

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**

**Bureau of Land Management**

Mount Lewis Field Office

50 Bastian Rd

Battle Mountain, NV 89820

**DECISION RECORD**

**Callaghan Complex Herd Management Area Plan / Gather Plan**

Environmental Assessment

DOI-BLM-NV-B010-2025-0006-EA

February 13<sup>th</sup>, 2026

**I. DECISION**

It is my decision to implement the Proposed Action as modified (Alternative A). This decision is effective immediately pursuant to 43 CFR 4770.3(c). The Proposed Action is consistent with land use plans as outlined in Section II below and will allow for achievement of management objectives in the Callaghan Complex.

Under this decision, and as analyzed as the Proposed Action, the Mount Lewis Field Office (MLFO) will:

- Implement a Herd Management Area Plan with a management strategy which would include several population growth suppression methods.
- This decision will not implement intrauterine devices or minimally invasive mare sterilization as analyzed under Alternative A.
- Immediately gather and remove excess animals in order to reach low Appropriate Management Level (AML) as expeditiously as possible through an initial gather, and if necessary, a follow-up gather or gathers, in order to reduce the population to within AML range. Follow-up gathers to remove excess animals to achieve low AML shall be conducted as promptly as appropriate to allow sufficient time for the animals to settle after a helicopter gather and to provide for a safe, efficient, and effective follow-up gather operation.
- Apply fertility control methods (vaccines) to released mares.
- Maintain a sex ratio adjustment of 60% male and 40% female.
- This will allow BLM to achieve management goals and objectives of attaining a herd size that is at or within AML, to reduce wild horse population growth rates, and to obtain a thriving natural ecological balance on the range as required under the Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act of 1971 (WFRHBA).

## II. COMPLIANCE AND CONFORMANCE

The Herd Management Area Plan and associated gather plan is necessary to remove excess wild horses and bring the wild horse population back to within the established AML range. This will achieve a thriving natural ecological balance between wild horses, wildlife, livestock, vegetation and the available water as required under Section 3(b)(2) of the 1971 Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act and Section 302(b) of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976.

The BLM is required to manage multiple uses to avoid continued degradation of the rangelands, and removal of excess wild horses is necessary to protect rangeland resources from further deterioration or impacts associated with the current overpopulation of wild horses within the Callaghan Complex.

As approved in this decision, the Proposed Action is consistent with the wild horse management objectives identified in the Shoshone-Eureka Resource Area (SERA) Resource Management Plan (RMP) Objectives (Shoshone-Eureka RMP Record of Decision dated 1986 and Shoshone-Eureka RMP Amendment, Record of Decision dated 1987).

The BLM prepared the Callaghan Complex Herd Management Area Plan / Gather Plan Environmental Assessment **DOI-BLM-NV-B010-2025-0006-EA** to disclose and analyze the environmental effects of the Proposed Action and alternatives, which consist of establishing a Herd Management Area Plan (HMAP) (Appendix XIII) and gathering and removing excess wild horses from within the Callaghan Complex.

The Callaghan Complex lies entirely within Lander County, Nevada, and expands from approximately 7 miles south of Battle Mountain to approximately 6 miles north Austin. The Complex encompasses approximately 1,145,515 acres and consists of the Callaghan, South Shoshone, Bald Mountain and Hickison (north of US Route 50) Herd Management Areas (HMAs). The gather area includes areas that expand beyond HMA boundaries where wild horses reside. The EA analyzes associated impacts with management activities and removals to reach and maintain the Appropriate Management Level within the Complex. The EA is consistent with BLM's management responsibilities under the Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act of 1971.

The BLM has determined that excess wild horses are present on public lands within the boundaries of the Complex and that removal of these wild horses to within AML is necessary to achieve a thriving natural ecological balance. The AMLs were set under the SERA RMP Record of Decision. The AML for the Callaghan Complex is 323-552 and the estimated wild horse population as of Fall 2025, is 4,478 adult wild horses.

## III. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

During preliminary planning for the Callaghan Complex Herd Management Area Plan / Gather Plan a Habitat Management Evaluation Report was prepared for public comment mailed to the

interested public mailing list informing 77 individuals, organizations and State and Federal Agencies of the availability of the document for public review on March 14th, 2025. Comments were received from 4,312 individuals, groups, and agencies during the 30-day comment period, and 90 comments were received after the end of the comment period. Approximately 4,300 of the comments received were form letters.

The Preliminary EA was posted on eplanning.gov on August 4<sup>th</sup>, 2025. A letter was mailed to the interested public mailing list informing 77 individuals, organizations and State and Federal Agencies of the availability of the document for public review. Letters were also sent to 5 Native American Tribal Representatives throughout Central Nevada informing them of the proposed gather. A BLM News Release was also issued, announcing the opportunity to review and submit comments. In response to the Preliminary EA approximately 124 comment letters were received from various organizations, institutions, or individuals. Comments received were considered in completion of the Final Callaghan Complex EA and summarized in Appendix XII of the Final Callaghan Complex EA. The EA is available on the National NEPA Registrar web page at: <https://eplanning.blm.gov/Project-Home/?id=f38370ee-a7f2-f011-8407-001dd80bcf93>

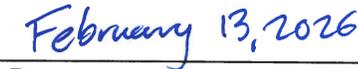
#### V. RIGHT OF PROTEST AND/OR APPEAL

If you wish to appeal this decision, it may be appealed to the Interior Board of Land Appeals, Office of the Secretary, in accordance with 43 CFR Part 4.

#### VI. APPROVAL



Samuel D. Ault  
Acting Field Manager  
Mount Lewis Field Office



Date