

Winter hay needs crucial for our Gila herd

With the drought still raging in South Dakota and hay yields down by 50%, it is critical that ISPMB raises enough funding to purchase winter hay, before prices soar above \$200 per ton. This past summer, we were purchasing small bales of hay (55 pounds) at \$10 per bale.



These small bales can be stacked in the barn to help protect our stockpile from lightning strikes that have sparked so many fires in our area. There are currently six active fires in South Dakota and more than 1 million acres have already burned north of us in Montana.

Temperatures will cool quickly in October, which means we can begin to stock large rounds of hay to feed to our horses this winter. We need to purchase 300 rounds, approximately 10 truckloads of hay, to see us through to spring. Each truckload will cost from \$3,500 to \$5,000 depending upon price of hay, which means we must raise at least \$35,000 right now, before prices soar even higher!

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**THIS IS AN URGENT CALL
FOR YOUR RENEWED
SUPPORT. PLEASE DON'T
DELAY...HELP US STOCK
OUR BARN WITH HAY!**



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

With more than 30 years of experience in the wild horse and burro movement, it has become quite evident that wild horse groups are often their own worst enemies when it comes to the protection of America's wild horses and burros. Why do I say this? Watching all these past years from where our ranch is located in the middle of cattle country, it is amazing to see the cohesiveness of the cattle industry when problems arise. I'm not just talking about one state's actions, but many states coming to each other's aid in times of trouble.

For example, in response to the 2013 Atlas Storm that caused the deaths of nearly 46,000 animals in western South Dakota, cattlemen came together and raised more than \$6 million in aid and they even donated heifers to those ranchers who were affected. This year, in response to the severe drought in South Dakota, Montana and Wyoming, cattlemen from around the U.S. created a hay bank to help provide ranchers with donated hay. This summer, when a fire destroyed a local pasture, ranchers volunteered their time to help rebuild fences for the rancher in need.

Perhaps we can say, ranchers behave this way because they are not competing for donor support or perhaps we can say it is because of fierce competition for donor support that has pitted wild horse groups against one another. When I joined the wild horse movement in 1981, there were only four other groups. ISPMB was the first. Now there are so many that they each compete for that almighty dollar.

The ability to sustain ISPMB's four herds over the last 16 years came at a huge cost. Yet I am truly grateful for the unwavering support of so many individuals and organizations that stood by ISPMB this past year... even in our darkest of hours. This support made it possible for us to complete our population growth studies and genetic viability of the unique herds that were entrusted to our care. There is no other study of wild horses I am aware of that has 16 years of data on herds that were never disturbed and left intact like we have.

The results of our research can potentially change the way wild horse and burros are managed and protected on public land. But our ability to win this fight is only possible when we stand together and support one another.

Karen A. Sussman



Is PZP the Reversible Fertility Drug?



While many wild horse groups advocate for the use of fertility control drugs, our studies show that at 5 years of continuous treatment, wild horses are rendered permanently infertile. Our studies also show that at 4.5 years, the majority of mares were rendered infertile. This contradicts the literature which states that permanent infertility happens at seven years of continuous use.

Bottom line...wild horses and survival of the fittest is best determined with limited human interference. Forcing birth control on wild horses permanently disrupts natural selection and family dynamics which affects the health and well-being of the entire herd. The decision of conception is best left up to the horses.

We Can Put Any Size Donation To Work Here's what your generosity can do—EVERY amount helps!

- \$5**... carrots for one horse
- \$10**... small bale of hay for one horse
- \$20**... senior feed for our elders
- \$90**... large bale of hay feeds a horse for a month
- \$150**... sponsor a horse for a year
- \$500**... sponsor a foal for a year
- \$1,000**... sponsor a band for a year
- \$5,000**... sponsor a herd for a year*
- \$35,000**... feed our Gila herd for a year**

*Receive a free three-day weekend at our ranch; airfare not included

**Become a life-time member of ISPMB and receive a free three-day weekend at our ranch



ISPMB is proud to have several Water Protectors committed to restoring property that was damaged by the winter storms and heavy use this past year. These Native men withstood the freezing elements of North Dakota's winter and stood up for all of our rights to have clean water. They have lived in the elements for more than a year with temperatures as low as minus 50 degrees. They are some of the strongest and kindest people one could ever meet. And, we can add to the mix—hard working!

We couldn't have survived this past summer without their dedication to our horses. They will be here until their next assignment. For that time, we will honor them as they have honored all of humanity in protecting our environment.

