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M 4/25/79

In Reply Refer To  
4730.1  
(N-040, N-043)

State Director, Nevada (N-931.3)

April 25, 1979

District Manager, Ely (N040)

Wild Horse Inventory -Contract 80-0279

Upon termination of inventory operations on March 30, 1979, approximately 4 million acres were inventoried within the District. A total of 12 herd units were covered with 761 horses being observed. Of this total 621 horses were observed in the Ely District, 7 horses were in the Las Vegas District, 9 horses in the Cedar City District, Utah; and 122 horses in the Elko District. (See attachments for map and herd unit data).

Population fluctuations within the individual herd units are directly related to movement between herd units.

We are quite happy with the performance of Lonte Russell's operation of the helicopter. Mr. Russell's cooperation and expertise enabled us to cover much more area than originally anticipated with a minimum amount of ferry time.

In relation to the 1979 inventory, I am attaching a copy of the memo from our Wild Horse Specialist with his findings and recommendations.

*Neil B. Howard*

Enc.

RDHoward:jay

# Memorandum

4730.1  
 (N-043)

TO : District Manager, Chief of Resources,  
 Area Manager, Schell Resource Area

FROM : District Wild Horse and  
 Burro Specialist

SUBJECT: Wild Horse Inventory - 1979

DATE: April 25, 1979

During the pre-planning analysis held on February 26, 27, 1979, the Ely District was told by Ross Ferris, NSO Wild Horse Specialist, that up to 50 hours of helicopter time could be used to inventory the Schell Resource Area to update wild horse information for the Schell ES in 1982. The inventory was scheduled to start on or about March 19, 1979.

The actual inventory began on March 14, 1979 and was completed on March 30, 1979. Avian Helicopter Company, P. O. Box 22481, Sacramento, CA 95822, was the contractor, and was under contract 80-0279. Lonte Russel was the pilot of the aircraft. A total of 43.7 hours was used, with 37.6 hours of this time spent on actual inventory. Approximately 4 million acres were covered. A total of 761 horses were observed in 12 herd units. Included in this total number of horses, were 7 horses in the Las Vegas District, 9 head in the Cedar City District and 122 horses in the Elko District leaving an actual total of 621 horses within the Ely District. Attached is a list of the horse herd units with a breakdown of numbers, age groups, sex and color descriptions and comparison of total numbers with the most recent inventory in each respective herd unit.

The horse herd showing the most significant increase was the Schell Creek Herd which went from 40 animals in 1978 to 241 animals this year. The Fortification Herd and the Dry Herd showed a slight increase. Other herd units showed a decrease in numbers. Three herd units that were inventoried; the White River Herd, the Hamblin Herd, and the Patterson Herd had no observations recorded. This indicates that horses probably have not migrated into these units, and the decrease in the other units probably can be largely attributed to seasonal migration. Other factors that have a lesser influence on decreases in herd units are natural mortality, illegal capture and destruction, and poisoning by noxious plants (mainly loco weed).

I have talked to a local rancher and he told me that two years ago in the Cave Valley Herd Unit that he observed several horses that were under the influence of loco weed poisoning. He said that he saw these horses wandering aimlessly and if they were exposed to noises that they would rear up and fall over backward or display other irrational behavior. It is felt that this herd unit should be checked periodically to determine if other horses are still being affected by loco weed poisoning.



Buy U.S. Savings Bonds Regularly on the Payroll Savings Plan

April 25, 1979

In future inventories of the Schell Resource Area I would recommend that we fly the area in June (and January if funds are available).

Inventories flown in late June would give us a more accurate picture of the colt crop for that particular year since the peak foaling period is between March and the middle of June. It would aid us in determining if in fact horses are migrating into the Schell Area from other areas. Also, inventories that are flown in June would have better flying conditions; i.e., this year we lost 7.5 days to stormy weather conditions. If possibly we could get a January inventory in conjunction with a June inventory we would get better estimates of colt survival, better estimates of permanent resident horse numbers, and estimates of transitional horse numbers, and total increase or decrease of horse population numbers.

