUPS.AUCTIONS OF THE WILD HORSES/BURROS. Please HALT
IMMEDIATELY ALL FURTHER SCHEDULED ROUNDUPS/AUCTIONS. SAVE THE WILD
HORSES NOW THEY DO NOT EAT THE RANGELAND. AND LIVESTOCK OWNERS DO NOT
GRAZE THEIR LIVESTOCK IN THE DESERT THE CATTLE EAT HAY OR GO TO FEED LOTS.

Karen-Kathy Harris: PLEASE SAVE THE WILD HORSES/BURROS... PLEASE HALT THE
SCHEDULED ROUNDUPS/AUCTIONS OF THE WILD HORSES/BURROS. Please HALT
IMMEDIATELY ALL FURTHER SCHEDULED ROUNDUPS/AUCTIONS

Karen-Kathy Harris: PLEASE SAVE THE WILD HORSES/BURROS.... PLEASE HALT THE
SCHEDULED ROUNDUPS. AUCTIONS IN WYOMING

Karen-Kathy Harris: PLEASE STOP THE SCHEDULED WILD HORSES/BURROS ROUNDUPS.
AUCTIONS now!

Kate Clark-Spencer: AS A CITIZEN, THESE ARE MY HORSES! I DO NOT WANT THEM
DISTURBED.

Kate Clark-Spencer: IT IS RIDICULOUS TO REMOVE WILD HORSES. YOU SHOULD KNOW
THAT THE MOVEMENT TOWARD A VEGAN WAY OF LIFE IS GROWING AND PEOPLE DON'T
WANT THE WILD HORSES REMOVED.

Kate Dougherty: The constant terrifying round-ups must stop. The shilling to and pandering of the BLM
is in regards to cattle to horses ratio is appalling.

Kathleen Egan: I believe the BLM needs a completely new way to look at and approach this 'problem'.
The horses actually fare quite well in the wild, again something I am sure you are aware of. Also the
horses are good for the local ecology, another fact I'm sure you are aware of if looking at this picture with
open minds. They do not, however, fare well being run half to death (esp. the poor foals!!) and rounded
up and kept the way they are in pens. I believe many that are sold off also do not fare well. To my mind it
is a travesty and I beg you to wipe the slate clean and begin anew with a more enlightened program.

Kathy Lewis-Aucreman: How does that make any sense to KILL horses so others can live and eat there!

Kathy Manett: PLEASE leave our wild horses alone. Let them be free!

Keith Penner: The last two weekends, I photographed the wild horses on White Mountain. What a terrible waste it would be to remove them, and not have them there for us all to enjoy.

Ken Gurtoz: Our wild horses are a living symbol of the historic and pioneer spirit of the west and should be treated with the dignity of America's heritage. I'm also not in favor of managing the herd as non-reproducing.

Kenneth Shapiro: The BLM is acting as a puppet of a special intersection group(cattle ranchers) by neglecting its sworn duty to protect the federally protected mustangs, belonging to all of us Americans and our children and grandchildren.

Kim Hart: I was told by another photographer who spoke with someone at the Rock Springs BLM that, "BLM has relocated 20 head of horses from McCullough Peak Wilderness area to the Red Desert this past January." Why are you taking horses from another area and then doing a round up???

Kim Hart: Quit using helicopters to run the horses! Can you not figure out how to capture the horses using better methods? I know there are other capture methods used successfully.

Kris Lynch: Please do not continue with the plans to remove the wild horse herds. Extinction is NOT the answer. As a taxpayer I am vehemently opposed to this plan.

Kris Williams: I just read about the plans for the wild horses, does no one have a conscience who figures these things out?

Kris Williams: It is wrong to claim to be "stewards of the land" and remove the inhabitants of that land.

Kris Williams: These Wild Horses deserve to remain FREE and deserve SAFE Havens!

Kristin Andersen: I am writing to you in hopes of rescuing these beautiful wild creatures. Ultimately, my dream is to see wild horses in the wild. Please help them!

Kristine Lackaff: I am writing to ask that you please support the wild horses of Wyoming and America and take a more friendly approach to managing them. Wild horses are part of the American culture and should be protected and cherished. From what I've read your plans to cull them and fertilize all mares would lead to wiping them out completely. I am vehemently against your plans. Please support these horses instead of eliminating them.

Laura Taylor: Let the wild horse run free!

Laurie Haggard: As an American citizen, I am OUTRAGED and INCENSED at the actions of the Bureau of Land Management, and their plans to rid our country of wild horses living and grazing in the western states. If you think that the American public does not know that the BLM is in the back pockets of the cattle cartel and their lobby and special interest to round up these horses, who have inhabited this country for years, and ship them to Mexico and Canada for slaughter, think again. If the majority of Americans knew what you were doing, and the inhumane treatment these horses are being subjected to, they would be just as outraged as I and many other Americans are. Stop the round ups of these horses, and the subsequent horrendous slaughter of them.

Laurie Manz: The majority of the PUBLIC does not want the horses rounded up and removed.

Laurie McCrink: I AM TAKING A HARD STAND FOR THE WYOMING WILD HORSES. How could the BLM even consider such an outrageously biased plan in favor of livestock ranchers? Corporate welfare! I am SHOCKED AND APPALLED by the BLM's lack of support for the wild horses!!

Laurie Newmyer: I am sending this response to let you know that I think these horses should be left in their home. These horses are an American icon and the BLMs plan to wipe them out is not the answer.

Laurinda Reinhart: The keep zeroing out herd management areas in favor of other uses is in violation of the wild and free roaming burro and mustang act. Other herd management areas or sanctuaries need to be created where the horses can be managed in a compassionate and sustainable way, where they won't be in conflict with other uses. The continued roundups, stockpiling in feedlots, and zeroing out of herd management areas is illegal, inhumane, and an affront to all who treasure this American icon.

Lenore Mullaney: WY helicopter round-ups can be characterized as almost closed events with the public's observation at a mile distance. There should never be another round-up in WY given its history.

Lida Gregory: Please consider visiting some different strategies for land management other than this plan for removing the horses.

Lida Gregory: There are a multitude of groups who are researching and providing much more sustainable solutions than eradication [of wild horses].

Lil Judd: Rounding the wild horses up & placing them in the containment areas actually make them cost the US Citizen a lot more each year than if they were allowed to roam free on the range as they're supposed to. These forced round ups are causing foals to get separated from their mothers/mares. They get injured & traumatized.

Lil Judd: We do not wish to have the slaughter houses reopened in the US. We do NOT want horses sold to slaughter.

Lily Fitzsimmons: Leave the beautiful wild horses alone!! It's cruel to take them away and slaughter them!!! Let them be free to live on this planet because this planet isn't made just for humans. Who are you to take them away from what they know.

Linda LaRoy: Must we wipe out everything that is beautiful and good. Greed, I believe, is the motivating factor in this move. They better remember what the horse represents in our history.

Linda Meyers: Leave these beautiful animals alone. They are a part of the west as much as any other animal we protect. It would be a sad West without our beautiful horses running free

Linda Wilkinson: Now let me add my own opinion. Playing God does not work and history has proven, what your doing is disgusting, and government thinking they can do anything. Tired of government kill programs, that seem to be the number one thing...when you come up for vote, I will not vote for anyone who thinks this right...killing history is not right, and it's the same old same. Money money money, for the greedy....

Lisa Ballantyne: Please do not roundup the 4 bands of mustangs in Sweetwater County. Please keep these mustangs free.

Lisa Cronin: Wild horses of the Checkerboard must be protected, not wiped out.

Lise Witter: The wild horses are part of our heritage and what makes this country what it is. They should also be part of our legacy for generations to come.

Lola Haus: A few words of my own first: How many horses does the taxpayer have to support? This is outrageous! These horses are living free on the land, costing the taxpayer next to nothing. Now you want to break up the horse families and have the taxpayers pay for their upkeep. Leave these horses free.

Loretta Kneebone: IM sure by now you have read the same thing.. that your probably not even opening these. I think Americans need more BEEF on our TABLES. NOT HORSE MEAT!!! would anyone of you EAT A HORSE??? NO. why are you trying to get rid of all the MUSTANGS???

Louisiana Horse Owner: Please do not do this to these herds! They are part of our Heritage! They deserve to roam free se let them be!

Lynn Degraff: As an American citizen I am demanding that BLM cease and desist from further removal of wild horses in the Rock Springs area and all other areas managed by the BLM. I am also demanding further studies be done to show why you insist on the complete decimation of wild horses in America with no substantiated evidence that they are either unhealthy or damaging property.

Lynn Huebner: BLM is not only allowing wild horses and burros to be sold to kill buyers it seems that they are actively participating in the sales.

Lynn Huebner: BLM needs to be held accountable for their actions, they need to open their records, accounting, plans and models of how they deduce how many horses need to be "gathered" (which is decades old and out of date according to NAS) to the public who have only the best interests of these animals in their hearts and their minds.

