

HARNEY COUNTY HISTORY PROJECT

AV-Oral History #94 - Sides A/B

Subject: Ron Harding - On BLM Wild Horse Program

Place: Wild Horse Corrals - Harney County Oregon

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Interviewer: Talk to public at tour of BLM Wild Horse Corrals -  
Open House

NOTE: This talk was given as Ron Harding showed the public the Mustangs gathered from the East Allotment in late July.

RON HARDING: ... I'll give you a little background on the wild horses and the management of them. It all --- I guess as far as the Federal Government managing horses started even as early as 1959. When Wild Horse Annie, her true name being Velma Johnson, seeing the abuse that wild horses were taking by a lot of mustangers on the range. They used to cut tendons, sew their nostrils together, anyway to get them to a truck, and get them on and get them to market to butcher. That's the term you've heard, the term chicken feed horses, well that's where it came from. She crusaded, and a law was passed in '59 that prohibited the use of motorized vehicles to gather wild horses. She got on another uproar in 1971, or even as early as 1970, and began to contact school teachers, lawyers, and the like, and got the school children to write to Congressmen. And they call it sometimes, "The School Children's Horse Act," the Wild Free Roaming Horse and Burro Act of 1971. And it allowed for the protection and preservation of wild horses on the range.

In 1974, we started gathering wild horses in the Burns District. We were the first

District to gather wild horses, to amount to anything. So we started in 1974. We gathered for two years, horseback, just like you might say in the old times, the rawhide method. It was pretty slow. The horse's cost to get off of the range during those years, from '74 to '76, was about \$900 per animal.

In 1976, there was amendment passed to the Wild Horse Act, which let us use helicopters, and at that time the prices to gather started dropping. Today it costs us about \$75 to \$80 per animal to gather them from the range, so there's a considerable difference between that \$900 and say \$80.

In 1978 the Wild Horse Act was amended again, which allowed us to pass title on these animals. After people take them and take care of them humanely for a period of one year, they have to have them inspected by a veterinarian; they apply for a title. If it's approved, then we would give them title. And at that time they become as any other horse. You can sell them; do what you want to with them.

If there is any questions as we go along, well just holler or hold up your hand. If I pause for a breath, which I generally don't do when I'm talking about horses, because when I've got a captive audience, I like to talk about them.

But at any rate, the horses that I'm going to show you, at least some of the horses that I'm going to show you today, or a major portion of them, are very special. So I think at least, and there's a lot of other people who share my belief. As we go along, you will understand a little bit more what I'm talking about.

We feel the horses we've got in this corral today, is the nearest thing to a Spanish Mustang that you can go anywhere in the United States and see. Pryor Mountain has a small herd. The gentleman who is instrumental in establishing the Pryor Mountain herd was here with me this past week for two days taking picture upon picture, and he says, "There is only two herds of these as far as I know, in the United States today," and he

says, "there's one on Pryor Mountain, and the ones right here." And he says, "I've looked at these horses and hunted for them for 25 years, these little Spanish Horses," he says, "I would rate this the number one herd, and the Pryor Mountain the number two herd, simply because the Pryor Mountain herd has a lot of hair on their legs." Feather, if you will. And these horses, as we look at them, you'll notice they are very clean legged. Because they have a lot of special characteristics that you won't see in any other range horse, and these I'll point out to you as we go along.

How did we come by these horses? In 1974, when I came to the Burns District, I started to asking the old time horse runners is there is any Spanish Mustangs around. I finally run across a fellow that seemed pretty knowledgeable, and he says, "Well there used to be some little horses that we call the Oriana Mustangs, and they were duns, and grulla, and buckskins. They were real nice little horse, fine boned, and small footed." And he says, "If there's any of them left," he says, "they're on Beatty Butte." That was in '74.

Well three years later, we gathered the horses off of Beatty's Butte, and the first load that come through, I walked up to the truck and I peaked through and I see zebra stripes. I began to get a little bit excited. But I thought, my suspicions as conveyed by this other gentleman, were probably true. When we unloaded the animals, I realized what we did have, and I went to town and talked to my District Manager, Chris Vosler. And I said that we've got a horse out there that's different than any other horse around, and we ought to do something about it. I said, "What are we doing in our District to the South? Are they going to do anything with these horses that's coming out of the Lakeview District?" He says, "No, I doubt if they would." And so I said, "Well what can be done?" And he says, "Well, let's talk about it a little." And so he called in an Area Manager, by the name of Bill Phillips, who is vitally interested in this particular kind of animal, and we

talked about it. And he said, "Well we're going to gather this small herd here in about four or five months, why don't we just hold the best that we've got of these Spanish Mustangs until we gather that herd, and then we'll release them." So we did this, and this was in 1977.

