



## Big Bear Wild Burro Territory

The Big Bear Wild Burro Territory (WBT) is administered by the Big Bear Ranger District, San Bernardino National Forest.

## **Location/Habitat**

The Big Bear WBT is located in California approximately 10 miles east of Big Bear Lake in southwestern San Bernardino County. The territory consists of 35,000 acres.

Climate is semi-arid with an average annual precipitation of 10-15 inches. Summers are hot and dry, and winters are cool. Most of the precipitation occurs during the winter. The majority of the territory is within the Arrastre Creek drainage basin. Arrastre Creek is a perennial stream that bisects the territory from north to south, occasionally flowing underground and resurfacing.

The majority of the Wild Burro Territory is located in pinyon-juniper woodlands with small inclusions of sagebrush scrub and Joshua tree woodlands. Jeffrey pine forests are dominant on a small portion in the southwest portion of the territory. Sensitive vegetation types located within the territory include riparian habitat, wet and dry meadows, and pebble plains habitat. Pebble plains habitat is found in the northwest portion of the territory and supports at least seven threatened, endangered, sensitive, or protected plant species.

Wildlife on the territory include deer and migrating and nesting birds.

## **History**

Burros were introduced to the Big Bear area between 1900 and 1940. During this period, burros escaped from miners, movie sets, fox farms, and ranches. The present population most likely became solidly established as a result of burros that escaped or were released from annual burro races in and around Big Bear City beginning in 1955.

## **Herd Description**

The Big Bear WBT is managed for a population of 60 burros. These burros are primarily gray and adults weigh about 500 pounds.

## **Viewing Tips**

Burros can be found east of Big Bear Valley. Popular hangouts for the burros include Broom Flats, Arrastre Creek, Round Valley, and the Rose Mine area. These areas can be reached via Forest Road 2N01 and 2N02. Occasionally burros are seen in Lone Valley on Forest Road 3N03. Burros are more visible in the early morning and early evening.

## **For More Information**

Contact the Big Bear Ranger District at 909-866-3437.

## **Big Creek Wild Horse Territory**

The Big Creek Wild Horse Territory (WHT) is administered by the Salt Lake Ranger District, Wasatch-Cache National Forest.

## **Location/Habitat**

The Big Creek WHT is located in Utah approximately 8 miles west of Grantsville. The territory consists of 10,000 acres of National Forest land in the northwestern portion of the Stansbury Mountain Range.

The topography is mountainous with elevations ranging from 5000 to 10,500 feet. Temperatures range from below zero in the winter to 90°+ F in the summer. Average annual precipitation is 10 inches at the foot of the mountains and 60 inches near Deseret Peak.

Vegetation varies with elevation, slope gradient, aspect, and microclimate. Lower west-facing slopes and south faces are sage-juniper communities rising through mountain mahogany to alpine ridge meadows of bunchgrasses. Lower north faces are cottonwood-chokecherry stream bottoms rising through aspen to white fir, Douglas fir, and limber pine at higher elevations.

Wildlife present include deer, mountain lions, and eagles.

Livestock grazing is not permitted within the wild horse territory.

### **History**

The Stansbury Mountain area was settled in the mid-1800s. Along with settlement came the introduction of feral horses, as working animals were either released or escaped. The Orr Ranch of Skull Valley reported losing some of their Percheron studs in the area. The Standard Horse and Mule Livestock Company raised large working horses for army remounts and ranch work and lost a number of these horses in the area. Other ranchers also raised horses for army remounts of Arabian, Morgan, and Thoroughbred breeding. These horses also contributed to the feral population. The progeny of these feral horses was consistently gathered off the west face of the Stansburys and in Skull Valley through 1967. Numerous infusions of domestic horses through the years contributed to the gene pool. The horses on the Stansburys were known to be large and refined.

There were 18 wild horses living in the Big Creek Territory in 1976. The horses were bay, sorrel, brown, and one dapple grey.

### **Herd Description**

The appropriate management level is 13-25 horses.

### **For More Information**

Contact the Salt Lake Ranger District at 801-733-2660.

## **Black Mountain Wild Horse Territory**



The Black Mountain Wild Horse Territory (WHT) is administered by the Santa Lucia Ranger District, Los Padres National Forest, California.

### **Location/Habitat**

The Black Mountain WHT is located in California approximately 20 miles east of San Luis Obispo. The territory consists of 13,215 acres of National Forest land and 635 acres of private land and lies primarily on the east side of the La Panza Mountain Range.

The topography of the area is steep with narrow drainages and limited watering sources. Elevations range from 1600 to 3600 feet. The climate is typically Mediterranean with hot summer temperatures and cool winters. Precipitation is in the form of rain with occasional snowfall. The wet season is normally from November through March, and average annual precipitation is 12 inches.

The territory consists of Blue Oak annual grasslands and Chaparral vegetation. Monitoring indicates that the rangeland is healthy.

Wildlife present within the territory include black-tailed deer, mountain lion, black bear, bobcat, coyote, grey fox, raccoon, woodrats, ground squirrels, and numerous bird, reptile, and amphibian species.

There are no livestock grazing permits in the wild horse territory.

### **History**

The origin of the Black Mountain herd began about 1907 when the Bethal brothers ran cattle and horses on National Forest land. The original Bethal horses were a blending of blood brought west with the covered wagons and the blood of the wild stock of Spanish origin. The Bethals then bred these mares with “blooded” studs of Morgan, Hambletonian, Steel Dust, and other popular bloodlines.

During World War I, the Bethals sold horses to the U.S. Army as remounts. After the war in the 1920’s, the value of horses declined, and the Bethal horses became wild as they were allowed to roam unmanaged on Forest land. The free-roaming horses ranged from Wilson Canyon to as far east as Carrizo Plains and La Panza.

Periodically, the horses were rounded up and sold to traders in the area. During the 1960’s a “Mustang Magazine” published the existence of the Black Mountain wild horses, which drew local people and parties to the area to trap the horses. By 1971, the herd size had diminished to about 7 horses.



## **Herd Description**

The Black Mountain WHT is managed for an appropriate management level of 20 horses. Occasionally, horses of similar size, conformation, and color are introduced from other territories in order to maintain genetic diversity in this small herd. Most of the horses in the Black Mountain WHT are of good size and conformation, and bay is the dominant color.

## **For More Information**

Contact the Santa Lucia Ranger District at 805-925-9538.

## **Brushy Mountain Wild Horse Territory**

The Brushy Mountain Wild Horse Territory (WHT) is administered by the Almanor Ranger District, Lassen National Forest.

