

**AOWHA TRUTH RALLY
BLM, FACTS OR FICTION?**

WHAT BLM SAYS: In 1971, when the BLM was given legal authority to protect and manage wild horses and burros, the number of wild horses was 17,300 mustangs compared to today's on-the-range population of 33,100 wild horses." *Bob Abbey, Director, BLM*

WHAT BLM DOESN'T SAY: "The 17,000 figure is undoubtedly low to an unknown, but perhaps substantial, degree..." *National Academy of Sciences Report, 1982*

What BLM says: "Over the last four decades, the Bureau of Land Management has helped wild horses thrive and populations recover on the arid expanses of public lands in the West." *Secretary of Interior Ken Salazar*

WHAT BLM DOESN'T SAY: BLM's statistics show a steady decline in wild horse populations since the 1974 "hard count." *BLM Wild Horse & Burro Removal, Adoption, Population, AML Table.*

WHAT BLM SAYS: "The removal of wild horses and burros from public rangelands is carried out to ensure rangeland health, in accordance with land-use plans that are developed in an open, public process." *Robert Abbey, Director, BLM*

WHAT BLM (in this case) ALSO SAYS: "No public access to meetings that help establish land use plans." *KIFI Channel 8 News, February 2, 2010*

WHAT BLM SAYS: "The direct mortality rate resulting from helicopter-driven gathers is usually less than one percent. Some indirect mortality also occurs." *BLM Wild Horse and Burro website*

WHAT BLM DOESN'T SAY: "BLM data indicates that the wild horses and burros held in short term holding facilities, from 2003-2007, had a mortality rate of about 5 percent. BLM does not report this information regularly to members of the public who remain concerned that the agency does not adequately care for animals in short term holding." *Governmental Accountability Office Report, 2008*

WHAT BLM SAYS: "The estimated current free-roaming population exceeds by some 10,350 the number (AML) that the BLM has determined can exist in balance with other public rangeland resources and uses." *BLM Wild Horse and Burro website*

WHAT BLM DOESN'T SAY: "Although field offices use many factors to make their AML determinations, BLM has no guidance or policy about the specific factors they must consider in determining AML." *Governmental Accountability Office report 2008*

WHAT BLM SAYS: "Horse removals are necessary to protect public lands and public land resources." *BLM Wild Horse and Burro website*

WHAT BLM DOESN'T SAY: "Wild horse removals often have not been accompanied by reduction in authorized livestock grazing levels or effective range management to increase the lands' capacity. As a result, range conditions have not demonstrably improved and the number of horses removed has exceeded the capacity of the Adopt-A-Horse program. BLM could not provide us with data to demonstrate where wild horse removals have materially improved the specific areas from which they have been removed. " *Government Accountability Office Report 1990*

AOWHA TRUTH RALLY WHAT IS REALLY GOING ON

1. Wild horse and burro populations have declined since 1971 when Congress declared that they were "*fast disappearing from the American scene.*"
2. While most parties agree that horse populations need to be managed, Congress mandated that such management be carried out "*at the minimal feasible level.*"
3. Scientific data and reports from the Government Accountability Office indicate that BLM's current rate of horse removals is producing unsustainable long-term expenses and have not "materially improved the specific areas where they were removed."
4. BLM doesn't really know what is going on with respect to wild horse populations and their impacts on range conditions due to cuts in staff that monitored and collected such data. The resulting savings of thousands of dollars could conceivably be costing taxpayers millions of dollars due to agency mistakes.
5. Reductions in educational outreach designed to promote successful horse adoptions have resulted in a decline in adoptions, increased the number of horses sent to long term holding, and produced incalculable long term costs for indefinitely holding horses in contract facilities.
6. The absence of any coherent birth control plan limits BLM's "management" options to large-scale horse removals, the most expensive of the various available strategies. Using the recent Calico Mountains roundup as an example, NO horses were provided birth control.
7. The absence of equine-based ecological management approaches in areas managed for horses contributes to the problems that BLM attempts to solve through large-scale horse removals. The GAO has determined that this strategy does not work.

KEN SALAZAR'S "EXODUS" PROPOSAL

Instead of addressing the failures associated with BLM's range management strategy, Interior Secretary Ken Salazar is proposing a new boondoggle, establishing wild horse sanctuaries in the Midwest and East. He proposes to haul thousands of horses across the country when lands are available for them in the West.

Most wild horse advocates oppose Salazar's sanctuaries as they simply shift taxpayer funds from one set of contractors to another. Salazar's proposal does nothing to address fundamental problems on western ranges. The Salazar Plan is a "magic pill" that in fact is nothing more than a placebo.

Furthermore what differentiates a wild horse from a domestic horse is its environment. A horse on a managed pasture is simply a pasture horse.

There are sufficient Western resources, already owned by the American taxpayer, that can be used to mitigate the present wild horse "crisis," *provided* practical and relevant management strategies are adopted. Wild horses can be intelligently managed and their continued presence can be compatible with the other multiple uses of our public lands. It just isn't happening now.

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