



Spirit of the Ancients

International Society for the
Protection of Mustangs and Burros

PO Box 435 · Rapid City, SD 57709
www.facebook.com/ISPMB
www.ISPMB.org 

2019 SPRING NEWSLETTER

THERE IS NO OVERPOPULATION OF WILD HORSES & BURROS TODAY!

**We are at a crossroads in our
wild horse and burro history.**

The organizations who promote PZP
and wild horse and burro reductions
and receive the public's support
could spell the literal end of
the beauty and resilience and
future of our American herds.
ISPMB is the oldest and most
knowledgeable advocacy group in
the United States, and we are
fighting for the survival of
America's wild horses and burros.
In 1974, there were nearly 60,000
wild horses and burros on public
lands when the Wild Horses and
Burros Act passed. The law stated
they were "fast disappearing from
the American scene." Why does BLM
consider there to be an overpopulation
today when fewer than 60,000 wild
horses and burros are on public lands?

**Your financial support is
crucial NOW to stop this
terrible practice of using
PZP on wild mares!**



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My Name is Ina Ohitika

BY KAREN SUSSMAN
ISPMB PRESIDENT

Read the true story inside written
from the perspective of a wild
mare crying out for help.

President's REPORT

THE TRUTH MUST WIN OVER REPEATED LIES AND MISINFORMATION

FIRST TRUTH

There is NO overpopulation of wild horses and burros on public lands. This is the truth! When the first count was done in 1974 after the Act passed, BLM counted nearly 60,000 wild horses and burros on public lands. The Act specifically said they were "fast disappearing from the American scene." Today we have fewer than 60,000 wild horses and burros on public lands. How can they be overpopulated?

SECOND TRUTH

BLM has, for the most part, illegally removed wild horses and burros from their ranges and have contained them in holding pastures to seek sympathy from Congress and the American public by touting there are too many horses. This rhetoric has eventually led to the BLM, through Congress, requesting "sale authority." This means selling to the highest bidder, even if they are kill buyers.

THIRD TRUTH

BLM must prove the horses are "excess" before they are removed. They cannot arbitrarily set a number of 27,000 horses and burros as a management number. Excess can only be proven by monitoring the habitat, which the BLM does not do.

FOURTH TRUTH

ISPMB's studies reveal that when herds are left alone, they grow at a very slow rate. This rate is as low as 9 percent, unlike the BLM's rate of 20 percent. It has taken ISPMB 17 years of citizen science to prove this.

FIFTH TRUTH

PZP has many detrimental side effects for wild horses rendering them permanently infertile in a short period of time.

SIXTH TRUTH

Wild horses and burros have a "right" to the use of public lands. Livestock have a "privilege" to use public lands. There is a big difference.

SEVENTH TRUTH

The real lack of understanding of the 1971 law and the refusal of the groups to work together and their ability to destroy each other has led to this critical moment for wild horses and burros on public lands. Seven is the universal number and indicative of the importance of this truth. Your support of ISPMB is so very important and vital to saving America's wild horses and burros on public lands. We need your help more than ever.



As her tears were flowing down her face, she promised me that this would never happen again to another mare. That my story will be told and changes will come before it is too late. She told me that she has witnessed what my mother told me in my early years about population growth; when we are left alone and our families are kept intact, our population is stable and grows at a rate in the single percentage digits, not the 20 percent that the BLM touts.

She said there is no overpopulation of wild horses. She said long before I was born, in 1974, there were nearly 60,000 wild horses and burros on public lands. These counts were visual counts and could be underestimated by 50 percent. She alluded to the fact that there could really have been far more than 60,000 wild horses and burros at that time. She reiterated the importance of the 1971 law which said "wild horses and burros were fast disappearing from the American scene." After all, at the turn of the 20th century, there were at least 2 million wild horses roaming in 17 states west of the Mississippi.

She said, why would two-leggeds want to limit our population when our gene pool almost disappeared? Especially when there were 60,000 wild horses and burros which were considered threatened and endangered at that time in 1971. She told me that the domestic horse industry does not have the beautiful genetic diversity that we in the wild have. She said this is because the two-leggeds are in charge of breeding. She was adamant that using this drug decreases the genetic diversity of the wild horses and requires horses from other areas to be transplanted into these areas. This disrupts and changes the beautiful horse cultures of the different herd areas. She said, only we should make the decision who breeds and who does not...

As she wiped her tears dry, she made a promise to me that the TRUTH will be told! She assured me that changes will come from speaking this TRUTH.

THE TRUTH MUST WIN OVER REPEATED LIES AND MISINFORMATION



SCARLET, NOW VIBRANT, WITH AUNTIE CLARE, WHO HELPED IN HER RESCUE ONE YEAR AGO

Please help ISPMB with a donation to bring the truth forward. Please share my story so others do not have to ever endure pain and suffering as I do daily. Please tell everyone, there is NO OVERPOPULATION. Remind them that when our herds are left alone and our families are left intact, we grow at very slow rates!

Yours in truth,

Ina Ohitika

Your Generosity Helps The Horses!

