

FOREST SERVICE

4/21/75

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FOREST SERVICE
HUMBOLDT NATIONAL FOREST
P. O. Box 539
Ely, Nevada 89301

REPLY TO: 2260 Wild and Free Roaming Horses

April 21, 1975

SUBJECT: Population Dynamics - White Pine Division

TO: FILE



During September and October, 1974, Ken Timothy and Garth Baxter made a population count of feral horses on a portion of the White Pine Division. The area inventoried was between Birch Spring, T. 14 N., R. 57 E., Sec. 13, proceeding south to Silver Spring T. 11 N., R. 58 E., Sec. 5.

In addition to visual observations, population density was found through use of a movie camera set at watering holes. This camera took one frame per minute. Pictures taken with a 35mm camera with a 400mm telephoto lens was also used in the population count. There were 106 adult and 14 young animals counted using this inventory method.

On March 15, 1975, Ken Timothy, USFS, and Vince Pace, BLM, made an aerial count of feral horses on the entire White Pine Division. The area inventoried in September and October, 1974, (Birch Spring proceeding south to Silver Spring) is approximately half the feral horse range which was covered by helicopter on March 15, 1975.

The following observations were made on the area between Birch Springs on the north to Silver Spring on the south:

- 106 Adults and 14 young were observed in September and October, 1974 by visual observation and remote camera.
- 118 adults, including 6 yearlings were observed March 15, 1975, by using helicopter to make population count.

This is an increase of 12 animals (6 yearlings + 6 adult animals), which could be attributed to: (1) different methods of inventory, (2) time of year that inventory was made, (3) adult animals moving into the area.

The 6 surviving yearlings indicates a mortality loss of 57% of last years colt crop.

We personally believe that the helicopter count was more accurate than on-the-ground observations, which was a difference of 6

Same area covered in summer of '74 and spring of '75

If young/100 adults is used this becomes a 61.5% mortality 100%
(Foals/100 Adults = 13%
Yearlings/100 Adults = 5%)

adults. Therefore, if this is correct, the only increase would be 6 yearlings for a 5.5% annual increase.

During the helicopter count in March, 65 horses were on National Forest lands and 66 horses were on (BLM) public lands. At this time of year, the horses utilize the National Forest land 50% of the time. It is suspected the amount of time spent on Forest land decreases during summer and winter months.

Kenneth Timothy

KENNETH TIMOTHY, Wildlife Biologist
U. S. Forest Service

Vince Pace

VINCE PACE,
Bureau of Land Management