



# United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
White River Field Office  
220 East Market Street  
Meeker, Colorado 81641

4700 (LLCON05000)

February 28, 2012

## Memorandum

To: Kent E. Walter, Field Office Manager *Kent E. Walter* 02/28/2012  
James R. Roberts, Assistant Field Office Manager *James R. Roberts* 2/28/2012

From: Melissa Kindall, Range Technician  
Tyrell Turner, Rangeland Management Specialist

Subject: Wild Horse Aerial Inventory  
February 16 and 17, 2012

Attached please find the report including maps of wild horses aerially inventoried by helicopter on the dates identified above. This information will be placed on the BLM, White River Field Office's website for access by the public.

*Melissa Kindall* 02/28/12  
*Tyrell Turner* 2/28/12

## Attachment

Aerial Inventory of Wild Horses in the Piceance-East Douglas Herd Management Area, West Douglas and North Piceance Herd Areas, February 16 and 17, 2012 (8 Pages)

**Aerial Inventory of Wild Horses in the  
Piceance-East Douglas Herd Management Area,  
West Douglas and North Piceance Herd Areas  
February 16 and 17, 2012**

**Notes**

The aircraft used was a Bell 206 E3, Jet Ranger III helicopter contracted by New Air out of Logan, UT. The inventory was originally scheduled to begin on 13 February 2012; however, weather delays which included snowfall in both Logan, Utah and Meeker, Colorado diverted the start date until Thursday, 16 February 2012. BLM advised Craig Interagency Dispatch if the pilot couldn't make it to start on the 16 February 2012 we'd reschedule but the new snowfall in the area made for premium on-the-ground conditions and further felt confident that with two full days of flying the inventory could be done in the Piceance-East Douglas Herd Management Area (HMA) and the West Douglas Herd Area (WDHA), and that the some of the North Piceance Herd Area (NPHA) would be considered a bonus. During all flights flight following was conducted by the Craig Interagency Dispatch with 15 minute check-ins to report operation status. If wild horses were spotted the pilot would circle and get in the general location of the band(s) of wild horses so that we could obtain a GPS point, take a picture, and confirm numbers counted. Most of the band(s) of wild horses would begin to move, start to running, or be running when the aircraft flew over. Pilot used GPS in the helicopter to keep spacing between passes consistent in the areas that would be considered open at approximately ½ mile and when terrain necessitated the helicopter flew down the ridges and up the drainages. Light conditions on 16 February 2012 was partly cloudy in the a.m. switching to full sun in the p.m. and clear/full sun on 17 February 2012 in the a.m. turning to partly cloudy in p.m. Refer to the attached maps, one for the PEDHMA and NPHA and the other for the WDHA, with the locations of wild horses observed. Note that Waypoint 42 (from 16 February 2012) and Waypoint 3 (from 17 February 2012) are identified as the same band of wild horses and only counted on 16 February 2012's listing. Photographs of each band were taken (unless where noted), however, we experienced camera difficulties. Most of the south facing slopes was lighter with snow or were bare but still able to see wild horses well due to the lower height of the helicopter flight and if in the morning, several wild horses or bands were out warming themselves in the sun. Due to the topographical conditions and several mechanical limitations of fixed-wing aircraft, it is recommended that future aerial inventories of wild horses within the WRFO be completed with a helicopter which is the best way to aerially inventory this HMA and HAs. Additionally, recent efforts by a local photographer will begin to include individual and/or band identification and numbers through her data collection of the wild horses located in the HMA. This is considered the beginning of an on-the-ground individual identification and location "catalog" of the wild horses within the PEDHMA, and perhaps a few of the wild horses or bands that have relocated just beyond the HMA boundary. Regarding the condition of the wild horses observed, as indicated by the notes, only one sorrel wild horse located on 84 Mesa was listed in "thin" condition, all other wild horses would be listed in good to very good body condition, no mares were noted as "heavy" with foal and no 2012 foals were observed.

