



# United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
Winnemucca District Office  
5100 East Winnemucca Boulevard  
Winnemucca, Nevada 89445  
Phone: (775) 623-1500 Fax: (775) 623-1503  
Email: wfoweb@blm.gov  
[www.blm.gov/nv/st/en/fo/wfo.html](http://www.blm.gov/nv/st/en/fo/wfo.html)

In Reply Refer To:  
4100/4700 (LLNVW0000)

Dear Interested Public:

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Winnemucca District (WD) is pleased to announce the completion and availability of the *Winnemucca District Drought Response Plan Environmental Assessment* (EA) and a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) regarding implementation of the Drought Response Plan. Please contact Wes Barry, Assistant Field Manager – Range at the above address or phone number to receive either a CD version or a hard copy of the EA, or visit the World Wide Web at the following address: <http://www.blm.gov/nv/st/en/fo/wfo.html>. Public comments to the Preliminary EA have been received, reviewed and considered in finalizing the EA; BLM's responses to those comments are included as an attachment to this letter.

According to the US Drought Monitor, as of May 30, 2013 over 60% of the state of Nevada is experiencing severe drought conditions. Field monitoring indicates that many areas within the WD are experiencing drought impacts including substantial reductions in forage production and reduced spring and stream flows. It is likely that a continuation of these conditions will impair forage and water resources on many more areas within the WD. The EA was prepared to analyze a range of Drought Response Actions (DRAs) that would be used to mitigate the effects of drought and to avoid emergency situations. These include temporary water hauls; temporary above ground pipelines; temporary changes in livestock season of use; temporary reductions in livestock grazing duration; temporary adjustments in livestock management practices; temporary fencing; targeted grazing of invasive annual dominated plant communities; temporary changes in kind or class of livestock; and wild horse and burro relocations or removals. The Drought Response Plan will allow the BLM to quickly respond to drought conditions, thereby avoiding emergencies and ensuring the long-term health and sustainability of public lands within the WD.

The EA discloses the environmental impacts that implementing the DRAs would likely have on the environment. Impacts to wildlife, wild horses and burros, socio-economics, riparian and wetland zones, vegetation, soil concerns and other resources are fully analyzed in the EA.

On May 30, 2013, I approved a Finding of No Significant Impacts for the proposed action, including design measures. At this time, no decision record is being issued; however, if drought conditions worsen I will, as appropriate, implement DRAs. DRAs will be implemented through the issuance of full force and effect decisions pursuant to 43 CFR §§ 4110.3-3(b), 4770.3(c) and in accordance with 43 CFR §§ 4120.3 after consultation with or a reasonable attempt to consult with, affected permittees or lessees, the interested public, and the state having lands or

responsible for managing resources within the area. Decisions will be implemented within all appropriate laws, regulations and policies. Voluntary reductions in livestock use or voluntary DRAs may offset the need to issue drought decisions.

DRA decisions will be supported by site-specific monitoring data collected as outlined in the Drought Detection and Monitoring Plan. Justification for wild horses and/or burros drought gathers will be thoroughly documented within site-specific decisions and drought gather plans. Both the Drought Detection and Monitoring Plan and guidelines for drought gather plans can be viewed online as attachments to the final EA.

If you have any questions or comments regarding implementation of DRAs or the referenced National Environmental Policy Act documents, please contact Wes Barry, Assistant Field Manager – Range at (775) 623-1584.

Sincerely,

/s/ Gene Seidlitz

Gene Seidlitz  
District Manager  
Winnemucca District

Attachment: Response to Public Comments