

BLM-Montana
Wild Horse and Burro (WH&B) Program
2008 Escalating Problems

- ★ The health of wild horses and rangeland resources is being compromised across the PMWHR. An escalating problem is occurring and continues to be monitored for range conditions and wild horse health. The AML is currently established at 95 wild horses plus or minus 10%. The current population is estimated at 170 wild horses excluding newborn foals on and off the PMWHR. The area is nearly two times above carrying capacity for wild horses, and AML has not been achieved since 1994. Wild horse advocates disagree with BLM's assessment of wild horse body condition and overall range conditions. Conversely advocates claim body condition is fine for wild animals and if range conditions were poor then wild horses wouldn't reproduce.
- ★ The PMWHR has large areas in poor ecological condition, especially the low elevation "desert" rangelands. These desert areas are very important to the wild horses as winter use areas. The area had extensive drought throughout the last ten years. A recent evaluation documented through a measured trend in the desert areas that significant decline in ecological condition and a loss of forage species has occurred.
- ★ The past winter had above average snowfall in the PMWHR with average low temperatures. The spring has been late with a cooler and dryer than average weather pattern that has not been conducive to forage production. Monitoring of the PMWHR has been regularly occurring at a minimum of a monthly basis throughout the winter and spring of 2007/2008.
- ★ Monitoring for forage utilization and wild horse body condition continues to occur. Utilization levels of over 90% were documented in areas of the winter range. Since March of 2008 wild horse body condition began to decline. Currently most stallions are in Henneke body score condition 4 while mares and yearlings are in body score's 2 and 3. Body condition is worse now than at the end of winter.
- ★ The PMWHR will begin bait trapping in around August 1st and continue until 30 horses have been trapped to relieve the pressure on the resources.

BLM-California
Wild Horse and Burro (WH&B) Program
2008 Escalating Problems

- ★ The California office could have an emergency situation on New Ravendale and Massacre Lakes HMAs. New Ravendale is 320% over AML and the rancher may shut off access to the waters that the horses use in that HMA. Massacre Lakes is