## **Inventory Flight of February 16, 2012**

We, Tyrell Turner (in the front seat) with pilot, and Melissa Kindall (in the back seat behind the pilot) began the inventory flight at approximately 9:00 a.m. after safety briefing, etc. with Flight Manager, temperature near 20 degrees to start, initiated the flight out of the Meeker Airport. The snow cover included new snow accumulation over each of the 3 days prior; therefore it was adequate snow cover. We flew direct to the east end of Rocky Ridge (aka Black Mountain) where we began to observe wild horses at the very onset of the inventory, then flew one pass to the west at roughly ½ way from the top and bottom of the slope, and occasionally bumped into several of the drainages. At the west end of Rocky Ridge or the mouth of Yellow Creek we turned and flew the south facing slope of Rocky Ridge, making only one pass at ½ from top and bottom of slope. With this, we considered Rocky Ridge covered. Next we flew west on Yellow Creek drainage to Barcus Creek, turned south and flew Barcus Creek drainage, then basically flew a north/south grid covering the Barcus and Greasewood Creek drainages, ending in Greasewood we flew across the Cathedral Bluffs ridgeline, then flew east across the ridge between Barcus and Pinto Mesa along County Road 122, then we went north on the ridge between Barcus Creek and Pinto Mesa, making a couple of passes, turning south at the Violet Place which placed us at 84 Mesa making two passes before landing for fuel at the end of the old runway next to County Road 24X. After fueling, we flew north on Yellow Creek then turned back south at the Cross Roads to make one pass outside the HMA along the Yellow Creek Jeep Trail area skirting the corner at County Road 24 and County Road 91 where we've seen several bands of wild horses outside the HMA. From here we dropped into Stake Springs Draw and flew south until we reach Tommy's Draw cabin area, only diverted when we noticed a band of two wild horses near the Sagebrush Gas Compressor Station (outside the HMA), then we turned north working a NE/SW terrain grid that covered most of Square S, Pasture C and Boxelder drainages and open areas with limited time spent over heavy P/J pockets, finishing this section by flying south along Big Duck Creek (boundary of HMA) to the Cathedral Bluffs rim.

East Douglas area: From the rim dropped down off into Rocky Point Draw. Then we flew south along the rim into the Cathedral Creek drainage, flew the Cathedral Creek basin, flew one pass south into Soldier Creek then north in Lake Creek including the bench between, then north over the Cathedral Creek drainage private property, then one more pass ½ between previous pass on basin until we reached Tommy's Draw where we began to do generally E/W down the ridges and up the draws, ending this section at Philadelphia Creek before heading direct to the Rangely Airport for fuel. Returning from fueling we flew the fence line boundary south of the airport until we reached East Four Mile where we generally flew E/W down the ridges and up the draws until reaching Philadelphia Creek where we cross west over State Highway 139 into Little Horse Draw (WDHA).

WDHA: We flew a general E/W grid using terrain and using the County Road 116 as the southern line, west to Texas Creek Divide and north to the Big Horse Draw which was where we ended for the day.

7.3 hours flight time logged.

Inside PEDHMA locating 43 bands of horses as follows:

Waypoint	Counted	Yearlings	Notes	East	North
1	7	1	At least 2 Cremellos, 1 or 2 Buckskin, 1 Gray (White)	735112	4439108
2	5	1	3 Sorrel 2 Bay	735170	4439964
3	4	1	2 Sorrel 1 Black 1 Bay	728416	4445321
4	4	1	All Bay	725490	4446146
5	2		Bay and Sorrel	724701	4448167
6	3		All Bay	727946	4443208
7	8	2	1 Gray 3 Sorrel 4 Bay	732012	4438793
8	8		All Dark	715484	4435004
11	23	2	4 Bands (7, 6, 4, 6) Bays and Darks 1 Bald Face Black Yearling	715706	4437208
12	7	2	2 Sorrels	719541	4439727
13	5		Bays	719944	4442016
14	5		All Bay	718596	4441473
15	10	2	Bays	716496	4439789
16	5	1	Bays	714390	4438302
17	4		3 Bay 1 Sorrel	718734	4433795
18	3		2 Sorrel 1 Dark	719324	4434354
19	4		3 bay 1 dark	719818	4435135
20	1		Bay	722617	4437046
21	3		1 Gray, Bay Mare, Bay Yearling	720963	4432233
22	7	2	Bays	722787	4428394
23	1		Sorrel (a little thin)	717517	4427003
24	9		2 Sorrel 7 Bay	718536	4426662
26	2		1 Gray 1 Dark (blue roan)	706448	4410509
27	22	1	Grays and Darks	711871	4417192
28	4		All Black	712649	4418706
29	5	1	1 Gray 4 Black	713083	4416648
30	2		Both Gray	714796	4417683
31	2		1 Gray 1 Buckskin	713631	4423384
32	2		1 Gray 1 Dark	716634	4427083
33	8	3	Bays and Sorrels	702235	4417971
34	1		Bay with Star	703270	4414212
39	5	1	4 Sorrel 1 Bay	702557	4411881
40	2		Both Dark	698230	4422866
	<b>183</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>Total</b>		

