

**Decision Record  
Bureau of Land Management  
Rock Springs Field Office**

**Removal of wild horses from checkerboard lands within the Great Divide Basin, Salt Wells  
Creek and Adobe Town Herd Management Areas (HMAs)  
WY-040-CX14-134**

**BACKGROUND:**

On April 3, 2013, the United States District Court for the District of Wyoming approved a Consent Decree and Joint Stipulation for Dismissal (Consent Decree) in Rock Springs Grazing Association (RSGA) v. Salazar, No. 11- CV-00263-NDF. The lawsuit and decree arise from an October 4, 2010 request by the RSGA for the BLM to remove all wild horses that have strayed onto its private lands. The RSGA owns and leases approximately one million acres of land (including 48 percent of the private land in the four herd management areas) on alternating odd-numbered sections in the checkerboard pattern of mixed land ownership in southern Wyoming. After the BLM did not take clear action on the request, RSGA filed a complaint seeking to compel the removal of all wild horses from its private lands. The BLM and RSGA entered into a settlement agreement that was memorialized in the Consent Decree.

**DECISION:**

Based on the Categorical Exclusion Review WY-040-CX14-134, it is my decision to authorize the removal of all wild horses from Checkerboard Lands within the Great Divide Basin, Adobe Town, and Salt Wells Creek Herd Management Areas, as provided by Section 4 of the Wild Free- Roaming Horse and Burro Act (WHA), 16 U.S.C. §1334, and the 2013 Consent Decree. All captured wild horses would be removed from the checkerboard lands and entered into the Wild Horse and Burro Program to be made available for adoption. The BLM currently plans to commence with the removal after August 18, 2014, to fulfill its obligations as stated above.

This action is categorically excluded from further documentation under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in accordance with 516 DM 11.9, D4 "Removal of wild horses or burros from private lands at the request of the landowner

The categorical exclusion is appropriate in this situation because there are no extraordinary circumstances potentially having effects that may significantly affect the environment. The proposed action has been reviewed, and none of the extraordinary circumstances described in 43 CFR 46.215 and 516 DM2 apply.

April 2014 Census flights confirmed that wild horses are present on checkerboard lands within the Great Divide Basin, Salt Wells Creek and Adobe Town HMAs. The BLM, the RSGA and the United States Geological Survey (USGS) completed a simultaneous double count method census survey for the Salt Wells Creek, Adobe Town, and Great Divide Basin HMAs. The direct count numbers were adjusted by the USGS using the simultaneous double count method. The statistically corrected survey shows an estimated 806 wild horses within the checkerboard of these HMAs at the time of the April 2014 census.

Removal of wild horses from checkerboard lands is required for compliance with Section 4 of the WHA and the 2013 Consent Decree to remove wild horses from private lands.

All reasonable precautions will be taken to avoid injury to the wild horses, including adherence to the Standard Operating Procedures (Appendix I) for Wild Horse Gatherers to ensure the safety of personnel involved in the gather.

#### **RATIONALE:**

This removal is necessary to comply with a request from private land owners, Section 4 of the WHA and its regulations, and the 2013 Consent Decree, Rock Springs Grazing Assoc. vs Salazar, which requires that all wild horses be removed from checkerboard lands within the Great Divide Basin, Salt Wells Creek, and Adobe Town herd management areas (HMAs) in accordance with the schedule set out in the decree.

In consideration of the public comment, including that of RSGA, the BLM has decided to not proceed with the action described in the December 2013 public scoping notice (see Public Involvement, below). The BLM will therefore not gather the Great Divide Basin HMA to low appropriate management level under Section 3 of the WHA, 16 U.S.C. §1333 but will gather all wild horses from the checkerboard within the HMAs as required by Section 4 of the WHA and the Consent Decree. Due to RSGA's notification of non-compliance, the BLM will also remove all wild horses from the checkerboard in the Salt Wells and Adobe Town HMAs, as required by the Consent Decree.

