U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Carson City District Office

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION
ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Project Lead: Arthur Callan
Field Office: Sierra Front
Lead Office: Sierra Front
Case File/Project Number: LLNVC02000-12512
Applicable Categorical Exclusion: 516 DM 11.9(H) : Recreation Management (1): Issuance of SRP's for day use or overnight use up to 14 consecutive nights; that impacts no more than 3 staging area acres; and/or for recreational travel along roads, trails, or in areas authorized in a land use plan.

NEPA Number: DOI-BLM-NV-C020-2012-0057-CX
Project Name: Virginia City 100 Horse Endurance Ride

Project Description: NASTR has submitted a five year permit renewal to conduct an annual horse endurance ride in the Virginia City and east Washoe Valley. NASTR previously operated this event under a five year permit and maintained a good record of permit compliance. The day event is typically held in mid-September. This year the proposed event date is scheduled for September 15, 2012. Endurance courses generally range from 25-75 miles long with a combination of various loops that accumulate the ride mileage. The proposed event would utilize approximately 71 miles of established dirt roads (~38 miles private, ~30.5 miles BLM, ~2.25 miles State Park). Up to seven water stops (6 on private, one on BLM) utilizing portable 50 gallon "Rubbermaid" type tanks would be stationed along the course; 2 vet checks are located on private (see map). Course loops are flagged in different colors and directional arrows are drawn using white flour on the ground. Flagging is removed immediately following the event. All camping, parking and the start/finish are located on private lands. The event typically draws 60 - 100 participants and up to 30 spectators. The project area is not located within preliminary general or priority habitat for the greater sage-grouse.

Applicant Name: Nevada All-State Trail Riders (NASTR)
Project Location (include Township/Range, County): T. 16 N., R. 20 E., S. 1-4, 8-13, 15, 17, 20-22; T. 16 N., R. 21 E., S. 5-7, 18; T. 17 N., R. 20 E., S. 1-2, 11, 14, 22-23, 25-26, 35-36; T. 17 N., R. 21 E., S. 1-4, 6, 8-10, 16-21, 29-32; T. 18 N., R. 20 E., S. 27, 34; T. 18 N., R. 21 E., S. 35-35; T. 18 N., R. 22 E., S. 31. **Storey, Lyon, Washoe counties.**
<u>BLM</u> Acres for the Project Area: ~30 acres
Land Use Plan Conformance: Section 8 – REC-2: Desired Outcomes, 1: "Provide a wide variety of recreation opportunities on public land under the administration of the Carson City Field Office."
Name of Plan: NV – Carson City RMP.

Screening of Extraordinary Circumstances: The following extraordinary circumstances apply to individual actions within categorical exclusions (43 CFR 46.215). The BLM has considered the following criteria:

If any question is answered 'yes' an EA or EIS must be prepared.	YES	NO
1. Would the Proposed Action have significant impacts on public health or safety? (project lead/P&EC)		X
2. Would the Proposed Action have significant impacts on such natural resources and unique geographic characteristics as historic or cultural resources; park, recreation or refuge lands; wilderness areas; wild or scenic rivers; national natural landmarks; sole or principal drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands (EO 11990); floodplains (EO 11988); national monuments; migratory birds (EO 13186); and other ecologically significant or critical areas? (wildlife biologist, hydrologist, outdoor recreation planner, archeologist)		X
3. Would the Proposed Action have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA 102(2)(E)]? (project lead/P&EC)		X
4. Would the Proposed Action have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks? (project lead/P&EC)		X
5. Would the Proposed Action establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects? (project lead/P&EC)		X
6. Would the Proposed Action have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects? (project lead/P&EC)		X
7. Would the Proposed Action have significant impacts on properties listed, or eligible for listing, on the NRHP as determined by the bureau or office? (archeologist)		X
8. Would the Proposed Action have significant impacts on species listed, or proposed to be listed, on the list of Endangered or Threatened Species, or have significant impacts on designated Critical Habitat for these species? (wildlife biologist, botanist)		X
9. Would the Proposed Action violate federal law, or a State, local or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment? (project lead/P&EC)		X
10. Would the Proposed Action have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (EA 12898)? (project lead/P&EC)		X
11. Would the Proposed Action limit access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites on federal lands by Indian religious practitioners or significantly adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites (EO 13007)? (archeologist)		X
12. Would the Proposed Action contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native species known to occur in the area or actions that may promote the introduction, growth, or expansion of the range of such species (Federal Noxious Weed Control Act and EO 13112)? (botanist)		X

SPECIALISTS' REVIEW: During ID Team consideration of the above Proposed Action and extraordinary circumstances, the following specialists reviewed this CX:

Realty Specialist: Erik Pignata ESP or Perry Wickham ___

Outdoor Recreation Planner: Arthur Callan ADC

Hydrologist: Niki Cutler NC

Archaeologist: Jim Carter ___ or Rachel Crews RCC

Wildlife Biologist: Pilar Ziegler for BAB

Botanist: Dean Tonenna DT — Need to include weed-free feed prior + during event

Planning & Environmental Coordinator: Brian Buttazoni BJB

Range Management Specialist: Katrina Leavitt KL or Ryan Leary ___

Wild Horse and Burro Specialist: John Axtell ___

Geologist: Dan Erbes ___ for Dan Erbes

Forester: Coreen Francis CF

DECISION: Based upon the review of this Proposed Action, I have determined that the above-described project is a categorical exclusion, in conformance with the LUP, and does not require an EA or EIS. It is my Decision to implement the Sunrise Pass Public Firewood Area project.

Approved by:

Leon Thomas
Field Manager
Sierra Front Field Office

8-30-12
(date)