

THE STATE



OF WYOMING

Department of Corrections

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Daniel Shannon
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November 5, 2021

Wyoming State Legislature
Joint Agriculture, State and Public Lands and Water Resources Interim Committee
The Honorable Senator Brian Boner, Co-Chair
The Honorable Representative John Eklund, Co-Chair
Wyoming Legislative Services Office
200 West 24th Street
Cheyenne, WY 82002

RE: Wyoming Honor Farm Wild Horse Program

Dear Co-Chairs Boner and Eklund,

The purpose of this letter is to respond to inquiries raised at the Joint Agriculture Committee meeting on October 21, 2021 regarding the Wyoming Honor Farm (WHF) Wild Horse Program.

The WHF's Wild Horse Program, which began in 1988, plays an important role in inmate rehabilitation as it provides an opportunity to learn how to respect animals and people through day-to-day challenges. The program is beneficial for the horses and the inmate trainers. The horses are progressed from round pen work to halter work and then into the saddling and rider acceptance process.

The WHF is presently home to 197 equine. Twenty (20) of these are currently in the process of being offered for adoption on the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Online Corral website. Funds raised from the sale of horses are given to the BLM. At optimal levels, the horse program employs 25 to 30 inmate laborers. Due to COVID related difficulties, the WHF has been operating with roughly half that number for a considerable time.

The Wyoming Department of Corrections (WDOC) currently contracts with the BLM to maintain a target population of 175 wild horses, with a maximum at any time of 350. The actual number may vary as horses are adopted and new horses are brought to the WHF. However, over the course of a year an average of 175 horses is maintained. The WHF infrastructure, budgeting, and resource management are planned with this in mind.

For the purposes of this letter, revenues and expenditures are calculated based on a count of 175 horses.

Revenue:

The BLM pays the WHF \$4.50 per horse per day up to 175 horses, with every horse over 175 being paid at \$5.75 per day. Annually, approximately \$287,437 is paid to the WHF. The existing agreement with the BLM expires December, 2021 and is currently being renegotiated for extension.

Expenditures:

Annual inmate labor for the horse program is roughly \$30,000 for 30 inmates, which is \$82 per day or \$.47 per day per horse.

Each horse requires 20 pounds of feed per day, or about four (4) tons per year. The cost of hay is approximately \$100 per ton. This equates to \$400 per horse per year, or roughly \$1.10 per day per horse. The total annual cost is approximately \$70,000.

The annual cost for inmate labor and horse feed is approximately \$100,000, or \$571 per horse per year. The approximate per day per horse cost is \$3.26.

Personnel:

Approximately 60% of farm production goes towards feeding the horses. The annual salary for the Crops Supervisor including benefits is \$56,604. Sixty percent of that is \$33,962 or \$93 per day and \$.53 per day per horse.

The annual salary with benefits for the Horse Supervisor is \$58,224 or \$159 per day and \$.91 per day per horse.

The total personnel cost for the program is approximately \$92,186 or \$526 per horse per year. The approximate per day per horse personnel cost is \$1.44.

Summary:

The annual revenue from the BLM is approximately \$287,437 with annual program costs of approximately \$100,000 resulting in a net gain of approximately \$187,437, based on a population of 175 horses.

Expanding the horse program would require the addition of one (1) staff person and the purchase of hay. The current price for quality hay in the area to purchase is \$300 per ton. Each additional horse would require \$1,200 per year. Based on the current revenue balance from the BLM, and the additional of cost of hay and personnel, the horse program could be expanded by 73 horses. Meaning the WDOC could add approximately 73 horses without additional revenue needed. Additionally, any horses above 175 would increase the revenue to the WHF and contribute to overall operating costs. This increased revenue would be approximately \$153,000.

The costs outlined in this report are based on an established agricultural program at the WHF. To create similar programs at other WDOC facilities would require additional funds than the aforementioned and further study.

In addition, included with the letter please find the annual report required by Wyoming Statute 25-13-105(b).

Please let me know if you need additional information or clarification.

Sincerely;

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Daniel Shannon".

Daniel Shannon, Director
Wyoming Department of Corrections

Cc: Heather Jarvis, Legislative Service Office