

DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

news release

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO AUCTION SURPLUS LONGHORNS IN NEBRASKA AND OKLAHOMA

Texas longhorns, descendants of those in the old great cattle drives, will be auctioned at Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge, Cache, Okla., on September 16, and at Fort Niobrara National Wildlife Refuge, Valentine, Neb., on October 13, the Interior Department's Fish and Wildlife Service announced today.

The sales of 100 longhorns at Wichita Mountains and 52 at Fort Niobrara will reduce herds to range capacities. Both mature and young animals will be sold. Sizeable herds are being retained at both refuges.

Longhorn ancestry is traced back to Spain, but natural selection and tough terrain molded a distinct American breed, the oldest breed of cattle on the continent. Adapting to the rugged Southwestern environment, longhorns contributed significantly to economic development of post-Civil War Texas.

They became almost extinct after being replaced as beef producers by meatier breeds about 1900. The herd at Wichita Mountains was established in 1927. In 1936, six calves were moved to Fort Niobrara to start another herd.

Anyone wishing additional information on these sales should write to the Refuge Manager, Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge, Cache, Oklahoma 73527 or Refuge Manager, Fort Niobrara National Wildlife Refuge, Hidden Timber Route, Valentine, Nebraska 69201.