

**NEVADA STATE OFFICE NO. 2005-11**  
**FOR RELEASE: Nov. 30, 2004**

Washoe County parcels approved for purchase by U.S. Forest Service

Reno, Nev.—The Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture have jointly approved spending more than \$4.7 million to purchase two environmentally important parcels of private land in southwest Washoe Valley near Carson City. If completed, the parcels would become part of the National Forest System. These parcels represent the first acquisitions in Nevada under the authority of the Federal Land Transaction Facilitation Act (FLTFA).

The 385-acre Big Musgrove property and the 320-acre McEwen Creek property, located within the Toiyabe National Forest, offer a diverse mix of habitat important to black bear, mule deer and the Sierra Nevada red fox as well as many other species of wildlife. These lands also offer dispersed recreation and improved access to National Forest System lands.

The final purchase price will be based on appraised fair market value. This approval does not obligate the private landowners to sell the properties nor obligate the Federal government to purchase them. It simply identifies those properties which are approved for acquisition. The Forest Service will screen the properties for compliance with Federal standards related to title and hazardous materials. For more information on these two parcels, call Jane Scott at the Forest Service, 775-352-1250.

The FLTFA was made public law in 2000 and authorizes the use of revenues from the sale of Bureau of Land Management (BLM) public lands identified for disposal under BLM land use plans to acquire private lands within, or adjacent to, federally designated areas and to pay administrative costs to carry out the BLM land disposal program.

Nevada is the first state to fully implement the Act. The BLM in Nevada has held ten competitive sales under the authority of this Act in Douglas, Humboldt, Nye, White Pine and Elko counties. Additional parcels of public land will be offered for sale this year. Persons interested in buying public lands through these sales may contact the BLM field office where the lands are located.

-BLM-

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For more information contact: JoLynn Worley at (775) 861-6515

**NEVADA STATE OFFICE NO. 2005-10**  
**FOR RELEASE: November 29, 2004**

Nevadan to Manage National Wild Horse and Burro Center  
at Palomino Valley

John Neill, a native of Smith Valley, Nev., has been chosen to manage the National Wild Horse and Burro Center at Palomino Valley. The facility, located about 20 miles north of Sparks, is the largest wild horse and burro preparation facility managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM).

Most wild horses and burros removed from Nevada's rangelands are transported to the Palomino Valley

Center for inoculations, veterinary care and freeze marking so they can be offered for adoption to qualified individuals. The Center prepares as many as 6,000 animals a year for potential adoption. Currently there are about 700 horses at the facility, but the number will rise to 2,000 by mid-December as BLM winter gathers in Nevada continue through February 2005.

As manager of the facility, Neill oversees a dozen employees and the contracts for veterinarian services, feeding and corral cleaning and manure removal. The Palomino Valley Center is a major purchaser of equine vaccines and grass and alfalfa hay. About 4,000 tons of grass and alfalfa hay are purchased through competitive bid each year, much of it coming from Fallon, Yerington and northern California growers.

While the mission of the Center is primarily preparation of excess wild horses and burros, those wishing to adopt a wild horse may do so by appointment. The facility is open Monday through Friday, except for Federal holidays, and can be reached at 775 475-2222. It is the largest of eight BLM wild horse preparation facilities in the Western United States.

Neill grew up on a farm in Smith Valley which grew alfalfa and raised cattle. He graduated from Smith Valley High School and attended the University of Nevada, Reno, and the Truckee Meadows Community College. He started working at the Center in 1992 as an animal care taker, often feeding hay. He became a wrangler, the lead wrangler and the assistant manager prior to being chosen as the manager.

John Neill is the son of Harvey Neill and Carolyn Galli, both of Smith Valley. John and his wife, Susie, live in Sparks, Nevada. They are involved with youth sports with their sons Nicholas and Jake.

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For more information contact: Maxine Shane (775) 861-6586 or Debra Kolkman (775) 289-1946

**NEVADA STATE OFFICE NO. 2005-09**  
**FOR RELEASE: Nov. 24, 2004**

#### Agee Smith Named Rancher of the Year

Reno, Nev.—Elko County rancher Agee Smith was named Rancher of the Year at the annual Nevada Cattlemen's Association banquet last Saturday. The award is presented jointly by the Cattlemen's Association, the Nevada Farm Bureau, the Nevada Department of Agriculture and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM).

The Smith family has operated the Cottonwood Ranch, northwest of Wells, for more than 50 years. Agee Smith has an extensive background in traditional ranching methods, but he is also on the front line of finding new and more profitable ways of doing business. Part of Smith's success is through the establishment of a holistic management plan for his ranch and the two public land allotments he leases from the BLM and the Forest Service.

Through holistic management, Smith includes the involvement of a working group of government agencies and interested publics to have a say in how to manage the operation to achieve specific goals that are agreed upon by the group. Improvements in rangeland health are the result of moving livestock

from pasture to pasture to relieve pressure on riparian areas and hauling water to areas with forage that were underutilized by livestock.

"Smith has what it takes to be a successful rancher using a public land allotment - he is willing to listen, learn, work with others and be flexible," said Bob Abbey, BLM Nevada State Director.