I would like to recommend that we combine the Goshute and Schell Creek Herd into one unit since there is no distinct boundary between the two units and the horses within these two units are constantly moving back and forth between both areas so much, that the demarcation is pure fiction. I recommend that when these herd units are combined to call the combined herd unit the Antelope Herd Unit since the Antelope Range is located approximately in the middle of the combined unit.

Richard L. Howard

Schell Creek Herd  
(Antelope)

Inventory  
Year

No. of Horses

1979

241

1978

40

1979 Data (Includes 12 horses in Elko)

<u>Observations</u>	<u>Stallions</u>	<u>Mares</u>	<u>Unclassified Adults</u>	<u>Yearlings</u>	<u>Colts</u>
	1 Black	2 Bays 1 Sorrel		1 Seal Brown 1 Sorrel	
	1 Bay 1 Sorrel				
	1 Buckskin	1 Palomino 1 Sorrel 2 Bays 1 Black 2 Buckskin			1 Bay
	1 Sorrel	4 Sorrels  1 Sorrel			
	1 Bay	1 Sorrel 2 Bays		1 Sorrel	1 Sorrel
	1 Bay	1 Sorrel		1 Bay	
	1 Bay	2 Sorrels			1 Sorrel
	1 Sorrel 1 Bay				
	1 Bay	4 Bay 1 Sorrel			
	1 Bay	2 Bays 1 Sorrel			
	1 Black				
	1 Sorrel	2 Bays 1 Black		1 Buckskin 1 Sorrel	
	1 Sorrel	5 Sorrels 2 Bays		3 Sorrels	
	1 Sorrel	2 Sorrels 2 Bays			

<u>Stallions</u>	<u>Mares</u>	<u>Unclassified Adults</u>	<u>Yearlings</u>	<u>Colts</u>
1 Seal Brn.	1 Buckskin 1 Sorrel 1 Bay			
2 Bays				
2 Bays				
1 Sorrel	2 Bays 2 Blacks 2 Sorrels		2 Sorrels	
1 Sorrel	3 Bays 2 Sorrels 2 Blacks		1 Bay 5 Sorrels	
1 Bay	3 Bays 2 Sorrels		1 Sorrel	
1 Chestnut	1 Bay		1 Seal Brown	
1 Bay	4 Bays		1 Bay	
1 Bay	1 Black 2 Sorrels 1 Bay		1 Sorrel	
2 Bays 1 Sorrel				
1 Black	2 Bays 1 Black		1 Bay	
1 Sorrel 1 Black				
1 Grulla 1 Sorrel				
1 Seal Brn.	3 Bays		2 Sorrels	
1 Bay	4 Bays		1 Bay	
1 Black	4 Blacks 1 Bay		2 Bays	
1 Black	4 Bays			
1 Bay	3 Bays 1 Buckskin 2 Blacks		2 Sorrels 1 Black	

<u>Stallions</u>	<u>Mares</u>	<u>Unclassified Adults</u>	<u>Yearlings</u>	<u>Colts</u>
1 Sorrel	1 Dun		1 Bay	
1 Bay	1 Buckskin 2 Blacks 1 Sorrel 2 Bays		1 Bay 2 Blacks 3 Sorrels	
1 Bay	1 Black 3 Bays		1 Bay	
1 Sorrel	1 Sorrel 1 Bay		1 Sorrel	
1 Sorrel	2 Bays		1 Bay 1 Sorrel	
1 Bay 1 Black			2 Bays	
1 Black	2 Sorrels 2 Bays 1 Black		2 Bays 1 Black 1 Sorrel	
1 Black	4 Bays 1 Sorrel		2 Sorrels 1 Bay	
1 Bay	3 Bays 1 Sorrel		1 Sorrel	
1 Bay	1 Seal Brown 1 Buckskin		1 Buckskin	
1 Bay	2 Bays 2 Sorrels 1 Black			
Totals 52	134		52	3

White Herd  
(Antelope)