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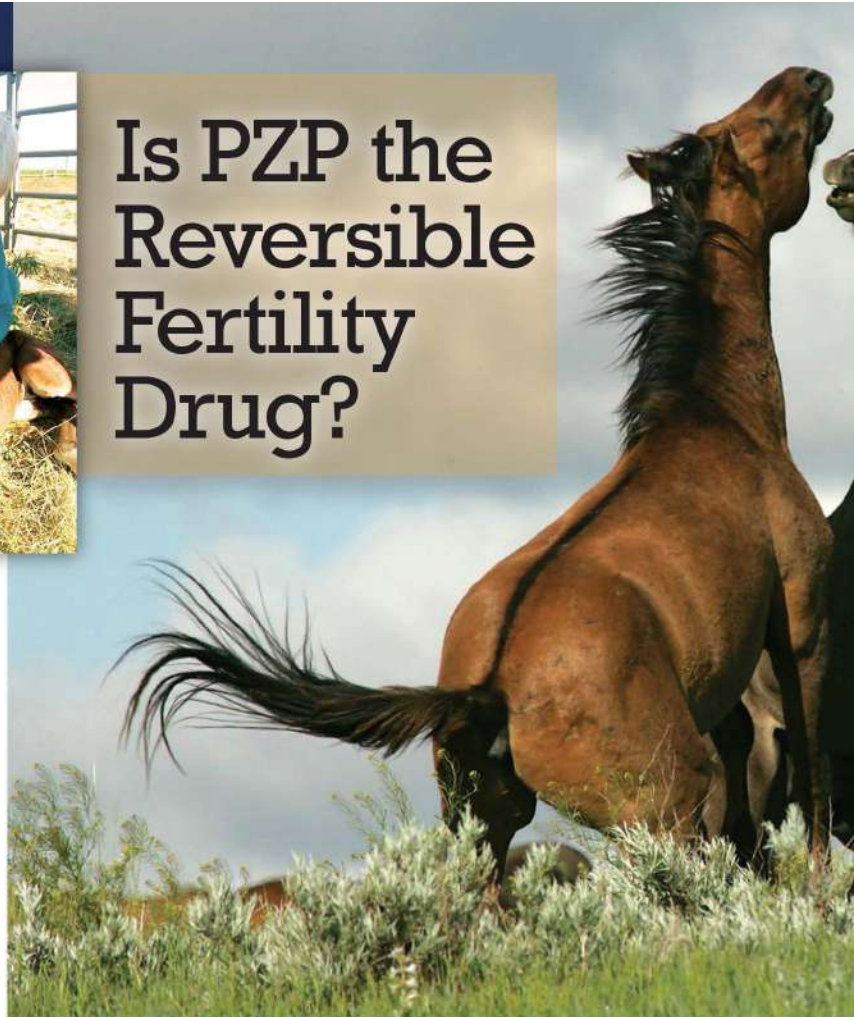
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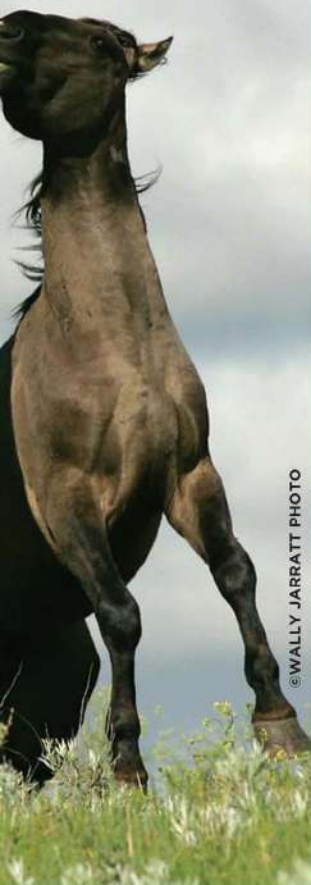
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Standing Rock Water Protectors

PROVIDING PROTECTION TO ISPMB HORSES



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Animal Case vs. U.S. Forest Service is Sidelined



Two horses and one mule named Snip, Diesel and Little Bit, under the care of the Forest Service, were found dead in Apache-Sitgreaves Forest in Arizona. All three died of dehydration after being moved from their corrals in May to Rattlesnake Pasture. Rattlesnake had not been occupied by a horse for more than a decade because there was no reliable water there.

The animals were left unattended for four weeks by Forest Service employees. They were left without water during the hottest time of the year, with temperatures ranging from 105-112 degrees Fahrenheit and were found dead in late June when someone finally checked on them.

An internal Forest Service investigation produced a one-page report, dated July 2016 that concluded the following: "Contributing to this unfortunate outcome as a compilation of past practices, unknown policies, poor communication, failure of leadership, local fire conditions and accretion of duties to an inexperienced employee."