Another ranching family, the Uhaldes of Ely, received an Outstanding Rancher commendation. They too use progressive methods to graze livestock by employing livestock rotation to allow for a period of rest to the vegetative resources during the critical growing seasons. They haul water to areas with good forage production that are underutilized by livestock, which lessens livestock use on streams and springs.

Mike and John Uhalde also donate their time, money and machinery to the Eastern Nevada Landscape Coalition, a project to restore rangelands to better ecological conditions.

-BLM-

For more information contact: JoLynn Worley, 775-861-6515

**NEVADA STATE OFFICE NO. 2005-08  
FOR RELEASE: November 3, 2004**

Youngsters Invited to Name the Burro Mascot

They are cute, fuzzy and love to be petted. Their ancestors helped missionaries explore and settle the West. They are the descendents of burros once found in mining towns, but left behind when the gold and silver played out.

Now two young burros make their home at the National Wild Horse and Burro Center at Palomino Valley, about 20 miles north of Reno-Sparks, Nevada. They are being gentled to greet visitors to the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM's) largest adoption preparation center.

Youngsters from kindergarten age to the sixth grade are being invited to participate in a national Name the Burro contest. Deadline for submission of entries is December 17, 2004.

Two burros born in October 2003 need names. One is a jack and one is a jenny and both have mothers who once roamed in the Blue Wing Mountains Herd Management Area in Pershing County, Nevada.

Contest winners will be rewarded with an autographed set of The Phantom Stallion series by Terri Farley. This series is published by HarperCollins Children's Books and is fast becoming a favorite for young readers.

Farley, who lives in northern Nevada, will also be available to talk to the winners by conference call. She'll be joined during that call by John Neill, acting manager of the BLM's Palomino Valley Center, and Ed Wass, BLM employee who is gentling the young equines. Winners may ask questions about writing, about the wild horse and burro program, about gentling or similar topics.

Application forms and rules for the contest are posted at

<http://www.wildhorseandburro.blm.gov/index.php> . Names should reflect our Western heritage or the BLM's Adopt a Wild Burro Program. Each name should be no longer than 20 letters and only one entry per individual for each burro is allowed.

A parent or guardian must sign the entry, along with the young person. No BLM employee family members may participate. Offensive submissions will be disqualified.

Entries must be postmarked by midnight, Friday, December 17. Mail entries to: BLM, P.O. Box 3270, Sparks, Nevada 89432-3270.

Under the 1971 Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act, the BLM manages nearly 37,000 wild horses and burros which roam public lands in the West. The law mandates the protection, management and control of these wild horses and burros in a way that ensures a healthy, viable free-roaming herd population within the limits of available public land resources. The BLM gathers excess animals and places them in good homes. After one year, qualified adopters may acquire a title for the animals. Adoption information is available at <http://www.wildhorseandburro.blm.gov/index.php> or by calling 1 866-4Mustangs.

The BLM, an agency of the U.S. Department of the Interior, manages more land – 261 million surface acres – than any other Federal agency. Most of this public land is located in 12 Western States, including Alaska. The Bureau, with a budget of about \$1.9 billion, also administers 700 million acres of sub-surface estate throughout the nation. The BLM's multiple-use mission is to sustain the health and productivity of the public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations. The Bureau accomplishes this by managing such activities as outdoor recreation, livestock grazing, mineral development, and energy production, and by conserving natural, historical, cultural and other resources on the public lands.

-BLM-

For more information contact: Maxine Shane, Nevada (775) 861-6586 or Debbie Collins, Oklahoma (918) 621-4145

**NEVADA STATE OFFICE NO. 2005- 07**  
**FOR RELEASE: November 2, 2004**

#### Saddle Horse Adoption Saturday in Carson City

This Saturday is your last opportunity in 2004 to adopt a saddle-ready wild horse trained by the inmates of the Warm Springs Correctional Center in Carson City. Gates open at 9 a.m. on November 6, with competitive oral bidding for qualified adopters beginning at 10 a.m.

Participants are asked to enter the facility via the rear entrance on Edmonds Drive in southeastern Carson City. All attendees must abide by the prison dress code: no blue clothing, blue jeans, shorts, tank tops, cell phones or keys.

Inmates at the Warm Springs Correctional Center trained six Bureau of Land Management (BLM) wild horses and three "estrays" (State of Nevada) horses for this adoption. Photos of all the horses are posted at [www.nv.blm.gov](http://www.nv.blm.gov) and at [silverstateindustries.com](http://silverstateindustries.com).

Adoption agent for the estrays is the Virginia Range Wildlife Protection Association which can be reached at (775) 881-2288. For wild free-roaming horses, call the BLM at (775) 861-6469. The BLM's adoption application is available on line at [www.wildhorseandburro.gov](http://www.wildhorseandburro.gov) and may be used for either BLM or stray horses. Minimum bid for a BLM horse is \$125. Minimum bid for an stray is \$150.

The next trained saddle horse adoption will be Feb. 12, 2005.

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For more information contact: Maxine Shane (775) 861-6586 or Debra Kolkman (775) 289-1946