



United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Salt Lake Field Office
2370 South Decker Lake Blvd
Salt Lake City, UT 84119
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www.blm.gov/utah

SEP 27 2017

RE: Population Control, Gather, and Research for the Onaqui Mountain Wild Horse Herd Management Area Project

Dear Interested Public,

The Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) Salt Lake Field Office is proposing to control the population of wild horses from the Onaqui Mountain Herd Management Area (HMA) and adjacent areas by gathering and removing excess wild horses to achieve the low end of the Appropriate Management Level (AML). The current population of wild horses on the Onaqui HMA is estimated at 450 animals (not including foals born in 2017), while the AML is set at 121-210 horses. The BLM estimates that over 325 wild horses would need be removed from the Onaqui HMA to achieve a low AML. The proposed gather activities, which could include helicopter and/or bait and water trapping, could begin in the summer of 2018 and extend for multiple years, based on funding.

The proposed population control comes in response to several issues currently occurring in the HMA. This includes, but is not limited to, actions to comply with the Utah Greater Sage-Grouse Approved Resource Management Plan Amendment (ARMPA), emergency stabilization and restoration of lands affected by wildfires, and resource impacts due to over-population of wild horses. The BLM is also collaborating with researchers to establish a study focused on wild horses, greater sage-grouse, and vegetation treatment interactions. The greater sage-grouse population in this area (the Sheeprocks population) has substantially declined over the last decade and the BLM must take action consistent with the ARMPA's management direction.

The project area is located within Townships 6-11 South and Ranges 5-9 West, various sections, Salt Lake Meridian, in Tooele County, Utah. A map of the project area is enclosed for your reference.

The BLM is preparing an environmental assessment (EA) for this project. As part of this EA process, the BLM is conducting a 30-day public scoping period from October 2, 2017 to October 31, 2017. Interested members of the public can submit written comments on issues and alternatives that the BLM can consider in preparing the EA.

Comments must be received by October 31, 2017 (4:30 pm MST) and can be submitted via:

- Regular Mail or Hand Carried: at the address shown in the letterhead above;
- Emailed: blm_ut_cedarnt_onaqui@blm.gov; or
- Faxed: 801-977-4397

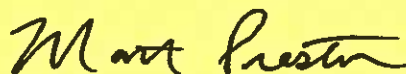
Please refer to "Population Control, Gather, and Research for the Onaqui Mountain Wild Horse Herd Management Area Project" in the subject line of your letter, email, or fax.

Comments, including names, e-mail addresses, and street addresses of respondents will be available for public review at the BLM Salt Lake Field Office during regular business hours (8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday – Friday), except federal holidays. Comments and related personally identifying information will be subject to disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and comments may be published as part of the EA and other related documents.

Individual respondents may request confidentiality. If you wish to withhold your name, street address, or email address from public review and disclosure under the FOIA, you must state this prominently at the beginning of the written comment. Such requests will be honored to the extent allowed by law. All submissions from organizations or businesses will be made available for public inspection in their entirety. The BLM will not accept anonymous comments.

If you are interested, you can obtain additional information and keep apprised of the project by following it on the NEPA Register.¹ A 30-day public comment period on the EA will be offered in the near future. If you would like additional information or wish to discuss the project further, please contact Trent Staheli (Wild Horse Specialist) at 435-743-3164 or tstaheli@blm.gov and Pamela Schuller (Environmental Coordinator) at 801-977-4377 or pschulle@blm.gov of my staff.

