

8/26/05



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Forest  
Service

Inyo National Forest

Mammoth Ranger Station  
P.O. Box 148  
Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546  
(760) 924-5500  
(760) 924-5531 TDD

File Code: 2260

Date: August 26, 2005

Montgomery Pass Wild Horse Territory  
Coordinated Resource Plan Steering  
Committee

Dear Committee Members:

Years have passed since the last meeting of the Montgomery Pass Wild Horse Territory Coordinated Resource Plan Steering Committee, the plan was completed in 1988. Recently there has been observed expansion of the herd beyond the historic, recognized territory boundaries. There also has been movement, documented by the Bishop Office--Bureau of Land Management Staff, of horses from the Mt. Powell herd onto the Bodie Hills from Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest System lands. Dr. John Turner, agency personnel and interested publics have continued to collect and document information on the Montgomery Pass Herd population.

As the lead agency for the Montgomery Pass Wild Horse Territory Coordinated Resource Plan Steering Committee, I am proposing a committee meeting to coincide with the annual trip to the herd territory by Dr. Turner. The purpose of the meeting is to: 1) review current information regarding wild horse population; 2) discuss wild horse herd movements; and 3) discuss any needed management actions.

This meeting is scheduled for 1:00pm to 3:00pm on September 15, 2005. The committee will meet in the Lee Vining Community Center, 296 Mattly Avenue (drive toward Mono Basin National Forest Scenic Area Visitor Center, turn right on Mattly to first building on left) in Lee Vining, California. I hope to see all of you soon. Feel free to call me at (760) 924-5553 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

MOLLY M. BROWN

Acting District Ranger



October 12, 2005

Molly Brown, Acting District Ranger  
Mammoth Ranger Station  
Inyo National Forest  
PO Box 148  
Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546

Dear Molly,

I am sorry to have missed the scheduled CRMP meeting for the Montgomery Pass Wild Horse Territory. It has been many years since we had last met. I was called away to work in New Orleans evacuating and rescuing animals and have been out of town and unable to attend your meeting on Sept. 15, 2005.

I was hoping that minutes of that meeting or notes might be available for me to review. We have had a long-standing interest in this herd area and the management of the horses and their habitat, as it is so unique.

I would still like to be kept informed of the planning for this area, and kept in any mailing lists. If there are future meetings, I would plan to attend as my schedule permits.

Thank you in advance for re-convening the CRMP for this Territory and the Montgomery Pass horses.

Sincerely,

Catherine Barcomb  
Administrator

6/3/93

MONTGOMERY PASS  
WILD HORSE TERRITORY  
COORDINATED RESOURCE PLAN

Steering Committee Meeting Notes  
June 3, 1993

Agenda:

10:00	INTRODUCTIONS	Randy Karstaedt
10:20	MPWHT BOUNDARY ISSUES	John Mattheissen
11:20	FOREST SERVICE LAND EXCHANGES	Randy Karstaedt
11:30	PIZONA ROAD REROUTE	Barrie Freeman
11:45	McBRIDE FLAT ALLOTMENT	Barrie Freeman
1:00	1992 RANGE UTILIZATION REPORTS	Bonnie Pritchard
1:15	PROGRESS REPORT ON STUDY	Dr. John Turner
1:45	RIVER SPRINGS FENCE/SPRING DEV.	Bonnie Pritchard
2:00	OPEN DISCUSSION	All

Attendees:

Barrie Freeman - Inyo NF	Bob Suter - Inyo NF
Ron Wechsler - Pierce College	Tamara Sawinski - Inyo NF
Richard Sewing - Nat'l Mustang Assoc.	Ken Zimmerman - Rancher
John Schuyler - Inyo NF	Earl McKinney - BLM, Carson City
John Mattheissen - BLM, Carson City	Jake Jacobsen - BLM, Carson City
Dr. John Turner - Research	Randy Karstaedt - Inyo NF
Ron Keil - Inyo NF	Genivieve Hannon - BLM, Bishop Area
Robert Bray - Cal 'Poly - Pomona	Dawn Lappin - WHOA
Cathy Barcomb - Nev Wild Horse Comm.	Scott Conroy - Toiyabe NF,
Mark Gish - BLM, Bishop	JoEllen Keil - Inyo NF
Beryl Schindler - Land Owner/rancher	Bonnie Pritchard - Inyo NF

Summary of Discussions following introductions:

MPWHT BOUNDARY ISSUES

Discussion on Change of Wild Horse Territory Boundary to match the 1973 Herd Management Area (HMA) boundary identified in the BLM's Unit Resource Analysis (URA). Discussion lead by Jake Jacobsen regarding history of boundary establishment and court case history which establishes requirement of BLM to maintain this HMA Boundary.

An issue was identified and agreement reached that, though the BLM's proposed Appropriate Management Level for wild horses in the Basalt

Allotment is zero, seasonal forage use by wild horses needs to be accounted for within the allotment.

An objective was identified that the steering committee needs to pursue water development as a means of keeping wild horses within the HMA boundary

A proposed action was identified to develop an inventory of potential water sources that may influence distribution. It was decided by the steering committee to form a Water Sub-committee to conduct this analysis. This committee consists of Bonnie Prichard, Cathy Baucomb, Mark Gish, and Jake Jacobsen. Establishment of a water source within the HMA with the objective of replacing water currently being utilized within the Basalt Allotment was identified as high priority.

