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## Theodore Roosevelt National Park News Release

Immediate Release

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### Park Horses to be Sold at Auction

Feral horses from Theodore Roosevelt National Park are scheduled to be sold at public auction at Stockman's Livestock Exchange in Dickinson on Friday, October 23 at 2 pm. Approximately 90 horses will be sold to reduce the herd in the national park to about 70 animals.

The park plans to sell about 30 foals, 20 yearlings, 13 2-year olds and some older stallions and mares, although composition of those being sold could change slightly based on results of the roundup.

"The majority of the horses that will be sold are young horses," said Superintendent Valerie Naylor. "They will be good horses for someone who is willing to take the time to train them. We hope that they are sold to owners who will appreciate that they came from the park."

Theodore Roosevelt National Park maintains feral (wild) horses as a "historic demonstration" herd so that park visitors can see horses in a natural setting. The park's goal is to keep the herd at 50-90 animals.

Periodic roundups of the horses are required to keep their numbers within park population goals. Since 1954, the NPS has conducted more than 25 roundups to maintain the herd at desired levels.

This year, the park will be initiating a research project to evaluate a new, multi-year contraceptive vaccine as a potential tool in feral horse management. The contraception study is a four year project to assess vaccine feasibility and does not represent a permanent change in the direction of current horse management. The project will involve approximately 50 of the park mares, half of which will receive a contraceptive vaccine. Park staff will monitor vaccine efficacy, durability of effects over time, and horse behavior.

"Keeping the population within our objective requires periodic roundups that are time consuming and have inherent risk for horses and park staff," said Naylor. "We want to see how well the contraceptive vaccine works on horses as we may want to consider using it as a tool in the future to reduce the need for frequent horse roundups in the park."

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