So I haven't seen these horses up close until about a week ago. I seen them out on the range, a neat sight to see a bunch of dun horses with a few grulla coming down the trail, you know. I mean to me it was exciting, when I seen them two years ago.

What we have intentions of doing now, and which we did, or we are partially done with the job, we've got two herd areas, and they're back to back, there's only a fence lines between them. One herd was the little Spanish Mustangs, and the other was just horses. And what was happening was we was getting mixing back and forth. And essentially if you keep that up, pretty soon you're gong to lose what you've got.

So we just decided what we would do was gather all the horses out of both herds, and release our little Spanish horses back, and that way we can hold them pretty well pure stuff. So we will release back into this herd, 50 horses, I'll select 50 of these horses. There will be stallions, mares, and colts. And what will go back will be a 50-50, or approximately so, 50-50 sex ratio, because anytime you gather any herd of horses, you're going to find about a 50-50 sex ratio. They won't vary over 2 to 4 percent. Usually, if they do, they will be heavy to the male population.

After we select the 50 head from these, then I will select another 20 head. We've got another center over at Eugene, and we will take 20 head over there. And then we'll select another 30 or 40 to go to Grants Pass, and then the remaining animals will be placed through here. And we will not place any animals until we've finished doing our branding exercise, and we expect to be done with that around the 15th of this month. So if you do see horses you like, well don't say, "Hey, I want number 32, he's mine, I like

him." If you are interested, we would be more than happy --- one of these young ladies usually standing around here by the loading chutes, will be happy to take your name, your phone number, age of animal that you desire, sex of animal that you desire, and then when horses become available, we will be more than happy to call you. There is a \$125 adoption fee. There are certain requirements as far as hauling is concerned. If they are over a year old, you have to have a ton truck or larger, or a four-horse stock trailer or larger. If it's open top, it must be six-foot sides.

So with that we will --- first of all, is there any questions over anything I've said so far pertaining to the law or management of the horses, or anything of that nature? Any question at all, or if it comes up now, or as we go around, or after the tour, be sure and holler at me.

Now whenever we get done, and we're running a little bit behind, but I made a tour at 10 o'clock, and we were supposed to go into starting these colts at 11 o'clock, a kind of a "how to session". But the number of people here, we decided to go ahead and give another tour, and then do the exhibitions.

The gentleman that will be doing that is Chuck John. I've know him for a number of years, and I consider him --- and I know a lot of you fellers are horsemen, I see a few in the crowd here that I know for sure are horsemen. But I kind of consider this gentleman a horseman's horseman, because he does have a lot of know how. And even though you might be a horse trainer, I think you can pick up a point or two off of him.

So let's just start around, and I'll talk a little bit as we go, and let you look. We'll get a little bit better look at these mares and colts as we go, and I'll show you a colt right here that just happens to be right here right now. The little light colored mare. Now there's a lot of controversy on wild horses today, and what age that mares will foal. That mare is two years old, and she's never shed a tooth. And you fellers that know how to age

horses, know that if they haven't shed any, they are still two or under.

Now that colt that's running with her, you'll notice his light buckskin color, with red mane and tail. You're going to look a long time before you'll find another one that's light buckskin, with red mane and tail. He's called clay bank. He's very unusual animal. During the day he's ...

Along in the 1700 or 1800's the Indian Chief's wife generally rode clay banks, because it gave them, they were a status symbol. There were very few of that kind of animal, so the Chief's wife rode the clay bank animal. They are kind of a really neat animal.

One thing I want you to look at, that little light mare, clay bank colts mother, look at the dorsal stripe runs clear down in the hair in her tail. If you look at these mares close, and some of the stallions you'll see that this dorsal stripe on all of them runs right down into their tail. But it really shows up in her because of her light color.

