

Release Number: 2001-74
For Release: August 29, 2001

BLM Allocates Funds to Nevada Volunteer and Tribal Fire Departments

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) in Nevada has allotted \$850,000 for 88 of Nevada's volunteer and tribal fire departments to enhance their wildland firefighting capabilities.

The money is part of the \$10 million that the Department of the Interior has set aside for this purpose, under the National Fire Plan. Nationally, the BLM share is about \$5.9 million.

Congress allocated the additional funding to Department of the Interior agencies with wildland firefighting responsibilities -- Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, Bureau of Indian Affairs and Fish and Wildlife Service -- in the 2001 Appropriations Bill to enhance the fire protection capability of rural fire districts.

This additional funding will help to enhance the capabilities of volunteer and tribal fire departments in the areas of training, supplies and materials, equipment, as well as prevention and education programs, said BLM Nevada State Fire Management Officer Kevin Hull.

The Nevada Division of Forestry (NDF) administers the Volunteer Fire Assistance grant program, and we're working with them to ensure that our efforts are consistent with theirs, said Hull. These initiatives provide excellent opportunities to enhance the Rural and Volunteer Fire Assistance Program within the counties and tribal areas, as well as across the state, and we would like to take advantage of them again next year.

The NDF's Volunteer Fire Assistance grant program provides 50-50 matching funds annually to rural fire departments in communities of less than 10,000 population. This year, rural fire departments in seven Nevada counties have received \$28,000 in these federal matching funds.

To participate in the BLM program, Nevada volunteer and tribal fire departments had to meet several eligibility requirements that included:

- Having a statewide agreement with the state forester or with an agency of the Department of the Interior.
- Serving a community with a population of less than 10,000.
- Using the funding only for training, equipment and prevention activities.
- Sharing at least 10 percent of the total cost; however, in-kind services may be included as part of the cost sharing.
- Serving a community in the wildland-urban interface, which is where development occurs near federal land that is vulnerable to wildfire.

The grants provide up to \$20,000 in assistance per volunteer or tribal fire department.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service has a longstanding, similar program in

coordination with NDF to assist volunteer and tribal fire departments.

The assistance to volunteer and tribal fire departments is a pilot program that is part of a larger national fire plan to reduce wildfire risks in communities in the wildland urban interface.

- BLM -

For More Information Contact: Richard H Brown, (775) 861-6586

Release Number: 2001-73
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BLM NEVADA SELECTS WILDLAND FIRE LIAISON FOR NACO

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) in Nevada has selected Bob Knutson to be its wildland fire liaison with the Nevada Association of Counties (NACO) in Carson City.

Knutson is expected to assume his new duties at NACO in mid-September. As wildland fire liaison, Knutson will be responsible for providing leadership, management and coordination in wildland fire management primarily in the areas of preparedness, suppression, prevention, education, training and qualifications, fuels management and assessments. He will also coordinate community assistance between the BLM and the counties in Nevada.

Bob Knutson will greatly expand our coordinated approach to wildland fire issues, said Bob Hadfield, Executive Director of NACO. We have learned a lot over the past three-year devastating fire cycle in Nevada. We have an increased awareness of ways to be more effective by expanding the collaborative relationship between the counties and the BLM.

Knutson is currently the assistant center manager for the Western Great Basin Coordination Center in Reno. He started his wildland firefighting career as a seasonal firefighter for the Forest Service in 1976, and has served in a variety of fire positions with the Forest Service and the BLM.

The position of wildland fire liaison was one of several permanent BLM Nevada fire positions funded by the National Fire Plan. Knutson's duties will include:

Coordinating the funding of fuels reduction projects in the wildland-urban interface, as well as projects to enhance the wildland firefighting capabilities of volunteer and tribal fire departments.

Working with volunteer and tribal fire departments, BLM field offices and other cooperators on training and education programs for wildland firefighters.

Bob is an excellent choice who will enhance the liaison efforts between the BLM and NACO, said BLM Nevada Fire Management Officer Kevin Hull.

- BLM -

For More Information Contact: Richard H. Brown at 775-861-6586

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For Release: August 28, 2001

CUTTING EDGE: TELEVISED WILD HORSE ADOPTION

Call 1-800-633-6094 to qualify to bid on September 7

Are you a person who's interested in what's new and what's cutting edge? Set aside Friday, September 7 and participate in one of the newest ways to adopt a wild horse: a competitive bid, televised wild horse adoption.