WE CAN PUT ANY SIZE DONATION TO WORK:

\$5...carrots for one horse

\$10...small bale of hay for one horse

\$20...senior feed for our elders

\$90...large bale of hay*

\$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 Gila herd for a year**

* Feeds an average horse for approximately a month

**Become a lifetime member of ISPMB.



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You shop. Amazon gives.

A great opportunity to increase giving to International Society for the Protection of Mustangs and Burros is with AmazonSmile donations. Remember to shop at smile.amazon.com.



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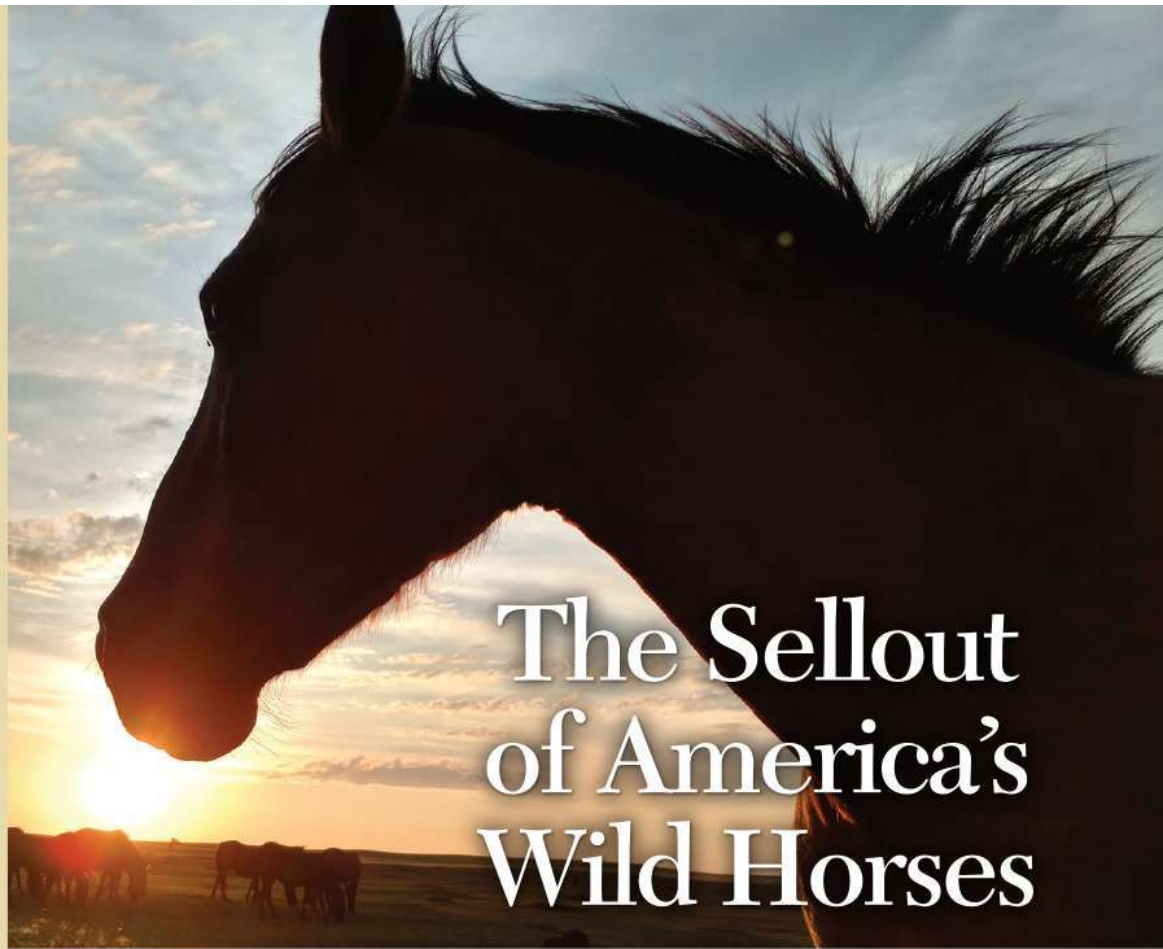
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Three organizations are leading the way in the betrayal of the public's wild horses and burros in a private deal put together with the cattlemen (rangeland stakeholders) and the BLM, violating the Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act of 1971. The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA), the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) and Return to Freedom (RTF) have conspired to reduce the numbers of wild horses down to 27,000 wild animals, which is in direct violation of the 1971 Act.

Those animals remaining will be given birth control which will ultimately lead to a loss of genetic diversity, disruption of band structures, and eventual extinction of wild horses and burros from our public lands.



The Sellout of America's Wild Horses

HSUS holds the registration of the "pesticide" PZP and will stand to gain an enormous amount of funding for its use on the animals. Already they receive millions of dollars in grants to promote the use of PZP.

Here is what ISPMB has encountered in the use of this "drug" on two of its herds. PZP promoters state that permanent infertility does not happen until seven straight years of use. However, one of ISPMB herds whose mares received PZP suffered permanent infertility within just five years of use. While ISPMB stopped the use immediately in the other herd, it was nearly too late after just four years of use. Out of 36 mares, only nine mares recycled four years after stopping the drug. Out of the nine mares, seven mares lost their foals the day they were born with the exception of one. This foal lived six months but would have been considered a "failure to thrive" foal.

