

High Rock Complex Roundup, Veterinary Report

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On gather day of Oct 20, 2011 a total of 81 horses gathered. All looked healthy with good body condition (most Henneke 4-5). One filly required examination, treatment, and final disposition as follow:

The last load of horses from trap site was transferred to the holding pen when it was dark. Horses were not sorted out, but a yearling paint filly was seen with a laceration on the left rear leg. Complete observation was noted for the next day. On Oct 21, 2011 she was examined and found to have multiple lacerations, most likely barb wire cuts that occurred during the gather, in various parts of her body.

Lacerations were located at left rear foot, left rear thigh muscle, and lower mid cervical area. She had lameness on the left rear leg, and laceration in thigh muscle area looked deep, and a piece of muscle protruded from the ruptured skin. On closer examination I found the laceration in thigh muscle deeper than it initially looked, and potentially there was a damaged tendon and the protruded muscle (Quadriceps) was hard to the touch, becoming necrotic and turning black.

Conclusions/Recommendations: Do to the pain and lameness, extensive nature of the wounds and likely complications of a lengthy healing and post-operative period in a wild horse (which could include wound infections and consequent systemic infection) even if reparative surgery could be performed the horse's condition was expected to adversely affect the filly's quality of life for the foreseeable future. For these reasons considering euthanasia was recommended, and the horse was euthanized on Oct 22, 2011 to eliminate pain and suffering.

Post mortem: During the post mortem examination performed on Oct 22, 2011, it was determined with certainty that the Quadriceps muscle's tendon was severed and a portion of the muscle protruded with no attachment to the bone. All muscles were deeply bruised, lots of fluids had accumulated between and within the muscle.