Lynn Huebner: I beg you to stop the "gathers" until your house in order. Leave these animals the peace and security they so deserve.

Lynn Huebner: I have many questions for BLM, and the first one is why are you "gathering" (such a nice, gentle term for such a brutal practice) horses at all? . You seem to be trying to reduce the number to 25,300 again, which was deemed unacceptable and dangerous in 1971. We are in danger of losing all of our wild horses and burros and yet you keep "gathering" them because ranchers, oil, gas and mining interests are unhappy. Forget that the horses and burros are protected by Federal Law.....You are working very hard to zero out the wild herds.

Lynn Huebner: Let us also look at the means used in these "gathers" which are as brutal and horrendous as I have ever seen. Obviously BLM does not care about the caliber or knowledge of the people they employ and the horses and the burros are recipients of what amounts to pure animal abuse.

Lynn Huebner: Right now we have 50,000 horses in holding, some in places that are so far below minimum standard that I actually despair. I have seen areas that fully resemble feed lots where horses are fattened for slaughter.

Lynn Huebner: Stop treating the equines as a commodity and meat on the table of foreign interests and start treating them as the national treasures they are. Make Sheldon a part of the HMA's under the Act and take those horses out of their care and control.

Lynn Huebner: The land is not being over foraged by horses, but it is being over foraged by cattle. Horses have less than 10% of the grazing area allotted to them in the HMA's. I cannot even begin to

understand why you think you need to remove any of them from Rock Springs. And where will you put them?

M Judd: Please leave the wild horses alone. There are far more cattle and sheep than horses. Putting them in holding pens is inhumane as is shipping them to auctions to be bought by kill buyers.

M. Ghost Dancer Wene: I urge you to stop now, think what our future will be if you destroy these living treasures.

Mackenzie K, Assoc. AIA: I feel there is a crime happening against our wild horses. Those animals are part of our *National Historic Culture* and should be preserved and allowed to prosper without being caught, and slaughtered.

Marc Norris: The wild horses of the Wyoming checkerboard must be protected for future generations, not destroyed at the behest of ranchers who receive tax subsidies to graze their livestock on our public lands. Public lands livestock grazing is a privilege not a right, while protection of wild horses is mandated by federal law!

Marcie Perskin: I DO NOT APPRECIATE YOUR USE OF PUBLIC MONIES FOR SAID ROUNDUPS - HELICOPTERS INCLUDED- AND THE TREATMENT OF OUR WILD HORSES AS THEY BELONG TO ~~~~~WE THE PEOPLE

Margaret Southwell: Leave America's Wild Horse where it belongs, on the range.

Marla Zanelli: We as Americans want to see the Wild Horse Herds left alone and not removed from the BLM Land. It is the choice of the people to leave these horses on the range!

Marsha Bland: I am emailing to ask that the wild mustangs in Wyoming need to be left unharmed on our public lands. I have been to Wyoming twice and that was to see wild horses and other wildlife that should be allowed to live in peace. I ask the BLM to use more humane practices to control the herds.

Martenson, Julie: Please stop, this is not what the people of this country want, these are national lands and the horses are a treasure that must be protected.

Martenson, Julie: Why is the Bureau of Land Management advancing a devastating plan to wipe out wild horses in the Wyoming Checkerboard, a two million acre swath of public and private land in the southern portion of the state at the behest of the Rock Springs Grazing Association? Nearly half of Wyoming's remaining mustangs live in this area!

Martha Bresnahan: I am requesting you STOP removing the wild horses from public lands. The horses feed themselves by grazing the lands and there should be no HUMAN interference with them.

Martha Peterson: You have no right to take out these herds!!!!

Mary Ann Leitch: IT IS OUTRAGEOUS TO TAKE AWAY LANDS DESIGNATED FOR WILD HORSES, OUR GREAT AMERICAN SYMBOL OF THE WEST, TO GIVE THEIR LANDS TO RICH RANCHERS FOR FURTHER POLLUTION AND TO MINING COMPANIES FOR ECOSYSTEM DEVASTATION AND TOXIC POLLUTION

Mary Cerniglia: Leave those horses where they are!!! They are healthy, not hurting anyone, you have 2 million acres and it is cheaper to leave them where they are. I am embarrassed that my taxpayer dollars are used to incarcerate wild horses and eradicate them from the plains. Leave them in place please.

Mary Hurley: Please don't eliminate these herds. Federal law cannot be violated under a consent decree. These horses are a national treasure and should be protected.

Mary Paquet: I don't understand why the Wild Horse and Burro Act of 1971 is not being enforced? Leave the wild horses and burros alone.

Meg Conner: I fully intend to complain to several politicians regarding the slaughter of wild horses!

Megan Jones: Please allow the Wild mustangs in Wyoming to remain on their public lands! They are our heritage in the West, part of our history that lives on. Please don't give in to the greed driven cattle industry's war on wild horses!! We are aware of this and nobody approves!

Melanie Bellamore: I am disgusted to hear of the BLM's plan to eradicate the wild horses in the Wyoming Checkerboard. Where is the justice in committing such a horrible act. Is it right to allow vast amounts of cattle and sheep to graze when they outnumber horses by 40 to 1. Horses are a symbol of freedom. They opened the frontier.

Michelle Benes: Keep these wild horses protected and on their natural range, and to seriously follow the recommendations of the NAS report instead of dismissing it out of hand .

Michelle Benes: These horses are unique and like the African Elephant or the Snow Leopard they need to be protected so next generations will be able to view the wild horse herds! These are a national treasure so why are you so intent on exterminating them? Leave them alone!!

Mike & Carol Korgan: Leave the wild horses alone.

Mindy Beardsley: I would like to go on record that I am not in favor of the tactics by the BLM in their roundups, the quality of the holding pens and that many of the FEDERALLY PROTECTED mustangs and burros are being sent to slaughter.

Missy Watson: Leave the horses alone, they are what makes America great! Why can't we leave things alone! Please let wild stay wild.

Montie Adamson: Please do go any further in snuffing out these horses.

Moving Cloud Productions: Accordingly, the BLM's decision to remove horses based on the argument that their removal will lead to rangeland recovery is unfounded and arbitrary.

Moving Cloud Productions: By contrast, for example, the BLM office in Grand Junction does helicopter roundups in which the last step of the roundup just before the trap pens is a funnel terrain trap with human pressure (as opposed to helicopter pressure), which is less violent than pushing the horses into the trap pens by helicopter. The trapped horses are initially kept with their band members in the trap pens, giving them the ability to become oriented and relax without the additional stress of being separated from each other right away. This is far less terrifying for the captured horses, more humane, and leads to less injuries. I would ask that the BLM consider this more humane method. The trap pens themselves have been documented as unsafe, including a lack of sufficient padding. Worse, there is abusive and unnecessarily aggressive behavior by the contractor's staff. An unfamiliar human presence is enough to

drive horses. There is no reason for sticks with plastic bags or any other violent method that unnecessarily creates fear and trauma. Horses are kept in the on- - site in crowded “temporary” trap pens for days exposed to the elements and separated from their band members, which is also inhumane, and fail to meet the BLM’s own minimum standard of 400 square feet per horse.

Moving Cloud Productions: Helicopter roundups are objectively inhumane regardless of what the BLM’s guidelines and manuals state. This is especially so “as practiced” by the BLM’s contractors. For this reason, use of helicopters to roundup horses is specifically outlawed by the 1971 Wild Horse Act, which protects wild horses from inhumane treatment.

Moving Cloud Productions: I am adamantly opposed to the following actions: Driving foals or injured/lame animals with the helicopter

Moving Cloud Productions: I am adamantly opposed to the following actions: Sex ratio adjustments Reference is made herein to the Wild Free- - Roaming Horses and Burros Act of 1971, 16 U.S.C. § 1331 et. seq. (“1971 Wild Horse Act ”), and the National Environmental Policy Act, 42 U.S.C. § 4321 et. seq. (“NEPA”).

Moving Cloud Productions: I am adamantly opposed to the following actions: Helicopter roundups

Moving Cloud Productions: I have personally witnessed and documented the inhumane conditions in short-term holding in Canon City, and the effect of captivity on the horses held there who have gone from roaming free with their family bands to being separated from their band members, held without exercise, without sufficient room to move about, and without any shade or protection from the elements such as wind, rain, snow and hail, and suffering from the illnesses caused by the change in diet to hay.

Moving Cloud Productions: I support the following: 1. Bait and water trapping by band with as little human interaction as possible and without splitting up band members.

Moving Cloud Productions: Wild horse band dynamics are extremely sensitive, take years to establish, and without the constant vigilance of the band stallion, can take as little as a few hours to destroy. If not already separated from each other by the violence of the helicopter, wild horse band members are immediately separated once they are corralled in the trap pens, and sorted by age and sex for additional processing. There are a number of problems with this. It is inhumane and traumatic for horses to be suddenly separated from their families.