#### **AUTHORITIES**

The 2014 Great Divide Basin, Salt Wells Creek and Adobe Town HMAs Wild Horse Removal is approved for implementation after August 18, 2014. This removal is in compliance with the WHA, as amended by the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA); and the Public Rangelands Improvement Act of 1978. This removal is being conducted under authority of Section 4 of the WHA, 16 U.S.C. §1334, and its implementing regulations found at 43 CFR 4700, and as required by the 2013 Consent Decree, which state in part:

*16 U.S.C. §1334: If wild free-roaming horses or burros stray from public lands onto privately owned land, the owners of such land may inform the nearest Federal marshal or agent of the Secretary, who shall arrange to have the animals removed.*

*43 CFR 4720.2-1: Upon written request from the private landowner to any representative of the Bureau of Land Management, the authorized officer shall remove stray wild horses and burros from private lands as soon as practicable. The private landowner may also submit the written request to a Federal marshal, who shall notify the authorized officer. The request shall indicate the numbers of wild horses or burros, the date(s) the animals were on the land, legal description of the private land, and any special conditions that should be considered in the gathering plan.*

43 CFR 4770.3(c): *Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph (a) of § 4.21 of this title, the authorized officer may provide that decisions to remove wild horses or burros from public or private lands in situations where removal is required by applicable law or is necessary to preserve or maintain a thriving ecological balance and multiple use relationship shall be effective upon issuance or on a date established in the decision.*

2013 Consent Decree, ¶ 1: *Pursuant to 16 U.S.C. §1334, BLM agrees to remove all wild horses located on RSGA's private lands, including Wyoming Checkerboard lands, with the exception of those wild horses found within the White Mountain Herd Management Area (HMA), in accordance with the schedule set forth in paragraph 5.*

2013 Consent Decree, ¶ 4: *If BLM determines, based on the results of any census and projected reproduction rates, that the population in the Checkerboard lands is likely to exceed 200 wild horses for the Salt Wells/Adobe Town Areas combined or 100 wild horses for Divide Basin, the BLM shall prepare to remove the wild horses from Checkerboard lands within the respective area.*

2013 Consent Decree, ¶ 5: *BLM will commit to gather and remove wild horses from checkerboard lands within Salt Wells and Adobe Town HMAs in 2013, Divide Basin HMA in 2014, and White Mountain HMA in 2015.*

## **COMPLIANCE AND MONITORING**

The BLM will monitor gather operations for adherence to the Standard Operating Procedures (Appendix I) for Wild Horse Gatherers.

## **LAND USE PLAN CONFORMANCE**

The FLPMA and its land use planning requirements apply only to the BLM's management of the public lands, not private lands. 43 U.S.C. §1712. As to public lands, the policies of FLPMA are to be construed as supplemental to and not in derogation of the purposes for which the lands are administered under other provisions of law. 43 U.S.C. §1701. The management direction set forth in the Green River and Rawlins RMPs, including that related to appropriate management levels (AMLs), do not apply to private lands.

This decision authorizes the gather and removal of wild horses from the checkerboard, as required by Section 4 of the WHA, 16 U.S.C. §1334, its implementing regulations at 43 CFR 4720.2, and the 2013 Consent Decree. Through this gather, the BLM is not removing excess wild horses from the public lands under Section 3 of the WHA, 16 U.S.C. §1333. In its 2013 scoping notice, the BLM contemplated a gather and removal under both Section 3 and Section 4 of the WHA. In response to the scoping comments it received, the BLM now clarifies that it will remove wild horses from the checkerboard as required by Section 4 of the WHA and the Consent Decree.

The BLM acknowledges that in discharging its duties under Section 4 of the WHA wild horses will be also removed the public land portions of the checkerboard. However, due to the unique pattern of land ownership, and as recognized in the Consent Decree, it is practicably infeasible

for the BLM to meet its obligations under Section 4 of the WHA while removing wild horses solely from the private lands sections of the checkerboard.

