



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
TWIN CITIES

Department of Ecology, Evolution and Behavior
109 Zoology
318 Church Street S.E.
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455
(612) 625-4466
Fax (612) 625-4490

*Carole C. J. ...
Alan Alper Death*

2/14/90

14 February 1990

Dr. Frederick Wagner
Dept. of Wildlife Resources
Utah State University
Logan, UT 84321

Dear Fred:

Enclosed is a table indicating our best estimate of the number of foals that were encountered, on each flight, in each of the three areas, in spring 1989. I guess it is up to you and the committee to interpret these data and decide how you wish to comment.

We have attempted to go through the Les Sweeney memo answering some of its allegations; however, it is virtually impossible to find any accusations based on hard data. Thus, it is rather impossible to counter any of the arguments directly. The only inconsistency that is obvious is in the Stone Cabin inspector's log, where a young gray foal was deemed separated on April 17th. On May 2nd the log stated that the foal was not found and thus presumed dead. On May 4th, we see the comment that it was observed back in the band. This is the only accusation that one can follow logically through these notes. However, it seems likely that many of the accusations could be traced in a similar fashion if the data were available. Further, other accusations in the memo are blatantly false. However, it seems fruitless to try and analyze this memo in a scientific fashion because the obvious intent is to discredit our research, and to imply that we are callous and without care when it comes to handling, surveying, or otherwise carrying out the activities of the research. We are very unhappy with these implications, and the fact that the memo was circulated widely, appearing as a BLM official memo. It would seem some type of a statement indicating this does not represent the general BLM position would be appropriate. Further, it would seem the committee could comment on the unprofessional nature of this memo. Regardless, I feel we have been unfairly represented again in the project.

I should inform you that we feel strongly that we should not fly this spring. The memo to John Boyles from Terri Jay implies


Dr. Frederick Wagner
Page 2
14 February 1990

that we will encounter nothing but opposition should we try to do the spring surveys and it also makes a valid point. The fact that BLM is restricted from flying at this time of the year by court order (I believe) would seem to be something that we should acknowledge. It is a reasonable argument that if BLM is restricted from flying at this time of the year, that we also should be thus restricted.

Therefore, we are looking into doing surveys from the ground, focusing on the Stone Cabin area. I have talked with John Boyles about this idea and he is checking with Linda DeRamus about this change in our contract. It seems likely that in the Stone Cabin area, where there are a few water holes, we could set up observation points and view animals as they come to water. Tom Eagle feels that we may be able to observe a fairly large proportion of the animals if this is done. If this plan is acceptable to BLM, we will probably be in the field during the month of May in the Stone Cabin area, trying to observe animals at water holes. Should this work well there, we may try and observe horses in the Clan Alpine area, although here water is more abundant, and the technique may not be fruitful.

This seems to be the current situation of our contraception studies. We appreciate the interaction at the meeting in Denver; the comments of you and the committee were helpful, and we will certainly take them into account as we analyze past data and move into the spring season.

Sincerely,


Donald B. Siniff
Professor
Ecology, Evolution and Behavior Department

DBS:dkb

Enclosures

cc: Linda DeRamus
John Boyles

SPRING FLIGHTS - 1989

<u>AREA</u>	<u>FLIGHT</u>	<u>#ADULTS</u>	<u>#FOALS</u>
Wassuk	1	109	28
	2	107	27
	3	69	19
	4	91	21
Stone Cabin	1	552	44
	2	511	56
	3	497	54
	4	472	55
Clan Alpine	1	731	77
	2	625	78
	3	619	75
	4	555	68