

# Equus

**Common Name:**  
Ice Age horse

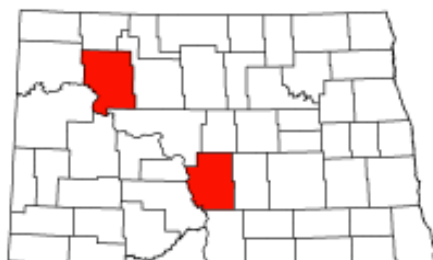
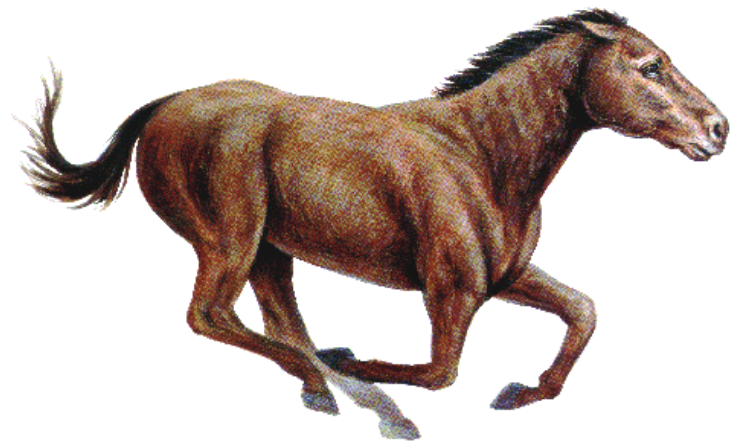
**Classification:**  
**Class:** Mammalia  
**Order:** Perissodactyla  
**Family:** Equidae



These *Equus* foot bones were found in McKenzie County in an Ice Age river channel by Chuck Monson on land administered by the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers within the Fort Berthold Reservation near New Town. Length 109 mm.

### Description:

The scientific name *Equus* is derived from the Latin language and means horse. Horses have lived in North Dakota for at least 30 million years. The early horses, such as *Mesohippus*, were small animals about the size of sheep and had three toes on each foot. They possessed low crowned teeth and were browsers. *Equus* sp., similar to today's horse, lived in North Dakota at the end of the last Ice Age at least 50,000 years ago. They had one toe on each foot and high crowned teeth adapted for eating grasses like today's horse. *Equus* sp. ranged widely over North America at that the end of the Ice Age but became extinct in North America several thousand years ago. It is not known why they became extinct in North America. Horses were reintroduced into North America by the Spanish in the 1500s.



Locations where fossils have been found

The Ice Age horse, *Equus*. Painting by and courtesy of Dorothy S. Norton.