

FIFTH MEETING
Of the
ECONOMIC AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
September 5, 2018
New Mexico Rural Electric Cooperative Association
Otero County Electric Cooperative
404 Burro Avenue
Cloudcroft, NM

Livestock Theft

New Mexico Livestock Board - Robert Alexander

Background

The New Mexico Livestock Board (NMLB) is a long standing law enforcement agency. A significant portion of its workload is monitor livestock movement. Brand inspections for livestock movement is a significant part of the Agency workload. As times change, the agency must make adjustments. Some people like the protection of law enforcement; however, others comment that they would like less emphasis on law enforcement. Areas with ranches on public lands managed by the Federal agencies often like to see more protection. Private land ranchers may not see the need for law enforcement. Beginning in 2017, a number of ranchers in northwestern New Mexico requested more law enforcement on lands managed by the Forest Service. In 2018, ranchers from southwestern New Mexico were requesting more law enforcement. Their ranches have mixed land ownership.

Adjustments Made

The NMLB has made adjustments to provide for more emphasis on law enforcement. They include:

- Follow up on reported missing livestock
- Clearing up the records to insure they are current
- Contact with other New Mexico Law Enforcement
- Contact with agricultural contacts and markets in other states.
- Evaluation and dialog on law enforcement in the NMLB
- More road stops
- More patrol in areas with missing livestock
- Added a hot line to report suspicious activity
- Developed articles to educate the public on how to report suspicious activity

Results

On August 29, 2018 NMLB inspector Kenneth Whetham received a report that a shipment of livestock was believed to be illegal. He had information leading him to believe the cattle originated from the Guadalupe Mountains of New Mexico and they were headed to San Angelo, Texas. He contacted Shawn Davis the Area 1 Supervisor for the NMLB. Shawn contacted a Texas Southwest Cattle Raisers Special

Ranger and asked for his assistance. The Ranger put him in contact with the Ranger for the San Angelo area. The Rangers reported to Davis when the cattle arrived at the San Angelo Auction.

The cattle had no brands or other identifying marks. The cattle had originated from a ranch that was under a Trichomoniasis quarantine. Texas requested the rancher that owned them return them to New Mexico. When they arrived at Roswell, 27 head were unloaded. The NMLB photographed each of them and pulled hair samples so DNA can be matched. The investigation is ongoing, charges are pending.

Future Adjustments

The NMLB is expecting to request additional funding and staff positions to provide for the five "LAW ENFORCEMENT ROVER" positions and their equipment and training needs. One Rover will be in each of the four areas and one will be located in Albuquerque. The Rovers will be full time law enforcement and be able to travel where the problem is.

The NMLB's Appropriation request for FY 2020 includes an increase of \$1,024,500 from the FY 2019 budget. We will request \$896,000 in General funds and \$128,500 for the NMLB Fund Balance.

NMLB INSPECTION DISTRICTS WITH AREAS