Inventory  
Year

No. of Horses

1979 306  
1978 333

1979 Data Includes 110 horses in Elko.

<u>Observations</u>	<u>Stallions</u>	<u>Mares</u>	<u>Unclassified Adults</u>	<u>Yearlings</u>	<u>Colts</u>
52			1 Black 1 Brown	1 Buckskin	
	1 Sorrel				
		1 Grey 2 Seal Brown			
	1 Bay	2 Blacks 4 Bay 1 Dun 1 Sorrel 1 Roan			1 Bay
	1 Bay	1 Bay 3 Roans 1 Sorrel	1 Seal Brwn 1 Sorrel 1 Roan		
	1 Black	3 Bay 1 Buckskin 1 Palomino 1 Seal Brown		2 Bays 2 Sorrels 1 Roan	
	1 Bay	3 Bays 5 Sorrels		2 Sorrels 1 Black 1 Palomino	
	1 Bay	2 Bay 2 Black 2 Sorrel 2 Buckskin		2 Sorrels	
	1 Sorrel	2 Black 1 Dun 2 Sorrel 1 Bay			
	1 Bay	2 Sorrel 1 Black			
	1 Sorrel	2 Bays 1 Sorrel 1 Black		1 Bay	

Stallions

Mares

Adults

1 Bay  
1 Sorrel  
1 Seal Brown

1 Bay  
1 Sorrel

1 Sorrel

1 Buckskin  
1 Sorrel

1 Sorrel  
1 Bay  
1 Grulla

1 Bay  
1 Sorrel

1 Bay  
3 Sorrels  
1 Bay

1 Sorrel

1 Sorrel

1 Black  
6 Bays

1 Bay

1 Buckskin  
1 Buckskin  
2 Blacks  
2 Sorrels  
1 Roan

1 Buckskin  
1 Black

1 Bay  
1 Black

1 Bay  
2 Bays  
1 Buckskin  
2 Sorrels  
1 Dun

1 Dun

1 Sorrel  
3 Buckskins  
1 Bay  
1 Sorrel  
1 Dun

1 Sorrel

1 Dun  
3 Duns  
2 Sorrels  
1 Buckskin  
1 Bay

1 Black  
2 Duns  
1 Buckskin  
1 Bay  
1 Sorrel



<u>Stallions</u>	<u>Mares</u>	<u>Adults</u>	<u>Yearlings</u>	<u>Colts</u>
1 Bay	1 Bay 1 Dun 1 Black			
1 Bay	6 Bays			
1 Sorrel	2 Bays 1 Black			1 Bay
1 Sorrel	2 Bays		1 Sorrel	
		Strawberry 1 Roan 1 Palomino	1 Sorrel	
1 Bay	1 Strawberry Roan 2 Red Roan 1 Blue Roan			
	1 Bay			1 Bay
1 Sorrel	1 Sorrel 2 Bays			
1 Sorrel	1 Black 1 Bay		1 Sorrel	
1 Sorrel	3 Sorrels		1 Sorrel	
1 Black 1 Bay				
2 Sorrels 1 Black				
1 Bay			1 Bay	
1 Buckskin	2 Sorrels		1 Sorrel	
1 Sorrel	2 Bays 1 Buckskin 1 Sorrel		1 Dun	
1 Chestnut	1 Sorrel		1 Sorrel	
1 Black 1 Sorrel	4 Sorrels 4 Duns 4 Bays 1 Buckskin		1 Dun 1 Bay 1 Sorrel	1 Sorrel
1 Sorrel	1 Dun 1 Buckskin 1 Black 6 Sorrels		1 Buckskin 1 Sorrel	

ont.)

Unclassified

<u>Stallions</u>	<u>Mares</u>	<u>Adults</u>	<u>Yearlings</u>	<u>Colts</u>
1 Sorrel	2 Bays 1 Buckskin 1 Sorrel		1 Sorrel	
1 Bay	3 Sorrels		1 Sorrel	
1 Bay	5 Sorrel 1 Black		1 Sorrel	2 Sorrels
1 Black	12 Sorrels 1 Buckskin 3 Bay 1 Black			
1 Chestnut	5 Sorrels			
		1 Sorrel		
1 Sorrel	3 Sorrels			
1 Bay	6 Sorrels 2 Bays 1 Buckskin 1 Dun		1 Sorrel	
Total	57	196	10	34
				9

Moriah Herd

Inventory  
Year

No. of Horses

1979	1
1978	18

1979 Data

Observation

Stallions

1

1 Black