



Dear Members of the U.S. House and Senate Appropriations Committees:

We are writing to oppose the request by the National Cattlemen’s Beef Association (NCBA), the Public Lands Council, the ASPCA, and The Humane Society of the U.S. for Fiscal Year 2020 appropriations legislation to require the roundup, removal and holding of 15,000-20,000 iconic wild horses and burros in a single year from western public lands. This would be among the highest ever roundup and removal rate in a quarter century. We urge you to reject this request because the proposal:

- Is opposed by so many key stakeholders on wild horse and burro protection efforts and violates the [Unified Statement of Principles](#) endorsed by over 100 organizations, and the spirit of the 1971 Wild Free Roaming Horses and Burros Act itself.
- Spends millions on outdated, ineffective, and massive roundups and removals without setting specific goals for numbers of horses contracepted. While this plan calls for an annual round up of up to 20,000 horses, it provides no comparable figures for the most significant part of the plan: to address the current unsustainable wild horse management problems.
- Does not even require the use of the PZP fertility control vaccine. Broad requirements for “population growth suppression” allows the BLM to expand roundups and removals that the public generally opposes. It also does not forbid surgical sterilization, a procedure which threatens the health and lives of wild horses and which the National Academy of Sciences recommended against.
- Makes eventual slaughter more likely by perhaps doubling the number of wild horses and burros in holding facilities without a guarantee for their long term safety. The fate of these horses is dependent on annual appropriations cycle legislation. Some lawmakers and interest groups have already used the current number of horses in holding as a reason to allow slaughter and this will embolden these pro-slaughter voices.

- Fails to address the underlying problems that fuel the wild horse controversy, impedes progress, and closes the door on creative solutions (such as grazing buyouts/rancher compensation, consolidation of habitats, and community-based fertility control initiatives) while mandating the BLM's mass removal approach, which the NAS warned, is *"likely to keep the population at a size that maximizes population growth rate, which in turn maximizes the number of animals that must be removed through holding facilities."*

Please vocally oppose and reject this misguided proposal that harms the interests of America's iconic wild horses and burros and the 80 percent of Americans who want these animals protected and humanely managed on our Western public lands. Please instead support the appropriations request of Reps. Raul Grijalva (D-AZ) and Dina Titus (D-NV) that requires the BLM to spend a minimum of five percent of its budget to implement humane fertility control programs. This will begin to lower population growth rates while allowing for creative, humane solutions to be presented, and will protect our free-roaming wild horses and burros as Congress intended when it unanimously passed the law to protect these cherished animals nearly five decades ago.

Thank you for your consideration

American Wild Horse Campaign
Animal Wellness Action
The Cloud Foundation
Horses for Life Foundation
Equine Collaborative International, Inc.
Safe Food Safe Horses
Virginia Wild Horse Rescue
Center for a Humane Economy
Hanaeleh
Animal Wellness Foundation
Freedom Reigns
Salt River Wild Horse Management Group
Montgomery Creek Ranch