## **Location/Habitat**

The Brushy Mountain WHT is located in California approximately 40 miles southwest of Chester. The territory consists of 3,285 acres of non-contiguous Forest Service land. Seven hundred of those acres are within the Ishi Wilderness Area.

The topography is predominantly rugged. Geologically the area is of volcanic origin, and the volcanic substrate has eroded to form a branching network of steep ravines separated by sharp ridges. Elevation varies from 1,120 feet on the western border to 3,760 feet on the eastern margin. Typically winter rains begin in November and last through March. A dry period occurs during summer-fall-early winter.

The territory can best be described as belonging to the foothill-woodland community. Several distinct floral associations occur within the community: 1) Blue Oak Woodland consists of scattered to dense blue oak stands with an understory of annual grasses. 2) Black Oak Association consists of an overstory of medium aged black oak with an understory of annual grasses, forbs, and Oregon grape. 3) Mixed Forest Type consists of Pondersosa pine, Douglas fir, black oak, and digger pine with an intermediate canopy of deer brush, poison oak, and redbud. Chaparral is interspersed throughout the entire area.

Common wildlife present in the territory include blacktail deer, coyote, bobcat, pocket gopher, beechey ground squirrel, grey squirrel, California quail, Coopers hawk, red-tail hawk, golden eagle, kestrels, turkey vulture, mourning dove, scrub jay, western whiptail lizard, alligator lizard, and western rattlesnake.

Livestock grazing is permitted in the territory.

## **History**

The population evolved from domestic ranch stock that escaped or were abandoned from 1922 through 1966. The horses were mostly bays with a scattering of sorrels and fewer dark brown and black individuals.

The population of horses within the territory was 37 in 1973. The population peaked at almost 80

animals during the early 1980's but has been declining gradually ever since. It is unknown why the population has declined: skewed sex ratio, inbreeding, illegal shooting, mountain lion predation? The question may never be answered. In 2003, only two horses were seen in the territory, and both were studs.

### **Herd Description**

The Brushy Mountain herd has naturally declined with only 2 studs remaining in 2003. Due to the limited amount of contiguous federal land within this territory, the territory is not able to sustain a viable population of wild horses.

### **For More Information**

Contact the Almanor Ranger District at 530-258-2141.

## **McGavin Peak Wild Horse Territory**

The McGavin Peak Wild Horse Territory (WHT) is administered by the Goosenest Ranger District, Klamath National Forest.

### **Location/Habitat**

The McGavin Peak WHT is located in California about 7 miles east of Dorris. The territory consists of 3,860 acres of Forest Service land, 1,860 acres of Bureau of Land Management land, and 10,325 acres of private land. Both the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management lands are scattered tracts, which cannot support a sustainable herd.

Elevations range from 3,400 – 5,500 feet on the mountains. Average annual precipitation is 12.6 inches, primarily occurring during November through March. Temperatures during the winter may drop well below zero for short periods of time, and temperatures during the summer can reach 100° F.

Vegetation is marginal timber.

Wildlife present within the territory include deer and mountain lions.

### **History**

Large herds were found near McGavin Peak since at least the early 1900's. The source of the original horses in this area is unknown. However, many horses escaped or were released by ranchers, miners, and soldiers, which mixed with the existing herds. Indications are that in the 1930's some American Standardbreds mixed with the existing herd.

Periodic round-ups occurred in the early history of this herd. Large round-ups occurred in the 1930's and 1940's. The "good" horses were kept for domestic stock, and the "poor" horses were sold for pet food. This herd was also subject to much recreational horse chasing. The horses would be run through fences, and in the process a few horses would be killed or crippled. Another practice consisted of shooting some of the old studs which had become mean.

When the Wild Free-Roaming Horse and Burro Act was passed in 1971, protecting the horses from harassment, estimated herd numbers in the McGavin Peak territory were around 30 horses. Bays and

browns were the dominant colors.

### **Herd Description**

Due to the limited amount of contiguous federal land in the McGavin Peak WHT, the appropriate management level is 0. Private landowners are not obligated to support wild horses, and there is not enough federal land in this area to sustain a viable population of wild horses.

### **For More Information**

Contact the Gooseneast Ranger District at 530-398-4391.

## **Devil's Garden Plateau Wild Horse Territory**



The Devil's Garden Plateau Wild Horse Territory (WHT) is administered by the Devil's Garden/Doublehead Ranger District, Modoc National Forest.

### **Location/Habitat**

The Devil's Garden Plateau WHT is located in California approximately 5 miles north of Alturas. The territory consists of 300,000 acres of Forest Service land and 8300 acres of Bureau of Land Management land.

The topography is a relatively flat continuous lava plateau. Average elevation is 4600 feet. Precipitation is primarily from winter snow between November and March. Average annual precipitation is 12.6 inches. Temperatures during winter can be severe for short periods of time, and summer temperatures frequently exceed 90° F.

Vegetation is fairly uniform and consists primarily of western juniper, big sagebrush, numerous perennial grasses, and a few annual grasses.

Wildlife present within the territory include deer, antelope, rabbits, and rodents.

The entire territory is within permitted livestock allotments.

## **History**

Wild horses have been present on the Devil's Garden Plateau for more than 130 years. Many of the early horses escaped from settlers during the Indian Wars or were released when their usefulness as domestic animals ended. In later years, local ranchers turned horses out to graze and then gathered them as needed. It is believed that three different ranches, which had permitted horses on the National Forest, greatly influenced the current herd composition. Draft breeds influenced the horses in the west portion of the territory. Lighter riding breeds influenced the horses in the east portion of the territory.



## **Herd Description**

The Devil's Garden Plateau WHT is managed for an appropriate management level of 305 horses. Horses can be seen in many colors and sizes. Many of the larger draft type horses, as found in the West Unit, probably average 1300 pounds. The horses in the rest of the territory average between 900-1000 pounds. The dominant colors are black and bay; however, appaloosa, palamino, gray, buckskin, and roan are also found with some frequency.

## **For More Information**

Contact the Devil's Garden Ranger District at 530-667-2246.

## **White Mountain Wild Horse Territory**

This description describes the White Mountain Wild Horse Territory (WHT) administered by the White Mountain Ranger District, Inyo National Forest.