Naila Sanchez: WE WANT OUR WILD HORSES TO ROAM FREELY AS THEY JUSTLY DESERVE TO DO!!

Nancie McCormish: I am against subsidizing private profits on public lands at public expense, and especially in the form of eliminating and irresponsibly reducing the gene pool of our publicly owned wild and "free roaming" horses and burros. A private grazing association, already benefitting from subsidized grazing on public lands, has no right to eliminate a species which by law and by public demand is to be protected in place.

Nancy McBride: PLEASE STOP DESTROYING SYMBOLS OF OUR HISTORY.

Nancy O: BLM, BACK OFF CHECKERBOARD ROUNDUP.

Nancy O: NO ROUNDUPS OF WILDHORSES.

Nancy Strand: I oppose removing wild horses from this public property. I believe special interests may be driving this proposal. You must do what's best for America's citizens, I don't think the future citizens would benefit from a healthier federal checkbook as much as their legacy saved.

No Name: As taxpayers, visitors to wild horse ranges, and mustang admirers, we ask that you reconsider removal from these ranges. There is more to consider than just grazing rights. The horses have a right by law to roam in the wild. They can be managed intelligently on the range, accommodating all interests

No Name: Do not diminish the herd sizes and put a stop to the selling of horses in the US for auction to slaughter buyers.

No Name: Gathers are particularly cruel and STUPID. Anyone who understand how mustangs live in the wild--also understands that BLM is breaking up family herds. Who benefits from the round-ups? The CONTRACTORS that gouge BLM in fees. The FEED SUPPLIERS that gouge BLM for forage. Maybe a cattle operation.

No Name: Get it together and leave our WILD HORSES ALONE.

No Name: Half of the people who journey out to the range are hoping to see wild horses in their habitat. Eventually that will be gone because congress and the government are oblivious to us. The Bureau of Land Management has rounded-up thousands of America's wild horses. Now, it will kill them. Over and over again Americans have said their horses must run free, but that hasn't stopped BLM from saying that killing wild horses is a "magic bullet for budget problems."

No Name: I am 100% against wiping out the wild horses, they have just as much right to be here as any of us.

No Name: I am one hundred percent against the roundup and sale of these beautiful wild horses, first and foremost they were there first they are on public lands and are part of our culture. Please reconsider your stand on this subject.

No Name: I am writing this letter to ask that you do not round up any mustangs in these 4 Desert areas. These mustangs deserve to continue living on the land that was designated for them through our government.

No Name: I am writing to convey my horror at your proposal to decimate and shift the population of wild horses in Wyoming's Checkerboard.

No Name: I feel it would be a great mistake to remove so many of the Wild horses in these areas.

No Name: I find your roundups and holding of wild horses a crime against nature...when will you learn that the ecology needs the wild horses

No Name: I strongly oppose the round ups of our wild horses. They do not belong to the BLM or our government. They belong to the people of the United States if they belong to anyone. They are native Americans and should be protected as such. Not only do I oppose round ups, I oppose horse slaughter.

No Name: I VEHEMENTLY OPPOSE the BLM roundup of Wild Horses, Donkeys, and Burros and the slaughter that ultimately follows.

No Name: I would hope the BLM will rethink their present plan for eliminating the Wild Horse Bands in the area on Adobe Town, Salt Wells Creek The Great Divide Basin and White Mountain...

No Name: I write to oppose the round up and elimination of our wild horses in Wyoming. Our government already has tens of thousands of horses in holding facilities, where most will and have ended up at slaughter auctions. Most Americans are fervently against horse slaughter in the US or anywhere for that matter. Please do not remove these iconic creatures.

No Name: I write to you today, to asking that the collection of wild horses on public lands be stopped, until this issue is brought before the American public for decision. I ask that these roundups be stopped, and the BLM produce evidence why it is necessary to remove such large numbers, to the point of extinction. Removal of large numbers will decimate the remaining herd, and alter the genetics of the remaining horses. These current proposed roundups are in direct conflict with the Wild Horse and Burrow Act, and therefore not legally authorized, and must not continue.

No Name: Is there no more room for wild things in this country, don't you realize that's the most precious thing you have in the USA. We should treasure our national Beauty and not destroy it.

No Name: It has come to my attention that you are planning to remove and exterminate the wild horse herds in Wyoming. This is an atrocity, these herds are a part of America's history. By doing so you will be erasing part of your proud history, when the west was wild and the animals roamed free.

No Name: It's time to speak up for letting a remnant of our past history remain and the horses certainly represent that

No Name: No more killing! It's a crime against nature and God! They are beautiful, and they have as much right to life and liberty as you do! The Wyoming proposal is obscene.

No Name: No more round ups. Save the horses and set them all free.

No Name: Or just greed that someone is paying you big \$ to kill our wild horses?

No Name: Please do not eliminate the wild horses in the Wyoming HMAs. I have spent many enjoyable hours observing wild horses and in the process spent many tourist dollars in Wyoming. Will reconsider spending time there if the horses are removed.

No Name: Please do not remove the horses from their land. Future generations deserve to be able to enjoy seeing these animals living in families and herds. They are supposed to be protected and have land to live out their lives on. Please let the herds continue to exist.

No Name: Please do not send the wild horses away from their land, their home!

No Name: Please leave these beautiful horses alone.

No Name: Please Stop the Cruel & Inhumane roundup's of our wild mustangs! They deserve to live free with their families in the wild.

No Name: Please, leave the wild horse herds alone, they deserve to be free. They are part of the American west. Are you going to get rid of all the wild animals?

No Name: Taking the numbers down that low is too low and I am against this. It is a waste of taxpayer money to taken wild horses off the range.

No Name: The Free Roaming Act 71 should be the basis of the wild horses and burros in part where they belong and its definitely NOT Holding Pens, long or short term. They are supposed to be on the public lands that belong to them, since way back there

No Name: The greed of a few will send a message on just how disgraceful you have become for selling out these wild horses with not one moment of concern or respect for any of them.

No Name: The majority of Americans have overwhelmingly spoken in support of leaving our wild horses to run free. These majestic animals are part of our natural heritage and deserve to live free to roam on the range. That was the original purpose for them.

No Name: The number of horses projected for removal will eliminate genetic variety and lead to the extinction of the wild horses. This is NOT what the American taxpayers want for their public lands. The wild horses are a heritage of the American people and should be there for future generations.

No Name: The people of the United States have made it clear, by vote, and through overwhelming opinion, that murdering these wild horses is NOT WANTED. You, and they, must stop your campaign to kill them all. These wild horses harm no one, and are part of the heritage of this country, which is priceless.

No Name: The public will never back wild horse sterilization and other population culling methods in this national preserve so it is imperative other measures discussed or the subject and horses left alone.

No Name: The removal of these wild horses is the worst atrocity allowed to take place since the killing of our wild buffalo herds. These horses should "ALL" be allowed to live their lives free in the ranges they were born on. If this removal was truly about the health of the herds, there are plenty of other solutions available. It is clear that Big Money Business is what is really at play here. Stop this program now!!!

No Name: The wild horses of the Wyoming checkerboard must be protected for future generations, not destroyed at the behest of ranchers who receive tax subsidies to graze their livestock on our public lands.

No Name: These animals represent our heritage of the West. They do not deserve to spend their lives in corrals or sent to meat packing houses, please let them roam free.

No Name: These are America's horses please stop taking them and throwing them in holding pens for the tax payers to pay for.

No Name: These wild horses were here before humans invaded this area. Please, please do what is right for them and let them roam free.

No Name: These wild mustangs represent the American spirit. These animals deserve to have a place to live and roam, free. We deserve to have them there!

No Name: Those horse herds are on public property you cannot wipe them out!!! It would collapse the ecosystem

No Name: To destroy the wild horse herds would be a national disgrace.

No Name: Until the highly critical NAS report has been implemented we ask that you DO NOT continue with gather and do not further destroy herd viability.

No Name: We have too many domestic trained animals that are ready for a home so let the wild herds live out their lives.

No Name: We pay for those horses out of our taxes. You have no right to sell them to be eaten.

No Name: We've had enough round-ups for a lifetime !!!!

No Name: What is their future after the survivors of the roundup are in holding pens? Will you be selling them on the QT to kill buyers? Will you be spending money on keeping them in dry lots for the rest of their lives?

No Name: What you are doing to the wild horses, and its intent, in the Wyoming Checkerboard is beyond illegal. It is unethical & immoral. Commercial grazing is a privilege on public lands -- it's the horses that have the *right* to be there, by LAW!

No Name: When you terrify these creatures with helicopter round ups that cause new mothers and babies to have to run miles in extreme temperatures, causing injuries and deaths, do you consider this appropriate treatment of cultural icons?

No Name: Wild horses are a national treasure, part of America's heritage. They are not feral, destructive, nuisances to be gotten rid of. This is their land, they have a right to it. It is the job and duty of the Bureau of Land Management to protect these magnificent creatures. Federal law requires that these horses be protected. They deserve protection and preservation. Not rounded up and removed from the land just so cattle can graze.