The BLM intends to address its future management of wild horses on areas of the public lands within these HMAs through a separate land use planning process. The BLM published a Notice of Intent in the *Federal Register* on August 16, 2013 to extend the public scoping period for the Rock Springs RMP revision and to amend the 2008 Rawlins RMP to address wild horse management in the Rock Springs and Rawlins field offices. The plan revision and plan amendment will consider adjusting AML for the HMAs, among other alternatives. Public meetings were held on September 11 and 12, 2013. The comment period closed on September 27, 2013 with more than 20,000 comments received.

## **PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**

This decision and Categorical Exclusion Review WY-040-CX14-134 will be available online for at least 31 days prior to the gather at:

[www.blm.gov/wy/st/en/info/NEPA/documents/rsfo/checkerboard.html](http://www.blm.gov/wy/st/en/info/NEPA/documents/rsfo/checkerboard.html)

On December 10, 2013, the BLM released a public scoping notice for a 2014 gather within the Great Divide Basin HMA and the comment period ended on January 10, 2014. In excess of 13,000 comment letters were received from individuals, organizations, and agencies. Many comments, including comments from the RSGA, identified concerns with BLM's proposed action to remove wild horses to the low appropriate management level for the HMA, as this was believed to be inconsistent with the 2013 Consent Decree provision for removing all wild horses from checkerboard lands. Additionally, many comments expressed concern for the general management of wild horses.

On February 4, 2014, RSGA notified the BLM of what it asserted where individual instances of non-compliance with the 2013 Consent Decree that require correction. One of the non-compliance issues was as follows: "Failure to remove all wild horses from the Wyoming Checkerboard in Salt Wells and Adobe Town Complex".

## **EFFECTIVE DATE**

The BLM is exercising the authority provided at 43 CFR 4770.3(c) to make this decision effective upon August 18, 2014. The BLM currently plans to commence with the removal after August 18, 2014, to fulfill its obligations as stated above.

Washington Office Instruction Memorandum (IM) No. 2010-130 provides, subject to certain exceptions, that wild horse decisions should be issued 31 days prior to the gather implementation. The purpose of the 31-day period is to "ensure the public has an opportunity to participate in and request administrative review of WH&B gather decisions" (IM No. 2010-130).

This decision is issued in accordance with 43 CFR 4770.3(c) which states in part: "decisions . . . shall be effective upon issuance or on a date established in the decision." Once the decision is final, it will be subject to appeal. If you wish to appeal this decision, as provided by 43 CFR 4770.3 and 43 CFR 4.4, you must file an appeal in writing within 30 days of receipt of this decision with the Field Manager, Rock Springs Field Office, 280 Highway 191 North, Rock Springs, Wyoming 82901.

The appeal must state clearly and concisely why you think the decision is in error.

Should you wish to file a petition for stay, the appellant shall show sufficient justification based on the following standards:

- 1) The relative harm to the parties if the stay is granted or denied.
- 2) The likelihood of the appellant's success on the merits.
- 3) The likelihood of immediate and irreparable harm if the stay is not granted, and
- 4) Whether the public interest favors granting the stay.

If you decide to also submit a petition for stay of the decision, a copy of the notice of appeal and petition for stay must be served simultaneously upon the parties identified below.

Field Manager  
Rock Springs Field Office  
280 Highway 191 North  
Rock Springs, Wyoming 82901

Office of the Regional Solicitor  
Rocky Mountain Region  
755 Parfet Street, Suite 151  
Lakewood, Colorado 80215

Office of Hearings and Appeals  
Interior Board of Land Appeals  
801 North Quincy Street, Suite 300  
Arlington, Virginia 22203

The Office of Hearings and Appeals regulations do not provide for electronic filing of appeals; therefore, they will not be accepted.

