MOUNTAIN MEADOW INSTANT STUDY AREA

1. THE STUDY AREA - 22 acres

The Mountain Meadow Natural Area or Instant Study Area (ISA) is located between the Hot Creek and Park Ranges in Nye County, approximately 50 miles southwest of Eureka, Nevada. The ISA was managed by the BLM until it was transferred to the U. S. Forest Service under PL 100-550, the National Forest and Public Lands of Nevada Enhancement Act of 1988. The northern, western and southern boundaries of the ISA are fenced. The eastern boundary is formed by a rocky hillside. The ISA is approximately 1500 feet long and 640 feet wide (22 acres).

2. RECOMMENDATION AND RATIONALE - 0 acres recommended for wilderness
22 acres recommended for nonwilderness

The recommendation for this ISA is to release all 22 acres for uses other than wilderness. The ISA was evaluated in the Statewide Initial Wilderness Inventory along with its contiguous roadless area, Inventory Unit NV-060-221. The entire unit was determined to "clearly and obviously lack wilderness characteristics" and was dropped from further review. The primary reason for this decision was the small size of the roadless acreage.

3. WILDERNESS CHARACTERISTICS

A. Naturalness: The ISA is a natural meadow surrounded by rocky buttes. The buttes have a thin cover of pinyon and juniper trees. The meadow contains natural and introduced species of grasses and forbs and some sage. Several springs occur in the ISA. The elevation of the ISA is approximately 7000 feet.

B. Solitude: Opportunities for solitude are limited due to the small size of the ISA.

C. Primitive and Unconfined Recreation: Opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation are limited due to the fenced nature and small size of the ISA.

D. Special Features: No special features of geological, scenic, or historical value are known to exist in the ISA. The ISA does have educational, ecological and biological significance as a livestock exclosure in a wet meadow environment surrounded by desert.

4. MANAGEABILITY

It would be possible to manage the ISA due to its small size and fences. Continued livestock grazing would be compatible with wilderness management.

5. ENERGY AND MINERAL RESOURCE VALUES

Energy and mineral resource values are low within the ISA.

6. SUMMARY OF ISA-SPECIFIC PUBLIC COMMENTS

The ISA was reviewed throughout the Nevada Statewide Wilderness Inventory Public Involvement and Participation Plan. A 90-day public comment period was held on the Initial Inventory Proposed Decision for this area that began May 1, 1979 and concluded on July 30, 1979. The comment period was announced in the Federal Register and in news releases. Public meetings were held in Battle Mountain, Reno, Las Vegas and Ely, Nevada. One comment on this ISA was received after the close of the formal comment period. The comment supported wilderness designation for the ISA.