## **Location/Habitat**

The White Mountain WHT is located on the California/Nevada border approximately 7 miles east of Benton, CA. The territory consists of 149,690 acres of Forest Service land and 60,000 acres of BLM land and lies on the east side and crest of the White Mountains. The territory is bounded by Highway 6 on the north, Fish Lake Valley on the east, Cottonwood Creek on the south, and the crest of the mountains on the west.

The White Mountain range is a triangular fault block that was elevated and tilted eastward in recent geological time. Elevations range from 5,000 feet on the floor of Fish Lake Valley to 14,246 feet on White Mountain Peak, the third highest point in California. The topography is a combination of very

gentle, open country and very steep-sided canyons and rugged ridges. The Sierra Nevada blocks much of the prevailing air flow and moisture from the west, resulting in precipitation of four to six inches annually in the lowest reaches and twenty inches or more on the crest. Major storms arrive usually between December and March and drop most of their moisture above 7,000 feet in the form of snow.

Four major vegetation zones occur within the territory: 1) desert scrub, 2) pinyon woodland, 3) subalpine forest and upland, 4) alpine tundra. The desert scrub zone is found on the valley floor and is dominated by shrubby species such as shadscale, four wing saltbush, Nevada ephedra, and rubber rabbitbrush. Pinyon woodland is distinguished by the presence of single leaf pinyon. The presence of bristlecone pine or limber pine characterize the subalpine forest, and subalpine uplands include sagebrush, leadleaf mountain mahogany, snowberry, lupine, and various grasses. Alpine tundra is considered to be the zone above treeline, and grasses, sedges, and rushes constitute a larger percentage of this flora than in the other zones.

Wildlife present on the territory include mule deer, desert bighorn sheep, sage grouse, and mountain lion.

Livestock grazing is permitted within the territory.

## **History**

The origin of the White Mountain herd is unknown, but it is thought to date back to the establishment of the first ranches in the adjoining Fish Lake Valley area of Nevada. Members of the early ranch families of Chiatovich and Patterson claimed that wild horses were present at least as far back as the 1870s and were probably escaped or free-roaming ranch horses. There have also been numerous instances reported of both common ranch horses and blooded stock escaping or being turned out into the White Mountains.

One of the more interesting stories of genetic infusions into the White Mountain herd was related by Helen McGee, niece of the Paiute Indian known as "Gray-haired Johnny." According to Ms. McGee, Johnny was an excellent horse doctor, skilled in the use of herbal medicines. During the early 1900's, whenever he went down to the Southern California racetracks, he was in great demand by race horse owners because he used special herbs for quickly healing newly gelded or injured race horses. In return for his services, he was given thoroughbred stallions which he would take to the Whites to replace some of the resident stallions.

Prior to the passage of the Wild Free-Roaming Horse and Burro Act of 1971, wild horses from the Whites were captured for use as saddle horses and pet food. In the mid-1970's some of the ranchers in Fish Lake Valley claimed to still possess wild horses captured prior to 1971 that became good cow ponies of much better quality, they claimed, than those found in other areas of the state of Nevada.

## **Herd Description**

The White Mountain herd is managed for a population of 75 horses. The herd has a majority of bays and chestnuts with most other colors being uncommon.

## **For More Information**

Contact the White Mountain Ranger District at 760-873-2500.

## **Burro Wild Burro Territory**



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

### **Location/Habitat**

The Burro territory is located in Nevada approximately 20 miles east of Austin. The territory consists of 23,700 acres of National Forest land and 64,300 acres of Bureau of Land Management land (Hickson Summit Herd Management Area). The territory is on the northwestern portion of the Toquima Mountain Range.

The wild burros rarely venture into the mountainous areas. Topography primarily consists of alluvial fans broken occasionally by ridges or foothills. Climate is generally of the Dry Steppe type. Elevation ranges from 6000 to 7000 feet. Average annual precipitation is 6-10 inches. Average winter temperatures range from 20 to 40° F, and summer temperatures range from 65 to 80° F.

Small hot springs are found within the territory, and water is scarce.

Vegetation primarily consists of a desert shrub association. Common species include sagebrush, horsebrush, hopsage, kochia, saltbrush, greasewood, and various forbs and grasses.

Deer are found within the territory.

Livestock grazing is permitted within the territory.

### **History**

The first burros to enter the United States probably belonged to the Spanish colonizer Juan DeOnate, who crossed the border from Mexico in about 1599. From here burros quickly spread to other parts of the west playing a diversified role in the mining economy. The present burro populations stem primarily from domestic stock used in past mining and ranching operations. The Toquima burros are thought to have appeared in the 1940's through escape and abandonment.

### **Herd Description**

The burros in the Toquimas are all black or dark brown in color. The underside, the muzzle, and the area encircling the eyes appear white or oyster. Yearlings or foals have less pronounced white areas. The average burro stands 44 inches tall.

## **For More Information**

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

## **Butler Basin Wild Horse Territory**

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

### **Location/Habitat**

The Butler Basin WHT is located in Nevada approximately 40 miles southwest of Eureka. The territory consists of 52,500 acres of National Forest land in the northern portion of the Monitor Mountain Range. Wild horses on the Butler Basin WHT typically use this territory as summer range and occupy the Bureau of Land Management administered Seven Mile Herd Management Area (HMA) during the winter.

The topography is mountainous with elevations ranging from 6000 to 9000 feet. The climate is represented by hot, dry summers and cold winters. Temperatures range from below zero in the winter to 90°+ F in the summer. Average annual precipitation is 5-12 inches.

Vegetation consists of pinyon-juniper communities in the higher elevations. Quaking aspen communities are also present in the higher elevations. At the mid and lower elevations, sagebrush, rabbitbrush, serviceberry, snowberry, and winterfat are common along with grasses and forbs.

Wildlife present include pronghorn, mule deer, elk, eagles, sage grouse, coyotes, and rabbits.

Livestock grazing is permitted within the wild horse territory.

### **History**

Although Spaniards brought horses with them to the Nevada area in the 16th and 17th centuries, it is believed that most of the wild horses in Central Nevada are descendants of horses that strayed or were abandoned by their owners during the mining booms and the settlements of homesteads in the late 1800s, early 1900s. Prior to the passing of the Wild Free-Roaming Horse and Burro Act of 1971, it was common practice for local ranchers to periodically release studs with “good blood” to “upgrade” the herds. Roundups would occasionally be held and suitable animals would either be sold or kept on the ranch, trained, and used as cow ponies.

### **Herd Description**

It has been observed and documented that wild horses migrate freely between the Butler Basin WHT and Seven Mile HMA. The two areas are managed for a combined appropriate management level of 60-100 horses.