  
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Kimberlee D. Foster  
Rock Springs Field Manager

Date: JUL 18 2014

  
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Dennis J. Carpenter  
Rawlins Field Manager

Date: JUL 18 2014

# Appendix I

## Standard Operating Procedures for Wild Horse Gathers

Gathers are conducted by utilizing contractors from the Wild Horse Gathers-Western States Contract or BLM personnel. The following standard operating procedures (SOPs) for gathering and handling wild horses apply whether a contractor or BLM personnel conduct a gather. For helicopter gathers conducted by BLM personnel, gather operations would be conducted in conformance with the *Wild Horse Aviation Management Handbook* (January 2009).

Prior to any gathering operation, the BLM would provide for a pre-gather evaluation of existing conditions in the gather area(s). The evaluation would include animal conditions, prevailing temperatures, drought conditions, soil conditions, road conditions, and a topographic map with WSA boundaries, the location of fences, other physical barriers, and acceptable gather locations in relation to animal distribution. The evaluation would determine whether the proposed activities would necessitate the presence of a veterinarian during operations. If it is determined that a large number of animals may need to be euthanized or gather operations could be facilitated by a veterinarian, these services would be arranged before the gather would proceed. The contractor would be apprised of all conditions and would be given instructions regarding the gather and handling of animals to ensure their health and welfare is protected.

Gather sites and temporary holding sites would be located to reduce the likelihood of injury and stress to the animals, and to minimize potential damage to the natural resources of the area. These sites would be located on or near existing roads whenever possible.

The primary gather methods used in the performance of gather operations include:

1. Helicopter Drive Gathering. This gather method involves utilizing a helicopter to herd wild horses into a temporary gather site.
2. Helicopter Assisted Roping. This gather method involves utilizing a helicopter to herd wild horses to ropers.
3. Bait Trapping. This gather method involves utilizing bait (e.g., water or feed) to lure wild horses into a temporary gather site.

The following procedures and stipulations would be followed to ensure the welfare, safety and humane treatment of wild horses in accordance with the provisions of 43 CFR 4700.

### **A. Gather Methods used in the Performance of Gather Contract Operations**

The primary concern of the contractor is the safe and humane handling of all animals gathered. All gather attempts shall incorporate the following:

1. All gather sites and holding facilities locations must be approved by the Contracting Officer's Representative (COR) and/or the Project Inspector (PI) prior to construction. The Contractor may also be required to change or move gather locations as determined by the COR/PI. All gather sites and holding facilities not located on public land must have prior written approval of the landowner.
2. The rate of movement and distance the animals travel shall not exceed limitations set by the COR who would consider terrain, physical barriers, access limitations, weather, extreme temperature (high and low), condition of the animals, urgency of the operation (animals facing drought, starvation, fire rehabilitation, etc.) and other factors. In consultation with the contractor the distance the animals travel would account for the different factors listed above and concerns with each HMA.
3. All gather sites, wings, and holding facilities shall be constructed, maintained and operated to handle the animals in a safe and humane manner and be in accordance with the following:
  - a. Gather sites and holding facilities shall be constructed of portable panels, the top of which shall not be less than 72 inches high for horses and 60 inches high for burros, and the bottom rail of which shall not be more than 12 inches from ground level. All gather sites and holding facilities shall be oval or round in design.
  - b. All loading chute sides shall be a minimum of 6 feet high and shall be fully covered with plywood or metal without holes.
  - c. All runways shall be a minimum of 30 feet long and a minimum of 6 feet high for horses, and 5 feet high for burros, and shall be covered with plywood, burlap, plastic snow fence or like material a minimum of 1 foot to 5 feet above ground level for burros and 1 foot to 6 feet for horses. The location of the government furnished portable fly chute to restrain, age, or provide additional care for the animals shall be placed in the runway in a manner as instructed by or in concurrence with the COR/PI.
  - d. All crowding pens including the gates leading to the runways shall be covered with a material which prevents the animals from seeing out (plywood, burlap, plastic snow fence, etc.) and shall be covered a minimum of 1 foot to 5 feet above ground level for burros and 2 feet to 6 feet for horses.
  - e. All pens and runways used for the movement and handling of animals shall be connected with hinged self-locking gates.
4. No modification of existing fences would be made without authorization from the COR/PI. The Contractor shall be responsible for restoration of any fence modification which he has made.
5. When dust conditions occur within or adjacent to the gather site or holding facility, the Contractor shall be required to wet down the ground with water.
6. Alternate pens, within the holding facility shall be furnished by the Contractor to separate mares or jennies with small foals, sick and injured animals, estrays, or other animals the COR determines need to be housed in a separate pen from the other animals. Animals shall be sorted as to age, number, size, temperament, sex, and condition when in the holding facility so as to

