

3-26-75



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
NAVAL WEAPONS CENTER
CHINA LAKE, CALIFORNIA 93555

IN REPLY REFER TO:
70309/TB:vp
26 March 1975

Mrs. Velma B. Johnston
Chairman - Board of Trustees
Wild Horse Organized Assistance, Inc.
P. O. Box 555
Reno, Nevada 89504

Dear Velma;

I apologize for having taken so long to answer your letter of 11 March.

First, about the Audubon Society tour -- much as I would like to have you join us, the fact that I will have 30 or 40 people claiming my attention would give me no opportunity to discuss the problem in depth with you. Also, I cannot take this group out to the Slate Range where our most critical problem is centered. Because of the logistics required to handle a group of this size, the Audubon tour will cover a portion of our ranges where competition between seasonal cattle grazing, wild burros and native wildlife can be observed. This tour will be confined to Etcheron Valley and Coles Flat on our China Lake Test Range Complex.

Annie, I would much rather take you to the heart of the problem in the Slate Range and discuss it with you without the distraction of a large group of people. Whenever you can make a trip down here, let me know and I will plan two or three days (whatever time you can spare) to show you what is happening in our critical areas and discuss the problems and possible solutions with you.

This looks like another sparse year for forage. We had a very dry winter with a little rain or snow in the middle and upper elevations coming in March, too late for good food production.

Certainly, there is a sensible way to resolve this problem and right now cool judgement is more necessary than ever. For our area of the eastern Mojave desert, a regional management plan is the realistic approach to the problem in my best judgement. Burros move back and forth between Naval Weapons Center lands onto BLM lands in Panamint Valley and Searles Valley and onto Death Valley National Monument lands through Wingate Pass.

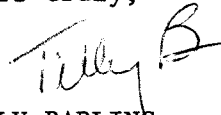
Please keep me informed of any developments you feel are pertinent to our situation.

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Meanwhile, I shall be looking forward to a visit whenever you can come down to our area. Your evaluation of the situation would be truly welcome.

Best regards.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Tilly B".

TILLY BARLING
Natural Resources Specialist