## **For More Information**

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

## **Caja del Rio Wild Horse Territory**

The Caja del Rio Wild Horse Territory (WHT) is administered by the Espanola Ranger District, Santa Fe National Forest.

### **Location/Habitat**

The Caja WHT is located in New Mexico approximately 8 miles west of Santa Fe. The territory consists of 8728 acres of National Forest land in the Caja Plateau. The horse herd is confined to the Caja Plateau by the town of Santa Fe to the east and the Rio Grande River to the west.

The topography is composed of rolling hills and swales, dotted by cone like peaks. Elevations range from 5250 to 7315 feet. Temperatures range from 19° in the winter to 90°+ F in the summer. Average annual precipitation is 17 inches.

Vegetation is primarily steppe grasslands in swales and Pinyon-juniper woodlands on rocky ridges. The peaks are grass-shrub on south sides and Pinyon-juniper on north sides.

Wildlife present include mule deer and mountain lions.

Livestock grazing is permitted within the wild horse territory, but competition is limited due to different areas of use.

### **History**

The herd history is not well known. The herd may be quite old since it is in close proximity to the earliest Spanish settlements and first source of horses. Wild horses have been known to frequent the Caja since at least 1934. After passage of the Wild Free-Roaming Horse and Burro Act of 1971, the Caja Wild Horse Territory was officially recognized and listed. In 1975, 1978, and 1988, studies were conducted to obtain information on the herd. The 1975 study estimated a population of 55 horses; the 1978 study estimated a population of 37 horses; and the 1988 study estimated a population of 45 horses. From the date of herd designation, there have been neither herd reductions nor herd supplementation. There is only speculation to account for the relatively stable herd numbers: lion predation, illegal shooting and capture, or disease.

Herd origination may have come from early settlement in Santa Fe, La Cienega, Cieneguilla, and La Bajada. Blood lines from this source would have been of Spanish origin. Adjacent ranches and Pueblos could have been sources of quarter horse bloodlines. Rumors indicate that race track horses past prime have been released onto the territory for retirement. This may also be true of local recreational horses.

### **Herd Description**

The appropriate management level has not yet been established.

The horses of the Caja are identical in appearance to the quarter horses of the nearby ranches. The majority of the horses are sorrel and bay in color.

### **For More Information**

Contact the Espanola Ranger District at 505-753-7331.

## **Cherry Spring Wild Horse Territory**

The Cherry Spring Wild Horse Territory (WHT) is administered by the Ruby Mountains Ranger District, Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest.

### **Location/Habitat**

The Cherry Spring WHT is located in Nevada approximately 50 miles south of Elko. The territory consists of 23,794 acres of National Forest land and 35 acres of private land. The territory lies on southern portion of the Ruby Mountain Range. It is bordered by Sherman Mountain on the north and Overland Pass on the south. It is flanked by Ruby Marsh on the east and Huntington Valley on the west.

Wild horse movements through the territory are seasonally motivated among high, mid, and low elevation ranges. The high elevation range is over 7,800 feet and is used in the summer. Snow cover prohibits high elevation use from fall until late spring. The mid elevation range is from 7,000 to 7,800 feet and is most heavily utilized in the spring as the snow line recedes and again during the fall as the snow line pushes horses out of the high elevations. The low elevation range is from the Forest boundary up to 7,000 feet and is primary winter range for the wild horse herd.

Livestock grazing is permitted within the territory.

### **History**

The Cherry Spring Wild Horse herd was developed from saddle horses used to work livestock. The wild horse ancestry came from saddle horses of large structure such as quarter, thoroughbred, or morgan, but were not draft animals nor were they closely linked to the Arabian horse.

### **Herd Description**

Cherry Spring WHT is managed for an appropriate management level of 58 horses. These horses are large for wild horses, 14.5-17 hands. The herd is being managed for historical characteristics. The horses have a variety of coloring. Blacks with white facial markings and black pintos are the most prominent coloring. Buckskin, palominos, gray-brown or black dapples, brown bays, grulla, and sorrels are also present. White and appaloosa coloring are not part of this herd.

### **For More Information**

Contact the Ruby Mountain Ranger District at 775-752-3357.

## **Dobbin Summit Wild Horse Territory**

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

## **Location/Habitat**

The Dobbin Summit WHT is located in Nevada approximately 50 miles southwest of Eureka. The territory consists of about 51,000 acres of National Forest land and lies in the middle of the Monitor Mountain Range.

Topography is steep canyons, rocky ridges, open meadows. There are good springs and creeks supplying water in the territory. Elevations range from 7000 to over 10,000 feet. The climate is represented by hot, dry summers and cold winters. Temperatures range from below zero in the winter to 90°+ F in the summer. Average annual precipitation is 5-12 inches.

Vegetation includes wet and dry meadow communities, sagebrush communities, pinyon-juniper communities, and aspen communities.

Wildlife include elk, mule deer, coyote, and mountain lion.

Livestock grazing is permitted within the territory.

## **History**

Although Spaniards brought horses with them to the Nevada area in the 16 th and 17 th centuries, it is believed that most of the wild horses in Central Nevada are descendants of horses that strayed or were abandoned by their owners during the mining booms and the settlements of homesteads in the late 1800s, early 1900s. Prior to the passing of the Wild Free-Roaming Horse and Burro Act of 1971, it was common practice for local ranchers to periodically release studs with “good blood” to “upgrade” the herds. Roundups would occasionally be held and suitable animals would either be sold or kept on the ranch, trained, and used as cow ponies.

## **Herd Description**

Wild horses in the Dobbin Summit WHT are primarily bays and sorrels.

## **For More Information**

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

## **Ellsworth Wild Horse Territory**

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

## **Location/Habitat**

The Ellsworth WHT is located in Nevada approximately 50 miles southwest of Austin. The territory consists of 18,000 acres in the northern Paradise Mountain Range.

Elevation of the territory is between 6,000 and 8,650 feet. The area is semi-arid with precipitation estimated at 9 inches per year. The terrain is mountainous.

Much of the vegetation within the territory is pinyon-juniper interspersed with low sagebrush and mountain big sagebrush. Mountain mahogany, aspen, and willow communities associated with springs and drainages are present throughout the area.

Wildlife present in the territory include deer and mountain lion.

Livestock grazing is permitted within the territory.