No Name: Yes, the BLM'S of this Country needs to leave the wild horses and burros alone and leave them on the lands that they're supposed to be on, NOT cattle, sheep or oil people.

No Name: You are proposing to remove 46% of Wyoming's wild horses and put them where exactly?

No Name: You need to end the unnecessary slaughter and capture of the wild horses.

Olivia Titcomb: I am writing to ask you to NOT remove any wild horses. They have as much of a right to live on the PUBLIC lands. Those lands are not exclusively for the livestock ranchers who want their livestock to graze on land SET ASIDE FOR AN AMERICAN ICON. Mustangs are the epitome of the "Wild West" and they are quickly becoming all that is left of that era.

Pam Bolinger: STOP, these horses are innocent, beautiful creatures put on earth for a reason. LEAVE THEM ALONE.

Pamela Peery: The wild horse is a symbol of a pure America. The herds are in your hands, Wyoming. Tend them, don't destroy them, care for them and contribute to our ever-diminishing American Spirit. They stand for us as much as the flag.

Paula Eaton: The handful of horses are outnumbered 40 head of livestock per horse, but the BLM sides with the livestock industry. The horses need protection, not destruction. The grazing by livestock is a privilege and not a right, the horses are supposed to be protected by federal law. Please leave the horses alone. They are not the problem.

Paula Kren: WHY ARE YOU ESSENTIALLY SENDING OUR HORSES TO SLAUGHTER? THEY ARE AMERICAN ICONS! LEAVE THEM ALONE!!!

Peggy Rollie: Please consider a different approach for our wild horses; on-the-range management as opposed to massive removals. Your duty is to uphold the 1971 Wild Free-Roaming Horse and Burro Act.

Priscilla Lane: I requesting again, please reconsider your plans to remove all the horses.

R Spivack: These treasured and federally "protected" horses on the Wyoming Checkerboard should remain where they are, and be left alone.

Rachel Mobley: Stop taking the wildlife that should be able to roam free on federal land. Remove the cattle!

Rachel Reeves: I strongly disagree and oppose the BLM's decision to remove all horses from the checkerboard region of Wyoming under the 2013 consent decree. This decision is in opposition with the Wild Horse & Burro Act and its consequences for horses that are not located within the checkerboard are unacceptable.

Rachel Reeves: I strongly oppose the BLM's decision to comply to the RSGAs demands in eradicating these herds. I have enjoyed following these herds and tracking the lives of the animals within these HMAs and feel it is a travesty that they would be so easily cast aside by the BLM. This decision should be reconsidered.

Rachel Reeves: It is completely unacceptable to zero out Divide Basin in its entirety. There is more land in Divide Basin outside of the checkerboard than there is within the checkerboard. While there does tend to be a slightly higher population of horses to the South and a few bands may migrate South in the winter, the BLM should not be allowed to remove horses that tend to stay on purely public land at the behest of the RSGA. The lawsuit demanded horses be removed due to overpopulation in regions where there is a mix of public and private land. That is not the case for northern Divide Basin and should not be applied.

Rachel Reeves: The only solution I can see to allow horses to remain away from the checkerboard area where their ancestors have roamed for centuries is to fence the area. Fencing such large areas would come at great expense from my tax dollars and would be harmful for other wildlife populations, namely the sage grouse. Thus, that is no solution at all. I am not the only member of the public who has concerns that in removing "only" the horses from the checkerboard, these herds will inevitably be zeroed out completely when it quickly becomes clear it is impractical to maintain this decision to the RSGA's liking.

Ramona Reynolds: Please do not eliminate our wild horses from their ranges! They are too important a part of our history to lose.

Ramona Reynolds: Please stop the planned removal of our wild horse herds! They are a national treasure!

Raven Boyne: Please do not allow for the wild Mustangs of Wyoming to be wiped out by roundups. They are crucial to the health of the range.

Rebecca Kimsey: These public lands are MY lands, too. I want wild horses left alone on them. Ranchers already get grazing rights, and that's enough. LEAVE the horses alone.

Rebecca Maines: The cattle ranchers, who are privileged to use public land for their private gain. I oppose prioritizing their interests above the mandate to protect our public lands and the flora and fauna inhabiting it. Please leave the horses be.

Rhonda Summer: I wholeheartedly want the land to be filled with wild horses roaming free.

Rhonda Summer: The removal of wild horses and the sterilization of horses will cause irreversible damage to the ongoing survival of wild horse herds in southern Wyoming, it will adversely impact tourism, and will reduce the value of public lands by the loss of these symbols of freedom.

Rita Collard: I am writing this letter to say I for one am against the destroying the last four herd of wild horses, we need to preserve our wild horse herds. It's the last of our wild west.

Robin Woll: There is NO reason that we, the people who have agreed to protect these and all endangered wild animals should remove them from their environment any more than any other wild animals from theirs.

Rothery Gensel: It has just come to my attention that you are planning on devastating the wild horse herds of the Wyoming Checkerboard!! I can NOT believe this. When are these round ups going to stop? These wild horses are part of AMERICA'S HERITAGE!!

Roxanne & Steve Pease: He who thinks they can control mother nature and all that it is, fails to realize that each and every animal, microscopic organism and humans included, are co-dependent on the other for survival. Have we not learned that we ALL live in a very delicate ecosystem and by destroying or interfering with one species begins a chain reaction on all other species and the ultimate price at some point in time is the eradication of all living things.

Sally Jardon: Our wild horses are a national treasure and need to be protected and not hunted.

Sandi Edgar: Please stop the inhumane roundup of these wild horses and stop pandering to the cattlemen and their agenda. Public land should be kept for the public and not rented or leased to cattlemen or anyone who would endanger our wild horse population.

Sandra Whitteker: Is the US government planning to remove ALL the horses from the wild? There's already thousands and thousands more horses living out their lives in crowded government holding pens than in the wild, or being offered up at slaughter auctions. You must stop this! We the people don't want this done. This is America. It's a democracy. Majority rules and the majority of us want our wild horses left on in the wild.

Sandy Duncan: LEAVE THE HORSES ALONE

Sandy Strout: I am repulsed by your efforts at culling wild horses in wyo, and did you forget the Free Wild horse and Burro Act? Is this really all about cattle and the wyo livestock association? Please do not proceed with your plans, unless checking with humane organizations and publishing their reports of alternative solutions.

Sarah Elaine Lawson: I have traveled to and thru our western states several times and cannot fathom why there is 'not enough room' for this symbol our American Heritage.

Sasha Shapiro: Please protect the wild horses and burros of the Adobe Town, Salt Wells Creek, Great Divide Basin and White Mountain, 4 of the largest remaining wild horse herds in the country. DO NOT

ROUND UP THESE HORSES. As a tax paying citizen of the USA I am telling you that I want these horses protected and left on the range. I as a tax paying citizen of the USA do not want any of these horses rounded up.

Sasha Shapiro: protect the wild horses and burros of the Adobe Town, Salt Wells Creek, Great Divide Basin and White Mountain, 4 of the largest remaining wild horse herds in the country. DO NOT ROUND UP THESE HORSES. As a tax paying citizen of the USA I am telling you that I want these horses protected and left on the range. I as a tax paying citizen of the USA do not want any of these horses rounded up.

Sasha Shapiro: The removal of horses from three herd's and the sterilization of horses in White Mountain will cause irreversible damage to the ongoing survival of wild horse herds in southern Wyoming, will adversely impact tourism, and will reduce the value of public lands by the loss of these symbols of freedom," explains Kathrens. "This action violates the Wild Horse & Burro Act. If the BLM removes these horses, it not only violates the multiple use mandate for public lands but it would be managing the lands for the benefit of the Rock Springs Grazing Association, for monetary gain, instead of according to the original intent of Congress in creating the Act."

Sean Riley: No more round -ups of ANY wild horses or burros. No Round-ups anywhere.

Sean Riley: No round up.

Sean Riley: No round up.

Sharon Boone: Will you please leave our wild horses alone and let them graze happily. Stop the inhumane hideous helicopter round-ups that cripple and kill our horses and do not allow them to go to slaughter. Your department is supposed to be about protecting them. please focus on that.

Sharon Truax: I am so upset that you are still continuing to round up these wild horses I guess it is true you are trying to eradicate them, this is so upsetting to me and others who love wild horses and want our children and grandchildren to be able to see them running wild and free but I guess they will all be dead by then, I feel you are more for the rich cattle barons, but you are supposed to be helping the wild horses not eradicating them .

Shelly Simpson: The BLM MUST protect and preserve the wild horses in the checkerboard area for future generations, and not eradicate these wild horse herds because of a special interest group who receives tax subsidies to graze their livestock on our public lands. Livestock grazing on public lands is a privilege, not a right.

Skip Chalfant: Stop trapping and killing the wild horses. They are a National Treasure!!