Outside PEDHMA locating 8 bands of horses as follows:

Waypoint	Counted	Yearlings	Notes	East	North
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9	6		2 Bands (3 Gray Dark, 3 Darks)	714582	4434419
10	4	1	2 Sorrel 2 Bay	713730	4434348
25	2		Grays near sagebrush compressor	713518	4414853
35	6		4 Sorrel 1 Black Hind Socks, 1 Bay	707356	4407027
36	6		4 Sorrel 2 Bay	709192	4405341
37	4		Sorrels 1 light	710577	4404734
38	6	2	Bobcat Ranch Sorrels and Bays	708876	4404084
	<b>34</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>Total</b>		

WDHA locating 4 bands of horses as follows:

Waypoint	Counted	Yearlings	Notes	East	North
41	10	3	Sorrels and Bays	690292	4411564
42	7	1	Bays 1 Mouse (See notes at Waypoint 3 for February 17, 2012)	685125	4410386
43	2		Bays	685372	4417236
44	4	1	Bays Dark	687018	4423860
	<b>23</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Total</b>		

### Inventory Flight of February 17, 2012

Tyrell Turner (in the front seat) along with the pilot, and Melissa Kindall (in the back seat behind pilot) flew direct to Little Horse Draw drainage from the Meeker Airport, leaving at 8:30 a.m. to complete the WDHA inventory. Then we flew between the Texas Creek Divide and Texas Mountain working south using a terrain grid using State Highway 139 as east boundary until we reached West Creek, then we flew E/W terrain grid using Texas Mtn. and Oil Spring as the line and then continued south and west to East Evacuation Creek. In the open areas continued to fly NE/SW until we flew the "pocket" between Oil Spring Mtn. and Texas Mtn. then we flew until we reached the South Fork of Texas Creek when we went flew direct back for fuel at the Middle Red Wash location. Then we flew direct over the top of Texas Mountain, then on the south side of Texas Mountain flew an E/W grid past County Road 109 to Park Mountain, flew over Park Canyon, then we started using County Road 23 as the west line, flying north to head of Cottonwood Creek. We did not fly the NW corner or what is considered west of County Road 23.

NPHA: We flew direct to Calamity Ridge then we fly north in Little Spring Creek drainage (we did not fly Hay Canyon or Monument Gulch), then cornering back south from State Highway 64 until we reached Boise Creek, then we flew N/S grid to the west towards Fletcher Gulch to the rim of the Bluffs, then we flew direct to the Rangely Airport for fuel. We resumed the flight by flying south out of the airport in Gillam Draw until we reached Big Ridge, then flew N/S making a few passes until we reached Hefley Cow Camp, then turned and did a few more N/S passes until we reached Spring Creek (main), then flew it

north to State Highway 64 where we turned east and flew the White River drainage back to Meeker direct.

7.0 hours flight time logged.

