

The Myths (continued)

free HMAs were empty, with pipes and pumps disconnected. On these fenced-off HMAs, dead horses were located; one horse was trapped by a fence that kept him from a water source. Wild horses have been left to literally drop dead next to well-managed cattle on opposite sides of public land fencing.

Wild horses destroy the natural ecosystem.

The droppings of wild horses contain many of the undigested seeds of native plants. Their hooves are ideally shaped to gently press the seeds back into the soil. Therefore, they contribute to replanting and fertilizing the ecosystem in which they - and other animals - live. Cattle pollute water sources; wild horses do not pollute water sources.

Wild horses are inbred.

Due to aggressive roundups, many wild horse herds are no longer genetically viable. They are too small to avoid inbreeding, which leads to physical and mental deformities. When a population is too small, it is a result of human interference and mismanagement. When left alone, nature ensures there will be no inbreeding; band stallions drive out their sons, as one way to prevent inbreeding.

There isn't enough land to sustain the horses.

262 million acres are available to the wild horses and burros. The BLM has been reducing the designated herd management areas, for years, to crowd out the horses and justify continued roundups. Thousands of acres have been fenced off, eliminated, or even turned over to other agencies for management. For example, in the late 1980s more than 400,000 acres were transferred by the BLM to the U.S. Forest Service in the Spring Mountain Complex area. This included the majority of water sources. The Forest Service then took close to 100,000 of the 'best' acres and removed them from use by wild horses and burros.



**America's wild horses
need our help!**

What You Can Do

Speak out on behalf of our wild horses and burros, living symbols of our heritage!

Write, call or email to:

Dirk Kempthorne, Secretary of the Interior
Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C St. NW
Washington, DC 20240

Congress (locate Congressional representatives at
www.senate.gov or www.house.gov
or call 202-224-3121)

James Caswell, Director, Bureau of Land
Management, 1849 C St NW
Room/Mail Stop 5655MIB
Washington, DC 20240

Send letters to the editor of local papers about the
plight of America's wild horses and burros

Send news tips to television stations to cover the issue

Adopt a mustang from Front Range Equine Rescue
(all are gentled)

Educate others about the plight of the horses and
burros

To Donate

**Yes, I want to donate to
FRER's 'Save The Wild Horses' campaign.
My tax deductible donation is enclosed.**

Your contribution is deeply appreciated. You can
donate or purchase merchandise via our website, or
make your check or money order payable to:

**Front Range Equine Rescue
P.O. Box 307
Larkspur, CO 80118**

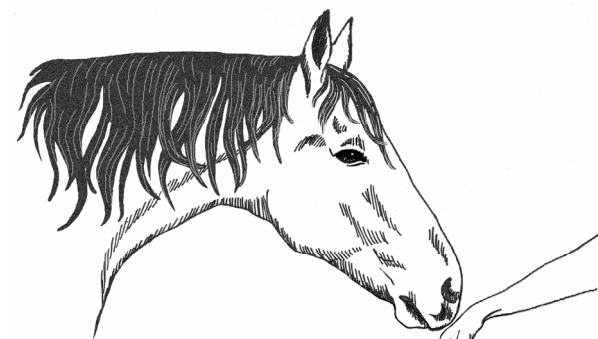
Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

SAVING AMERICA'S WILD HORSES



**To stand by and do nothing ...
makes us sharers in the guilt.**

FRONT RANGE EQUINE RESCUE

A 501(c)(3) nonprofit dedicated to
ending the abuse of horses.

P.O. Box 307
LARKSPUR, CO 80118

719.481.1490

info@frontrangeequinerescue.org
www.frontrangeequinerescue.org

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Background

At the turn of the century, approximately 2 million wild horses roamed freely. By the 1950s, it was discovered that, for decades, hundreds of thousands of wild horses and burros had been shot or rounded up; many were slaughtered for pet food. More than 30 million pounds of wild horsemeat were processed into food for dogs, cats and chickens during the 1930s alone. By the end of the 1950s, wild horse numbers had dwindled to approximately 25,000.

At that time, it was perfectly legal to round up and send the horses to slaughter. Hunters, called 'mustangers', were licensed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) in order to rid the ranges of mustangs. The horses were captured for slaughter, poisoned or gunned down as they were hunted by plane or truck. Not one law existed to protect them.

