



United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Winnemucca District Office
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www.blm.gov/nv/st/en/fo/wfo.html

In Reply Refer To:
4110 (NVW01000)

DEC 26 2012

Dear Permittees and Interested public,

According to the U.S. Drought Monitor, Nevada is experiencing moderate to extreme drought conditions which are predicted to persist or intensify. Drought conditions affect plant growth, water availability and could require the need to modify livestock and/or wild horse/burro management.

Drought results in decreased vigor and root reserves (carbohydrate storage), diminished root growth and a reduction in vegetative production of perennial plants. During a drought, forage production is usually not sufficient to provide for livestock and/or wild horse/burro grazing on the public lands at the same levels or in the same manner as in average production years. Drought also affects the availability of water which may dry up or reduce flows of water sources. This will place additional grazing pressure on the remaining water sources (including riparian areas) and surrounding areas. Increased grazing pressure during drought can cause long lasting damage to soils, plants, stream channels and water quality.

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Winnemucca District is aware that temporary changes to your livestock operation may be necessary because of forage conditions or water availability and as a result, can cause economic hardship and management stress. The BLM would like to work with you to plan for the upcoming 2013 (3/1/2013 to 2/28/2014) grazing season so that any changes that must be made are anticipated in advance. This will allow you an early opportunity to adjust your operation if needed.

If drought conditions persist and acceptable voluntary adjustments are not requested, the authorized officer will be required to take appropriate action. Pursuant to 43 CFR §4110.3-3(b), "When the authorized officer determines that the soil, vegetation, or other resources on the public lands require immediate protection because of conditions such as drought, fire, flood, insect infestation, or when continued grazing use poses an imminent likelihood of significant resource damage, after consultation with, or a reasonable attempt to consult with, affected permittees or lessees, the interested public, and the State having lands responsible for managing resources within the area, the authorized officer shall close allotments or portions of allotments to grazing by any kind of livestock or modify authorized grazing use... Notices of closure and decisions requiring modification of authorized grazing use may be issued as final decisions effective upon issuance or on the date specified in the decision."

I encourage you to contact your assigned Rangeland Management Specialist to discuss your specific situation in order to identify any temporary changes in grazing use that will be required to mitigate the effects of drought.

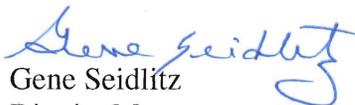
In support of the above-mentioned management actions, the Winnemucca District is developing a Drought Management Environmental Assessment (EA) for the district. The primary purpose of the EA is to analyze a range of management alternatives that could be used to mitigate the effects of drought and to avoid emergency situations. These alternatives will provide a suite of drought response actions that would be implemented during various stages of drought. Drought response actions will address grazing management, wild horse and burro management, wildlife needs, riparian resource concerns and a variety of other resources and management actions associated with the public lands located within the Winnemucca District.

Input can be submitted via email to wfoweb@blm.gov, or mailed to BLM Winnemucca District 5100 E. Winnemucca Blvd. Winnemucca, NV 89445 or faxed to (775) 623-1503.

Before including your address, phone number, e-mail 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 can 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.

If you have any questions regarding these matters, please contact Gerald Dixon, Field Manager for the Black Rock Field Office or Edward Seum, Field Manager for the Humboldt River Field Office at 775-623-1500.

Sincerely,



Gene Seidlitz
District Manager
Winnemucca District

cc: State Director, Nevada (NV 930)
Nevada State Range Program Lead
BLM Battle Mountain District
BLM Elko District
BLM Carson City District
BLM Ely District
BLM Burns District
BLM Vale District
BLM Lakeview District
BLM Cedarville District
BLM Eagle Lake District