



United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Tonopah Field Office

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http://www.blm.gov/nv/st/en/fo/battle_mountain_field.html

In Reply Refer To:
4700 (NVB0200)

AUG 26 2015

Dear Reader:

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Battle Mountain District, Tonopah Field Office (TFO) issued the Decision Record for the Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Bullfrog Herd Management Area (HMA) Gather Plan, in 2012. The EA and associated Decision specifically allotted for follow-up bait and water trap gathers of the Bullfrog HMA to attain Appropriate Management Level (AML). Hence, the Tonopah Field Office is planning to conduct a bait/water trap and removal of 40 nuisance burros within the Gather Area (see Figure 1- Gather Area Map) which surrounds the town of Beatty, NV and is encompassed by the Bullfrog Herd Management Area (HMA). The gather and impacts are described and analyzed in the 2012 Bullfrog Gather Plan Final EA. The EA, Decision Record, Finding of No Significant Impact, maps and other information about the Bullfrog HMA is posted on the BLM Battle Mountain website at

http://www.blm.gov/nv/st/en/fo/battle_mountain_field/blm_programs/wild_horse_and_burro/2015_Bullfrog_HMA_Nuisance_Burro_Water_Bait_Gather/docs.html.

Once the gather begins bi-weekly updates to gather and shipping numbers can be observed at the aforementioned link. Once gathered, burros will be transported to a BLM off-range holding facility located in Axtell, UT. The wild burro gather is estimated to begin on September 1, 2015.

The Bullfrog HMA is located in the southernmost portion of the TFO planning area, and is approximately 151,782 acres in size. The eastern edge of the HMA borders the Nevada Testing and Training Range (NTTR), and the western border neighbors Death Valley National Park. Burro movement between the HMA and the NTTR has been observed, and similar movement between the National Park and the HMA is likely to occur. The southern border of the HMA is the Battle Mountain District boundary, which borders the Southern Nevada District. The town of Beatty, Nevada lies in the center of the HMA, and Highway 95 splits the HMA into eastern and western portions. Elevations within the HMA range from a high of 6,031 feet at Bare Mountain to a low of 3,095 feet south of Beatty. The area receives little precipitation, typical of the Mojave Desert Ecosystem. The Bullfrog HMA contains habitat for the threatened desert tortoise and the sensitive Amargosa toad.

The Appropriate Management Level (AML) range for the Bullfrog HMA was established through the Final Multiple Use Decision (FMUD) for the Montezuma Allotment Complex, completed in 2007. The FMUD was issued following an interdisciplinary analysis of monitoring data, the completion of a Rangeland Health Evaluation (RHE) for the complex, and the involvement of interested public.

The following table lists the AML, current population estimate, proposed number to gather, proposed number to remove, and estimated post-gather populations of wild burros.

HMA	Allotment	AML		Est. Population ^a	Est. Number to Gather	Est. Number to Remove	Est. Post Gather Population
		High	Low				
Bullfrog	East [*]	23	15	243+	40	40	203+
	West ^{**}	68	43				
	Total	91	58	203+	40	40	203+

^a Represents the estimated population based on a January 2012 direct count inventory (195 head) and gather (75 head), adjusted for 20% rate of increase from 2012 thru 2015 (207 head), and an additional 36+ head that have migrated into the HMA likely due to a lack of water availability during drought.

* The portion of the HMA on the east side of Highway 95 and includes portions of the Razorback and most of the Springdale 2 Allotments.

** The portion of the HMA on the west side of Highway 95 and is comprised only of the Razorback Allotment.

The Bullfrog HMA wild burro gather is needed to:

- remove wild burros from areas within HMA that are not designated for wild burro use; city limits, and private property,
- reduce hazards from human-burro encounters in Beatty and along the Highway 95 corridor that divides the HMA,
- to protect the wild burro populations from diminished health and body condition, and suffering emergency conditions due to a lack of forage and water,
- protect threatened desert tortoise and sensitive Amargosa toad habitat,
- protect rangeland resources from deterioration associated with an overpopulation of wild burros, and
- restore and maintain a thriving natural ecological balance and multiple use relationship on the public lands consistent with the provisions of Section 3(b) (2) of the Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act of 1971 (WFRHBA).

By removing excess wild burros and attempting to maintain a population consistent with the established AML, progress would be made towards achievement of Mojave-Southern Great Basin Resource Advisory Council (RAC) Standards for Rangeland Health. Please refer to the EA for more detail about the Bullfrog HMA and wild burro gather.

If you would rather not remain on the mailing list for the Bullfrog HMA wild burro gathers, and do not wish to receive the Environmental Assessment /Gather Plan and subsequent decision documents, please submit your request in writing to the address identified on the letterhead.