### **History**

Although Spaniards brought horses with them to the Nevada area in the 16th and 17th centuries, it is believed that most of the wild horses in Central Nevada are descendants of horses that strayed or were abandoned by their owners during the mining booms and the settlements of homesteads in the late 1800s, early 1900s. Prior to the passing of the Wild Free-Roaming Horse and Burro Act of 1971, it was common practice for local ranchers to periodically release studs with “good blood” to “upgrade” the herds. Roundups would occasionally be held and suitable animals would either be sold or kept on the ranch, trained, and used as cow ponies.

However, historic accounts claim that “true mustangs” occupied the southern Paradise Mountain Range. These horses may have also been present in the area of the Ellsworth territory.

### **For More Information**

Contact the Austin Ranger District at 775-964-2671

### **Jarita Wild Horse Territory**



The Jarita Mesa Wild Horse Territory (WHT) is administered by the El Rito Ranger District, Carson National Forest.

### **Location/Habitat**

The Jarita Mesa WHT is located in New Mexico approximately 20 miles northeast of El Rito. The herd use area consists of 55,000 acres of National Forest land on the north end of the El Rito Ranger District. Wild horses on the Jarita Mesa WHT use this area year round.

The topography is mountainous with elevations ranging from 7000 to 9700 feet. The climate is represented by cool summers and cold winters. Temperatures range from below zero in the winter to

80°+ F in the summer.

Vegetation consists of pinyon-juniper and sagebrush communities at the lower elevations. Ponderosa Pine and mixed conifer are present in the higher elevations.

Wildlife commonly viewed on the territory include black bear, mule deer, elk, turkey, redbirds, raven, and a host of smaller terrestrial wildlife.

Livestock grazing is permitted within the wild horse territory.

There are a few well traveled National Forest roads within territory and Jarita Mesa wild horses can occasionally be seen during travels through the area.

### **History**

The history of the Jarita Mesa wild horses is tied to the local Hispanic communities that have been present in the area for some 300 years. The foundation blood for the horses is Spanish mustang, but genetic testing and physical appearance indicate that other bloodlines may have influenced the herd as well.

### **Herd Description**

The appropriate management level for the El Rito herd is between 20 and 70 head of horses depending on range conditions. Common horse colors include Red and gray roans along with black, bay and brown.

### **For More Information**

Contact the El Rito Ranger District at 505-581-4554.

## **Jicarilla Wild Horse Territory**



The Jicarilla Wild Horse Territory (WHT) is administered by the Jicarilla Ranger District, Carson National Forest.

## **Location/Habitat**

The Jicarilla WHT is located in New Mexico approximately 40 miles east of Bloomfield. The territory consists of 76,000 acres of National Forest land on the north end of the Jicarilla Ranger District. Wild horses on the Jicarilla WHT use this territory year round.

The topography is mountainous with elevations ranging from 6000 to 8000 feet. The climate is represented by hot, dry summers and cold winters. Temperatures range from below zero in the winter to 90°+ F in the summer.

Vegetation consists of pinyon-juniper and sagebrush communities at the lower elevations. At the mid and lower elevations, sagebrush, rabbitbrush, serviceberry, snowberry, and winterfat are common along with grasses and forbs. Ponderosa Pine and mixed conifer are present in the higher elevations.

Wildlife commonly viewed on the territory include black bear, mule deer, elk, bald eagles, redtail hawks, ravens, and a host of smaller terrestrial wildlife.

Livestock grazing is permitted within the wild horse territory.

The Jicarilla Ranger District is well-roaded due to significant oil and gas development. Horses are accustomed to vehicle traffic and can generally be viewed from major roads within the territory.

## **History**

The history of the Jicarilla wild horses is vague, but appears to be based on cavalry stock and ranch horses from the area along with an influx of horses from the adjacent Jicarilla Apache Reservation. Genetic testing has indicated a mixed breeding background.

## **Herd Description**

The appropriate management level for the Jicarilla herd is between 50 and 105 head of horses depending on range conditions. Colors vary from bay to paint.

## **For More Information**

Contact Stan Dykes on the Jicarilla Ranger District at 505-632-2956.

## **Kelly Creek Wild Horse Territory**

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

## **Location/Habitat**

The Kelly Creek WHT is located in Nevada approximately 25 miles west of Eureka. The territory consists of 19,600 acres of Forest Service land and 35,000 acres of Bureau of Land Management land (North Monitor Herd Management Area). Kelly Creek WHT is located on the northern tip of the Monitor Mountain Range.

The territory has five principle watersheds, which radiate like wheel spokes with Antelope Peak and Summit Peak at the hub: Kelly Creek, Pedlar Creek, Willow Creek, Dagget Creek, and Faulkner Creek. Elevation is between 6,500 and 10,500 feet. Precipitation is estimated at 12 to 15 inches per year,

mostly as snow, but its occurrence is highly variable. The terrain is mostly mountainous trending into foothill and valley.

Much of the territory's vegetation is pinyon-juniper interspersed with Wyoming and mountain big sagebrush of which some of the valley sagebrush has been converted to stands of crested wheatgrass. Mountain mahogany, aspen, and willow is patchily distributed throughout the area.

The territory is also used by cattle and deer.

### **History**

Although Spaniards brought horses with them to the Nevada area in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, it is believed that most of the wild horses in Central Nevada are descendants of horses that strayed or were abandoned by their owners during the mining booms and the settlements of homesteads in the late 1800s, early 1900s. Prior to the passing of the Wild Free-Roaming Horse and Burro Act of 1971, it was common practice for local ranchers to periodically release studs with "good blood" to "upgrade" the herds. Roundups would occasionally be held and suitable animals would either be sold or kept on the ranch, trained, and used as cow ponies.

### **Herd Description**

Wild horses on the Kelly Creek WHT are typically bays, sorrels, and browns.

### **For More Information**

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

## **Little Fishlake Wild Horse Territory**

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

### **Location/Habitat**

The Little Fishlake WHT is located in Nevada approximately 50 miles southwest of Eureka. The territory consists of about 76,000 acres of Forest Service land and about 28,000 acres of Bureau of Land Management land, located on the east portion of the Monitor Mountain Range.

The Little Fishlake WHT includes the crest of the Monitor Range to the west and the Little Fishlake and Stone Cabin Valleys to the east. The topography is a combination of peaks, canyons, and valleys.

Vegetation includes low sagebrush communities, mountain meadows, and pinyon-juniper communities.

Wildlife present in the territory include elk, deer, antelope, sage grouse, and mountain lion.

Livestock grazing is permitted within the wild horse territory.