Some of the characteristics, and we'll kind of move along, and I'll talk about some of the characteristics, and then as we see the animals, I'll point them out again. The characteristics of these horses, they have hooked ears. Not only do they have hooked ears, but their ears are outlined in a dark color, usually black or dark brown. The back of their ears is very unique, in that it looks as though somebody almost took a paint brush and painted a third to half of their ears to a real dark color, and then their ear goes into their body colors.

These horse will have, a lot of them, will have a bi-colored mane and tail. There's a little filly there whose mane stands a little bit erect. That's another, that two year old in there, that's another characteristic of the animal. Now if you look close, if we get close enough to some of these, and we will I'm sure, they have zebra stripes on their knees, around their knees, and around their hocks.

Of course I pointed out the dorsal stripe earlier. Now I have one stud that I turned loose on Riddle Mountain. I don't know if you are familiar with mules or burros, but they have a term they call a jack-stripe, that comes off of their withers. This stud has a set of two jack-stripes coming off of his withers, and then if you look at him from the top, he has stripes coming off of that dorsal stripe. And you look at him and say, what have we got here, a part zebra, you know. Very unusual animal. The only one I've ever seen in my life.

But this dun color and these markings that I've been telling you about are primitive colors. They are the first, the colors like the first horses that modern man captured and tamed.

Now the Spanish Mustang background of course comes from the Spanish barb that the Spaniards brought to North America. And that animal came from the old ... which became extinct at one time until two German scientists brought it back into existence. By selecting animals similar to these, and breeding them up close, they bred the ... back into existence. These animals, the Spanish Barb is a ... Arabian cross.

If you'll look at these horses, you'll begin to see a little bit of Arabian. If you look at Arabians ears, he's got them ears, kind of pointed at each other.

If you look at these horses you'll see they have very prominent eyes, very large prominent eyes, as compared to a regular horse. And if you look at the old bay mare there, she's a regular horse. You can see the difference in him.

These horses, some of them will have arched neck. If you're able to examine their vertebrae, you'll probably find that they have a five lumbar vertebrae, very similar to that of an Arabian horse. If you look at their bones, you notice their leg is free of hair. But if you look at their bone, it is not a big flat bone; it's a round bone horse. They don't have a big flat bone like most range horses. It's a little tiny round bone horse, and almost all of

them; if you look at their feet there they've got the same foot on them. They probably all wear --- I've got a horseshoer standing in the crowd, he'll say he'll wear about a double 00 shoe, every one of them.

QUESTION: Do horses like that make very good endurance horse?

RON: I would say, well first of all I think probably, not only this horse but all --- if they've been on the range for say up to two years, if they have had a pretty tough life, and if they wasn't tough, they didn't live, so, they would probably have a lot of stamina.

On the right here is a very small mare who is no relation to the Spanish Mustang horses. What their background is, I have no idea. They are, they may tend to show pony blood, and I say that because if you look at the little mares hips, and she's so fat, and ponies tend to fatten up like that. However she does have a horse ears, as does the other little mare. What I'm saying horse ears, ponies tend to have shorter ears, in relation to their bodies, than do horses. These look to me like little horses, only thing that I know of, and I've seen a lot of Big Summit Prairie horses come in, in the wintertime and they were very thing. I think that these horses have very little forage in the winter, and I think they just get stunted.

Now here's a couple of studs. One of them being part blood, and you can kind of see what they do when they cross out a little bit. The reason I say part blood, is because they felt that the Spanish horses did not tend to have a lot of white on them. They had white on them, but not to the point that you have an excessive amount, as does this colt here. I think this colt is probably out of the little sorrel mare we seen in that other pen, because her, this year's baby looks just bout like her. This is a two-year-old colt. The other horse, the brown-black looking horse, he's part blood, and the reason I say it is, if you look at his ears, while he's that dark color, he has still got the fawn color inside his ears.

I'll let everybody through this gate, because I'm sure he wants to put some horses back in there.

You see the pen coming up on the left, are the dry mares coming off of that bunch, and they range from two on up to about six years old. Two of them in there are a little bit ouchy, and you're going to run into that every now and then, and that old sorrel mare, if you get up close to her, would probably take half your arm off if you stuck it in there to her.

