

Hopi: Livestock confiscations are no big deal

By Kathy Helms
Diné Bureau

WINDOW ROCK — Rumors of a crack-down on livestock on Hopi Partitioned Land are just that — rumors, according to William Vicente, director of Hopi Resource Enforcement Services.

Vicente said Friday that any recent livestock confiscations have occurred as part of the rangers' routine duties and responsibilities.

"Normally when we do impound livestock, folks that are out there tend to be not too happy about that. Right now we did not have a crack-down of any sort. The roundup is continuous. It doesn't have a start date."

When Hopi rangers receive reports from the public or from tribal employees that monitor the range lands on HPL, he said, "We normally will put notices out to let the folks know that their spe-

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cific animals are in trespass or in violation of the tribal ordinances. If they don't remedy the situation, then we do go out and start impounding."

The rangers have been going out and assisting other departments with inventory on HPL and in what the tribe refers to as District 6, which is more the immediate area surrounding the Hopi villages.

Vicente said departmental assistance includes roundup "and ensuring that they do have the right amount of animals that needs to be in each of the range units. Along with that we also check to see if there are any other animals that shouldn't be in the area. If those violations are found, we do take action at that point. We also get numerous calls on fence-cutting."

Confiscations on HPL and Hopi include horses and cattle. If the animals are branded, the owners can retrieve them as long as they are not exceeding the number they are permitted to have. Documentation of ownership for animals, with or without brands, also is required.

To retrieve the animals, owners must pay a \$50 initial impoundment fee and \$8 a day thereafter for feed and care.

"We will hold them up till 10 days. During that period, notifications are posted. Normally they are posted at the stores, or at the chapter houses if they are impounded farther north. If no one claims the animals within the 10 days then they go off to auction," Vicente said.

Hopi Resource Enforcement Services dispatch usually has information on which animals are on notice, which range area, and which have been picked up, he said.

Information: Hopi Resource Enforcement Services, (928) 734-7340 or 7341 during work hours, 8 a.m.-5 p.m., seven days a week.

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