minimize, to the extent possible, injury due to fighting and trampling. Under normal conditions, the government would require that animals be restrained for the purpose of determining an animal's age, sex, or other necessary procedures. In these instances, a portable restraining chute may be necessary and would be provided by the government. Alternate pens shall be furnished by the Contractor to hold animals if the specific gathering requires that animals be released back into the gather area(s). In areas requiring one or more satellite gather site, and where a centralized holding facility is utilized, the contractor may be required to provide additional holding pens to segregate animals transported from remote locations so they may be returned to their traditional ranges. Either segregation or temporary marking and later segregation would be at the discretion of the COR.

7. The Contractor shall provide animals held in the gather sites and/or holding facilities with a continuous supply of fresh clean water at a minimum rate of 10 gallons per animal per day. Animals held for 10 hours or more in the gather site or holding facilities shall be provided good quality hay at the rate of not less than two pounds of hay per 100 pounds of estimated body weight per day. The contractor would supply certified weed free hay if required by State, County, and Federal regulation.
8. An animal that is held at a temporary holding facility through the night is defined as a horse/burro feed day. An animal that is held for only a portion of a day and is shipped or released does not constitute a feed day.
9. It is the responsibility of the Contractor to provide security to prevent loss, injury or death of gathered animals until delivery to final destination.
10. The Contractor shall restrain sick or injured animals if treatment is necessary. The COR/PI would determine if animals must be euthanized and provide for the destruction of such animals. The Contractor may be required to humanely euthanize animals in the field and to dispose of the carcasses as directed by the COR/PI.
11. Animals shall be transported to their final destination from temporary holding facilities as quickly as possible after gather unless prior approval is granted by the COR for unusual circumstances. Animals to be released back into the HMA following gather operations may be held up to 21 days or as directed by the COR. Animals shall not be held in gather sites and/or temporary holding facilities on days when there is no work being conducted except as specified by the COR. The Contractor shall schedule shipments of animals to arrive at final destination between 7:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. No shipments shall be scheduled to arrive at final destination on Sunday and Federal holidays; unless prior approval has been obtained by the COR. Animals shall not be allowed to remain standing on trucks while not in transport for a combined period of greater than three (3) hours in any 24 hour period. Animals that are to be released back into the gather area may need to be transported back to the original gather site. This determination would be at the discretion of the COR or Field Office Wild Horse & Burro Specialist.

**B. Gather Methods That May Be Used in the Performance of a Gather**

1. Gather attempts may be accomplished by utilizing bait (feed, water, mineral licks) to lure animals into a temporary gather site. If this gather method is selected, the following applies:
  - a. Finger gates shall not be constructed of materials such as "T" posts, sharpened willows, etc., that may be injurious to animals.
  - b. All trigger and/or trip gate devices must be approved by the COR/PI prior to gather of animals.