Now the little mare, she's not quite as ouchy, see she just kind of tries to stay out of the way of the others. The little mare is a Big Summit Prairie mare. The brown mare is a five year old, and come off Murderers Creek, and the old sorrel mare come off from down by Jack Mountain. We call her Warm Springs Allotment. The old mare is about 25 years old, according to her teeth, the angle and the wear. The two larger animals I'll guarantee you, you better pack a lunch if you think you are gong to train them, because either one of them will try to kill themselves before they'll let you train them. So that's the reason they are isolated. Because there's not doubt about it, that pair of mares would put the hurt on you if they could.

And it's just --- well they are kind of like people, you know. The schoolteacher has the little boy that she can't make sit down in class. They throw the word out that he's hyper. Well I guess these mares are hyper.

There will be a few of these mares will go back. The little light colored mare is one of the original mares that went out in 1977. She appears gray to you, and the reason she does is that you are looking at her mane, and her mane and tail is kind of gray. But if you look at her again, she's got a kind of yellowish tint to her, and in the wintertime I've seen her with her winter hair on. I had her in the corrals here with her winter hair on, and we called her --- there's another little mare that didn't come in, I imagine she winter killed or something. There was a pair of them and we called them our pumpkin colored mares,

because they were just as orange as a jack-o-lantern. It was kind of a frosty orange over their whole body. And if you look close, you can see it on her.

QUESTION: What about that one that is kind of behind her that has kind of dark face, and --- right against the fence there.

RON: Can you give me a number?

QUESTION: No.

RON: Okay, she's a red roan, and this is a common Spanish color, red roan and blue roan. Now the little mousey gray horse right here, number 60 is a grulla. People commonly call them grulla, or grulla. But the proper term being Spanish name is grulla, G R U L L A, the double "L" being silent.

Now I'll show you another mare before you leave here. I want you to look at her if you can see the color, and that's this brown mare right here closest to us. She's brindle as any old bulldog you ever looked at in your life. Or an old jersey cow that you milked when you were a kid. She's a brindle mare, and that's all you can call her, and I've only seen one. I've seen over 7,000 horses come through this corral. And she's the only brindle mare I've ever seen in my life anywhere. When you get up close to her, she looks like she's stripped as a tiger. Now we did put her back out. She came in with these little mustang horses. It's definitely some primitive characteristic that is almost lost. And the genetic pool was such that when ever she was conceived it turned out that way, and I would almost wager you pay a check, that you'll probably go a lifetime and never see another one like it.

The one right out on the far right, right here now. Look at those streaks on her hips and the shoulders and the sides, see them? Number 62, she's just a little horse. Kind of cute, isn't she?

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QUESTION: I'm just wondering how come your fences are so tall?

RON: I'm really glad you asked that. That's a good question. I generally cover that, and I just failed to do so. The lady asked why are our fences so tall. We worked these horses at the Harney County Fair Grounds, these wild horses, for two years. And then they told us that they didn't want us there anymore, so we decided to build us a good set of corrals. We had problems there, and the problems was that those two year olds would clear a five and a half feet just about as easy as looking at it, if they got a little bit excited. So we decided if they were tall enough they wouldn't try them, so we built these. These are six and a half to seven foot. Then you'll notice that they are double constructed, most of them. Those two pens here are some of the original constructions established as a temporary installation. But if you look at some of our other pens, on the outside, while the inside will be five boards high, the outside will only have three boards on them.

These things are kind of like a Ford car, you know. Fix or repair daily. Well that's kind of what you do when you have a bunch of wild horses. Because they will attack the fences at a drop of a hat. Boy, they will hit them head on.

Now these stallions here come off of the mares and colts that we've been looking at, and people say how can you do that? How can you keep all them stallions? Well I don't know how we can do it, but here they are. They get along real well, you don't see them peeled up, they're not fighting. But put a mare along side here in the alley, and then watch them fight. There will be one win out. That old number 64 horse, which is almost directly in front of us, there's a blue roan in front of him, he'll come out there in a minute. He's a real long maned horse, was one of the old original studs. He's about 10 years old. See the blue horse, some people call him grey, but he's a blue roan, right in front of him, he's one of the old original studs. Now that blue roan horse, in the old days, they called him a Blue Corn, and he's a Spanish color.

