



NATIONAL HORSE & BURRO RANGELAND MANAGEMENT COALITION

*Advocating for commonsense, ecologically-sound approaches to managing horses and burros
to promote healthy wildlife and rangelands for future generations*

DATE: 5 November 2015

TO: Ms. E. Lynn Burkett, Bureau of Land Management, Lakeview Field Office
1301 S. "G" Street, Lakeview, OR 97630

RE: Beaty Butte Wild Horse Gather

FROM: National Horse & Burro Rangeland Management Coalition
Keith Norris, Chair, keith.norris@wildlife.org, 301-897-9770 x309

Dear Ms. Burkett,

The National Horse and Burro Rangeland Management Coalition (Coalition) supports the BLM's efforts to comply with the Wild Free-Roaming Horse and Burro Act of 1971 (Act) by removing excess horses through carrying out the Beaty Butte gather.

Our Coalition includes a wide range of sportsmen, livestock, wildlife, and land conservation organizations and professional societies. Collectively, we represent over eight million Americans and focus on commonsense, ecologically-sound approaches to managing horses and burros to promote healthy wildlife and rangelands for future generations.

The Coalition recognizes that unmanaged horses and burros negatively impact the health of rangeland ecosystems. Horses and burros are known to compact soils and graze vegetation extremely low to the ground, reducing the ability of plants to re-grow. Additionally, horses and burros compete with native wildlife for food and water resources and impact habitat used by these species. Excess horses and burros are not compatible with a thriving natural ecological balance, which is required by the Act.

BLM's "Worksheet Determination of Land Use Plan Conformance and NEPA Adequacy (DNA) DOI-BLM-L050-2015-0036-DNA Beaty Butte Wild Horse Gather" clearly makes the case for bringing the number of horses in line with the appropriate management level (AML). With a population of over 1,500 horses, approximately six times the established AML, horses are having severe impacts on the rangelands, wetlands, wildlife habitat and the health of the wild horse herd. The Beaty Butte region overlaps with priority conservation areas for greater sage-grouse; excess horses need to be removed to ensure the habitat can continue to support sage-grouse populations. The excess horses in the Beaty Butte area exceed the carrying capacity of the land, and thereby threaten the natural ecological balance of the region.

We encourage you to proceed with implementation of the Beaty Butte Wild Horse Gather. We believe this action supports rangeland health, native wildlife, and the multiple uses of the range including a healthy horse population consistent with the Act.

Thank you for your efforts to manage horses in a manner that will restore and maintain a thriving natural ecological balance between horses, native wildlife, and multiple uses of the range.

Sincerely,

Keith Norris, Chair

cc Neil Kornze, Mike Tupper, Dean Bolstad, Jerry Perez

American Farm Bureau Federation • American Sheep Industry Association • Masters of Foxhounds Association • Mule Deer Foundation
National Association of Conservation Districts • National Cattlemen's Beef Association • National Rifle Association
National Wildlife Refuge Association • Public Lands Council • Public Lands Foundation • Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation
Safari Club International • Society for Range Management • The Wildlife Society

Contact us at horseandrange@gmail.com or visit us on the web at wildhorserange.org