#### FOREST SERVICE LAND EXCHANGES

Randy Karstaedt identified that he is currently working with Willie Wolfe on exchange of scattered parcels totaling 200 acres.

Richard Sewing affirmed commitment of National Mustang Association to assist in funding appraisal fees for the Wolfe exchange.

Randy also identified that several springs previously thought to be located on private land are located on National Forest System land.

#### PIZONA ROAD REROUTE

Barrie Freeman presented proposed relocation of Pizona Road. This was followed by brief discussion. No changes were proposed by the Steering Committee.

Conversation proceeded to discussion of Pack Trips in the vicinity of Pizona Springs.

Concern was identified that back-to-back trips may be displacing horses from spring area. It was also stressed that this was not intended as a slur of the packing operation or the packer. The packers operation was complimented as being a very clean, well organized operation.

A suggestion was presented that the pack operation could reduce the impact/harassment of wild horses by varying the route of travel from day to day, especially in the morning, when leaving base camp. Ron Keil will present this proposal to the packer and permit administrator.

#### McBRIDE FLAT ALLOTMENT

Barry Freeman presented information regarding an agreement with Orin Harris to eliminate the Critical Wild Horse Area from the McBride Allotment prior to issuance of a permit for this allotment.

#### 1992 RANGE UTILIZATION RESULTS

Bonnie Pritchard presented a summary of utilization records for the Wild Horse Territory for the years 1988 through 1992. There is no identifiable trend in utilization patterns.

An issue was identified that inconsistent locations and methods may be a factor contributing to inconsistent utilization measurements from year to year.

It was decided that the Range Sub-committee will identify key areas and review the utilization methodology to improve consistency of measurements prior to this years data collection.

#### PROGRESS REPORT ON STUDY

Dr. John Turner presented the following information. The 1993 data is preliminary, and will be updated during the field season.

#### 1992 WILD HORSE COUNT

Adults.....	135
2 yr olds.....	9
Yearlings.....	<u>8</u>
TOTAL BASE POPOULATION.....	156
Foals.....	<u>26</u>
TOTAL POPULATION.....	178

#### 1992 FOAL DETAILS

Foal Count.....	26
(includes all foals known to be born by 10/15)	
Foals missing by 10/15.....	12
Foal carcasses found by 10/15...	7
Deer carcasses found by 10/15...	2

#### 1993 WILD HORSE COUNT

\*\*Partial 1993 count - through 6/2/93\*\*

Adults.....	116
2 yr olds.....	5
Yearlings.....	<u>5</u>
TOTAL BASE POPOULATION.....	126
Foals.....	<u>21</u>
TOTAL POPULATION.....	147

#### 1993 FOAL DETAILS

Foal Count.....21  
(includes all foals known  
to be born by 6/2)  
Foals missing by 6/2..... 5  
Foal carcasses found by 6/2.....2  
Deer carcasses found by 6/2.....2

#### 1992 - 1993 LION DATA

this data is based on radiotelemetry, tracking and location with dogs. Four lions are radio-collared presently.

There is a resident population of lions and an additional seasonal population of lions that follow the deer migrations (arrive November; leave April).

1992 Resident Population      n = 6  
1993 Resident Population      n = ?

We do not know the 1993 population size yet because some deer have delayed their migration to Sierras (perhaps due to heavy snows there) and therefore some seasonal lions may have delayed leaving the MPWHT. There are presently 8 documentably different lions in the MPWHT. We must continue monitoring to see if resident population is increasing or if seasonal population is simply leaving late.

#### SUMMARY

1. Predation on horse foals continues, but no evidence of increased rate.
2. Horse population has shown a significant (10%) decline in 1992 from previous years (<5%).
3. 1993 data are incomplete and difficult to interpret due to factors affecting horse movement and distribution
  - a) increased water sites
  - b) improved range condition
  - c) long, cold spring
4. Continuing efforts should focus on:
  - a) winter range and horse distribution
  - b) mountain lion monitoring for possible increased numbers and/or activity
  - c) expanding the research base of this unique horse territory

#### RIVER SPRINGS FENCE/SPRING DEVELOPMENT

Bonnie Pritchard presented information on status of fence around River Springs and identified possible spring development sites.

Bonnie indicated that upper and lower Pizona Springs, as well as Dead Horse Spring had been improved with natural materials (rock) in early

May. Truman Springs box and trough were unimproved. Decision needs to be made as to what improvements, if any, would be most appropriate. Other springs identified as potential work areas were McBride Flat (windmill), sagehen springs, willow springs (barbed wire removal), Huntoon Springs area, Adobe Hills (dirt tank), and the area west of the Basalt Allotment.

#### OPEN DISCUSSION

A proposal was received to recognize Randy McCoy for his contribution to the efforts of Wild Horse management within the MPWHT. Dr. Turner volunteered to draft this letter. Ron Keil will finalize letter and route for appropriate signatures.

It was identified that Inyo National Forest has been covering 100% of the aircraft support cost to conduct the fall count and utilization survey. It was identified that the Inyo will be looking to other agencies for contributions to cover this cost in the future (including this fall).

It was identified that more notice was needed for scheduling this annual steering committee meeting. It was also identified that early June is a good time to conduct this meeting. Ron Keil committed to getting an announcement out earlier next spring for this meeting.