



Lava Beds Herd Management Area Pershing County, Nevada

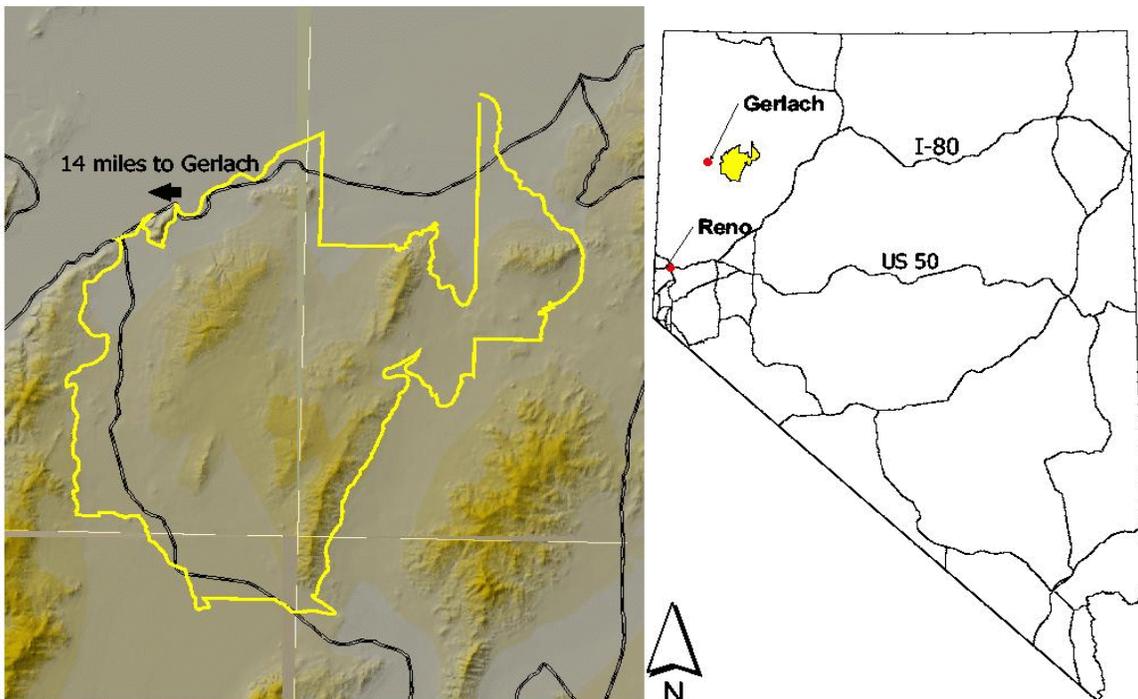


Location/Habitat

The Lava Beds Herd Management Area (HMA) is located in western Pershing County, approximately 70 miles northeast of Reno, Nevada. The HMA contains approximately 231,744 acres of unfenced public land. The terrain in the area consists of north-south trending mountains separated by broad valleys. Elevations within the HMA range from 4,500 feet along the valley floor to 6,832 feet on the mountain tops. Summer climate is characterized by warm dry days and cool nights. Low yearly precipitation ranges from 4 to 6 inches at lower elevations to approximately 10 inches at higher elevations. Winter is typically cold and dry. The area is also utilized by domestic livestock (cattle and sheep) and numerous wildlife species. Typical wildlife species found in the area include mule deer, pronghorn antelope, chukar partridge, coyotes, 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 include shadscale, bud sage, winterfat, black greasewood, Indian ricegrass), squirreltail and desert needlegrass. Species



typical of the sagebrush/grass communities include low sage, Wyoming sagebrush, desert peach, rabbitbrush, needlegrass, basin wild-rye, squirreltail, Indian paintbrush and phlox .

Herd Description

The appropriate management level (AML) for wild horses and burros in the HMA is managed in a range from 89 to 148 for horses and from 10 to 16 for burros. Periodic removals are conducted to maintain this population level. 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; however, quite a few buckskin and dun horses are also found in the area.

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 or burro found within the area.