### **History**

Most of the wild horses in Central Nevada are descendants of horses that strayed or were abandoned by

their owners during the mining booms and the settlements of homesteads in the late 1800s, early 1900s. Prior to the passing of the Wild Free-Roaming Horse and Burro Act of 1971, it was common practice for local ranchers to periodically release studs with “good blood” to “upgrade” the herds. Roundups would occasionally be held and suitable animals would either be sold or kept on the ranch, trained, and used as cow ponies.

### **Herd Description**

The Little Fishlake WHT is managed for 132 horses. Dominant colors found within the herd are sorrel, bay, and black.

### **For More Information**

Contact the Tonopah Ranger District at 775-482-6286.

## **Monitor Wild Horse Territory**

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

### **Location/Habitat**

The Monitor WHT is located in Nevada approximately 15 miles east of Tonopah. The territory consists of about 380,000 acres of Forest Service land in the southern half of the Monitor Mountain Range.

The topography of the area is mountains and valleys. Elevations range from 6000 ft to 11,000 ft. Climate is represented by hot, dry summers and cold winters. Temperatures range from below zero in the winter to 90° + F in the summer. Average annual precipitation is 5-12 inches.

The territory consists of 3 primary vegetation types: 1) low sage community, 2) desert shrub community, and 3) pinyon-juniper community.

Wildlife present within the territory include elk, deer, antelope, hawks, owls, and bats.

Livestock grazing occurs within the territory.

### **History**

Although Spaniards brought horses with them to the Nevada area in the 16 th and 17 th centuries, it is believed that progeny from strays of early emigrants, as well as abandoned and stray animals from early mining booms and settlement of homesteads account for much of the current wild horse population in the Monitor Territory. Many of the abandoned animals were the result of economic slumps and periodic droughts which plagued the early settlers. Also many of the wild horses are descendants of the Dixon strain.

The Dixon strain, developed by Tom Dixon, a rancher who came from Ireland to California and then to Nevada in 1869, was a mixture of Shires, Percherons, Morgans, Hambletonians, and various Irish stock. Hambletonians were the foundation bloodline for the Standardbred breed. At one time Dixon’s

horses ran at large over much of Nevada (including Long Valley to Fish Creek, Spring, Diamond, and Monitor Valleys) and numbered over 10,000.

Also adding to the population are remnants and descendants of the Clifford “steeldusts.” “Steeldust” was a common name referring to a preferred type of cow pony. These horses were descendants of Steel Dust, a Kentucky bred stud born in 1843. Steel Dust was of Thoroughbred lineage, but an excellent sprinter. He was a blood bay who stood 15 hands high and weighed 1200 lbs. He was moved to Texas and became a popular sire for ranch stock. Many ranchers would breed captured wild mares of Spanish decent to Steel Dust, and the result was a much desired cow horse. Horses of Steel Dust lineage became commonly known as “steeldusts,” and these horses later became known as Quarter Horses.

### **Herd Description**

Wild horses of the Monitor WHT come in a variety of colors. Grays are common in the territory, along with bays, blacks, sorrels, roans, and buckskins. The horses average 14-15 hands.

### **For More Information**

Contact the Tonopah Ranger District at 775-482-6286.

## **Monte Cristo Wild Horse Territory**



The Monte Cristo Wild Horse Territory (WHT) is administered by the Ely Ranger District, Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest.

### **Location/Habitat**

The Monte Cristo WHT is located in Nevada approximately 30 miles west of Ely. The territory consists of 71,680 acres of National Forest land and 366,000 acres of Bureau of Land Management land, Monte Cristo Herd Management Area (HMA). The territory lies on the west slopes and foothills of the White Pine Mountain Range.

Topography consists of canyons, mountains, and steep ridges. Elevations range from about 6000 to 11,000 feet. The climate is arid to semiarid. Average annual precipitation is 20 inches at the higher elevations and 8 inches at the lower elevations. Precipitation comes mostly in the form of winter snow

and early spring rains. Temperatures range from summer maximums in excess of 90° F to winter lows falling below zero.

Major vegetation types are sagebrush-grass, pinyon-juniper, aspen, and meadows.

Wildlife within the territory include elk, mule deer, antelope, sage grouse, and various species of reptiles, small mammals, rodents, and raptors.

Livestock grazing is permitted within the territory.

### **History**

There is no specific information regarding the original breeds of horse within the Monte Cristo WHT. It is known that the horses descended from ranch stock and horses that belonged to miners in the area during the 1800's that were released or escaped and became wild. Curly horses are found within this territory, as they were introduced in the area by Tom Dixon in 1874.

### **Herd Description**

Monte Cristo WHT/HMA is managed for an appropriate management level of 236 horses. These horses are average size for wild horses, 13-15 hands. Colors are varied and include roans, greys, buckskin, bay, sorral, brown, black, and white.

### **For More Information**

Contact the Ely Ranger District at 775-289-3031.

## **Northumberland Wild Horse Territory**

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

### **Location/Habitat**

The Northumberland WHT is located in Nevada approximately 40 miles southeast of Austin. The territory consists of 12,800 acres of National Forest land and is located in the central part of the Toquima Mountain Range.

The territory lies in the upper portion of four principle watersheds, which radiate like wheel spokes about Wildcat Peak: Northumberland Canyon, Wildcat Canyon, Mill Canyon, and Water Canyon. Elevation is between 7,500 and 10,500 feet. The area is semi-arid. Precipitation is estimated at 12 inches per year, mostly as snow, but its occurrence is highly variable. The terrain is mountainous.

Much of the territory's vegetation is pinyon-juniper interspersed with low sagebrush and mountain big sagebrush. Mountain mahogany, aspen, and very small willow communities associated with springs are patchily distributed throughout the area.

The territory is grazed by cattle and deer.

## **History**

Although Spaniards brought horses with them to the Nevada area in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, it is believed that most of the wild horses in Central Nevada are descendants of horses that strayed or were abandoned by their owners during the mining booms and the settlements of homesteads in the late 1800s, early 1900s. Prior to the passing of the Wild Free-Roaming Horse and Burro Act of 1971, it was common practice for local ranchers to periodically release studs with “good blood” to “upgrade” the herds. Roundups would occasionally be held and suitable animals would either be sold or kept on the ranch, trained, and used as cow ponies.

## **For More Information**

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

## **Paradise Peak Wild Horse Territory**

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

## **Location/Habitat**

The Paradise Peak WHT is located in Nevada approximately 60 miles northwest of Tonopah. The territory consists of 14,700 acres in the southeast portion of the Paradise Mountain Range.