Steward, Diane: I am writing in protest of the proposed rounding management & confinement of wild horses.

Susan Barrow: Please reconsider massive removal of these horse and consider a more positive approach to on-range management.

Susan Higgins: These animals are our heritage; it is important that we hang on to them. And they deserve to live.

Susan Setzke: I do not support the removal of our precious wild horses nor do I support the welfare ranching and special interests being provided for by the BLM.

Susan Setzke: One of the most important was to cancel the round-up policy and look to other methods for managing the horses.

Suzanne Roy - American Wild Horse Preservation: BLM should address the concerns raised in the GAO Report. The amendment of the Rock Springs and Rawlins RMP's is a perfect opportunity for the agency to begin addressing the concerns and shortcomings highlighted in the report.

Switch To Stitch Custom Embroidery: I am totally opposed to this plan !!!! PLEASE leave the wild horses where they belong.

Teresa Shively: I am writing to ask you to stop immediately the round-up of wild horses and burros, removing them from our public lands. I am also asking you to place the healthy animals back into the wild, from which they were removed, without sterilizing them. These round-ups break up family structures and bonds and destroy long-standing mare/stallion relationships, and they remove all older, wise horses, who are responsible for naturally managing the welfare of the herds. The BLM's strategy of "management for extinction" has almost completely eradicated the wild horse, as was the intention. The round-ups must stop now in order for them to survive. The removals and round-ups are brutal, unjustified scientifically, and expensive. Moreover, the holding facilities, both short- and long-term, are expensive and inhumane. I resent that I am paying for this atrocity through support of my own government, and your actions go against the overwhelming majority will of the people.

Terri Simpson: We are opposed to the Bureau of Land Management's plan to amend the Rawlins and Rock Springs Resource Management Plans in an attempt to eliminate the wild horse herds currently roaming the Wyoming checkerboard. These horses are protected under the Wild Free Roaming Horses and Burros Act and should not be removed to benefit private livestock owners.

Tom Rossi: I believe, in my gut, that wild horses should be given respect and allowed to continue to live in a safe, and habitable area. I think that they should be allowed to live, breed, divorce, grow, die, all on habitable American Lands. Like a Reserve, Like the American Indians, but a large area because they can't be isolated to where they cannot mix and meet, and breed, different horses.

Tonna Yutze: Please leave them be. Please protect them.

Tonya and Andreas: We need to preserve wild horses on our public lands in these 4 herd areas and not submit to pressure from the Rock Springs Grazing Association to virtually wipe all the horses out.

Tracey Schoeneck: STOP THE HORRIFIC ROUND-UP AND HORRIFIC SLAUGHTER OF AMERICAS LEGENDS!!!!!! WE ARE AGAINST THIS AND DO NOT SUPPORT THIS.

Valerie Hackney: Please stop the roundups!!!!

Vallie Morgan: Please don't exterminate these horses. They've been on these lands for hundreds of years n deserve to live wild n free. Please let them live

Vickie Jay: These animals deserve a place here in the land of the Free.

Victoria Hulen: It does not appear that a grass roots movement will stop these brutal events, but someone needs to employ some decency. The broken legs, the dead foals, the terror, have all been

thoroughly documented. These round-ups need to be stopped until you can responsibly, without physical harm, remove these horses from their home.

Victorine Meyers: I cannot BELIEVE that my government is still practicing GENOCIDE for profit! I understand that the process of meat keeps escalating but it is NOT worth the death of these fine animals. Do not do this. The horses and the land should be preserved.

Wayne Johnson: The horses have every right to stay there, every one of them. Reduce the cattle and sheep grazing. Leave the horses alone.

Weber, Jodi: I'm writing you to express my opposition regarding elimination of wild horses and burros from the Wyoming Checkerboard. Sterilization of the population in the Wyoming Checkerboard promotes the future elimination of all wild horse herds of the United States. Wild horse are a symbol of the American West and held an invaluable role in building this nation. These horses are protected by the Wild and Free Roaming Horses and Burros Act. It is our responsibility to preserve these herds at all costs. Do not amend the Rawlins and Rock Springs RMP's. Please help protect the wild horses for generations to come and preserve this symbol of America. We are obligated to protect not only our history, but nature as well.

Zango Music: I am opposed to the slaughter of any wild herds of horses. This land is supposed to be safe for them.

APPENDIX B—FEDERAL REGISTER PUBLICATION: NOTICE OF INTENT

 50090	Federal Register / Vol. 78, No. 159 / Friday, August 16, 2013 / Notices
Sept. 24, 2013, from 10 a.m.–12 p.m. MDT.	Authority: 43 CFR 1784.4–1.
ADDRESSES: Those attending in person should meet at the GSENM Headquarters, 669 South Highway 89A, Kanab, Utah, in the Cottonwood Conference Room located off the lobby.	Jenna Whitlock, <i>Associate State Director.</i> [FR Doc. 2013–19938 Filed 8–15–13; 8:45 am] BILLING CODE 4310–00–P
FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Public participants wishing to listen to the conference call, orally present material during the teleconference, or submit written material for the GSENM MAC to consider during the teleconference should notify Larry Crutchfield, Public Affairs Officer, Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, 669 South Highway 89A, Kanab, Utah 84741; phone (435) 644–1209; or email lcrutchf@blm.gov by Friday, Sept. 20, 2013. Persons who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 1–800–877–8339 to leave a message or question with the above individual. The FIRS is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Replies will be received during normal business hours.	DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR Bureau of Land Management [LLWY930000–L16100000–DS0000]
SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The 15-member GSENM MAC was appointed by the Secretary of the Interior on August 2, 2011, pursuant to the Monument Management Plan (MMP), FLPMA, and the Federal Advisory Committee Act of 1972. As specified in the MMP, the GSENM MAC has several primary tasks: (1) Review evaluation reports produced by the Management Science Team and make recommendations on protocols and projects to meet overall objectives; (2) Review appropriate research proposals and make recommendations on project necessity and validity; (3) Make recommendations regarding allocation of research funds through review of research and project proposals as well as needs identified through the evaluation process above; and, (4) Could be consulted on issues such as protocols for specific projects.	Notice of Intent To Extend the Public Scoping Period for the Rock Springs Resource Management Plan (RMP) and To Amend the 2008 Rawlins RMP To Address Wild Horse and Burro Management in the Rock Springs and Rawlins Field Offices, WY
Topics to be discussed by the GSENM MAC during this meeting/conference call include review of the GSENM Campground and Day Use Business Plan, formulation of a land health subcommittee to assist with the development of the MMP amendment, future meeting dates and other matters as may reasonably come before the GSENM MAC. A public comment period will take place immediately following the business meeting. The meeting is open to the public; however, transportation, lodging, and meals are the responsibility of the participating public. The conference call will be recorded for purposes of minute-taking.	AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior. ACTION: Notice of intent.
	SUMMARY: In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), as amended, and the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA), as amended, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) intends to extend the scoping period for an additional 30 days for the ongoing Rock Springs RMP, which was initiated on February 2, 2011, to address wild horse and burro management in the Rock Springs Field Office and to amend the 2008 Approved Rawlins RMP for the Adobe Town Herd Management Area in the Rawlins Field Office in Wyoming. The BLM, by this notice, is announcing the beginning of the scoping process to solicit public comments and identify issues that will influence the scope of the environmental analysis, including alternatives, and guide the planning process for wild horse and burro management. DATES: This notice extends the scoping period initiated on February 2, 2011 for wild horse and burro management in the ongoing Rock Springs RMP and associated environmental impact statement (EIS) and initiates the public scoping process for wild horse and burro management for the Adobe Town Herd Management Area (HMA) for the amendment of the 2008 Approved Rawlins RMP. Comments on issues relating to these two planning efforts may be submitted in writing until September 16, 2013. Two public scoping meetings concerning wild horse and burro management will be held in Rock Springs and Rawlins, Wyoming. The meeting times and addresses will be announced through the local news media, newspapers, and the BLM Web
	site at http://www.blm.gov/wy/st/en/programs/Planning/rmps/RockSprings.html at least 15 days prior to the event. In order to be included in the Draft Rock Springs RMP/EIS, all comments must be received prior to the close of the scoping period or 15 days after the last public scoping meeting, whichever is later. The BLM will provide additional opportunities for public participation upon publication of the Draft Rock Springs RMP/EIS.
	ADDRESSES: You may submit comments on issues and planning criteria related to the Rock Springs RMP/EIS and an amendment to the Rawlins RMP by any of the following methods:
	Web site: http://www.blm.gov/wy/st/en/programs/Planning/rmps/RockSprings.html ;
	Email: RockSpringsRMP_WY@blm.gov . Include "Wild Horses" in the subject line of the message:
	Fax: 307–352–0329; or Mail: BLM Rock Springs Field Office, Wild Horse Scoping, 280 Highway 191 North, Rock Springs, Wyoming 82901.
	Documents pertinent to this proposal may be examined at the BLM Rock Springs Field Office, during normal business hours: 7:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays.
	FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jay D'Ewart, Wild Horse and Burro Specialist, at 307–352–0331. Persons who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 1–800–877–8339 to speak with Jay D'Ewart during normal business hours. The FIRS is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to leave a message or question with the above individual. You will receive a reply during normal business hours.
	SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On June 27, 2011, the Rock Springs Grazing Association (RSGA) filed a lawsuit (<i>Rock Springs Grazing Association v. Salazar</i> , No. 11–CV–00263–NDF) in the United States District Court for Wyoming contending, in part, that the BLM had violated Section 4 of the Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act, 16 U.S.C. 1334, by failing to remove strayed animals from private lands controlled by RSGA within the Wyoming checkerboard pattern of mixed public and private land ownership. RSGA-controlled private lands include lands within the BLM's Rock Springs and Rawlins management areas in the Adobe Town, Great Divide Basin, Salt Wells Creek, and White Mountain HMAs.

