



Applewhite Herd Management Area Lincoln County

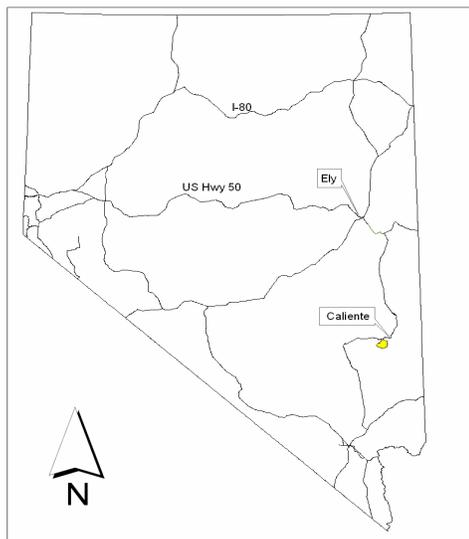
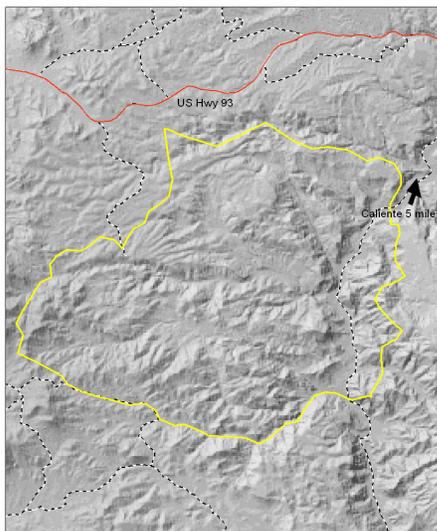


Location/Habitat

The Applewhite Herd Management Area (HMA) is located approximately five miles southwest of Caliente, Nevada, in Lincoln County. The HMA encompasses 30,968 acres, all of which is public land except for one 323-acre parcel in Rainbow Canyon. The majority of the HMA lies west of Rainbow Canyon, on the north end of the Delamar Mountains. The topography within the HMA is very mountainous, with several canyons running from west to east, draining to Rainbow Canyon, a major drainage. The canyons within the HMA include Hardy, Dula, Colburn, Chokecherry, Taylor Mine, and Applewhite Canyon, for which the HMA is named. The HMA is bordered by the Meadow Valley Wash and State Highway 317 on the east, by Buckboard Canyon on the north, Rock Springs Canyon on the south and Applewhite Summit on the west. The western boundary is also adjacent to the Delamar Mountains HMA. Due to its rugged topography, most of the HMA is inaccessible to vehicle traffic.

Elevation within the HMA ranges from 7,384 feet on the western side of the HMA, decreasing to 4,266 feet in Meadow Valley Wash. Permanent water sources consist of many small springs found in the canyons, a year-long stream in Meadow Valley Wash, as well as water troughs installed for livestock grazing.

Climate in the area is quite harsh, with winter temperatures well below freezing and summer temperature well over 100 degrees Fahrenheit. The area has had snow in May and 90 degree Fahrenheit heat as late as November. Rainfall averages only 8-14 inches per year, divided almost equally between summer and winter. Summer rains are localized, short, and very intense while winter/spring rains are gentler and over a wider area.



Sharing the area are desert mule deer, coyotes, grey and kit fox, mountain lions, as well as many species of small wildlife. Birds include the rare prairie falcon, ravens, quail, horned larks, and many more. Reptiles include many species of lizards and both poisonous (rattlesnakes) and non-poisonous snakes.

Vegetation

The vegetation within the HMA is typical of the Great Basin, with some transition areas to Mojave Desert. Upland plant communities cover the largest landmass in the HMA and are characterized by extensive stands of Pinyon-Juniper interspersed with blackbrush and big sagebrush communities. Secondary shrub species include desert bitterbrush, cliffrose, Gambel's Oak, and Nevada Joint Fir. Grasses in these areas include galleta, squirreltail, and Nevada bluegrass. Cheatgrass is present.

Although active springs and riparian communities cover relatively small percentages of the landmass in this area, they are dominant features of the landscape. Riparian communities serve as major travel corridors, water sources, and feeding grounds for horses. Vegetation within riparian communities includes perennial grasses and sedges, willows, cottonwoods, and salt cedar.

Herd Description

The Applewhite HMA is managed by the Ely BLM District for a population of one wild horse to account for incidental use by wild horses that travel through the area. Although the area cannot sustain a viable wild horse herd, wild horses from the adjacent Delamar Mountains HMA enter the area and will use it for a short period of time, before returning to their home range. Horses have populated the Applewhite HMA and the adjoining Delamar Mountains HMA at least since contemporary livestock use commenced; the BLM licensed domestic horses in this area until 1974. The wild horses in the area are generally descendants of early ranch horses, mining stock, and cavalry remount horses. These horses can show bloodlines of Quarter horses, Arabians, Thoroughbreds, and many other breeds including draft horses. The predominant colors are bay and sorrel, with roans, palominos, and other colors also occurring. These horses average approximately 13-14 hands (52-56 inches) tall and weigh about 600-800 pounds.