Paradise Peak is the geographic center of the territory. Elevation ranges from 8650 feet at Paradise Peak to 6400 feet near Ford Wells. The area is semi-arid with precipitation estimated at 9 inches per year. The terrain is mountainous.

Vegetation is primarily extensive stands of pinyon pine interspersed with low sagebrush and mountain big sagebrush.

Wildlife include deer and mountain lion.

Livestock grazing is permitted within the territory.

Mining has been active within the territory. Results of past mineral operations have left numerous unreclaimed roads, pits, and trenches. Ore mined in the area include iron, magnesite, and gold.

## **History**

Historic account claims that horses on the south end of the Paradise Range (Paradise Peak WHT) were true mustangs: “true horses that was wild of the mustang breed” (*Walter Pierson, retired Forest Service District Ranger*). During 1967 to 1971, the Forest Service made an attempt to remove trespass horses from Forest Service land in Central Nevada. The horses in the Paradise Range were not attempted to be removed because they were of the wild horse nature. They numbered 20 to 30 head. They were primarily found around Goldyke and BC Wells, and they wintered in Ione Valley and Gabbs Valley.

## **For More Information**

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

## **Powell Mountain Wild Horse Territory**

The Powell Mountain Wild Horse Territory (WHT) is administered by the Bridgeport Ranger District, Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest.



### **Location/Habitat**

The Powell Mountain WHT is located in Nevada approximately 10 miles south of Hawthorne. The territory consists of 111,000 acres of National Forest land on the south end of the Wassuk Mountain Range.

The territory is situated between Anchorite Pass and Buller Mountain, and the topography is mountainous. The southern Wassuk Range is a fault block mountain range, faulted and uplifted on the east side and tilted to the west.

The territory is influenced by a southwestern climate pattern. It has a biseasonal pattern characterized by winter and summer precipitation and spring and fall drought. Precipitation amounts vary from 5 to 20 inches per year with approximately 2/3 occurring as snow between November and May. Typically there are large fluctuations in daily temperatures, ranging in the coldest months of December and January as low as -20° F and highs in the 60's° F. Temperatures during the hottest months of July and August rarely exceed 100° F and are typically in the 80's and 90's. The low temperatures during these months are typically in the 50's.

There are four major vegetation communities within the territory: sagebrush, pinyon-juniper, meadows, and playas. The sagebrush type is dominated by Great Basin sagebrush. Pinyon-juniper type is characterized by the single leaf pinyon pine and Utah juniper. The meadow type is confined to small areas of accessible water or snowmelt accumulation, producing a grass dominated community. The playa type is an alkali sink community consisting of alkali tolerant plants, such as saltbrush, goosefoot, and greasewood.

Wildlife present within the territory include deer, antelope, badgers, jackrabbits, and coyotes.

Livestock grazing is permitted within the territory.

### **History**

According to local accounts, there were no known horses in the Powell Mountain WHT until Amos Green at Tweedy Meadows lost his horses in 1855. Also, Perry Morgan, once owner of the Flying M Ranch, turned out his horses when he joined the Army during WWI. Horses then remained wild in the territory with Mr. Morgan periodically turning out studs and gathering horses until the 1930's. The type of horses originally turned out is not documented. There were approximately 23 horses in the territory

when the Wild Free-Roaming Horse and Burro Act was passed in 1971.

### **Herd Description**

The Powell Mountain WHT is managed for an appropriate management level of 29 horses. Bay is the dominant color in the herd. Genetic testing of the herd reveals similarity with the North American Gaited breeds.

### **For More Information**

Contact the Bridgeport Ranger District at 760-932-7070.

## **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 ledifolus*. 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.

## **Three Sisters Wild Horse Territory**

The Three Sisters Wild Horse Territory (WHT) is administered by the Goosenest Ranger District, Klamath National Forest.

### **Location/Habitat**

The Three Sisters WHT is located in California about 7 miles northeast of Tennant. The territory consists of 26,000 acres of Forest Service land.

Topography is open, rolling rangeland. Elevation ranges from 4,600 feet in the north to about 5,200 feet in the south. Temperatures during the winter may drop well below zero for short periods of time, and temperatures during the summer can reach 100° F. The horses spend the summer in the higher elevations of the southern part of the territory and move north during the winter.

Wildlife present within the territory include the Mt. Dome deer herd.

Livestock grazing occurs in the wild horse territory.

### **History**

Large herds were found near Three Sisters since at least the early 1900's. The source of the original horses in this area is unknown. However, many horses escaped or were released by ranchers, miners, and soldiers, which mixed with existing herds. Indications are that in about 1950 a thoroughbred stud was released into the herd.

Over the years this and other herds were used to replenish local ranch stock and to provide supplemental income for the local ranchers. During World War I, large numbers of horses from the Three Sisters area were rounded up and sold to the Army.

When the Wild Free-Roaming Horse and Burro Act was passed in 1971, population of the Three Sisters herd was 7 horses. All of the horses were bay.

## **Herd Description**

The Three Sisters WHT is managed for an appropriate management level of 15 horses.

### **For More Information**

Contact the Gooseneck Ranger District at 530-398-4391.

## **Tierney Wild Horse Territory**

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

### **Location/Habitat**

The Tierney WHT is located in Nevada approximately 30 miles south of Austin. The territory consists of 61,400 acres of Forest Service land in the central portion of the Toiyabe Mountain Range.

Elevation of the territory is between 6,900 and 10,500 feet. The area is semi-arid with precipitation estimated at 12 inches per year. The terrain is mountainous.

The vegetation within the territory is primarily pinyon-juniper interspersed with low sagebrush and mountain big sagebrush. Mountain mahogany, aspen, and willow communities associated with springs and drainages are present throughout the area.

Livestock grazing is permitted within the territory.

### **History**

It is believed that wild horses on the Tierney WHT were once owned by the Yomba Indian Tribe.

### **For More Information**

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

## **Toiyabe Wild Horse Territory**

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

### **Location/Habitat**

The Toiyabe WHT is located in Nevada approximately 35 miles north of Tonopah. The territory consists of 74,000 acres of National Forest land and is located on the south end of the Toiyabe Mountain Range.

The topography is mountainous. Elevations range from 6000 to 11,000 feet. Springs occur at the higher elevations and are a source of water along with perennial streams at the lower elevations. The climate is semi-arid with precipitation estimated at 12 inches per year.

Vegetation consists of Northern Desert Shrub type, Salt Desert Shrub type, and Pinyon-Juniper type.