We've got two of them buckskins, and they're almost more than a buckskin. If you'll look at them, they have that orange cast that I was telling you about. See on their hip, at the point, they're really orange colored.

That old black horse that's the closest to us there, he is a term called sway backed. Not only is he sway backed, he's hog backed, and he's deformed, and you won't find one probably in --- about one in a thousand, might be like it, that's unusual to find a deformed animal. In the time that I've been here, 9 years, with horses coming off of the range, I've seen about five excessive sway back, and about a dozen with club feet, and I don't think that the club feet, I don't think that they were born with them. I think that they were caused later. In digging for grass in the wintertime, the folks that live around here know that we have a lot of snow, and especially where these horses are, and they have to get around and dig for their grub, and in the winter they don't have any. And the snow makes their feet get soft, and then they get down into where the grass is, they're pawing in the gravel and it tends to, like an abrasive, it just wears their toes off. And when that happens the foot turns down and you've got a permanent clubfoot.

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One thing the fighting in here, I'll explain how we kind of take care of it. When these horses arrive at the corrals, the first thing we do is separate them according to their ages, and sex. We put wieners and yearlings in one pen. We put the two year old mares and up, dry mares, two year olds and up in another pen. Studs, two year olds and up in another pen. And the mare sand colts in another pen. And this reduces fighting. These horses haven't been real bad to fight. Now I don't know whether it's the nature of this kind of animal, I'm not going to argue that point. It may be that they're smart enough that they've got past that point. You don't see these mares fighting that much. Normally when we've got a bunch of mares in, they tend to start establishing who is boss right

away. They try to put the hurt on each other. They don't go at it like stallions either. A stallion, he'll go head to head, you know, or head to flank and start rooting each other in the flank, like a couple of hogs or something. And they'll squeal and come up in the air, and paw the air. And they walk off and that's it. But mares, now, when they fight now, they mean business. They back up rump-to-rump, and boy, what I mean they go to kicking, and bones go to cracking. And what generally happens is that one mare will end up with a calfed hock, and which is a permanent, as far as a riding animal, is ... worthless. But you could use her for a brood mare, if they are able to get around.

Got one mare in here, I don't believe that she's got twin foals, however, she's got two babies, if I see her I'll point her out, she's got two babies that follow and nurse her, and she don't care. Their colors are compatible. They are both bay, but their markings are completely different. If they are twins, they're certainly fraternal twins, they are not identicals. If they are fraternal twins, they would certainly be an oddity, in horses.

These horses in this pen are horses that say, "Please give me a home," because a lot of them have been here for over a year. And the reason they are here is that people are very selective on what they take home with them. They want something that's beautiful, and in the horse world today, usually "big" is beautiful. If he is a big horse, they want them. If he's ugly they don't want him. He may ride just as good as the pretty ones, but if he's got an ugly head on him or something; they don't want him. So he's left here and nobody will take him.

Some of these horses in this lot will eat you up; there are a few of them that will! I usually know which ones they are, I've handled them enough so I know pretty well all of them. And when people come and if they are the kind that will bite your arm off if they get a chance, I will tell people. I don't want them to get hurt. They don't need them if they are going to be dangerous to them, a threat to their life. So we try to be honest, we're not

horse traders. Maybe I shouldn't have said that, but I've tended to be a horse trader all of my life, at times. And you get around people, and they'll tell you about anything, kind of like a car dealer, I guess, sometimes. But if they have flaws, I'll definitely call them out. If they are nasty temperament, I'll call that out, and if they are gentle, I'll call it out. If I get people in here that's never touched a horse in their life, and they want a horse, I'll tell them what they are up against, and if they still want a horse, well then I'll say well I can show you some of these horses that are a little gentler. If they don't want to listen to me, hey, I'll let them have their way. It's first come first served when they go up for adoption.

QUESTION: What is the method of making one of these horses, you know, rideable, and useable?

RON: Okay, we're gong to get into that if you've got enough time. There's a lot of different methods.

