



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Ely District Office
Star Route 5, Box 1
Ely, Nevada 89301

2-9-78

IN REPLY REFER TO

4700
(N-040)

February 9, 1978

Mrs. Helen Reilly
Wild Horse Organized Assistance (WFOA)
P. O. Box 555
Reno, Nevada 89504

Dear Mrs. Reilly:

The answer to your telephone inquiry pertaining to the horse gathering in the Ely District is as follows:

The helicopter gathering was on interdistrict claims and was arranged by and under the direction of the Elko BLM District.

During all phases of the gathering operation, one or more BLM representatives from both Elko and Ely were at the horse trap and/or in the helicopter during the roundup. The horses were gathered under the Wild Horse and Burro Act Claiming Procedure. All horses were inspected in the trap and determined by our people to be claimable animals. The decision was based on the original claims submitted; horse color, markings and age which closely fit the original horses claimed. The claimed animals also included progeny.

There were no horses shot or injured during the roundup procedures. All horses left the original trap for a central holding pen near Ely, Nevada and were in good condition at that time with the exception of an aged mare.

During the telephone conversation you mentioned something to the effect that three colts were shot or killed during the operation. This did not occur and I was surprised to hear that such a rumor has been started. The possible cause of this story could have resulted from incidents with the horses after they were determined to be claimable. It is our understanding that two, and possibly three, horses died while in the private corrals in Ely. Two horses approximately one and one-half to two years old died from broken necks. These horses became excited while separated from the band and ran into the corral fence. In addition, a mare, of considerable age, was disposed of. She was loaded separately into the stock truck and penned off by herself because of her age. While the other horses were being loaded into the stock truck, this animal went down. The truck was then unloaded and the mare put on her feet again. The mare went down a second time and was removed from the stock truck and bedded down on hay in



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Mrs. Helen Reilly

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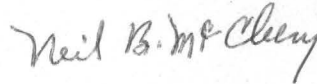
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an area removed from the loading activities. The animal was pulled across an open space of approximately 10 to 15 yards. It was impossible to lift her up and carry her because of her size and weight. This is a probable source for the rumor of a mare being dragged and killed in the corrals. After loading of the stock truck and removal of the other horses from the area, the claimant attempted to get the mare on her feet. I am not aware if he was successful in this attempt. Again, these events took place after the horses were determined to be privately owned and had been moved to corrals on private property under the custody of claimants.

BLM representatives inspected the claimed horses one additional time while in the private corrals. This inspection was made with the local Brand Inspector. It was once again determined by the BLM representatives and the State Brand Inspector that all horses gathered were either branded or identified as claimed horses under the original claim. At the time of the brand inspection the BLM/State of Nevada Agreement for Brand Inspection was in effect. That agreement has since terminated.

We feel that the horse gathering went extremely well and was done in the most humane manner possible. The horses were handled in such a manner that unnecessary stress did not occur.

Sincerely yours,



Neil B. McCleery
District Manager