The most popular method used to capture the horses involved rounding them up, using airplanes to drive them at breakneck speeds into flatlands or dry lakebeds. The mustangers would then chase the horses in fast-moving trucks; some horses were inflicted with bullet wounds to make them run faster. The exhausted horses, already run for 15-20 miles, had little chance against their assailants, whose job it was to rope them. Once roped, a heavy truck tire at the rope's end was thrown out of the back of the truck. The exhausted and frantic horse, with heaving sides and blood pouring from its nostrils, usually fell over. Mustangers then tied the horse's legs, attached a line to the hind legs, and pulled the horse into a truck bed. Ropes were removed; the horse was then prodded to its feet. Many horses were trampled; others that were too injured to load were left to die. Foals were often abandoned and starved to death, or became easy targets for predators.

In 1950, a Nevada woman named Velma Johnston saw blood dripping from a truck she was driving behind. She followed it to a slaughterhouse and saw firsthand the horror the mustangs were experiencing. Later nicknamed 'Wild Horse Annie', she set out to change the way wild horses (and burros) were treated. It was often an uphill battle, but in 1959 the Wild Horse Annie Act was passed to stop the hunting of wild horses from airplanes. The next step was to engage the American public in a massive letter-writing campaign to set up protections for wild horses and burros.

By the time the 1971 Wild Free-Roaming Horses and

Burros Act was passed, less than 1-percent of the original two million wild horses remained. By 2007, there were barely 28,000 wild horses living free in eight Western states.

There are more wild horses held in captivity (more than 30,000) than those left free on the open range. Meanwhile, approximately 4 million cattle and thousands of sheep graze on our public lands at nominal fees (fees were reduced in 2007 from \$1.56 per cow/calf pair per acre, to \$1.35). Meanwhile, a mare and foal are counted as two animal units by the BLM, the agency in charge of managing wild horse and burro herds on our public lands.

The Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act of 1971 (Public Law 92-195):

Thanks to the tireless efforts of Wild Horse Annie and many other wild horse advocates, this historic law (in part) reads: "To require the protection, management and control of wild free-roaming horses and burros on public lands. Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled. That Congress finds and declares that wild free-roaming horses and burros are living symbols of the historic and pioneer spirit of the west; that they contribute to the diversity of life forms within the nation and enrich the lives of the American people; and that these horses and burros are fast disappearing from the American scene. It is the policy of Congress that wild free-roaming horses and burros shall be protected from capture, branding, harassment, or death; and to accomplish this they are to be considered in the area where presently found, as an integral part of the natural system of the public lands."

In late 2004, the 1971 Act was undermined by the actions of former Senator Conrad Burns (R-MT). Without any public comments or hearings, he inserted an amendment into the FY2005 Appropriations Bill. His amendment allowed for the sale of wild horses and burros over the age of 10 and those put up for adoption three times but not placed, to be sold, including for commercial purposes such as slaughter.

As mustangs began shipping to U.S. slaughterhouses, the BLM temporarily halted the sale of wild horses to amend their sales contract. Purchasers now sign that they do not 'intend' to sell the horses (or burros) for slaughter. The BLM also contacted the three slaughterhouses to watch for any deliveries of mustangs. However, kill buyers easily bypassed the BLM by

sending loads of mustangs to Mexico or Canada for slaughter.

Roundups

To this day, roundups continue at an alarming rate. It is the policy of the current administration to continue the elimination of wild horses and burros from our public lands. One tactic used is to reduce herd numbers to below genetic viability, then (1) claim the need for removal because the herd would become inbred, and (2) with so few in the herd, it is not sound management for the BLM to maintain the herd. Constant pressure to remove wild horses from their legal herd management areas (HMAs) continues to be exerted by powerful special interests such as the cattle industry, oil and gas development, land use permittees and big game hunting.

In 2007, more than 7,000 wild horses and burros were removed from public lands at taxpayers' expense (more than \$15 million). The BLM now plans to further decimate Nevada herds by eliminating 1.7 million acres of designated herd management areas.

Despite public protest and numerous legal filings, those in charge of the BLM continue to destroy America's wild horse herds, even though their printed materials promote them as "living symbols of our great American spirit." Some wild horse and burro herds fall under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, the U.S. Park Service, and Department of Agriculture. These unfortunate animals and estrays (those straying off of public lands) do not receive protection under the 1971 Act.

The Myths

Wild horses are starving and must be removed.

Wild horses have evolved over a long period of time to adapt to their environment. Fossil remains show that they are a reintroduced native species. They are known for their hardiness and, in winter, other animal species often follow wild horse herds to hidden water sources. Wild horses eat a variety of plant species and travel widely for forage. Advocates who monitor many herds would be the first to raise a 'red flag' if horses were starving.

There isn't enough water for the horses.

Evaluations by advocates have shown that HMAs without cattle were often without water; those with cattle had plenty. Water tanks and troughs on cattle-