

# Shoshone Wild Horse Territory

The Shoshone Wild Horse Territory (WHT) is administered by the Austin/Tonopah Ranger District, Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest.

## Location/Habitat

The Shoshone WHT is located in Nevada approximately 30 miles southwest of Austin. The territory consists of 109,440 acres in the Shoshone Mountain Range.

Elevations range from high mountain peaks, 10,000 to 11,000 feet, to 6,000 foot sagebrush valleys. Topography consists of gentle sloping alluvial fans, foothill areas, and steep ridges. Canyons are usually steep to their origins. Precipitation increases with elevation.

High mountain uplands or grassy plateaus seem to be important summer ranges for wild horse bands. These key areas tend to be saddles between large ridges that are gentle sloping areas.

The territory has four primary vegetation types: Sagebrush, Pinyon-Juniper, Browse-shrub, and Wet/Dry Meadows. The Sagebrush areas are distinguished by the presence of *Artemisia* species. The Pinyon-Juniper woodland is distinguished by the presence of *Pinus monophylla* and *Juniperus osteosperma*. The Browse-shrub type is distinguished by the presence of *Cercocarpus ledifolius*. Wet/Dry Meadows are characterized by a variety of herbaceous species.

Wildlife include deer.

Livestock grazing is permitted within the territory.

## History

The actual origin of wild horses in the Shoshone WHT is unknown. Most horses within this area seem to have established themselves around the mid-1900s through escape and abandonment. Because of the steep terrain and large area, escape horses were difficult to recapture and quickly obtained a wild free-roaming nature. Several ranching operations in the Shoshone WHT area had, on several occasions, been trespassed for unauthorized horses grazing Forest Service land.

## Herd Description

The horses in the Shoshone WHT vary considerably in color. They cover the range of whites to blacks, including bays, browns, sorrels, red roans, blue roans, grullas and buckskins. The most abundant color is bay.

## **For More Information**

Contact the Austin Ranger District at 775-964-2671.