On April 3, 2013, the United States District Court for the District of Wyoming approved a Consent Decree and Joint Stipulation for Dismissal (Consent Decree) in *Rock Springs Grazing Association v. Salazar*, No. 11–CV–00263–NDF, that provides in part, “No later than 180 days after this Consent Decree is approved by the Court, BLM will submit to the **Federal Register** for publication a notice[s] of scoping under NEPA to consider the environmental effects of revising the respective Resource Management Plans for the Rock Springs and Rawlins Field Offices by considering proposed actions that would: (a) Change the Salt Wells [Creek] HMA [Herd Management Area] to a Herd Area, which would be managed for zero wild horses, and if BLM determines there are more than 200 wild horses within the Herd Area, the area will be re-gathered to zero wild horses; (b) Change the [Great] Divide Basin HMA to a Herd Area, which would be managed for zero wild horses, and if BLM determines there are more than 100 wild horses within the Herd Area, the area will be re-gathered to zero wild horses; (c) Change the Adobe Town HMA [Appropriate Management Level] AML to 225–450 wild horses or lower, and that gathered wild horses will not be returned to the Salt Wells area; and (d) Manage the White Mountain HMA as a non-reproducing herd by utilizing fertility control and sterilization methods to maintain a population of 205 wild horses and to initiate gathers if the population exceeds 205 wild horses.” Consent Decree, No. 11–CV–00263–NDF, pp. 6–7.

You may submit comments on issues and planning criteria in writing to the BLM using one of the methods listed in the **ADDRESSES** section. Before including your address, phone number, email address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment—including your personal identifying information—may be made publicly available at any time. While you may ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

Authority: 40 CFR 1501.7 and 43 CFR 1610.2.

Mary Jo Rugwell,

Associate State Director.

[FR Doc. 2013–19841 Filed 8–15–13; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310–22–P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

National Park Service

[NPS–WASO–NAGPRA–13515;
PPWOCRADNO–PCU00RP14.R50000]

Notice of Intent To Repatriate Cultural Items: University of Colorado Museum of Natural History, Boulder, CO

AGENCY: National Park Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The University of Colorado Museum of Natural History, in consultation with the appropriate Indian tribes or Native Hawaiian organizations, has determined that the cultural items listed in this notice meet the definition of sacred objects. Lineal descendants or representatives of any Indian tribe or Native Hawaiian organization not identified in this notice that wish to claim these cultural items should submit a written request to the University of Colorado Museum of Natural History. If no additional claimants come forward, transfer of control of the cultural items to the lineal descendants, Indian tribes, or Native Hawaiian organizations stated in this notice may proceed.

DATES: Lineal descendants or representatives of any Indian tribe or Native Hawaiian organization not identified in this notice that wish to claim these cultural items should submit a written request with information in support of the claim to the University of Colorado Museum of Natural History at the address in this notice by September 16, 2013.

ADDRESSES: Jen Shannon, Curator of Cultural Anthropology, University of Colorado Museum of Natural History, 218 UCB, Boulder, CO 80309–0218, telephone (303) 492–6276, email jshannon@colorado.edu.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Notice is here given in accordance with the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA), 25 U.S.C. 3005, of the intent to repatriate cultural items under the control of the University of Colorado Museum of Natural History, Boulder, CO that meet the definition of sacred objects under 25 U.S.C. 3001.

This notice is published as part of the National Park Service’s administrative responsibilities under NAGPRA, 25 U.S.C. 3003(d)(3). The determinations in this notice are the sole responsibility of the museum, institution, or Federal agency that has control of the Native American cultural items. The National Park Service is not responsible for the determinations in this notice.

History and Description of the Cultural Item(s)

Beginning in 1926, Reverend Harold Case acquired everyday objects as well as traditional, religious, and ceremonial items, through gifts, purchases, and items left for collateral by Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara individuals living on and near the Fort Berthold Reservation. In 1983, over 300 items from the Case collection were donated to the University of Colorado Museum of Natural History. After extensive consultation, official representatives of the Three Affiliated Tribes of the Fort Berthold Reservation, North Dakota submitted a repatriation claim for five items. The five sacred objects are pipes. The pipe represented by catalog number 33032 is comprised of a red pipestone bowl with a lead inlay and wood stem, which is decorated with black banding. The pipe represented by catalog number 33035 is comprised of a red pipestone bowl and stem, which are joined by a wooden connector. The pipe represented by catalog number 33043 is comprised of a red pipestone bowl and wood stem. The pipe represented by catalog number 33047 is comprised of a black pipestone bowl and wood stem, which is decorated with red, white and blue quillwork, as well as red and yellow ribbons. The pipe represented by catalog number 33049 is comprised of a black pipestone bowl and wood stem, which is decorated with knobby protrusions and a black amorphous pattern.

The provenance of the pipes supports cultural affiliation to the Three Affiliated Tribes of the Fort Berthold Reservation, North Dakota, which is comprised of Mandan, Hidatsa and Arikara peoples. Historic evidence provided during consultation also supports cultural affiliation with the Three Affiliated Tribes of the Fort Berthold Reservation, North Dakota.

Determinations Made by the University of Colorado Museum of Natural History

Officials of the University of Colorado Museum of Natural History have determined that:

- Pursuant to 25 U.S.C. 3001(3)(C), the five cultural items described above are specific ceremonial objects needed by traditional Native American religious leaders for the practice of traditional Native American religions by their present-day adherents.

- Pursuant to 25 U.S.C. 3001(2), there is a relationship of shared group identity that can be reasonably traced between the sacred objects and the Three Affiliated Tribes of the Fort Berthold Reservation, North Dakota.

APPENDIX C—SCOPING MEETING PRESS RELEASES

NEWS RELEASE #1

Release Date: 8/16/2013

Contacts: Serena Baker 307-212-0197

BLM ROCK SPRINGS AND RAWLINS OPEN SCOPING ON WILD HORSE AND BURRO MANAGEMENT

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is extending the public scoping period for the Rock Springs Resource Management Plan (RMP) and is opening a 30-day public scoping period to amend the 2008 Approved Rawlins RMP to address wild horse and burro management in the Rock Springs and Rawlins field offices, Wyo.

On April 3, the United States District Court for the District of Wyoming ruled in the case of Rock Springs Grazing Association vs. Ken Salazar by upholding a revised Consent Decree governing wild horse management in the checkerboard pattern of mixed public, private, and state land ownership in southern Wyoming. Under the Consent Decree, the BLM agrees to remove all wild horses from the Rock Springs Grazing Association's (RSGA) private lands. RSGA owns or leases more than 48 percent of the private land in four Herd Management Areas (HMAs) in the checkerboard pattern within the boundaries of the Rawlins and Rock Springs field offices.

The Rock Springs Field Office is presently revising its RMP through the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process. Wild horse management, including HMA boundaries which encompass RSGA lands and appropriate management levels (AMLs), will be reviewed and reanalyzed during the NEPA process. This process allows for public involvement throughout with several opportunities for interested parties to comment and review.

The BLM will prepare to remove wild horses from the checkerboard lands within the respective HMAs once the population is estimated to exceed 200 wild horses for the combined Salt Wells Creek/Adobe Town Complex, or 100 wild horses for the Great Divide Basin HMA. The yearly gather/removal commitments are Salt Wells Creek and Adobe Town HMAs in 2013, Great Divide Basin HMA in 2014, and White Mountain HMA in 2015, with additional gathers in 2016, if necessary.

Between 205 to 300 wild horses will remain in the White Mountain HMA where the BLM will institute fertility control measures to maintain the numbers to the lower range of the AML. The BLM also commits to consider an amendment to the RMP to manage the White Mountain herd as non-reproducing.

Written comments will be accepted until Sept. 16. Comments may be emailed to RockSpringsRMP_WY@blm.gov (please include "Wild Horse Scoping" in the subject line), faxed to (307) 352-0329, or mailed to the Bureau of Land Management, Rock Springs Field Office, Wild Horse Scoping, 280 Highway 191 North, Rock Springs, WY 82901.

