

US Fish & Wildlife Service - Journal Entry

Horses and burros gathered and removed from Sheldon NWR, Nevada

Region 1, October 26, 2004

In 2004, the US Fish and Wildlife Service successfully removed 99 burros and 772 horses from the Sheldon National Wildlife Refuge. While this is less than one fourth of the total number to be removed, it is a very important beginning to a long term project to reduce these herds of feral animals to a manageable sized herd. The burros were all captured using baited traps by Sheldon NWR staff in the Dufurrena and thousand creek areas of the refuge. A total of 293 of the horses were removed from the Big Springs Table herd by cooperating with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to complete a helicopter gather on both the refuge and adjacent BLM lands, leaving about 20-30 animals in this area. An additional 82 head were removed from the Catnip reservoir area by contract with a local rancher to use non-motorized means (horse back) to gather these animals. Another 392 head of horses were removed from the Fish Creek mountain area of the refuge under a separate helicopter gather contract with Cattoor Livestock Roundup, Inc of Nephi Utah. Most of these horses have been adopted to homes all around the United States, and the remaining animals are expected to be placed very soon. Removal of these horses and burros will allow improvement of more than 200,000 acres of upland habitat for pronghorn, sagegrouse, mule deer, and other great basin wildlife species that use Sheldon NWR and surrounding lands. Spring heads, creeks and associated watersheds will also be relieved of horse and burro grazing impacts, leading to improved conditions for riparian associated species such as the Lahontan Cutthroat trout.

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