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Guardians of the Range

Dedicated to the Multiple Use of Public Lands & the American Way of Life

Newsletter No. 82

February 2011



BLM Proposes Field Darting Fertility Control in McCullough Peaks Wild Horses

Beginning in February 2011, the BLM proposes to treat select mares over one year of age with the fertility drug porcine zona pellucida (PZP), to slow the population growth on the range, and work towards maintaining the appropriate management level (AML) of 70 -140 wild horses in the McCullough Peaks HMA. Maintaining the AML will help prevent deterioration of rangelands, and balance wild horses with other public rangeland resources and uses.

The goal of utilizing field darting to apply the PZP is to reduce the need for large and costly helicopter gathers and removal operations in the future.

An environmental assessment (EA) was prepared to analyze the potential environmental impacts of the fertility control program. The EA is available for review and comment on the BLM website at: <http://www.blm.gov/wy/st/en/info/NEPA/documents/cyfo/mcculloughpeakshma.html>.

Comments should be postmarked by Feb. 22, 2011 and mailed to Tricia Hatle, BLM-Cody Field Office, 1002 Blackburn Street, Cody, WY 82414, or emailed to: cody_wymail@blm.gov. ★

Guardians at Work: Highlights of Your Executive Director Representing Your Interests

Government Affairs Committee
 Cody Chamber of Commerce

Meeteetse City Council for
 Shoshone NF Secure Rural Schools

Cody Chamber Luncheon
 Shoshone NF Secure Rural Schools

BNF-Medicine Wheel/Paint Rock District
 Individual permittee meeting

Thermopolis
 Wild Lands Inventory

Cody
 Brucellosis
 Rural Living Series

Cody
 Open Landscapes – Wilderness Society

Worland
 Sage-grouse Local Working Group

Meeteetse
 Predators Research Project

"Courage is not the absence of fear, but rather the judgment that something else is more important than fear."

~ Attributed to: Ambrose Redmon.

Ambrose Redmon was a pseudonym taken by James Neill Hollingworth (1933-1996)



Sage-Grouse Dollars On-the-Ground Projects

(See special insert at the bottom of this page
for Johnson & Sheridan Counties)

~ by Kathleen Jachowski

Some of our readers already know that the Guardians of the Range have chaired the Big Horn Basin Sage-grouse Local Working Group (LWG) for the past six years. On November 1, 2010 we stepped down from this leadership position. The Guardians continue, however, to fill one of the two committee seats designated for agriculture.

The committee met this past month to review proposed projects submitted in response to our recent public solicitation. There were a number of good ones.

The LWG had focused our solicitation toward projects dealing with control of invasive weeds and vegetative management. There are many invasive vegetative species in the Big Horn Basin. Two species which are really devouring wildlife habitat, degrading rangeland health, reducing grazing opportunities and limiting water resources are cheat grass and juniper encroachment.

Successful vegetative management related to mining reclamation is also a huge player in the scheme of rangeland health and habitat.

The Big Horn Basin LWG considers vegetative management and control of noxious and invasive weeds two of the best ways to provide habitat for sage grouse conservation. Supporting **on the ground** projects which **'get after these problems'** will enhance grazing opportunities for domestic livestock and habitat for wildlife.

In the Big Horn Basin, Conservation Districts, Weed and Pest and the Natural Resource Conservation Service have been superb in their efforts to address Russian Olive and tamarisk.

Their continued efforts coupled with the LWG efforts will have long and broad term benefits across the landscape of the Big Horn Basin.

We will provide specific project identification in this newsletter as soon as we get confirmation that our recommendations have been accepted.

Stewardship of natural resources is about problem solving! ★

Partners in Conservation Mining & Ranching

~ by Kathleen Jachowski

American Colloid Company is sponsoring a multi-year UW Sage Grouse research project beginning in March 2011. For this upcoming study season, we're looking for a 2-3 bedroom house/apartment (including appliances) for our technicians from March - August in the Hyattville, Manderson, Greybull, Shell, or Basin area - the eastern side of the basin. Ideally, the place(s) would be pet friendly. Contact Aaron Pratt @ 361-960-0946 or 701-866-0978 or aaroncpratt@yahoo.com.

The Guardians are pleased to assist American Colloid in securing rental housing for the above project. Mining interests have served on the Big Horn Basin Sage-grouse Local Working Group for the last six years via the efforts of Matt Call of Wyo Ben.

American Colloid is working to get the Cheat grass and other reclamation problems turned around in the Big Horn Basin. They too recognize that habitat is critical to Sage Grouse conservation.

This notice is also posted on our website: www.guardiansoftherange.org

As a fellow multiple use industry on our public lands, the Guardians support American Colloid's demonstrated interest in problem solving. Let's help them 'get 'er done'!



Sheridan & Johnson Counties Sage-grouse Conservation

The Guardians of the Range have invited the Sage-grouse Local Working Group in these counties to let us know what projects they are working on, and we'd be glad to post those in the newsletter. That would help our full readership get an idea of what is happening, sage-grouse-wise, in those counties. We'll run that information next month, if available.



by Kathleen Jachowski

Direct from the Director: Thank you to Conservation District Supervisors & County Commissioners

The huge and significant public process of revising the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM)

Resource Management Plan (RMP) for the Cody and Worland resource areas has been ongoing for over two years now.