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is offering qualified individuals the chance to adopt mares or geldings gathered from rangelands in Nevada. Or, you may choose a saddle-ready wild horse trained in Wyoming at the Riverton Honor Camp. To participate you must be pre-approved and have a bidder's number. Call BLM's toll free number for that information: 1-800-633-6094.

Nevada horses may be picked up at the National Wild Horse and Burro Center at Palomino Valley, just 20 miles north of Reno-Sparks, Nevada, or they will be transported to one of the following BLM-managed facilities: Elm Creek, Nebraska; Milwaukee, Wisconsin; Washington, Pennsylvania; Cross Plains, Tennessee; Piney Woods, Mississippi; or Pauls Valley, Oklahoma. Saddle horses must be picked up at Rock Springs, Wyoming.

A preview of the horses starts at 9 a.m., Pacific Daylight Time, Sept. 7. Bidding begins at 10 a.m. Tune in to C Band Satellite, Galaxy 3, Transponder 22. Bob Abbey, BLM's Nevada State Director, says photos of the animals are on the BLM, Nevada, Internet site (www.nv.blm.gov/whbpairs/whb.htm) (dead link) and are in Superior's August catalog.

Bidding on each animal starts at \$125. All animals have equine inoculations and have received a Coggins test to assure they do not have Equine Infectious Anemia. Health papers provided by BLM allows transportation into any state. Successful adopters will receive the health card for their animal.

"Although Superior Livestock Auction of Fort Worth, Texas, and BLM have sites where bidders may view the adoption, you need not have a satellite to participate," said Abbey. A list of states with either BLM or Superior viewing locations is provided on the BLM website or can be obtained by calling the toll free number, 1 800 633-6094.

- BLM -

For More Information Contact: Maxine Shane, 775-861-6586; Debra Kolkman, 775-289-1946; Shayne Banks, 601-977-5405

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For Release: August 27, 2001

New Ownership Documentation Allows BLM to Release Impounded Livestock

Based on new information from the Nevada State brand inspector, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) turned over to Julian Smith the livestock impounded in late July from the Magruder Mountain grazing allotment, located on public land in Esmeralda County.

The decision we reached last Friday pertaining to Mr. Julian Smith proves the process works, said Nevada State Director Bob Abbey. The brand inspector was on site at the time the livestock were impounded, and informed us that some of the cattle impounded belonged to Mr. Smith based on a transfer of the brand from Jack Vogt.

In a meeting Friday (Aug. 24), the brand inspectors supplied BLM officials with documentation from Smith citing the terms and conditions of his sales agreement with Vogt, whose cattle had been in trespass since 1995. Based on this new information the brand inspector informed the BLM that Smith did not possess ownership until after the impoundment.

The BLM concurred and agreed to release the livestock to Smith if he reimbursed the BLM for costs incurred for transportation and boarding of his livestock. The costs to Smith were reduced to offset the losses of the livestock that took place while they were in BLM custody. Smith will be picking up the livestock later this week from the BLM's Palomino Valley Wild Horse and Burro Facility.

We appreciate the close working relationship we have with the Nevada Department of Agriculture, and the assistance we have gotten from the brand inspector that has allowed us to adjudicate the ownership of livestock, said Abbey. This is their job and we have deferred to them consistently throughout the process to certify ownership.

The livestock were moved to the Palomino Valley Facility from Snow's Fallon Livestock Auction week before last (Aug. 16), to lessen the potential for disruption of business. The livestock impounded and determined to be the property of Ben Colvin remain in Fallon pending resolution of a temporary restraining order. The order was issued by the Churchill County District Court and was moved to federal district court, where the United States has filed a motion to vacate the order and requested an expedited hearing.

In the meantime, Mr. Vogt now is responsible for all trespass fees and impoundment costs associated with the livestock that we removed from his previous allotment, said Abbey. We intend to aggressively pursue all fees owed the American public by Mr. Vogt and Mr. Colvin. We are also reviewing the cases of the few remaining grazing trespassers as we continue to seek compliance with federal law and grazing regulations. Contacts have been made with these individuals and if we are not successful in gaining compliance soon, we will impound these livestock as well.