Inside WDHA locating 31 bands of horses as follows:

Waypoint	Counted	Yearlings	Notes	East	North
1	3	1	Bays Stud Mare Yearling	687617	4410210
2	6	2	Bays	686603	4410346
3	7*	1	Bays 1 Mouse (*Not included in today's count)	685078	4410559
4	5		All Sorrel	690583	4409072
5	2		1 Bay 1 Sorrel, (no picture changing batteries in camera)	690491	4407589
6	4		Bay	685069	4405600
7	5	1	Yearling Flax mane and tail rest sorrels and bays	686385	4406511
8	5	2	Sorrels and Bays	687867	4406177
9	3		1 Sorrel 1 Dark 1 Bay	688237	4406919
10	1		Sorrel Flax mane and tail	690465	4406907
11	2		Sorrel and Bay	689736	4405697
12	2		Bay and Sorrel	688373	4405445
13	6	1	4 Bay 2 Sorrel	687716	4405305
14	4		Sorrels and Bays	685534	4402449
15	4	1	Bays and Sorrels	687305	4402426
16	4		3 Bay 1 Sorrel with Star	686920	4401966
17	7	1	Bay	687184	4400499
18	7	1	4 Bay 2 Sorrel 1 Dark Bay SS	687945	4400718
22	3	1	1 Sorrel 2 Bay	679316	4399862
28	3		1 Sorrel 2 Bay	679214	4406162
29	5	1	Bay 1 mule mouse color	677979	4407323
30	8	2	Branded Mare?	677685	4408683
31	2		Bay 1 Dark 1 Light	678992	4408234
32	8	3	All Bay	680750	4410500
33	4		1 Sorrel 2 Dark (1 with Star) 1 Bay	679510	4411041
34	4		3 bay 1 sorrel	677380	4412000
35	8	3	Darks and Bays	681606	4413325
36	3		Big Bays Stud Band	679269	4414302
37	4	1	All Bay 1 Dark bay	680560	4417035
38	7	2	All Bay	680907	4415975
	2		Counted 2 bays enroute to TX Mtn. from refueling – did not mark due to refueling–approx. location T3S, R102W, Section 5, NWSE		
	<b>131</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>Total</b>		

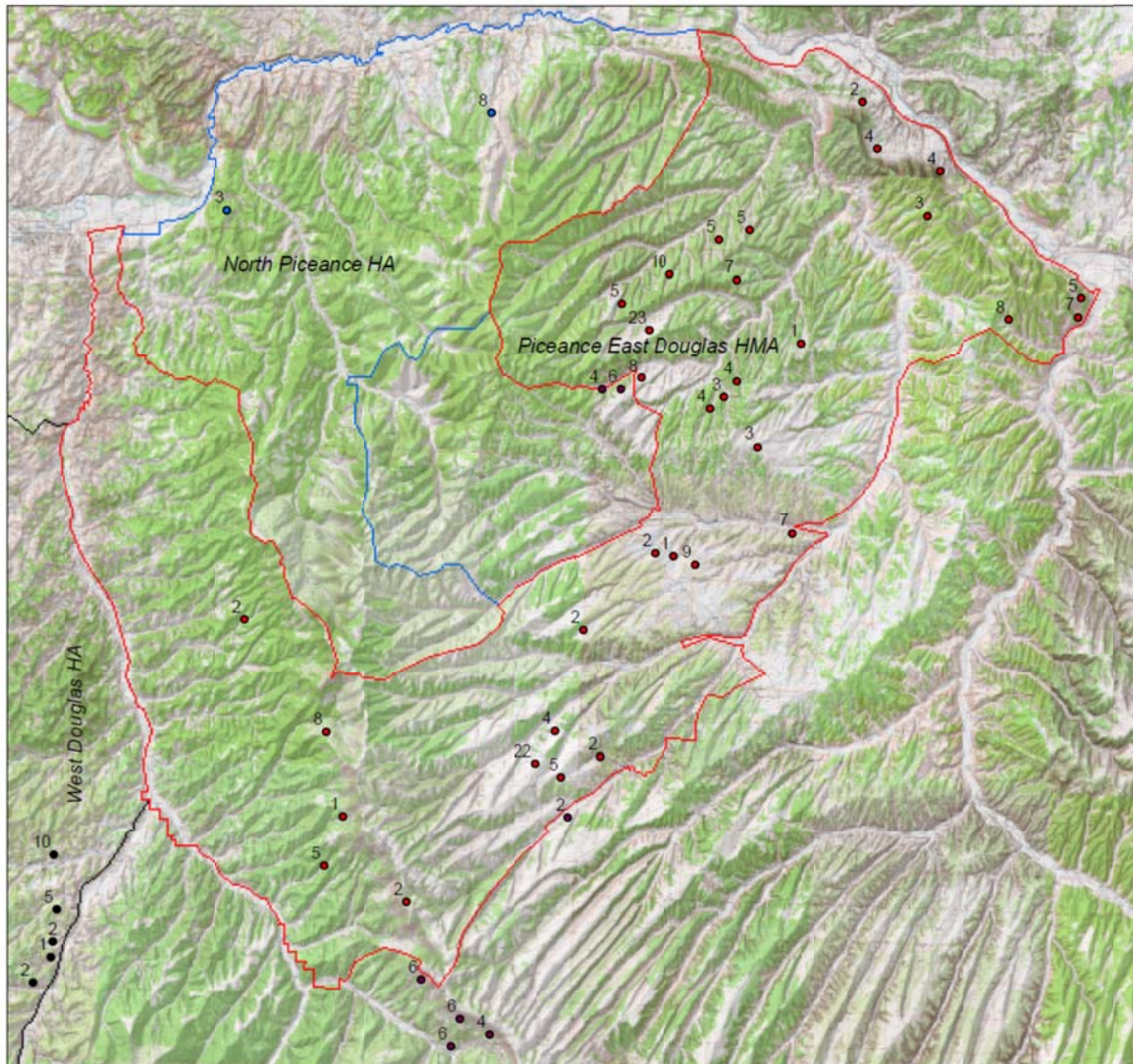
Outside WHDA locating 8 bands of horses as follows:

Waypoint	Counted	Yearlings	Notes	East	North
19	4	1	3 Sorrel 1 with flax mane and tail 1 bay	679525	4395269
20	2		young sorrel and bay	671785	4399071
21	7	2	3 Bay 3 Mouse 2 Sorrel	672083	4398449
23	4	1	1 Sorrel 3 Dark	672213	4403934
24	6	2	3 Dark 3 Sorrel	676058	4404062
25	3		1 Sorrel 2 Bay - Stud band	678724	4404398
26	6	2	All Bay	673720	4405702
27	4	1		677654	4405920
	<b>36</b>	<b>9</b>			

NPHA locating 2 bands of horses as follows:

Waypoint	Counted	Yearlings	Notes	East	North
39	8	1	3 Gray 3 Black 1 Bay 1 Cremello Yearling	707835	4446537
40	3		All Bays (Studs)	696205	4441333
	<b>11</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Total</b>		

# 2012 Wild Horse Inventory Piceance-East Douglas HMA and North Piceanc HA



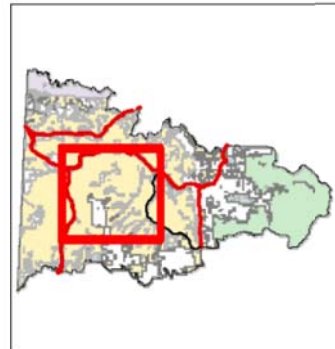
- February 2012 Inventory Area
- NPMA
  - Outside PEDHMA
  - Outside WCHA
  - PEDHMA
  - WDHA
  - FieldOffice\_Boundary\_WRF0
  - North Piceance HA
  - Piceance East Douglas HMA
  - West Douglas HA