We have written about this revision process on more than one occasion in this newsletter. Additionally, the Guardians took a public position in March of 2010, as to what we consider a serious flaw in handling of the public process by the BLM relative to certain meetings. (See Guardian website for full letter: www.guardiansoftherange.org)

However, this DFD is not about what is wrong with the handling of the process, but about what some of your elected officials have been doing to protect and secure your socio-economic futures. This is about a thank you from the Guardians to those elected officials and their designated staff, who have been working incredibly hard to fulfill their service to you, the American public.

A combination of Conservation District Supervisors, County Commissioners and their designated staff have been serving in 'cooperator status' since this public process began. This special status is open to ELECTED officials under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). It costs tax money to participate as a 'cooperator' in this process. The law requires that level of commitment. This money goes to help obtain real, current and credible information into the document. Such information can and is used to help produce a solid, scientifically sound and legally compliant document which will guide management on these BLM lands for at least the next 20 years.

It also takes brains and courage under fire to fulfill the role of an effective cooperator. This is important 'stuff'.

This has not been an easy effort. There have been and still are some serious disagreements between the cooperators and agency perspectives.

Many of our readers are understandably not familiar with how these various public processes are wired together and how they DIRECTLY affect your lives.

That unfamiliarity alone is all the more reason for the Guardians to bring their efforts to your attention, and to thank them publically for trying to do a first class job of protecting your rights as Americans.

And indeed.....we do thank and respect them for their efforts!

Kathleen

Kathleen Jachowski, Executive Director
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USFS Personnel Transfer

Bighorn to Shoshone

Zack Blaine has transferred from the Medicine Wheel/ Paint Rock District-Bighorn NF to the North Zone of the Shoshone NF, effective mid-February 2011.

Wyoming Agriculture Statistics

Cash Receipts by Commodity: Wyoming, 2003-2009
Livestock and Products \$745.7 million

Cattle & calves on Wyoming farms and ranches on January 1, 2010 were 1,320,000 head.

SOURCE: National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS)

CRAIG THOMAS GUARDIANS OF THE RANGE ENDOWMENT

Supporting this endowment is a wonderful tax exempt way to show your support for the Guardians' effort, or to honor a family member or friend. We want to have a sustainable financial resource base to achieve our goals and objectives.

For more details, please contact a board member or Kathleen Jachowski (307)587-3723 or guardians@hughes.net.

Join Guardians of the Range

LIVESTOCK OPERATORS:

\$50 for up to 50 head of cattle
\$1.00 a head from 51 to 1,500 cattle
20 cents a head for sheep

BUSINESSES, INDIVIDUALS & ASSOCIATIONS

without federal grazing permits:

\$25 up to \$100 WRANGLER
\$250 RANGE RIDER
\$500 TOP HAND

\$1,000 GUARDIAN of the RANGE

Please make checks payable to:
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DUES AND DONATIONS ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE

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www.GuardiansoftheRange.org

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Follow Up Comments: Rangeland Health Assessment Program to Help Permittees

~ by Kathleen Jachowski

In December's newsletter, we carried a story about the new Rangeland Health Assessment Program.

The Guardians wanted to afford a vehicle to help explain, in some detail, what this effort is all about. We think that interview provided that. We wanted to wait, however, to highlight a couple of very important aspects to this laudable effort, with which the Guardians have had some involvement.

First, we want to highlight the fact that it is not intended to replace permittee involvement in the monitoring of their allotment. This is not a replacement program, or a substitute for permittee involvement.

Second, the Guardians have strongly emphasized in our conversations with the all of the entities involved in building this 'platform' that we want to see seasoned range professionals guiding this monitoring, both in the field and administratively. We would not be comfortable having just graduate students and/or very new to the profession range folks looking at these landscapes and coming to conclusions which we know will have a direct bearing on the future of permit renewals and management approaches.

No insult intended to the less experienced range professionals out there, but the reality is that it takes seasoned professionals to really assess what they are seeing on

these landscapes. Their years of experience are what the newer range professionals can benefit from, and the seasoned range professionals will bring a balance and insight that only comes with years of on the ground experience. Our permittees must have that dimension of experience guiding this field work and conclusions drawn. ★

Resource Projects: Guardians at your Service...

There are many range improvement projects that need doing...some on BLM and some on USFS lands in our service area.

Sometimes the environmental paperwork has slowed down for lack of money and manpower, bringing a halt to things that need done.

We encourage members, and potential members, to utilize our assistance if you are having trouble getting things underway or completed. For any variety of reasons, range improvement projects can get put onto the back burner, fall off the radar screen, get lost in space, go underfunded or not funded etc., etc.!

Who cares what the problem is, the Guardians will help you find a solution.

So, ease the stress of public land ranching by utilizing the available help we provide to our members and potential members.....call us to help you and the agencies find solutions as we wander down the trail!
Kathleen @ 307-587-3723. ★