- BLM -

For More Information Contact: Jo Simpson, (775) 861-6586

For Release: August 24, 2001

MINING CLAIM MAINTENANCE FEES DUE SEPT. 1

The deadline for annual filing with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) of mining claim fees is September 1, 2001, State Director Bob Abbey said today. All mining claims, mill site and tunnel site claims that claimants wish to hold on public lands in the 2001 assessment year must pay a \$100 maintenance fee on or before September 1. The fee is waived for those with no more than 10 claims nationwide, thus qualifying for a small miner waiver which is also due on or before September 1.

Unless the appropriate forms are filed by the deadline, miners risk the loss of their claims, Abbey said. BLM employees are available to answer questions individuals may have concerning these filings and maintaining of active claims.

Because September 1 falls on a Saturday before a Monday holiday, special rules affect the deadline. Claim forms filed by mail must bear a postmark no later than September 1. Since BLM offices are not open to the public on Saturdays, claim forms may be delivered in person no later than Tuesday, Sept. 4. Claim forms postmarked with a date of September 2, or delivered after Tuesday, will not be accepted as legal filings.

Each payment must be accompanied by a written list of the claim name and BLM serial numbers for which the maintenance fee is being paid. All certificates and fees must be filed or paid at the BLM State Office at 1340 Financial Boulevard, near Mill and South McCarran. The mailing address is P.O. Box 12000, Reno, NV 89520-0006. Filings made by mail need to be postmarked on or before September 1, 2001.

The office is open for payment or filing from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. Cash, check or credit card (Visa or Master Card) can be presented to make payment. Claims for which no maintenance fee has been paid or no qualified waiver has been filed or postmarked on or before September 1 will be declared forfeited and void.

For more information on the filing deadline, the claim fee or the small miner waiver, call the BLM State Office Information Access Center at (775) 861-6500.

- BLM -

For More Information Contact: Bob Stewart at 775-861-6586

Release Number: 2001-66
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PREPARE FOR WILD HORSE OWNERSHIP: FREE CLINICS
August 18, Sept. 1 & 15 at IFA

Have you always wanted to adopt a wild horse or burro, but wondered how to care for it in today's

urban environment? Learn the answers to your questions and you might also take home the ingredients for building a round pen in which to train your animal.

A wild horse and burro pre-adoption kickoff will start this Sat., Aug. 18, at the Intermountain Farmers Association (IFA), 3176 West Martin, Las Vegas. Horse experts will be on hand to answer questions on everything from nutrition, conformation, grooming and shoeing to finances. There will also be demonstrations with adopted, gentled wild horses.

The Aug. 18 clinic and two other clinics on Sept. 1 and 15, will cover all aspects of horse ownership. Leading the clinics will be Al Cirelli, University of Nevada Extension Horse Specialist, and Brenda Cloud, Vocational Education Instructor-Cooperative Extension. Wild horse and burro supporters from the National Wild Horse Association and a wild horse specialist from the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) will be on hand to answer questions and offer support to potential adopters.

Clinics begin at 9 a.m. each day, and will last until about noon. Each clinic will cover different topics. There will be a drawing for free horse-related merchandise during each Saturday session.

Attend all three sessions and adopt a wild horse or burro on October 7 and your name will be entered in a drawing for panels which can be used to build a round training pen. Priefert Manufacturing, IFA and BLM are providing the eight 12-foot panels which can be used to construct a round pen. The six-rail panels are six feet tall.

On Sat., Oct. 6, the public is invited to see what a trained wild horse or burro can do. The National Wild Horse Association will sponsor a horse and burro show at Horseman=s Park, 5800 E. Flamingo Road, Las Vegas. Competition begins at 8 a.m.

Thirty classes will give horse and burro owners a chance to show how well trained, or how cleverly dressed, their animal is. Examples of classes include halter, English and Western, trail and in-hand. There is also a costume class in which the horse or burro and its handler are dressed to fit a theme. Registration is \$7 per class, plus a grounds fee. Stables are available, with advanced notice, from Friday through Sunday, Oct. 5 - 7.

Show premiums and entry forms may be obtained from the Association by calling (702) 452-5853. Detailed information is available at nwha@kozmail.com.