Persons who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 1-800-877-8339 to contact the individuals listed below during normal business hours. The FIRS is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to leave a message or question with the below individuals. You will receive a reply during normal business hours.

Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, be advised that your entire comment – including your personal identifying information – may be made publicly available at any time. While you may ask us in your comment to withhold from public review your personal identifying information, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

For further information, please contact Jay D'Ewart at (307) 352-0331, or William West at (307) 352-0259.

Note to editor: More information about the Rock Springs RMP process can be found at: www.blm.gov/wy/st/en/programs/Planning/rmps/RockSprings.html.

NEWS RELEASE #2

Release Date: 8/27/2013

Contacts: Serena Baker 307-212-0197

BLM ROCK SPRINGS AND RAWLINS SCHEDULE PUBLIC MEETINGS AND EXTEND SCOPING ON WILD HORSE MANAGEMENT

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) will host public scoping meetings from 4-7 p.m. Sept. 11 at the Rock Springs Field Office, 280 Highway 191 N., Rock Springs, Wyo.; and Sept. 12 at the Rawlins Field Office, 1300 N. Third St., Rawlins, Wyo., to address wild horse and burro management for the Rock Springs and Rawlins Resource Management Plans (RMPs).

The scoping period for the RMP revisions will also be extended to Sept. 27 to allow adequate time for public comment. The scoping meetings will provide an opportunity for the public and interested parties to ask questions one-on-one with BLM specialists, view maps and posters detailing the RMP revision process, and provide written comments.

The BLM is seeking public input in analyzing the environmental impacts of implementing the April 3 consent decree governing wild horse management in the checkerboard pattern of mixed public, private, and state land ownership in southern Wyoming. Under the consent decree, the BLM agrees to remove all wild horses from the Rock Springs Grazing Association's (RSGA) private lands. RSGA owns or leases more than 48 percent of the private land in four herd management areas (HMAs) in the checkerboard within the boundaries of the Rawlins and Rock Springs field offices. Wild horse management, including HMA boundaries which encompass RSGA lands and appropriate management levels (AMLs), will be reviewed and reanalyzed.

Written comments will be accepted until Sept. 27.

Comments may be emailed to BLM_WY_RockSpringsRMP@blm.gov (please include "Wild Horse Scoping" in the subject line), faxed to (307) 352-0329, or mailed to the Bureau of Land Management, Rock Springs Field Office, Wild Horse Scoping, 280 Highway 191 N., Rock Springs, WY 82901.

Persons who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 1-800-877-8339 to contact the individuals listed below during normal business hours. The FIRS is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to leave a message or question with the below individuals. You will receive a reply during normal business hours.

Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, be advised that your entire comment – including your personal identifying information – may be made publicly available at any time. While you may ask us in your comment to withhold from public review your personal identifying information, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

For further information, please contact Jay D'Ewart at (307) 352-0331, or William West at (307) 352-0259.

Note to editor: A link to the planning documents can be found at www.blm.gov/wy/st/en/programs/Planning/rmps/RockSprings.html.

APPENDIX D—PUBLIC MEETING MATERIALS

WELCOME

to the

Public Scoping Meeting

for

**Wild Horse & Burro
Management**

for the

**Rock Springs and Rawlins
Resource Management
Plans (RMPs)**

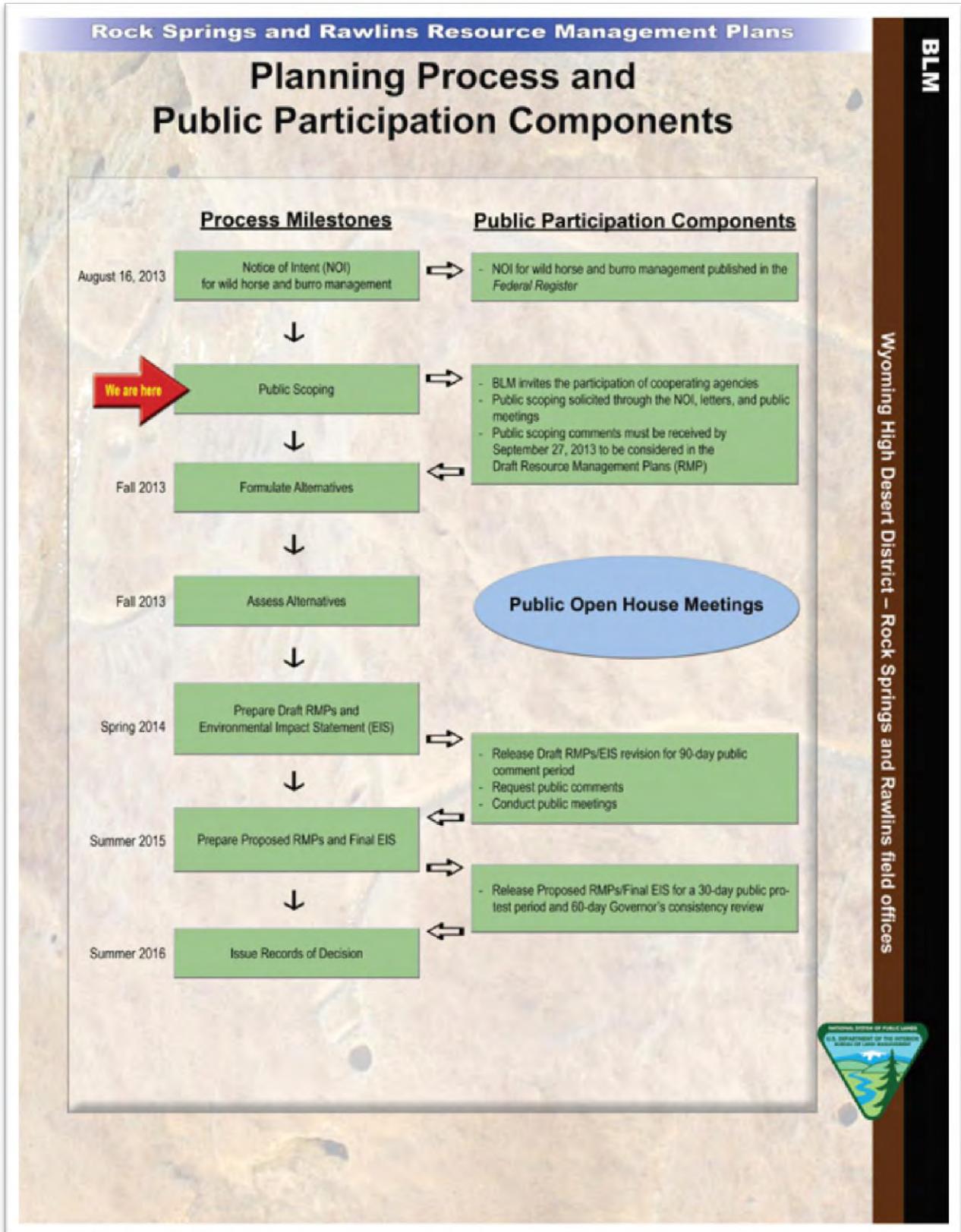
for

**Public Lands Administered
by the
Bureau of Land Management
Rock Springs and Rawlins Field Offices**

BLM

Wyoming High Desert District – Rock Springs and Rawlins field offices





Rock Springs and Rawlins Resource Management Plans

Providing Your Input for Wild Horse and Burro Management

What is the public comment period and how is input used in the process?

- Process of actively acquiring input from agencies and the public
- Public input assists the BLM in identifying the following:
 - Potential environmental issues
 - Planning criteria and alternatives
 - Areas of concern and public interest
 - Mitigation measures

Ways to submit your comments

TONIGHT: Written comments at this meeting

Fill out one of the comment forms provided and place it in the comment box.

LATER: Mailed or delivered

Fill out one of the comment forms provided at the public meetings or any other paper and deliver it in person to the Rock Springs Field Office or by mail to:

Rock Springs Field Office, Bureau of Land Management
Attn: William West, Project Manager
260 Highway 191 North
Rock Springs, WY 82901

LATER: Email

Submit comments by email to the following address: blm_wy_rockspringsrmp@blm.gov



PROVIDE YOUR COMMENTS BY
September 27, 2013



BLM

Wyoming High Desert District – Rock Springs and Rawlins field offices

Rock Springs and Rawlins Resource Management Plans

2013 Consent Decree Terms

The Consent Decree requires the BLM to analyze:

- Adobe Town Herd Management Area
 - Change the Appropriate Management Level (AML) from 610-800 to 225-450 wild horses

- Great Divide Basin Herd Management Area
 - Change from a Herd Management Area to a Herd Area*
 - Manage for zero wild horses
 - If population exceeds 100 wild horses within the checkerboard, must gather to zero

- Salt Wells Creek Herd Management Area
 - Change from a Herd Management Area to a Herd Area*
 - Manage for zero wild horses
 - If population exceeds 200 wild horses within the checkerboard, must gather to zero

- White Mountain Herd Management Area
 - Manage as a non-reproducing herd
 - Utilize fertility/sterilization
 - Change the AML from 205-300 to 205 wild horses

*Herd Area: An area where wild horses may be found, but is not specifically managed for wild horses.





