

# Blue Wing Mountains Herd Management Area

## Pershing County, Nevada

### Location/Habitat

The Blue Wing Herd Management Area (HMA) is located in western Pershing County, approximately 65 miles northeast of Reno, Nevada. The HMA contains approximately 17,913 acres of unfenced public lands. The terrain in the area consists of north-south trending mountains separated by broad valleys. Elevations within the HMA range from 4,000 feet along the valley floor to 6,592 feet on Black Mountain. Climate is characterized by warm dry days, cool nights and low yearly precipitation that ranges from 4 to 6 inches at lower elevations to approximately 8 inches at higher elevations. The area is also utilized by domestic livestock and numerous wildlife species. Typical wildlife species found in the area include mule deer, pronghorn antelope, chukar partridge, coyote, and various rodents.

### Vegetation

Vegetation varies from salt desert shrub communities at lower elevations to big sagebrush/grass communities at upper elevations. Typical species in the salt desert shrub community includes shadscale, budsage, winterfat, black greasewood, Indian rice grass, squirrel tail and desert needlegrass. Species typical of the sagebrush/grass communities include low sage, Wyoming sagebrush, desert peach, rabbit brush, needlegrass, basin wild rye, squirrel tail, Indian paintbrush and phlox.

### Herd Description

The appropriate management level (AML) for wild horses and burros in the HMA are managed in a range from 27 to 36 horses, and 21 to 28 burros. Periodic removals are conducted to maintain the population within the management range. Horses within the HMA are descendants of ranch horses and horses that either escaped or were released into the area. The majority of horses exhibit a bay, brown or sorrel color pattern. Burros within the HMA are the descendants of pack animals used by miners and sheep ranchers. The majority of the burros exhibit a gray color pattern, however pinto burros are also found in the area. It is not possible to provide any specific information on parentage of any wild horse found within the area.