Wild horses and burros will be offered for adoption on Sun., Oct. 7, at the same site as the horse show, Horseman=s Park, 5800 E. Flamingo Road, Las Vegas. Viewing begins at 9 a.m., with competitive bidding slated to begin at 10 a.m. The base price is \$125 per animal.

Potential wild horse adopters are encouraged to enroll in the clinics and attend the show, plus call the BLM at (702) 647-5000 for applications and approval. BLM will advise adopters about trailers appropriate to the number and kind of animals being adopted. Adopters may provide their own trailers or make arrangements with the National Wild Horse Association for transportation.

Newly adopted wild horses or burros must be kept in an enclosed corral with a minimum of 400 square feet, or about 20' by 20'. A shelter is needed to shield the animal from the hot, dry desert.

Adopters must be at least 18 years old, although a parent can adopt and allow younger family members to care for the animals. Many young people care for and train wild horses or burros as projects for 4-H, fairs and Scouts.

After one year of humane care, the adopter may apply for title to the wild horse or burro.

Animals for the adoption were gathered from Nevada ranges. Each animal has a current health record and is certified to travel to other states. It is anticipated about 30 animals will be offered for adoption.

- BLM -

For More Information Contact: Debra Kolkman (775) 289-1946 or Maxine Shane (775) 861-6586 or Phil Guerrero (702) 647-5046

Release Number: 2001-64
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BLM NEVADA PREPARED FOR PEAK OF FIRE SEASON

Thunderstorms and dry lightning have been forecast for Northern Nevada this week, and the days have been hot and dry. Severe drought conditions continue in some areas of the state. Hot, dry weather is not unusual for this time of year. It is the peak period of Northern Nevada's wildfire season, continuing from mid-July to the end of August.

Four lightning-caused large fires are currently burning in Northeastern Nevada. The Stag Fire, which has burned 19,462 acres in eastern Elko County, is 40 percent contained.

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Nevada has worked hard to prepare for this peak period. The objective is to put enough firefighting resources on the ground so they can attack the fires shortly after ignition and knock the flames down before the fire spreads.

Nevada firefighting agencies have four Hotshot crews in place, including the newly formed BLM Ruby Mountain Hotshot Crew in Elko. The highly trained and organized 20-person Hotshot crews are used both locally and nationally to combat wildland fires, in cooperation with federal, state and local firefighting agencies.

Other Nevada Hotshot crews include BLM's Silver State Hotshot crew in Carson City, the Forest Service's Black Mountain Hotshot crew in Minden, and the Park Service's Triple Seven Hotshot crew at the Lake Mead National Recreation Area.

The BLM Nevada maintains 24 fire stations throughout the state, with one in California. Increased manpower means all of BLM Nevada's 49 wildland fire engines are now manned seven days a week, compared to five days a week during the 2000 fire season.

The BLM Nevada has also made increased use of contract services, such as air tankers and crews, engine crews, dozers, and catering, showers and other fire camp amenities.

The peak fire season in other areas of the nation has ended, allowing release of firefighting assets there to fires in Nevada.

The fire seasons in Arizona, New Mexico and Southern Nevada usually begin earlier in the year, and

end with the monsoon rainy season in mid-July. The fire season in Alaska slows down by mid-July. As these fire seasons slow down, Arizona, New Mexico and Alaska begin releasing wildland firefighting assets to the Great Basin, Montana, Colorado, Wyoming and Northern Idaho.

As of early August, Alaska has sent its Denali and Tazlina Hotshot Crews to Northern Nevada, along with a Type III Incident Management Team, one air tanker and one air attack (command and control) aircraft

Engines and crews from New Mexico and Arizona are now stationed throughout Northern Nevada. Alaska, Arizona and New Mexico have also sent miscellaneous support personnel to Nevada.

When the weather and fuel conditions become severe enough, we request additional funding to bring in additional resources in case they're needed to carry out initial attacks on newly started fires, said Mike Lipka, BLM Nevada's State Fire Control Officer. The additional resources strengthen the capabilities of our existing resources.

We work with our interagency partners when we order additional resources, as well as when we position firefighting resources throughout the state.

- BLM -

For More Information Contact: Richard H. Brown at 775-861-6586