QUESTION: Can you just be kind of be friends with them, or do you have to really get to -  
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RON: There are a few you can, but I would say that 98 to 99 percent you can't. That's the misconception that people have. They think they are getting --- They look at these horses and they stand out here and they say well, them horses ain't wild, look at them; they're just standing there. Well I guarantee you; you pitch a rope on one of their heads, and see where they're standing. I'll tell you what; you are going to be going around in that lot about 90 miles an hour, if you can hang onto that rope. So when I say that these horses will eat on you, they're a different kind of a horse, they'll bite, strike, and kick. They are not a barn-raised horse, and they know how to use their teeth. When you start on these horses, as a rule, you always want to approach in from the right angle to the shoulder, because you can't get kicked or struck there, and if he starts to, maybe you got a chance to get out of his way.

The big problem comes, and this is where I get most of my trouble with people who have problems with these horses. They take one home, and they put a halter on him, and they tie him to a post, and they want to try to walk up to that horse, and what is the horse's natural reaction? Probably anybody could tell you, the horse is just going to jump, and when they jump, they jump back too. Now the horse is watching this, you know. Well I'm braver now, go back and try it again, and they walk up to him and the horse jumps, and they jump again. And about the third time, or fourth they jump, the old horse has got them cataloged, and he says, "Ah ha, old boy here, every time I jump he's going to get away from me." So the next thing you've got is a horse that will run you out of the corral.

I've had ladies call me up crying, and they say, "Oh, what am I ---," and hey, they taught that horse that. And I don't care how afraid you are, the only time you jump is if that horse is going to kill you. That's when you jump. Because these horses have no bad habits, but what you teach them, except maybe with these old studs, if you've had one eat on you, or ... mare. Because they get bad habits of kicking and biting you, and running you out of the corrals, but you started it.

...

This gentleman down here at the end will show you. I didn't take time to discuss it, but he'll show you one method of doing it. He's going to, and no doubt the little colt will act up a little and things, but he's going to --- that doesn't shake him none.

This little mare got injured, and I think we can talk her out of it. This little red dun mare. This little mare I've had around for a year, she's kind of a showpiece, to show people, when I don't have these mustangs in, which they really are. You see all the markings on her? You'll see one of the freeze brands on her left neck when she turns around. This little filly has been tied up three times, but she's been around long enough, that people don't shake her too bad.

This horse here in this pen, over there, the roan horse, come out of the Vale District, named Roan. He's been broke since 1976. He's a pretty good kind of using horse. Now you'll look at our grulla mares, I don't know why, but our grulla mares seem to be a super mare. This 76 animal is an awful nice mare, but I like the next one over, the grulla color, being the mousey colored mare, what is she, number 85? A beautiful headed mare. You can see the zebra marks on those grullas real well on their front legs, but if you would look at 85, right there a breast of us. She is a doll; love that mare. 92 is not a half bad dun mare. This number 20 dun mare over here with, is a sweetheart.

QUESTION: Can you adopt just a little one, or do you have to ---

RON: These colts will go with their mama's. They, now at times you can adopt little ones. If I've got an orphan colt, or if I've got a wiener colt, you can adopt the small one. If I have anything that's an orphan, and under six months old, there is no charge for.

We do that as an encouragement for the public to take them. If they're over, anything over six months old, and not on a mother, it's a \$125 adoption fee. If we adopt these mare and foal pairs out, then the mare and foal pair is considered one unit, thus \$125 for the pair. But anything else that is not an orphan is \$125.

I think one thing I always say is when you look at these Spanish horses today, I want you to --- if I ask you to do any-thing, it's just to photograph them in your mind, because I don't think you'll ever --- if you don't come back the next time we gather them, you'll never see that kind of animal probably again. They, I think, are one of a kind.

This is where we run them in to make the freeze brands, or marks. Now that number that you see on their side is sheared on there, it will grow out. There is a permanent freeze mark on each and every animal's neck that goes out for adoption. There is a "U". Two symbols representing the last two digits of their birth year; and six digits representing the animal's number. And this is done here. You'll notice, if you look

in here it is a funnel shape, goes around the corner, we built it that way because horses, if they come straight on down an alley into a straight --- and funnel down into a straight, and look down there at a dead end, they will turn right around and run right back over the top of you if at all possible. And you are left climbing the fence. So they go around in around this corner, and they think they are getting away until it's too late, and then we've got them hornswoggled in here.

We'll slip through here. Whenever he starts to work this colt, I'll let him instruct you, you'll have to position yourself where you can see. Some of you it would be probably better to stay on this side, others might go around on the other side and stand in the road, and we'll --- If you've got babies, young children, hang onto them so they won't fall off, and anything.