00.51 2 Miles

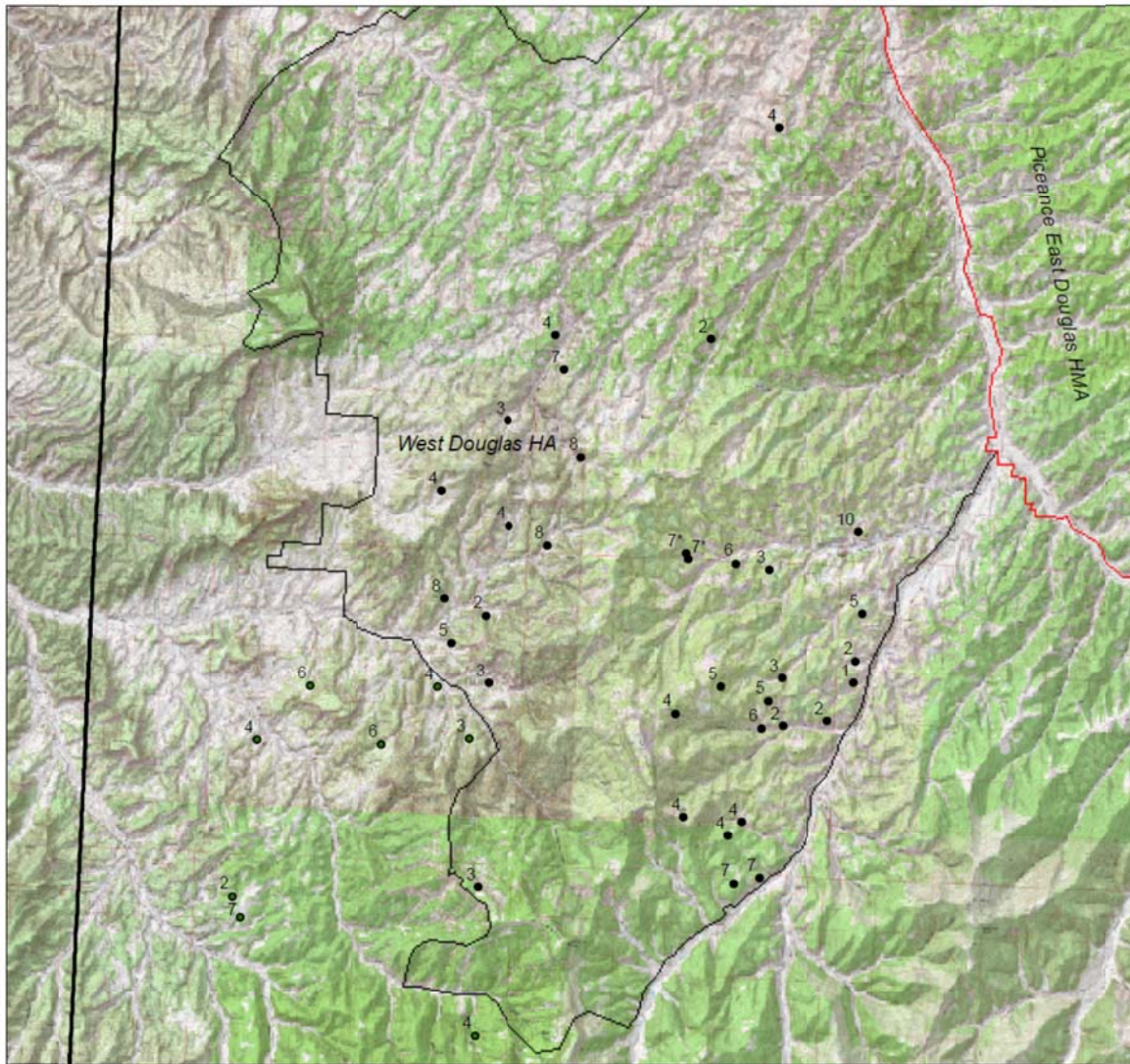
Sources:  
 BLM, USGS, CDOW, etc.

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# 2012 Wild Horse Inventory West Douglas Herd Area



- February 2012 Inventory Area
- NPHA
  - Outside PEDHMA
  - Outside WCHA
  - PEDHMA
  - WCHA
  - ▭ FieldOffice\_Boundary\_WRFO
  - ▭ North Piceance HA
  - ▭ Piceance East Douglas HMA
  - ▭ West Douglas HA



0 0.5 1 2 Miles

Sources:  
 BLM, USGS, CDOW, etc.



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