



Coalition For Healthy Nevada Lands, Wildlife and Free-Roaming Horses

December 8, 2023

The Honorable Tracy Stone-Manning
Director
Bureau of Land Management
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20240

Re: Additional BLM Funding and Actions for Nevada Wild Horse and Burro Gathers in 2024

Dear Director Stone-Manning:

The undersigned members of Nevada's wildlife and natural resource conservation communities urge BLM to expand efforts to effectively address the wild horse and burro over-population (WHB) crisis on our public lands. **We request that you take all actions necessary to meet the obligations of the Wild and Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act of 1971 (WHB Act) and that Nevada (NV) be prioritized for those actions.**

Prioritizing gathering and removing horses is the only feasible way to achieve Appropriate Management Level (AML) and save our arid public lands. Inadequate gathers explode populations and future budgets. Until at or below AML, fertility control is not effective in management nor cost. **Once at AML, fertility control will allow limited gathers and adoptions to sustain cost effective management, while over time retiring costly long term holding pastures. We must spend what it takes now to follow the law and reduce costs in the long term.**

To address this West-wide crisis **we support BLM efforts to obtain additional resources and full management authorities from Congress** in the FY2024 and FY2025 appropriations toward fulfilling BLM's obligation under the WHB Act. Yet recognizing that annual appropriations are not sufficient to bring success, **we support a long term step by step funding plan to achieve AML in 5 years.**

Nowhere is this crisis more manifest than in our state of Nevada (NV). In March, NV had 60% of the horses and burros and 65% of the 56,000 excess. Due to insufficient gathering, WHB will likely increase another 10,000 by end of this year – erasing most progress since the 2019 Path Forward — increasing negative impacts on our native wildlife and fragile arid rangeland ecosystems. **We respectfully request that you prioritize Nevada for additional gathers.**

We are unwilling to lose wildlife - from squirrels to mule deer, native plants, pollinators - and resiliency of our ecosystems. Current WHB management actions are inadequate to restore health to our native wildlife, our rangelands, and the horses and burros themselves. Our public lands and wildlife need BLM to **take all actions necessary to meet the obligations of the '71 WHB Act, prioritizing NV in those actions.**

Yours in Conservation,

Coalition for Healthy Nevada Lands, Wildlife and Free-Roaming Horses and signatories

The Nevada Association of Conservation Districts (NvACD)
Nevada Association of Counties
Elko County Board of Commissioners
White Pine County Board of County Commissioners
Board of Eureka County Commissioners
Lander County Board of Commissioners
Lincoln County Wildlife Advisory Board
Meadow Valley Wildlife Unlimited
The Wildlife Society, Nevada Chapter
Coalition for Nevada's Wildlife
Southern Nevada Coalition for Wildlife
Coalition for Healthy Nevada Lands, Wildlife and Free-Roaming Horses
Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership
Backcountry Hunters and Anglers, Nevada Chapter
Nevada Wildlife Federation
Fraternity of the Desert Bighorn (FDB)
Nevada Bighorns Unlimited, Reno Chapter
Nevada Bighorns Unlimited, Fallon Chapter
Nevada Bighorns Unlimited, Elko Chapter
Nevada Bighorns Unlimited, Midas Chapter
Safari Club International, Northern Nevada Chapter
Safari Club International, Las Vegas Chapter
National Wild Turkey Federation
Wild Turkey Federation, Nevada State Chapter
Mule Deer Foundation
Muley Fanatic Foundation Sierra Front Chapter
Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation
Ducks Unlimited
Nevada Waterfowl Association
Nevada Chukar Foundation
Nevada Sporting Dog Alliance
Nevada Bow Hunters Association
Truckee River Flyfishers

Nevada Trappers Association

Nevada Outfitters and Guide Association

Willie Molini, Retired Director, Nevada Department of Wildlife

Kenneth Mayer, Retired Director, Nevada Department of Wildlife

Jeremy Drew, Past Chair, Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners and Past Vice-Chair, Nevada Sagebrush Ecosystem Council

Jim French, National Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board, Co-chair and Wildlife Representative; Retired, Nevada Department of Wildlife

Dr. James Sedinger, Foundation Professor of Wildlife Emeritus

Dr. Sherm Swanson, University of Nevada, Reno, Emeritus Professor of Rangeland and Riparian Ecology and Management

Jake Tibbitts, Sagebrush Ecosystem Council, Local Government Representative

Eddie Booth, Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners, Sportsman Representative

Rex Steninger, Chair, Elko County Board of Commissioners

Rob Jacobson, Board member, Lyon County Board of Commissioners

Don Klebenow, Retired Captain, Nevada Department of Wildlife

Rebecca Mills, Retired, Superintendent of Great Basin National Park

Mark Butler, Washoe Valley, Retired, Superintendent of Joshua Tree National Monument

Henry Krenka, Hidden Lakes Outfitter, LLC

Susan Juetten, Carson City, Retired, Professional Advocate for Public Land Health