



The Wyoming Department of Agriculture is dedicated to the promotion and enhancement of Wyoming's agriculture, natural resources and quality of life.

May 4, 2018

Wild Horse Specialist
Worland Field Office
Bureau of Land Management
101 S. 23rd Street
Worland, WY 82401

Worland Field Office,

Following are the Wyoming Department of Agriculture's (WDA) comments pertaining to the Scoping Notice for Fifteenmile Wild Horse Herd Management (HMA) Population Management Project located within the Worland Field Office (WFO).

Our comments are specific to our mission: dedication to the promotion and enhancement of Wyoming's agriculture, natural resources, and quality of life. As wild horses affect our agriculture industry, our natural resources, and welfare of our citizens, it's important you continue to inform us of proposed actions and decisions and continue to provide us the opportunity to express pertinent issues and concerns.

The current estimated population is well over 3-times the high Appropriate Management Level (AML) of 160 wild horses, the WDA strongly supports the removal of wild horses to reach low AML (70). In addition, we encourage the WFO structure the sex ratio of the herd returned to the range at approximately 60:40 (60 studs to 40 mares) to assist in managing the reproductive rate of the HMA. Managing the reproductive rate will reduce the demand on short and long-term holding facilities and help the Bureau of Land Management lower numbers.

We fully support the WFO updating the Fifteenmile HMA Plan (HMAP) to identify future management of the HMA. We suggest the updated HMAP provide the WFO flexibility to manage the HMA and the ability to make changes based on data collected from the HMA. The HMAP should develop monitoring objectives and a monitoring plan to allow the WFO to make adjustments to the AML and assist in planning future gathers.

The Scoping Notice states; "Manage the Fifteenmile HMA for an initial appropriate management level of 70 to 160 wild horses, not counting foals, in an attempt to maintain a population of 100 adult wild horses adjusted as necessary based upon monitoring." We encourage the WFO address this language in the HMAP process to ensure foals are considered as part of the "population" when assessing against the established AML.

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Fifteenmile Wild Horse HMA

5/4/2018

Page 2 of 2

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on this Scoping Notice. We encourage continued attention to our concerns and look forward to providing valuable comments on a Draft NEPA document.

Sincerely,



Doug Miyamoto
Director

DM/cw

CC: Governor's Policy Office
Rocky Mountain Farmers Union
Wyoming Association of Conservation Districts
Wyoming Game and Fish Department

Wyoming State Grazing Board
Wyoming Stock Growers
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Wyoming Board of Agriculture