Sincerely,



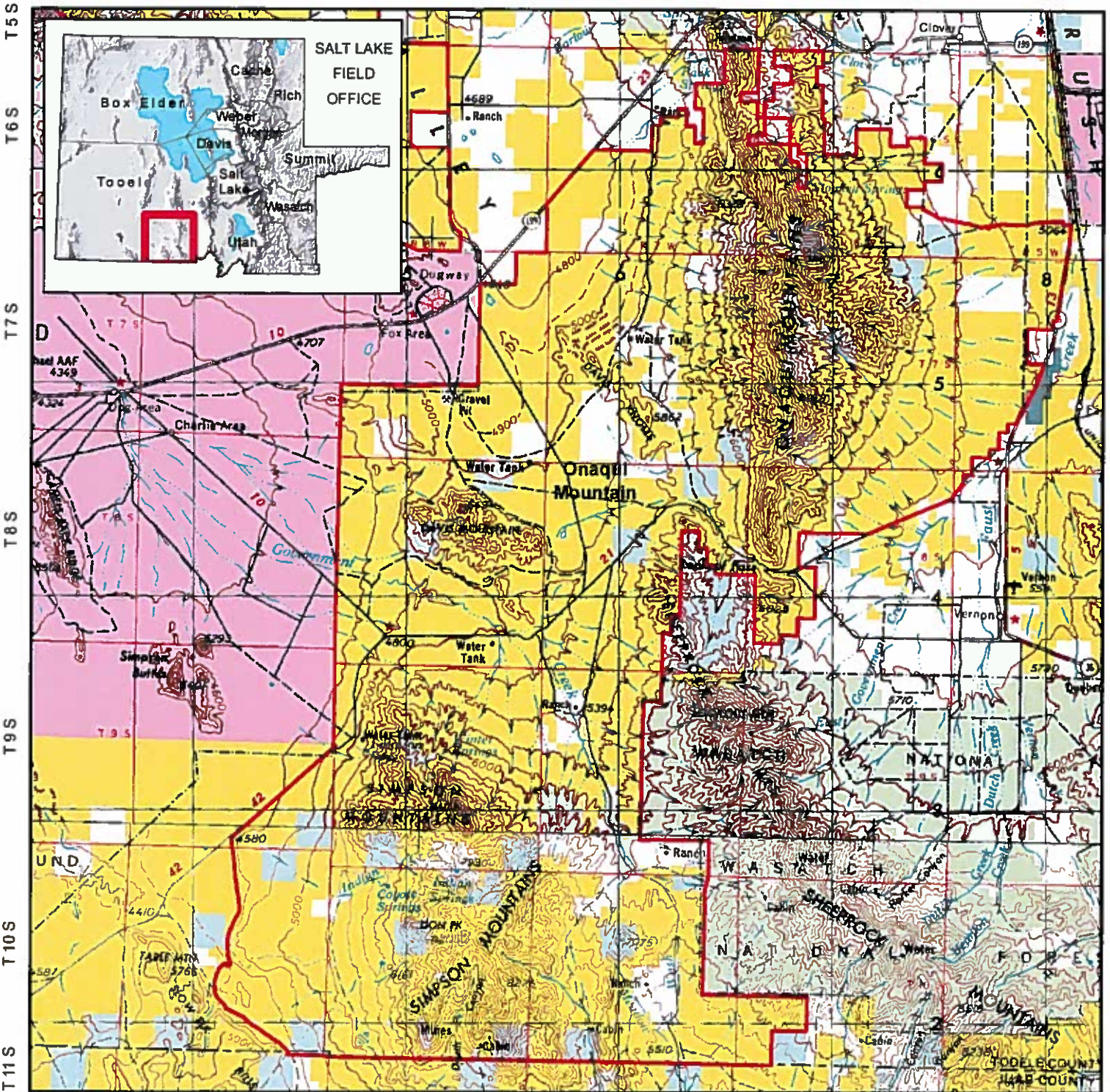
Matt Preston
Field Manager

Enclosure: Map of the Onaqui Herd Management Area

¹ The NEPA Register is located online at: https://eplanning.blm.gov/epl-front-office/eplanning/nepa/nepa_register.do. Sort by: Utah>Salt Lake FO>EA>2017>Wild Horse and Burros> Onaqui Mountain Herd Management Area Population Control and Research.

Onaqui HMA

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- Herd Management Area
- Land Status**
- BLM Wilderness Area
- Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
- Indian Reservation (IR)
- Military Reservations and Corps of Engineers
- Private
- State
- State Wildlife Reserve/Management Area
- US Forest Service (USFS)



August 9, 2017

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