According to Jeff Ruch, Executive Director of Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility (PEER), "The real killer of these animals was inattention to duty compounded by official indifference, noting that the Forest Service Livestock Management Plan requires equines be inspected at least once every two weeks. The Forest Service routinely tickets members of the public but rarely tags one of their own."

In April 2017, Greenlee County filed nine misdemeanor animal cruelty counts against the employees and district ranger (who since retired). The case was dropped on the basis that a federal employee cannot be subjected to state jurisdiction under the Doctrine of Federal Supremacy. According to federal court records, an attempt to criminally prosecute the U.S. Forest Service employees for acts of cruelty to animals resulting in their deaths was dropped.

PEER is asking everyone to contact the Secretary of Agriculture, Sonny Perdue, to request that he reopen this case and take steps to prevent future tragedies of this kind.

Secretary Sonny Perdue • U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., S.W. • Washington, DC 20250
email: agsec@usda.gov • Information Hotline: (202) 720-2791



HOPE RYDEN Wildlife Photographer

One of the first wild horse books that many of us have read was Hope Ryden's "America's Last Wild Horses" (1970). Ms. Ryden spent more than 25 years as a writer, director and producer of documentary films. In addition to her books, she wrote for National Geographic, Audubon, Smithsonian and The New York Times.

Hope was a committed animal rights person. We shall remember her achievements in that field. She died on June 18, 2017 in Hyannis, Massachusetts at age 87.

ROY LARSON Wild Horse Annie's Brother-in-Law

For years now, ISPMB has kept in close touch with many members of Wild Horse Annie's family (Velma Bronn Johnston). We are sad to announce that after several years of suffering from multiple myeloma, Roy Larson passed into the spirit world on May 13, 2017. He was 88 years old. Roy was married to Betty Jo Bronn, Velma's sister. Both Roy and Betty Jo were avid supporters of ISPMB. Betty Jo passed in 1996 and Roy eventually moved to Modesto with his second wife, Meryls, in 2001.

In 2012, both Meryls and Roy made a trip to Lantry, South Dakota to see Karen Sussman, ISPMB's president, and visit ISPMB's herds. During that time, both Karen and Roy were captured on film by Kurt Brungardt (Vanity Fair freelance reporter) who made a special trip out from New York to video the event. Roy was an extraordinary person whose positive attitude and beautiful smile could never be forgotten. He told wonderful stories and had a great sense of humor. He was part of a generation that is sorely missed.

We extend our deepest sympathies to his wife, Meryls, and his five children: Trudy, Mary, Linda, Robyn and Allen.

<< ISPMB PRESIDENT KAREN SUSSMAN AND ROY LARSON



ISPMB also acknowledges the following members who have passed this year and have so generously remembered ISPMB in their wills. Their legacy will live on with ISPMB.

- ELEANOR K. DECKER
- ROBERT AND AUDREY GALLOW
- ARTHUR AND VIOLA WALKENHORST



THE REAL
REASON
WHY

40,000
WILD HORSES

ARE IN BLM
HOLDING
PASTURES

ISPMB pushes for 'natural management' of wild horses

ISPMB has concluded a 16-year study and is in the process of compiling data which shows that "natural management" is in the best interest of our wild horses and burros. Simply put, when wild horse family structures are left intact, without constant disruption of roundups and darting, wild horses herds regulate their own growth rate at 10% or less annually.

The 1971 Act clearly states that animals should be managed at "minimal feasible levels"...meaning, as little management as possible. Instead, the BLM has chosen to continuously disrupt herds by rounding them up every three years or so—which is "maximum intrusive management" and contrary to the spirit of the Act.

When wild horse populations are constantly disrupted—destroying family structures—growth rates increase.

Wild horses have highly evolved social structures and ISPMB studies have shown that males naturally become family band stallions by the age of 10 or older when left alone. However, when the BLM removes wild horses, they separate stallions from their mares. This allows younger stallions to steal mares when they are released from their traps. The younger stallions are not mature enough or ready to handle families. Their only interest is in breeding. Dr. R. H. Denniston's wild horse studies in the Wyoming Red Desert in 1979 showed that the youngest family band stallion was 12 years of age, which coincides with ISPMB's findings.

The BLM's "maximum intrusive management" is the only reason there are thousands of wild horses languishing in holding facilities at the taxpayer's expense. Their only exit strategy from this disaster is to convince public taxpayers that wild horses which cannot be adopted must be sold—rather than take responsibility for their failed management policy, stop abusive and disruptive round-ups, and adopt a more humane management model.

