

U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Finding of No Significant Impact
Proposed Elko Resource Management Plan Wild Horse Amendment
BLM/EK/PL-2003/04

I have determined that no significant impacts to the human environment will result from the proposed action, as described in the attached environmental assessment (BLM/EK/PL-2003/004). Therefore, an environmental impact statement will not be prepared prior to its implementation. This finding is based on the following:

A. The proposed action is analyzed within the appropriate context. The proposed action is to amend the 1987 Elko RMP for wild horse management by designating the Little Humboldt and Rock Creek Herd Management Areas, each within herd areas established pursuant to the 1971 Wild Free Roaming Horse and Burro Act. The affected region is limited to the northwest portion of Elko County, where the two wild horse herds are located. There is little to no difference in the proposed action from the alternative of continuing current management, as it may affect differing values of wild horse advocates and users of public lands for other purposes.

B. There is no evidence that the intensity (severity) of impacts is significant:

1. The management of wild horses within the designated areas is expected to meet BLM's objective for wild horse management of maintaining a thriving natural ecological balance consistent with other resource needs.

2. The proposed action has no effect on public health or safety.

3. The proposed action has no potential to affect unique characteristics such as historic or cultural resources. There are no wild and scenic rivers, or ecologically critical areas present in the areas. Future maintenance of appropriate numbers of wild horses is expected to keep impacts to seeps and springs at an acceptable level.

4. The effects of the proposed action on the quality of the human environment are not considered to be highly controversial. The effects of wild horse management on public lands are well-known and understood. The proposed designations would continue to support viable populations, because they provide the habitat that monitoring has shown wild horses use.

5. Possible effects on the human environment are not highly uncertain, and do not involve unique or unknown risks.

6. The proposed Amendment provides guidance for, and is compatible with, future consideration of actions required to improve livestock management in conjunction with meeting objectives for fish and wildlife habitat in the wild horse herd areas.

7. The proposed action is not related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts.

8. The proposed action has no potential to adversely affect properties listed or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, and would not cause loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, or historical resources.

9. The proposed action is not likely to adversely affect the Federally threatened Lahontan cutthroat trout, and would have no effect on any other threatened or endangered species or habitat determined to be critical under the Endangered Species Act.

10. The proposed action does not threaten to violate any Federal, State, or local law or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment.

Robert V. Abbey, State Director

Date