...

There is only one other herd that I know of, or that's in the United States, that would even compare to this bunch of horses you are looking at, and that's the ones on Pryor Mountain. All they manage Pryor Mountain for is the wild horses. It is known as a wild horse range. A gentleman out of Wyoming helped get that established. He spent two days with me this past week. He says, "As far as I'm concerned there's only two herds that carry this kind of blood in the United States. That's Pryor Mountain and here, and I rate Pryor Mountain horses second, and these first."

Because the Pryor Mountain horses have a lot of hair on the feather on their legs.

QUESTION: By any chance will you guys start trading back and forth, like a club, or ---

RON: Probably not. Because I have some more of these on Riddle Mountain. I'll probably just switch back and forth on Riddle. Now these markings you see are primitive markings. They are the first markings; they are markings on these horses that were on the first modern horses that man tamed. This horse right here, if you look at what's

causing him to have this look, is that he's probably bred up real close, and the genetic concentration came out of him. But if you look at his head, he's almost got a head like a Mongolian wild horse. See he's really gone back.

Now I've got a stud on Riddle Mountain that I turned out there, that originated in Sand Spring over in Vale District, which is a herd that shows a little bit of mustang. And this horse had two jack stripes, one about eight inches long on his withers on either side, and then just in front of that he had two, another set of jack stripes about fourteen, sixteen inches long, about an inch and a half wide. And then starting behind his withers, if you look at him from the top it looked like a fish skeleton. I mean these stripes started off with that dorsal stripe, and he looked like he was about half zebra, you know. And I've never seen another horse like it. And like I've said, I've been around them a lot of years.

I used to go to a lot of horse shows, and horse sales all over the country before I got into this. One thing you'll notice, and you'll notice a little more in the colt, look at the tufts hanging out the bottom of the horse's ears. You don't see that in a regular horse's ears. This horse standing right here by us, number 67, look right where his ears connect onto his head there, look at them tufts coming out.

Now I want you to look at why we termed to buckskin colored horses here. They are almost clay bank horses. They've got a pinkish-orange cast to them that I was telling you about earlier, which a normal buckskin don't have. It's kind of a weird little color to them.

SIDE B

... (Conversations with Pauline Braymen.)

NOTE: An excerpt from a tour done earlier in the day.

... A trip up through Mexico, that horse would get loose. It is a known fact and on

record that Coronado and his men had only one mare in their band of horses that they were riding, and the rest were studs and geldings. So it's highly unlikely that thousands of wild horses came from one mare.

Another theory is, which is not a bad one to grab a hold of and kind of hang onto is that we know that in New Mexico, Spain gave a large land grants to some of the people, thousands of acres.

And when they came and settled in New Mexico, they took Indians, and they were almost as slaves. They didn't allow the Indians to ride horses at all, because they were afraid if they got control of horses, then the Indians would get control of them. And what happened the Indians stuck around for a while, and then all of a sudden they decided they were tired of working for the Spanish, and they left. And when they left, they knew enough about these horses from just watching, that they took the horses with them.

So we know that's how the Indians got a hold of some, so they feel probably from those Spanish people, as well as the Indian, horses got started, and of course moved into Texas, moved north ward into Nebraska, the Dakotas, and what have you.

The other theory is that when the Spanish were settling in Mexico, and up through California establishing their missions, that these horses got loose and came up into Oregon. All that we really know for sure is the fact that when Lewis and Clark came through Oregon, there were thousands of wild horses along the Columbia River Valley.

This pen of horse we've had around, some of them around a year in February. They are all ages. They are horses that don't seem to find homes. We're busy branding these other horses now, and soon as get done with them, we'll have to go through and trim these again. It will be the second time we went through and trimmed them all.

Most of them are from Murderers Creek and Big Summit Prairie. There are a couple of horse in here that, other than that, I think three head, but most of them from

Murderers Creek, Big Summit Prairie. They are just kind of horses, you see a lot of, most of them have got a lot of feather on their hoofs, legs, real flat boned, kind of a horse kind of a horse.

You see some of these blue roans; there is a blue roan stud in that pen we just looked at, blue roan mare over here. Years ago we called them Blue Corns, like I said earlier is a Spanish color in their horses.