Principal plant species include Galeta grass, ricegrass, bluegrass, fescue, needlegrasses, lupine, bitterbrush, mahogany, winterfat, shadscale, Pinyon pine, and juniper.

Wildlife present within the territory include deer and mountain lion.

Livestock grazing is permitted within the territory.

## **History**

The history of wild horses in the Toiyabe WHT has been clouded and confused by a chronic history of unauthorized use of private horses on the National Forest land. This situation of unauthorized use within the area by privately owned horses could have resulted in mistakes in the actual inventories of wild horses used to establish the designation of the Toiyabe WHT.

The Forest Service record regarding horses in this area can be traced back to 1951. Many horses had been turned loose and allowed to run wild on the open range. These horses and their use of National Forest lands were not authorized under permit. The horses belonged to several area ranchers and to members of the Yomba Indian tribe. From 1951 to 1971, the Forest Service took steps to document ownership of the horses and notified owners to remove them. None of the violators made a good faith effort to remove their unauthorized horses. Finally, in 1968, one of the ranchers, John Casey, was tried in a U.S. Magistrate's court and was ordered to remove his horses from National Forest land. After Mr. Casey's conviction and removal of unauthorized horses, the other violators also removed their animals. There is documentation that no horses were in the area from 1971 to 1973. However, there is also contradictory documentation stating the presence of 33-35 horses during the same time frame.

Since 1974, the Toiyabe WHT has been reported as having no wild horses present within its boundaries.

## **Herd Description**

No wild horses occupy the Toiyabe Wild Horse Territory.

## **For More Information**

Contact the Tonopah Ranger District at 775-482-6286.

## Toquima Wild Horse Territory



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

### **Location/Habitat**

The Toquima WHT is located in Nevada approximately 50 miles north of Tonopah. The territory consists of about 135,000 acres of National Forest land within the Toquima Mountain Range.

The Toquima WHT is divided between a remote mountainous area and remote arid foothills. Vegetation consists of low sagebrush communities, wet and dry mountain meadows, and pinyon-juniper communities.

Wildlife present within the territory include elk, deer, mountain lion, sage grouse, coyote, badger, raptors and reptiles.

Livestock grazing is permitted within the territory.

### **History**

Although Spaniards brought horses with them to the Nevada area in the 16th and 17th centuries, it is believed that progeny from strays of early emigrants, as well as abandoned and stray animals from early mining booms and settlement of homesteads account for much of the current wild horse population in the Toquima territory. Many of the abandoned animals were the result of economic slumps and periodic droughts which plagued the early settlers. Prior to the passing of the Wild Free-Roaming Horse and Burro Act of 1971, it was common practice for local ranchers to periodically release studs with “good blood” to “upgrade” the herds. Roundups would occasionally be held and suitable animals would either be sold or kept on the ranch, trained, and used as cow ponies.

### **Herd Description**

The Toquima WHT is populated with 30-50 horses. Most often the horses are gray, brown, sorrel, or bay in color, although roans and buckskins can also be found in this herd.

## **For More Information**

Contact the Tonopah Ranger District at 775-482-6286.

## **White Mountain Wild Horse Territory**

This description describes the White Mountain Wild Horse Territory (WHT) administered by the White Mountain Ranger District, Inyo National Forest.

### **Location/Habitat**

The White Mountain WHT is located on the California/Nevada border approximately 7 miles east of Benton, CA. The territory consists of 149,690 acres of Forest Service land and 60,000 acres of BLM land and lies on the east side and crest of the White Mountains. The territory is bounded by Highway 6 on the north, Fish Lake Valley on the east, Cottonwood Creek on the south, and the crest of the mountains on the west.

The White Mountain range is a triangular fault block that was elevated and tilted eastward in recent geological time. Elevations range from 5,000 feet on the floor of Fish Lake Valley to 14,246 feet on White Mountain Peak, the third highest point in California. The topography is a combination of very gentle, open country and very steep-sided canyons and rugged ridges. The Sierra Nevada blocks much of the prevailing air flow and moisture from the west, resulting in precipitation of four to six inches annually in the lowest reaches and twenty inches or more on the crest. Major storms arrive usually between December and March and drop most of their moisture above 7,000 feet in the form of snow.

Four major vegetation zones occur within the territory: 1) desert scrub, 2) pinyon woodland, 3) subalpine forest and upland, 4) alpine tundra. The desert scrub zone is found on the valley floor and is dominated by shrubby species such as shadscale, four wing saltbush, Nevada ephedra, and rubber rabbitbrush. Pinyon woodland is distinguished by the presence of single leaf pinyon. The presence of bristlecone pine or limber pine characterize the subalpine forest, and subalpine uplands include sagebrush, leadleaf mountain mahogany, snowberry, lupine, and various grasses. Alpine tundra is considered to be the zone above treeline, and grasses, sedges, and rushes constitute a larger percentage of this flora than in the other zones.

Wildlife present on the territory include mule deer, desert bighorn sheep, sage grouse, and mountain lion.

Livestock grazing is permitted within the territory.

### **History**

The origin of the White Mountain herd is unknown, but it is thought to date back to the establishment of the first ranches in the adjoining Fish Lake Valley area of Nevada. Members of the early ranch families of Chiatovich and Patterson claimed that wild horses were present at least as far back as the 1870s and were probably escaped or free-roaming ranch horses. There have also been numerous instances reported of both common ranch horses and blooded stock escaping or being turned out into the White Mountains.

One of the more interesting stories of genetic infusions into the White Mountain herd was related by Helen McGee, niece of the Paiute Indian known as "Gray-haired Johnny." According to Ms. McGee, Johnny was an excellent horse doctor, skilled in the use of herbal medicines. During the early 1900's, whenever he went down to the Southern California racetracks, he was in great demand by race horse owners because he used special herbs for quickly healing newly gelded or injured race horses. In return for his services, he was given thoroughbred stallions which he would take to the Whites to replace some of the resident stallions.

Prior to the passage of the Wild Free-Roaming Horse and Burro Act of 1971, wild horses from the Whites were captured for use as saddle horses and pet food. In the mid-1970's some of the ranchers in Fish Lake Valley claimed to still possess wild horses captured prior to 1971 that became good cow ponies of much better quality, they claimed, than those found in other areas of the state of Nevada.

### **Herd Description**

The White Mountain herd is managed for a population of 75 horses. The herd has a majority of bays and chestnuts with most other colors being uncommon.

### **For More Information**

Contact the White Mountain Ranger District at 760-873-2500.