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PRESS RELEASE

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POINT MAC CORRECTIONAL FARM TO SHELTER ABANDONED HORSES

(JUNEAU) – The Point Mackenzie Correctional Farm will begin sheltering and caring for horses turned over to the Matanuska-Susitna Borough. The agreement was approved by the borough assembly at its Tuesday meeting.

Under the agreement, the Point Mackenzie Correctional Farm will care for neglected or abandoned horses turned over to the borough's animal control officer. Superintendent Joe Schmidt called it "a great partnership. We have homegrown hay and oats to spare, a round corral (under construction) and inmate labor for exercising and caring for these rescued or abandoned horses." The borough will provide veterinary care and feed supplements.

The borough finds itself caring for neglected or mistreated horses from time to time, according to Officer John Frey. Sometimes families buy a horse for a youngster and then find it's more difficult or expensive to care for the horse than anticipated. Frey said overall numbers are low: maybe 6-12 a year. But the borough's horse population is increasing by 50-100 a year, so the need to shelter horses will grow accordingly.

To prepare for the program, the correctional farm has set established curriculum to train inmates to work with horses. Inmates will brush and walk the horses – but not ride them, the Superintendent said.