- c. Gather sites shall be checked a minimum of once every 10 hours.
2. Gather attempts may be accomplished by utilizing a helicopter to drive animals into a temporary gather site. If the contractor selects this method the following applies:
  - a. A minimum of two saddle-horses shall be immediately available at the gather site to accomplish roping if necessary. Roping shall be done as determined by the COR/PI. Under no circumstances shall animals be tied down for more than one-half hour.
  - b. The contractor shall assure that foals shall not be left behind, and orphaned.
3. Gather attempts may be accomplished by utilizing a helicopter to drive animals to ropers. If the contractor, with the approval of the COR/PI, selects this method the following applies:
  - a. Under no circumstances shall animals be tied down for more than one hour.
  - b. The contractor shall assure that foals shall not be left behind, or orphaned.
  - c. The rate of movement and distance the animals travel shall not exceed limitations set by the COR/PI who would consider terrain, physical barriers, weather, condition of the animals and other factors.

### **C. Use of Motorized Equipment**

1. All motorized equipment employed in the transportation of gathered animals shall be in compliance with appropriate State and Federal laws and regulations applicable to the humane transportation of animals. The Contractor shall provide the COR/PI, if requested, with a current safety inspection (less than one year old) for all motorized equipment and tractor-trailers used to transport animals to final destination.
2. All motorized equipment, tractor-trailers, and stock trailers shall be in good repair, of adequate rated capacity, and operated so as to ensure that gathered animals are transported without undue risk or injury.
3. Only tractor-trailers or stock trailers with a covered top shall be allowed for transporting animals from gather site(s) to temporary holding facilities, and from temporary holding facilities to final destination(s). Sides or stock racks of all trailers used for transporting animals shall be a minimum height of 6 feet 6 inches from the floor. Single deck tractor-trailers 40 feet or longer shall have at least two (2) partition gates providing at least three (3) compartments within the trailer to separate animals. Tractor-trailers less than 40 feet shall have at least one partition gate providing at least two (2) compartments within the trailer to separate the animals. Compartments in all tractor-trailers shall be of equal size plus or minus 10 percent. Each partition shall be a minimum of 6 feet high and shall have a minimum 5-foot-wide swinging gate. The use of double deck tractor-trailers is unacceptable and shall not be allowed.
4. All tractor-trailers used to transport animals to final destination(s) shall be equipped with at least one (1) door at the rear end of the trailer which is capable of sliding either horizontally or vertically. The rear door(s) of tractor-trailers and stock trailers must be capable of opening the full width of the trailer. Panels facing the inside of all trailers must be free of sharp edges or holes that could cause injury to the animals. The material facing the inside of all trailers must be strong enough so that the animals cannot push their hooves through the side. Final approval of tractor-trailers and stock trailers used to transport animals shall be held by the COR/PI.

5. Floors of tractor-trailers, stock trailers and loading chutes shall be covered and maintained with wood shavings to prevent the animals from slipping as much as possible during transport.
6. Animals to be loaded and transported in any trailer shall be as directed by the COR/PI and may include limitations on numbers according to age, size, sex, temperament and animal condition. The following minimum square feet per animal shall be allowed in all trailers:
  - 11 square feet per adult horse (1.4 linear foot in an 8 foot wide trailer);
  - 8 square feet per adult burro (1.0 linear foot in an 8 foot wide trailer);
  - 6 square feet per horse foal (0.75 linear feet in an 8-foot-wide trailer);
  - 4 square feet per burro foal (0.5 linear feet in an 8-foot-wide trailer).
7. The COR/PI shall consider the condition and size of the animals, weather conditions, distance to be transported, or other factors when planning for the movement of gathered animals. The COR/PI shall provide for any brand and/or inspection services required for the gathered animals.
8. If the COR/PI determines that dust conditions are such that the animals could be endangered during transportation, the Contractor would be instructed to adjust speed.

