



# United States Department of the Interior

## BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

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In Reply Refer to:  
4750 (LLCAN02000) P

### **DECISION RECORD**

#### ***For the 2025 Red Rock Lakes Nuisance Wild Horse Removal***

#### ***DOI-BLM-CA-N020-2025-0002-CX***

#### **Introduction**

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) received a request from a landowner to remove up to 50 wild horses from private lands adjacent to the Red Rock Lakes Herd Management Area (HMA) on Bureau of Land Management (BLM) administered lands, approximately 6 miles east of Macdoel, CA in Siskiyou County. The BLM prepared a Categorical Exclusion (CX) to document that the proposed action is categorically excluded from review under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). This decision is the result of my review and consideration of the CX.

#### **Background**

Nuisance wild horses have long been a concern and impact to private landowners adjacent to the Red Rock HMA in Siskiyou County, California. In 2019, a total of 31 horses were removed from private lands adjacent to the Red Rock HMA. Then on August 10, 2020, a private landowner called the BLM to alert the it of the presence of wild horses migrating onto his private lands. On August 18, 2020, the private landowner submitted a written request for the removal of wild horses from his private lands adjacent to the Red Rock Lakes HMA. Between March 12 to October 21, 2020, BLM game cameras captured photos of wild horses traveling to and from the Red Rock HMA onto adjacent private lands. On September 14, 2020, a second private landowner contacted the BLM alerting it about wild horses migrating south on to their private land from the Red Rock HMA. An additional request to the BLM for removal was submitted on September 18, 2020, by the second private landowner. By September 1, 2021, a total of 81 wild horses had been gathered and removed from private lands. On February 13, 2025, BLM personnel started to again receive private landowner complaints of wild horses breaking through fences onto private land and eating hay stored in pole barns. Wild horses are migrating on to adjacent private lands due to a lack of water and feed availability within the HMA.

To gather and remove the wild horses on private lands, the BLM will install bait traps with weighted swing gates at locations conducive to passive gathering techniques. All trapped horses will be removed regardless of age, sex, type, conformation, size, or color. No horses will be returned to the HMA, and no population controls will be implemented. The BLM will transport all gathered and removed wild horses to the Litchfield Wild Horse and Burro Corral Facility. Gathered and removed animals will be sorted and placed into proper pens by sex, age, etc. in preparation for adoption, sale, or transport to long-term pastures. BLM will follow standard operating protocols for animals removed off the range.

#### **Authority**

- Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act of 1971 (WFRHBA), Section 4: *If wild free-roaming horses or burros stray from public lands onto privately owned land, the owners of such land may inform the nearest Federal Marshall or agent of the Secretary, who shall arrange to have the animals removed.*

- 43 C.F.R. § 4720.2-1: *Upon written request from the private landowner to any representative of the Bureau of Land Management, the authorized officer shall remove stray wild horses and burros from private land as soon as practicable.*

### **Compliance with Laws, Regulations, Policies, and Land Use Plans**

The Proposed Action is in conformance with the goal of the 2008 Alturas Resource Management Plan (RMP): *Manage wild horses at appropriate management levels **within the established HMA.***

I have determined that the Proposed Action is categorically excluded from further analysis under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in accordance with 516 DM 2, Appendix 4, D (4, 5, & 6), Range Management, which states:

- (4) *Removal of wild horses or burros from private lands at the request of the landowner.*
- (5) *Processing (transporting, sorting, providing veterinary care, vaccinating, testing for communicable diseases, training, gelding, marketing, maintaining, feeding, and trimming of hooves of) excess wild horses and burros.*
- (6) *Approval of the adoption of healthy, excess wild horses and burros.*

### **Decision**

Based upon my review and consideration of the CX, it is my decision to approve the Proposed Action of the 2025 Red Rock Lakes Nuisance Wild Horse Removal (DOI-BLM-CA-N020-2025-0002-CX), incorporated by reference. This decision is contingent upon satisfying all other Federal, State and Local regulations pertaining to this project. **This decision is issued effective immediately**, in accordance with 43 C.F.R. § 4770.3(c).

### **Rationale**

The BLM received a written request from a landowner to remove wild horses from private land. Under the WFRHBA, the BLM must remove wild horses from private lands. As outlined in the CX (DOI-BLM-CA-N020-2025-0002-CX), the BLM has determined that the decision to implement the Proposed Action will lead to achievement of RMP goals and will not result in unnecessary or undue degradation to public lands or cause significant impacts to public health and safety. The Proposed Action has been scoped by a BLM interdisciplinary team of specialists and found to have no resource issues. After a review of the possible exemptions by the interdisciplinary team of specialists, I have determined that the above-described project can be categorically excluded from further NEPA analysis and is in conformance with the 2008 Alturas RMP.

### **Administrative Remedies**

This decision may be appealed to the Interior Board of Land Appeals, Office of the Secretary, in accordance with the regulations contained in 43 C.F.R. Part 4 and the enclosed Form 1842-1.

Approved By:

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Craig R. Drake,  
Applegate Field Manager

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Date