I like some of these, I've got, I think three grulla mares in here, and one grulla colt. They are all going back. They are the original mares that were turned out in 1977, and they are sure enough keen little mares. Not only do they have a pleasing color, but their confirmation, the way they carry themselves, their heads, tend to be real refined. I think a real beautiful animal.

The color that they are, the dun and the grulla, they call it the dun factor, you take any one of these dun mares, and breed them to a dun stallion, and they are liable to throw a grulla. They can throw a red dun. They can throw a clay bank. I didn't turn loose any red duns in this bunch at all. However, I've got a red dun mare, three year old red dun mare right there with a red dun colt on her. Then I've got a dun mare with a red dun colt on her, yet there are no red dun stallions. So that's what I say, you can mate a dun mare to a dun stallion, and come out with a red dun.

Now I've got a mare that's a little too old mare, and people say, "Ah, these wild horses don't breed as a yearling." Well I'll defy anybody to look in her mouth and tell me that's she's any older than two. She hasn't shed a tooth, and she's got a color that I know some of you have never seen before. But if you really look into it, you probably won't see over 25 in your life, and that's if you see horses every day. These clay bank colts, stud colt on her, a clay bank colt. What I'm saying is he looks like a light buckskin, but he's got a red mane and tail.

But you'll notice some of these other mares, here's a mare just behind the fence, you can probably see her pretty good, got two colors of manes, these bright and then the lighter ones. This is the characteristics of it.

They are pretty good mamas, but they --- fight a little bit, but I don't think they fight as much as a normal range horse. They seem to get along a lot better. When you get in a pen with a bunch of them, they'll all bunch up, and they tend to move like, I refer to them that they are moving just like water, because they just flow together. When one turns the whole bunch goes. The problem with this bunch is that they'll probably scatter like a bunch of quail.

What we're going to do with these that we're not sending back, we're sending 20 head to our Eugene Center for placements. We'll cut out another 30 or 40 head and take them to Grants Pass. And then the remaining will stay here. Of course the horses that go back onto the range I'm going to cut first.

Here's a little red dun mare, unfortunately got injured. I think she's going to get all right. I've had her split out because I think I can doctor her through it. She's not much more than a yearling. She's a part blood.

Here's a yearling that we've had around for a few yearling class ... She's been tied up three times. Look at the legs and see how much she's marked. Really get down and count them. You can count about eight of those zebra stripes on that leg. You can see them coming out on the back leg. She's got a breast bar, if you'll turn around and look at it. We roached her, and she's got a short mane, and you can see them stripes really stand out on this side. But she's got brass bars, right where her neck hooks onto her chest.

...

Their skin, if you look at that mare's skin, you don't have to touch it, you know that

mares got a thin skin, and I mean it is thin. And her hair is just like silk when you run your hands across it. Now when she gets her winter coat on, she'll have a kind of a golden cast, and you can even see it in her body coat there now. It's kind of a yellow tone to it.

I go around these corrals every day, and have been for the last week, and I never get tired of looking at them. I don't know; they're just a special animal.

These horses here, the old big roan horse that doesn't have a saddle on him, he's wild horse from off Crowley, he's been broke since 1976. The saddle colt there, just a two year old, been ridden about fifteen times. They do make good horses. I've ridden a lot of them. I've trained a lot of them. They are a little different to train than a barn raised, or ranch raised horse. One thing they won't have is a lot of bad habits. Anything these horses learn, unless it's a nasty old stud, is that if it's a bad habit, you've taught it to him. So when I train one, if he does something that ain't too good, then I'll have to blame myself for that, you know.

Here's this little red dun mare that I was telling you about, number 84, she's a three year old, and that's a red dun baby, and he's sure got a nice set of stripes on his legs. Look how fine that bone is. And there's a complete absence of hair on her fetlock joint. And they seem, from what I'm looking, when I see crosses outside of the bloodline, they seem to really cross out really good.

... Here's the other clay bank horse, I was telling you don't see many in your life, little number 80 horse. There's his mother, the little light buckskin looking mare, with the orange cast to her. She's a two-year-old mare. That's the reason she's so darn thin, she's having a hard time taking care of her baby. Well, she's young. That's a clay bank colt, and you ain't going to see many of them like it.

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