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UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
BANDELIER NATIONAL MONUMENT
SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO

December 29, 1951

Memorandum

To: The Superintendent
From: Supervisory Ranger
Subj: Wildlife Count

On December 27, after a fresh snow which resulted in about 6 inches of snow on the ground, a patrol was made by three members of the Bandelier staff for the purpose of estimating numbers of various types of wildlife. All patrols were made on foot. Augustine Pino proceeded from headquarters to the South Mesa, thence via Corral Hill to Alamo Canyon, thence along Alamo Rim to within 1 mile of the "Y". He then cut across the head of Lunais Canyon to the Frijoles Rim trail and thence back to headquarters via that route. Cres Toribio proceeded down Frijoles Canyon to the Rio Grande, thence down the Rio Grande Canyon to the mouth of Alamo Canyon. He returned by the same route. His intention had been to climb to the mesa at Alamo Canyon and return via the South Mesa but because foot travel was rather slow it got too late in the day for him to try that route. S. J. Keefe proceeded from headquarters to the South Mesa, thence along Frijoles Rim trail to a point directly above the three mile marker, thence he descended into Frijoles Canyon and returned to headquarters via the canyon trail. Pino travelled approximately 10 miles, Toribio 10 miles, and Keefe 7 miles.

As progress was made toward the higher elevations it became more and more difficult to walk. Pino reported about 10 inches of snow at the "Y". Keefe reported about 8 inches at the point where he descended into Frijoles Canyon.

A general condition was in evidence and that was that at altitudes above 6000 feet most of the wildlife was on top of the mesas. No sign of deer was seen in Frijoles Canyon above the Ceremonial Cave. However, from the Ceremonial Cave to the Rio Grande numerous deer tracks were to be found.

Another general observation was that almost all of the deer had



descended to altitudes below 6500 feet by this date in the year. This is not always true--it depends on the amount of early snowfall.

A summary of track counts made on these patrols broken down by the types of terrain traversed is as follows:

Type of terrain	Linear miles travelled	No. deer	No. Turkey	No. Coyote	No. Fox
Mesa tops, at altitudes up to 7200 ft.	9	105	--	4	--
Canyon bottom, including 3 miles Rio Grande Canyon:	8	28	15	4	10

It is estimated that on the main section of the monument about $\frac{1}{4}$ of the canyon type terrain was covered, and about $\frac{1}{10}$ of the mesa type terrain was traversed. Thus, a rough estimate of totals on the main section might be as follows:

	Deer	Turkey	Coyote	Fox
Mesa tops, at altitudes up to 7200 feet.	1050	--	40	--
Canyon bottom	112	60	16	40
Totals.....	1162	60	56	40

These estimated totals appear reasonable except for the deer, in which case I believe the estimate is too great.

I strongly believe that there must be a more accurate means of estimating wildlife from track counts, and wonder if it might be suggested to the Regional Naturalist that sometime this winter (after fresh snow) we might obtain his services in supervising a wildlife count of this nature on the monument area. In lieu of this, perhaps he could describe to us via memorandum or conference, a system which may have been found effective at other areas.

Sylvester J. Keefe.
Sylvester J. Keefe,
Supervisory Ranger.