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Cape Lookout National Seashore News Release

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Shackleford Banks Horses
2010 Findings Report

Harkers Island, NC -- Federal legislation, passed in 1998, protects the wild horses within Cape Lookout National Seashore and requires an annual report on the status of the herd. This report covers the period from April 2010 through March 2011. The horses are cooperatively managed by the National Park Service and the Foundation for Shackleford Horses, Inc., pursuant to the legislation and a Memorandum of Understanding updated in 2007.

There are 113 horses on Shackleford Banks. The population is managed to range between 110 and 130 horses.

Five foals were born in 2010. Two of these cases were considered births because the mares apparently carried to term, but their foals were not sighted. One foal died at three months of unknown causes. No horses were removed. The Foundation has horses available for adoption to the public from previous years.

One yearling (born 2008) was found trapped in a freshwater dig hole unable to stand and was removed. Her adoption, through the Foundation, is pending.

Adult mortality was below average: two adults died. A mare who had given birth to nine foals during her lifetime died at 26 ½ years of age and a 16 year old stallion died of unknown causes.

No birth control was administered in 2010; none was needed because the birth rate has slowed due to previous years' contraception. This was the first year since birth control was initiated in January 2000 that it has not been needed for population management purposes.

Three mares tested pregnant for 2011; if they foal they should be due before the end of June. The pregnancy testing does not show mares who might foal in July or later.

-More-

For further information, contact Dr. Sue Stuska, Wildlife Biologist – Horses, at Cape Lookout National Seashore, (252) 728-2250, ext. 3017, or Carolyn S. Mason, Chairman and President, Foundation for Shackleford Horses, Inc., (252) 728-6308. For horse adoption information, contact Anita Kimball at (252) 241-5222 or Joy Lawrence, evenings, at (252) 728-7111.

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