BLM
 Wyoming High Desert District – Rock Springs and Rawlins field offices

Rock Springs and Rawlins Resource Management Plans

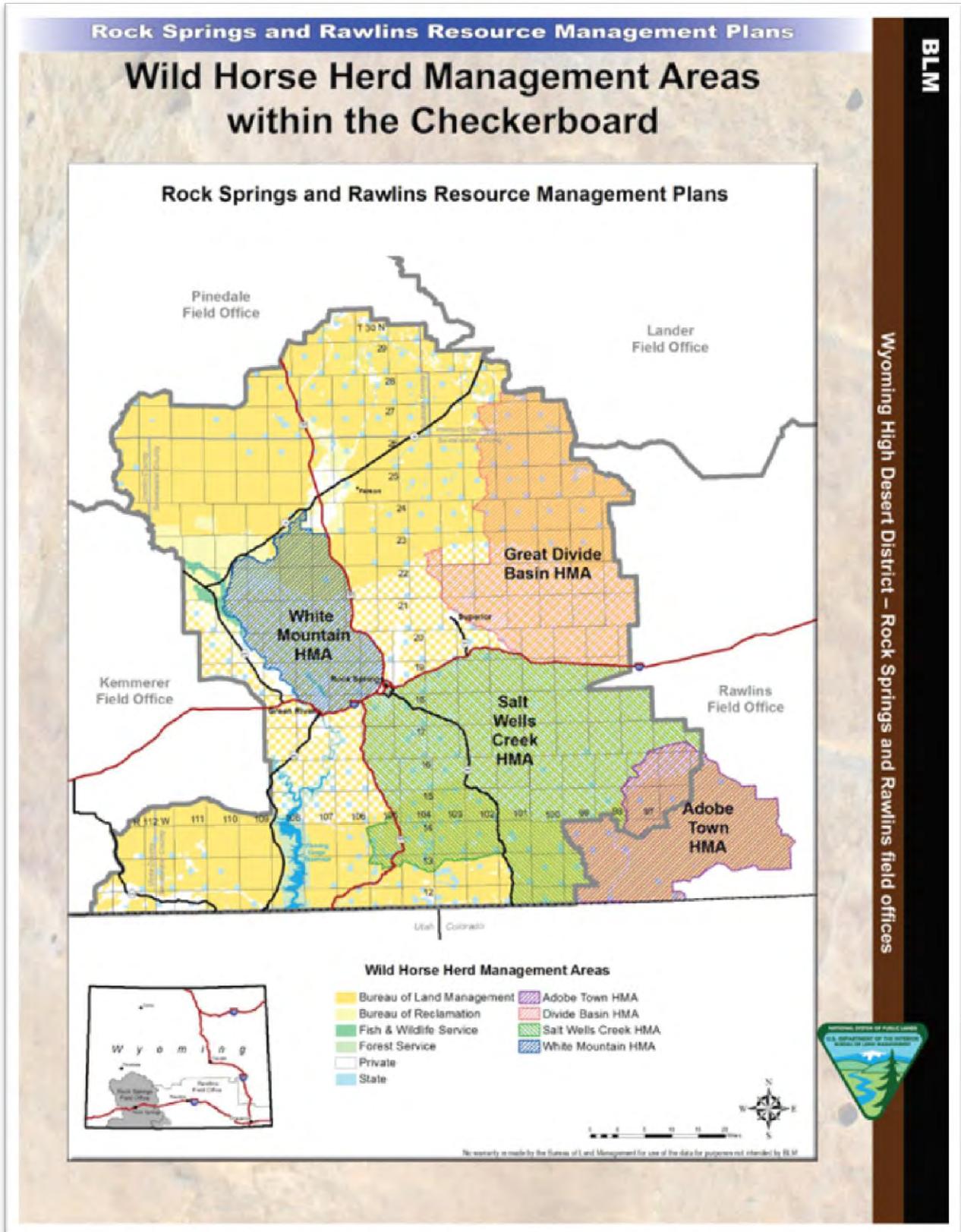
Wild Horse Herd Management Area Acreage within the Checkerboard

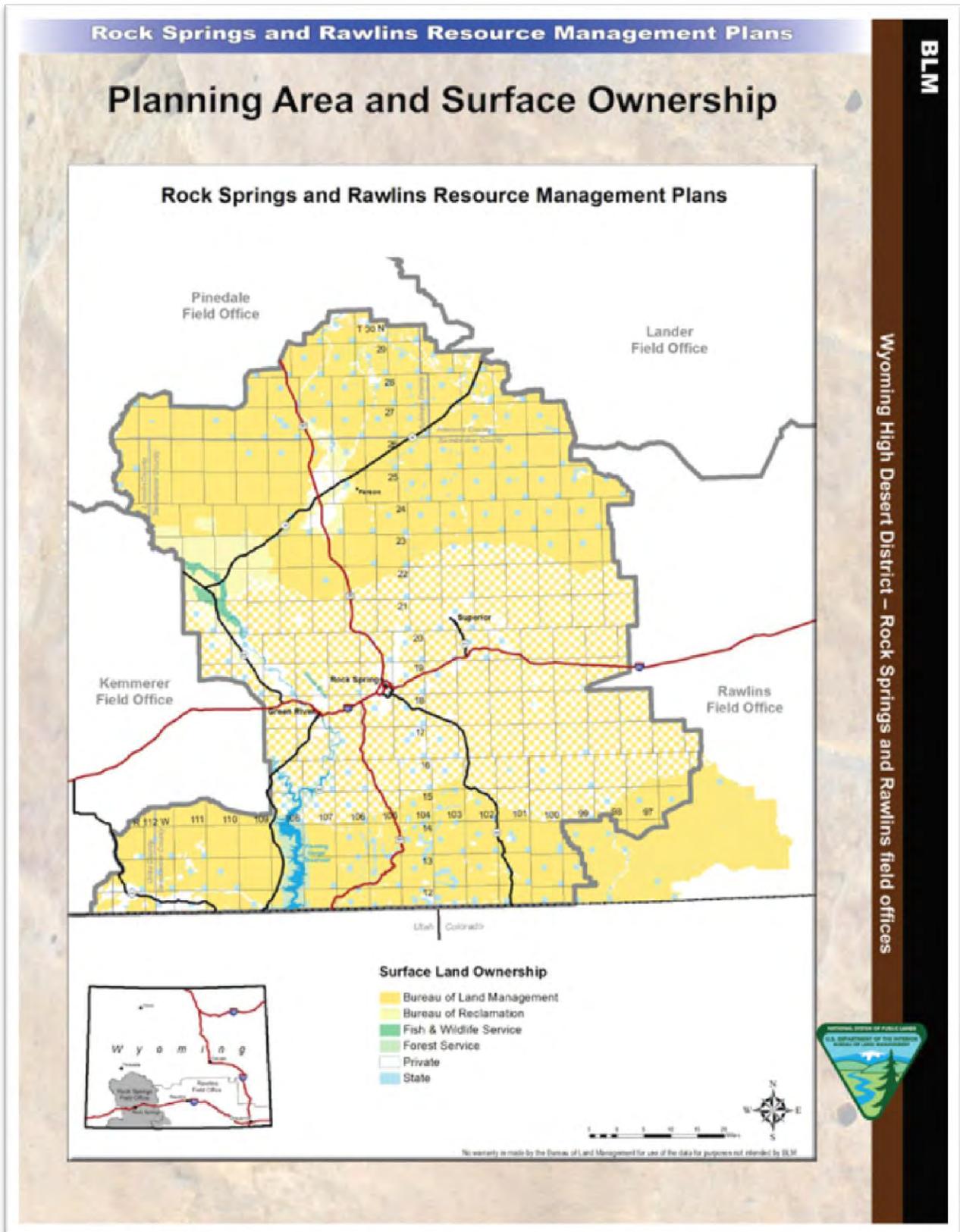
Herd Management Area (HMA)	Private Surface Acreage	State Surface Acreage	Federal Surface Acreage	Total Acreage
Adobe Town (within Rock Springs Field Office)	21,643	1,277	79,947	102,867
Adobe Town (within Rawlins Field Office)	4,682	7,063	363,012	374,757
Adobe Town (entire HMA)	26,325	8,340	442,959	477,624
Great Divide Basin	196,149	20,707	559,820	776,676
Salt Wells Creek	440,635	39,299	690,025	1,169,959
White Mountain	151,302	3,245	207,585	362,132





BLM
Wyoming High Desert District – Rock Springs and Rawlins field offices





BLM
Wyoming High Desert District – Rock Springs and Rawlins field offices