Wyoming
DEPARTMENT OF Agriculture

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

June 25, 2018

Clay Stott
Wild Horse and Burro Specialist
Lander Field Office
Bureau of Land Management
1335 Main Street
Lander, WY 82520

Mr. Clay Stott,

Following are the Wyoming Department of Agriculture's (WDA) comments pertaining to the population control measures and removal of excess wild horses in the Scoping Notice for the analysis of the Herd Management Plan and wild horse gathers for the North Lander Complex (Conant Creek, Dishpan Butte, Muskrat Basin, and Rock Creek Mountain) Herd Management Areas (HMAs) within the Lander Field Office (LFO).

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 approaching 3-times the high Appropriate Management Level (AML) of 536 wild horses. The WDA strongly supports the removal of wild horses to reach low AML (320). In addition, we encourage the LFO to take a proactive approach to managing wild horse populations within these HMAs and analyze a full suite of population control methods to achieve and maintain AML.

We recommend the following methods be analyzed for use to control wild horse population growth within the HMAs: vasectomizing a high percentage of stallions; reduce the reproducing population through gelding; adjusting the population's sex ratios; utilizing a combination of gelding, spay, and/or segregation to limit reproduction rates; and using the fertility control drug GonaCon in conjunction with other population control methods. The LFO should be provided the flexibility to fully manage the HMAs' wild horses through the use of these population control methods and any others.

We support the LFO updating the Lander Complex HMA Plan (HMAP) to identify future management of the HMAs. We suggest the updated HMAP provide the LFO maximum flexibility to manage the HMAs and the

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ability to make changes based on data collected from the HMAs. The HMAP should allow the LFO to make adjustments to management, AML, and assist in planning future gathers.

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 National Environmental Policy Act document.

Sincerely,

Doug Miyamoto
Director

DM/cw

CC: Governor's Policy Office
Wyoming State Grazing Board
Rocky Mountain Farmers Union
Wyoming Stock Growers
WY Association of Conservation Districts
Wyoming Wool Growers
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