

Idaho - Challis Wild Horse Gather – PRELIMINARY EA

Comments Due by June 2, 2008

EA# ID-330-2007-EA-351

BLM Challis Field Office
1151 Blue Mountain Road
Challis, Idaho 83226
Phone: (208) 879-6209
FAX: (208) 879-6219
CONTACT: Kevin Lloyd Kevin_Lloyd@blm.gov

HMA: 154, 150 acres
AML: 185-253
Last Gathered in 2004

Common to All Alternatives; 60-40 ratio of studs to mares.
Every gather prior to 2004 was a gate-cut gather. Have removed 1, 578 horses since 1979. They took blood samples in 2002.

Proposed Action:

Gather: 266 (80% of population)

Remove: 150

Remain: 162 (Below AML) Claiming current population is 332. pg.

Treat 45 mares with a REVISED IMMUNOCONTRACEPTIVE but then it states it's PZP. It is possible mares treated in 2004 will be retreated again. They will be branded with a AA, the Idaho state brand and if retreated, a 1 will be added to the BLM freeze brand.

BLMs website states they will only gather 100.

Alternative I: Removals with no fertility control. A gather would be necessary in TWO YEARS to stay within AML without using fertility control.

Alternative II: Remove using a “modified gate cut method” and no fertility control.

Alternative III: No Action.

Allocated Wild Horse AUMs: 2,200

The BLM has only allocated wild horse AUM forage for the LOW AML number of 185. AUMs for the “high” is 3,036. This allows them to issue even MORE forage for livestock.

Average Horse Weight: 900-1000 pounds

Livestock Allotments: 6

Total Livestock AUMs: 13,659

Total Head Run Through Per Year: 5,326 (These are NOT occurring on the range year long!
But a total of all livestock grazed throughout the year)

Warm Springs 4,478 AUMs 2,377 Head of Cattle

Mountain Springs: 8,375 AUMs 2,470 Head of Cattle
Road Creek: 204 AUMs 130 Head of Cattle
Split Hoof: 187 AUMs 183 Head of Cattle
Bradbury Flat: 414 AUMs 166 cattle and Bradshaw Basin Allotments.

Personal Notes:

Destruction of injured horses which have been permanently injured as determined by a veterinarian would be destroyed after approval by the BLM authorized officer. Animals would be destroyed in the most humane manner possible.

Stubble height standards have been set for the perennial streams in the HMA at 4 inches at the end of the grazing season. This goal has been met by the livestock use, but use of the riparian areas by horses, before and after livestock use, has prevented the stubble height standard from being achieved (Mountain Springs – 2006 End of Year Report; and Warm Springs Monitoring File). Requested Warm Springs Monitoring File 5/16/08.

Stubble height and streambank shearing standards have not been met due primarily to use by wild horses.

Data has been collected to document stubble height after livestock are removed and then again at the end of the growing season. This shows the amount of use after livestock. Use of wild horses in the riparian areas has also been documented in pastures where no livestock grazing or “rest pastures” has occurred.

Native ungulates are relatively few, tend to not concentrate in large numbers and are allowed to range over large areas.