We have faced this dilemma before in the 1980s, when the BLM waived adoption fees for wild horses in holding facilities (termed "fee waiver" adoptions), which resulted in more than 16,000 wild horses being sold for slaughter! At that time, the BLM repeatedly

lobbied Congress for sale authority, which was resoundingly defeated each time by the majority. Now, it appears that Congress may buy into the false allegation that there are too many wild horses!

Today, there are fewer free-ranging wild horses and burros than in 1974, when only 60,000 wild animals were identified. It is well known that these early visual counts notoriously underestimated the total number of animals by as much as 50%. This means there may have been as many as 120,000 wild animals roaming free at that time, which calls into question the whole calculus of "over-population" as justification for continued roundups and herd disruption.

In response, many wild horse groups have been advocating for chemical birth control, to placate the BLM and ranchers, as "the only viable alternative" to the BLM's failed management policy. The sale of these chemicals has proven to be a highly lucrative business venture for many groups, which receive millions of dollars in grants for the promotion of these chemicals.

While ISPMB and Wild Horse Annie were instrumental in getting the 1971 Act passed through Congress, it is clear that the mischaracterization of the word "excess" by the BLM has led to the removal and slaughter of America's wild horses and burros, which is the real reason why 40,000 animals now languish in long-term holding pastures and corrals today.

The BLM has failed to prove "excess." In fact, without proper monitoring and habitat survey, they cannot prove that wild horses and burros are the cause of damage to the range. Instead, they have set arbitrary "allowable" numbers of animals to appease the ranching community. While this practice was ruled against by the Interior Board of Appeals in 1989, the BLM continues to reduce the number of wild horses and burros allowed on public land unabated, every year.

"Natural Management" is a term that you will hear often now, as defined by ISPMB as the optimum management needed to sustain healthy functional herds and maintain stable population growth.



PO Box 55 • Lantry, SD 57636



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visit: www.ISPMB.org

Please note that ISPMB protects your name and address as we do not sell, share or trade your personal information. If you prefer to receive an e-newsletter, please send us your email address. E-newsletters will help save ISPMB money, which can be used to care for our horses.



The future of wild horses & burros is in the hands of a perilous Congress...what can you do to help?

When the federal law was enacted in 1971 to protect America's wild horses and burros, a part of the law allowed the BLM to destroy "excess" wild horses and burros in the field. This clause was there so animals would never have to be cruelly rounded up and shipped inhumanely to slaughter.

In 1969, prior to passage of the Wild Horse and Burro Act, the first-ever wild horse adoption program was established in the Pryor Mountains by Wild Horse Annie and ISPMB. This successful adoption model was given to the BLM to help create a national adoption program in 1976, which led to the adoption of more than 200,000 wild horses and burros—thereby eliminating the need to kill "excess" animals in the field. Since the early 1980s, a yearly moratorium against this killing practice has been in place.

This year, however, the Stewart Amendment passed the House of Representatives, which if enacted by the Senate and signed by the President, will give the BLM authority to kill "excess" animals in the field, eliminating the moratorium. In an unsuccessful attempt to stop the Stewart Amendment, Congresswoman Dina Titus (D-NV) introduced an amendment to the Appropriation's Rules Committee on September 5, 2017 to continue the moratorium. On a strictly partisan

vote, the amendment was defeated 9-4, with Republicans voting against the moratorium and Democrats voting to save the horses. The Senate must now reconcile the differences between the Senate and House versions of the bill, which now contains the order to kill wild horses and burros.

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) was mandated by Congress in 1971 to protect and preserve these "last living symbols of the American West," although this was not the agency Wild Horse Annie wanted to protect America's wild horses and burros. She favored having the Park Service protect them. However, at that time, it was not accepted that wild horses and burros were indigenous to this continent. Today, through DNA testing and knowledge that these animals evolved here some 60 million years ago, would have fit beautifully into the Park Service's mission to protect native animals and habitat.

It was the BLM whose forerunner, the Grazing Service, took out a bounty to kill wild-horses worth \$2.00 for every left ear collected, according to historical accounts. Putting wild horses and burros under BLM's control was the same as the putting the fox in charge of the hen house.

The BLM has pushed for sale authority since the 1980s, which would allow their agency the ability to sell excess animals for slaughter contrary to the spirit of the law. Their attempts have been unsuccessful so far.

Contact Your Senator

WWW.SENATE.GOV/SENATORS/CONTACT

Please call your Senators and ask them to save America's wild horses and burros from being killed by the BLM in the field. Ask them to continue the moratorium which would prohibit the BLM from killing healthy excess wild horses and burros.