Data Submitted (UTC 11): 5/15/2020 5:13:29 PM
First name: Joseph
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Organization:
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Comments: Comments re:
Ochoco Wild Horse Herd Management Plan

As a wartime veteran of the United States Marine Corps, and as a taxpayer of our great country, I strongly object to any reduction in AML of the Ochoco Wild Horse herd in Big Summit Wild Horse Territory.

USFS proposed action to reduce the wild horse population of approximately 135 horses to an AML of 12-57 wild horses will cause and speed inbreeding, thus reducing the population, which is already showing signs of gene depression. Allowing this situation is violation of the law.

The EA opposes itself. The horses lacking a large gene pool, which has been noted in the plan, indicates that the assertion of "management as a metapopulation with contiguous herds" is not possible and has already demonstrated the isolation of this herd.

The study does not show an alternative in reducing grazing by livestock in the Wild Horse Territory (WHT), thus allowing for a larger gene pool in the wild horse herd. It is clearly stated in the study that raising the herd's AML and reducing grazing livestock, is the "better" and appropriate decision in safeguarding the herd's history and survival. The American public has shown that they want the wild horses in their public lands. However, this EA does not present that option.

USFS EA gives options that are not supported by any data or study conducted, presented to the parties concerned. Using surgical options on the wild horse herd, is not an option when preserving the herd, when the EA offers such a low AML number. The option given of introducing mares to replenish the lost genetics of the herd, once sterilization occurs does not make any logical sense!

If any operations occur in the WHT, USFS must allow for public observation, where all proper handling and herd body score must be clearly visible to everyone present.

Respectfully,
Joseph Arrington