For more information regarding the proposed gather, please contact David Price at (775) 482-7848.

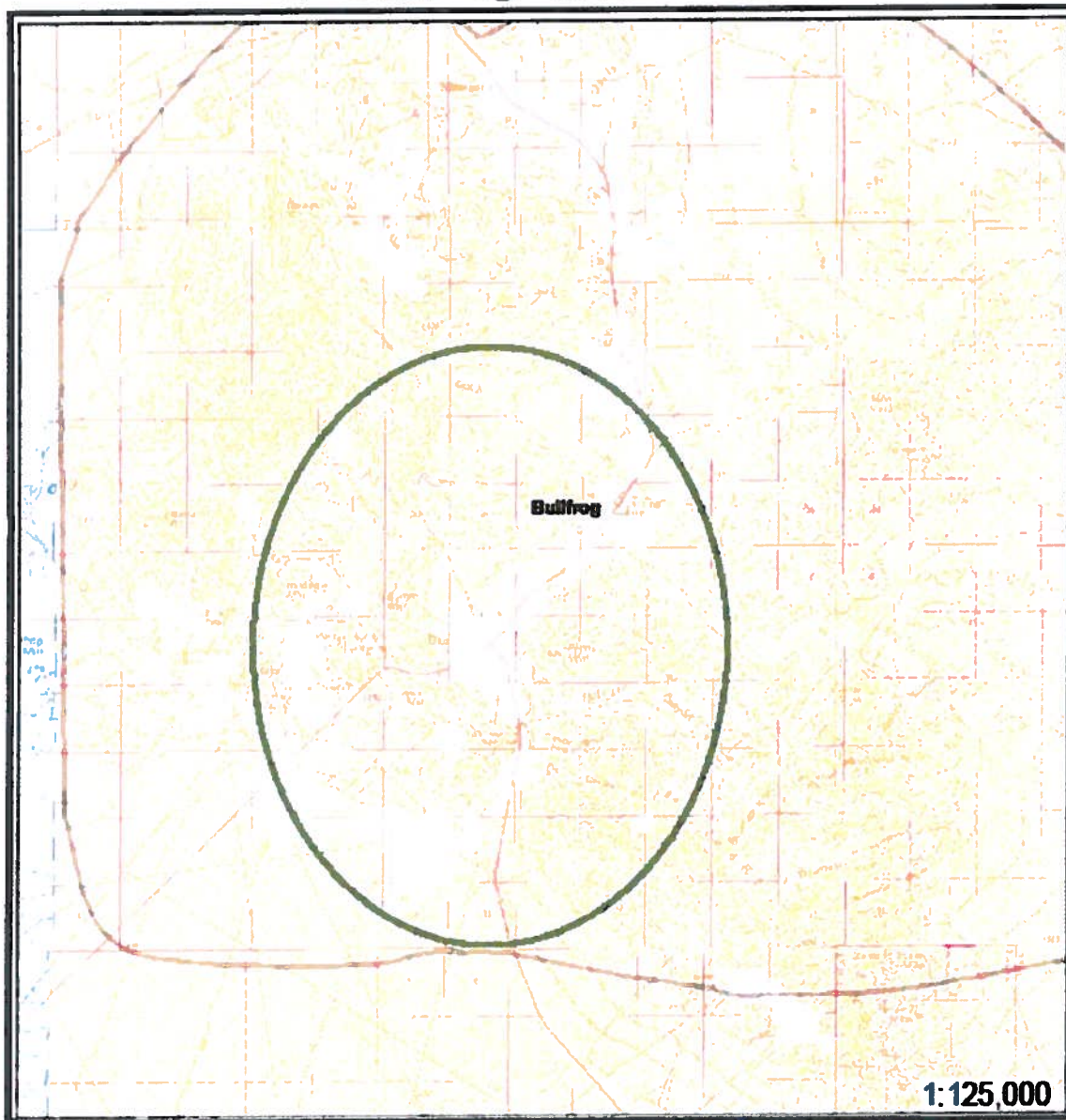
Sincerely,

Timothy J. Coward
Field Manager

Attachments: Figure 1: Gather Area Map

Figure 1- Gather Area Map

2015 Bullfrog HMA Gather Area



Legend

- 2015 Bullfrog Gather Area
- Herd Management Area (HMA) Polygons Miles

Land Status
Agency

- Bureau of Land Management
- National Park Service
- Private



14 May 2015
Source: BLM 2012
Bureau of Land Management
Goffs Mountain District Office
No warranty is made by the BLM as to the
accuracy, reliability or completeness of these data.