#### **D. Safety and Communications**

1. The Contractor shall have the means to communicate with the COR/PI and all contractor personnel engaged in the gather of wild horses utilizing a VHF/FM Transceiver or VHF/FM portable Two-Way radio. If communications are ineffective the government would take steps necessary to protect the welfare of the animals.
2. The proper operation, service and maintenance of all contractor furnished property is the responsibility of the Contractor. The BLM reserves the right to remove from service any contractor personnel or contractor furnished equipment which, in the opinion of the contracting officer or COR/PI violate contract rules, are unsafe or otherwise unsatisfactory. In this event, the Contractor would be notified in writing to furnish replacement personnel or equipment within 48 hours of notification. All such replacements must be approved in advance of operation by the Contracting Officer or his/her representative.
3. The Contractor shall obtain the necessary FCC licenses for the radio system.
4. All accidents occurring during the performance of any task order shall be immediately reported to the COR/PI.
5. Should the contractor choose to utilize a helicopter the following would apply:
  - a. The Contractor must operate in compliance with Federal Aviation Regulations, Part 91. Pilots provided by the Contractor shall comply with the Contractor's Federal Aviation Certificates, applicable regulations of the State in which the gather is located.
  - b. Fueling operations shall not take place within 1,000 feet of animals.

#### **E. Site Clearances**

1. No Personnel working at gather sites may excavate, remove, damage, or otherwise alter or deface or attempt to excavate, remove, damage or otherwise alter or deface any archaeological resource located on public lands or Indian lands.
2. Prior to setting up a gather site or temporary holding facility, the BLM would conduct all necessary clearances (archaeological, T&E, etc.). All proposed site(s) must be inspected by a government archaeologist. Once archaeological clearance has been obtained, the gather site or temporary holding facility may be set up. Said clearance shall be arranged for by the COR, PI, or other BLM employees.
3. Gather sites and temporary holding facilities would not be constructed on wetlands or riparian zones.

#### **F. Animal Characteristics and Behavior**

Releases of wild horses would be near available water when possible. If the area is new to them, a short-term adjustment period may be required while the wild horses become familiar with the new area.

#### **G. Public Participation**

Opportunities for public viewing (i.e. media, interested public) of gather operations would be made available to the extent possible; however, the primary considerations would be to protect the health, safety and welfare of the animals being gathered and the personnel involved. The public must adhere to guidance from the on-site BLM representative. It is BLM policy that the public would not be allowed to come into direct contact with wild horses being held in BLM facilities. Only authorized BLM personnel or contractors may enter the corrals or directly handle the animals. The general public may not enter the corrals or directly handle the animals at any time or for any reason during BLM operations.

#### **H. Responsibility and Lines of Communication**

- Rock Springs Field Office – Contracting Officer's Representative/Project Inspector: Jay D'Ewart
- Alternate – Contracting Officer's Representative/Project Inspector: Benjamin Smith
- Wyoming State Office – Contracting Officer's Representative/Project Inspector: N/A

The Contracting Officer's Representatives (CORs) and the project inspectors (PIs) have the direct responsibility to ensure the Contractor's compliance with the contract stipulations. The Rawlins and Rock Springs Assistant Field Managers for Renewable Resources and the Rawlins and Rock Springs Field Managers will take an active role to ensure the appropriate lines of communication are established between the field, Field Office, District Office, State Office, National Program Office, and BLM Holding Facility offices. All employees involved in the gathering operations would keep the best interests of the animals at the forefront at all times.

All publicity, formal public contact and inquiries would be handled through the Assistant Field Manager for Renewable Resources and District Public Affairs Officer. These individuals would be the primary contact and would coordinate with the COR/PI on any inquiries.

The COR would coordinate with the contractor and the BLM Corrals to ensure animals are being transported from the gather site in a safe and humane manner and are arriving in good condition.

The contract specifications require humane treatment and care of the animals during removal operations. These specifications are designed to minimize the risk of injury and death during and after gather of the animals. The specifications would be vigorously enforced.

Should the Contractor show negligence and/or not perform according to contract stipulations, he would be issued written instructions, stop work orders, or defaulted.