



Matthew H. Mead, *Governor*
Jason Fearneyhough, *Director*
2219 Carey Ave. • Cheyenne, WY 82002
Phone: (307) 777-7321 • Fax: (307) 777-6593
Web: agriculture.wy.gov • Email: wda1@state

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

May 6, 2011

Jay D'Ewart, Wild Horse & Burro Specialist
BLM, Rock Springs Field Office Bureau of Land Management
280 Highway 191 North
Rock Springs, WY 82901

Dear Mr. D'Ewart:

To Whom It May Concern at the Rock Springs Field Office (RSFO),

Following are the Wyoming Department of Agriculture's (WDA) comments pertaining to the White Mountain/Little Colorado Wild Horse Gather Environmental Assessment (EA).

Our comments are specific to our mission: dedication to the promotion and enhancement of Wyoming's agriculture, natural resources, and quality of life. As this EA affects our agriculture industry, our natural resources, and the welfare of our citizens, it is 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 WDA supports Alternative A, the proposed action to remove excess animals to Lower Limit of Appropriate Management Level (AML) with fertility control and adjustment of sex ratios (favoring stallions 60:40). The proposed actions in the EA for these Herd Management Areas (HMAs) are essential to achieving AML, ensuring a natural ecological balance to the range, and providing for the protection of rangeland resources. The proposed alternative also meets the direction and guidelines of the August 2003 Consent Decree (Consent Decree) *State of Wyoming v. U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management (BLM)*.

We fully support the actions listed as common to Alternatives A, B and D. We commend the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) for including the statement "All wild horses outside of the HMAs would be removed." This provides additional consistency with the Consent Decree and is imperative to appropriate management of the HMAs.

We support the continued work of the BLM to manage wild horse populations in the State of Wyoming, while providing for the protection of rangeland resources. The gathering of wild horses is in conformance with the Green River Resource Management Plan, the BLM Wyoming "Standards for Healthy Rangelands and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management", Consent Decree provides for the continuation of healthy viable populations of wild horses on public lands

Equal Opportunity in Employment and Services

BOARD MEMBERS

Vacant, *District 1* • Jim Hodder, *District 2* • Shaun Sims, *District 3* • John Moore, *District 4* • Alison Lass, *District 5*
Bryan Brost, *District 6* • Jim Price, Jr., *District 7*

YOUTH BOARD MEMBERS

Patrick Zimmerer, Southeast • Dalin Winters, Northwest • John Hansen, Southwest • Bridget Williams, Northeast

for future generations to view and works to protect the delicate balance between rangeland resources and their multiple uses.

The WDA works closely with the Wyoming Game and Fish Department (Game & Fish) and the conservation districts to conserve and protect the State's natural resources, wildlife and quality of life for the citizens of the state. We strongly encourage the BLM work closely with the Game & Fish and local conservation districts, consider their comments in your decision and collaborate with them during EA implementation.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the White Mountain/Little Colorado Wild Horse Gather Environmental Assessment. We look forward to hearing of your decision about this project and urge your agency to continue to keep us informed of the current status of this project.

Sincerely,



Jason Fearneyhough
Director

JF/ls

CC: Steve Ferrell - Governor's Planning Office
Jerimiah Reiman – Governor's Planning Office
Rocky Mountain Farmers Union
State Grazing Board
Wyoming Game and Fish Department
Wyoming Board of Agriculture
Wyoming Stock Growers Association
Wyoming Wool Growers Association
Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation
Wyoming Association of Conservation Districts