

## **New Pass/Ravenswood Herd Management Area**

The New Pass/Ravenswood Herd Management Area (HMA) is located approximately 35 miles northwest of Austin, Nevada. The area is approximately 260,336 acres in size and is 18 miles wide and 24 miles long. The HMA consists of north-south trending mountains surrounded by valley bottoms. The New Pass Range provides the western boundary of the area, with the Ravenswood Mountains in the eastern portion of the HMA. The Antelope and Reese River Valleys fall in between the mountain ranges at an elevation of 5,100 feet. The highest point in the HMA is New Pass Peak at 9,003 feet. A small portion of the area, the New Pass HMA is located within the boundary of the Carson City Field Office.

A wild horse gather of this HMA was conducted from August 19 through August 26, and October 21-30, 1994. The first portion of the gather was stopped because of extremely dry weather conditions and intolerable dust, which was deemed detrimental to the horses. The second half of the gather began after the area received some precipitation.

During this gather, 444 horses were captured from the New Pass/Ravenswood HMA. 221 of the horses that were captured were transported to Palomino Valley Center north of Sparks, Nevada for preparation into the adoption program. The remainder of the horses, ages 6 to 22 years old, were released back inside the HMA from which they were captured.

In August 1999, the Antelope wildfire burned 187,000 acres, burning 124,000 acres within the New Pass/Ravenswood HMA, affecting approximately 44% of the habitat within the HMA. An emergency gather was completed to remove the wild horses from the burned areas, protecting them from starvation, as well as preventing impacts by wild horses to the rehabilitation work.

A total of 945 wild horses were removed from the HMA, leaving an estimated 45 wild horses within the unburned portions of the HMA. A large portion of the horses captured were very thin, and suffering from lack of forage. The BLM worked through the next few years to complete seeding and rehabilitation work of the burned areas. Many areas were successfully rehabilitated and today support productive stands of crested wheatgrass and other seeded and native species. Unfortunately, the seeding efforts within a large portion of Antelope Valley were not as successful, and today, many areas are dominated by annual weeds.

It is suspected that wild horses move into the area from other HMAs located west of the New Pass/Ravenswood HMA, and the current population is estimated to be 671 wild horses. An AML of 476 has been established for this HMA, and a gather is tentatively scheduled to be completed winter 2008.

Wild horses within this HMA are average size, and comprised of colors that include bay, brown, black, and sorrel. Some roan horses and a few curly horses have been noted within the HMA.