One just has to look at the domestic horse breeding industry to see the effects of humans' decisions on animals. The average age of soundness in many breeds is but seven years. The genetics on some of the breeds now requires crossbreeding to preserve diversity. We know PZP causes a reduction in diversity of the herds that are already receiving this drug.

Please write your representatives and senators telling them not to support this program. The law requires "minimal" management and this program is a massive intrusion of human intervention making choices for the animals as to who will and will not foal. These horses will no longer be considered wild. They will be nothing more than domestic animals unable to make decisions about their future. Write to them:

"STOP the removals of wild horses and burros down to a level of 27,000. This is a gross violation of the 1971 Act. This is against the law! HALT the use of any birth control on wild horses and burros."

READY TO TAKE ACTION?

Find your representatives and senators using these links:
<https://www.house.gov>
<https://www.senate.gov>

BLM: Find your local office by going online or calling: 202-208-3801
<https://www.blm.gov/office/national-office>
Tara Rigler, Assistant Director, Communications
Phone: 202-208-6913 • Email: blm_press@blm.gov

Heber Herd NEWS



Heber foal dozing



Heber stallion and youngster

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DEATH TOLL RISES IN THE HEBER TERRITORY

ISPMB and our attorneys at Snell and Wilmer in Phoenix continue to monitor the wild horse deaths in the Heber Territory. To date 20 horses have been shot to death in what appears to be a very painful death for the horses. One mare, shot in the rear, aborted a colt that was nearly full-term.

The Forest Service (FS) officer, John Lopez, investigating the deaths, was seen on Phoenix TV stating that the Heber horses were “feral” and belonged to the Apache Tribe. ISPMB’s lawsuit against the FS clearly stated

that these horses are “wild and free-roaming” to be protected by the 1971 Act. To date, no one has been charged in the killings. Calling these animals “feral” only emboldens the killers to shoot more horses, not fearing the \$100,000 fines for killing a wild horse or burro.

ISPMB awaits the Territory Plan which calls for a reduction of this herd of nearly 200 horses to a mere 52 animals which they intend to shoot with the drug, PZP. Both actions will destroy this herd.



DO A FACEBOOK FUNDRAISER FOR ISPMB

A great opportunity to increase giving to International Society for the Protection of Mustangs and Burros is with a Facebook fundraiser. Learn more at <https://www.facebook.com/fund/ISPMB/>



MOVIE REVIEW: *The Mustang*

BY JEFF ROTH

A lost opportunity for telling a moving story about America's mustangs and their healing abilities with humankind

THESE STATEMENTS BELOW APPEAR AT THE BEGINNING OF THE MOVIE:

- FALSE:** Over 100,000 Wild Mustangs, an icon of the American West, still roam across the United States. Overpopulation, limited resources and privatization of public lands now threaten their existence.
- MISLEADING:** In response, the federal government rounds up thousands of mustangs a year to help with population control...most spend the rest of their lives in long-term holding facilities and some are euthanized.
- TRUE:** A few hundred are sent to prisons, to be trained by inmates for sale at public auction.

The movie is a fictional story. However, it is about a real program and so the information given at the very beginning of the film should be accurate, and the figure of 100,000 horses still roaming free is not supported by any group or research material and far exceeds the BLM's already-inflated estimates. The film does not offer any information of how the survival of mustangs is endangered now or how they may be nearing extinction due to the long-term practices of the BLM and their failure to enforce the 1971 law protecting horses and burros on public lands. So, we're not given a larger view of the mustang in the West. They talk about overpopulation but they don't even give two sentences to the controversy that surrounds roundups in the first place and the cattle industry's use of the public lands. They talk about long-term holding facilities but they don't mention that the BLM adopts out horses that they know will go to slaughterhouses in Mexico and Canada.

Thus, the film starts out on a very weak leg as far as viewers knowing the state of mustangs in the West.

The story is told in a linear fashion from beginning to end. There are no flashbacks or flashforwards, no subplots woven together to give it richness so it's one-dimensional in its storytelling. Even at that, the characters are still not fully developed. There seem to be several throwaway minor roles, which should have been more fully developed. For example, the psychologist Connie Britton has short scenes that are perfunctory and don't add anything (or enough) to the story. They don't give us background, motivation. The same is true with the main character's daughter. She seems to be there

so we can find out what the main character is in jail for but she is not developed as a real person.

And other than in the scene where the main character explains to his daughter why he's in jail, we really don't know anything about him — and the development of his character doesn't show his transformation. He likes the horses but we don't really believe that he has changed. The biggest disappointment for people with knowledge about mustangs and horse psychology was how shallow the Bruce Dern character was. He shows none of the qualities of a true horse person, doesn't reveal any special knowledge he has about working with horses, the intersection of horse and human behavior. He is a superficial character made to look scruffy and old, which is very stereotypical (cowboy) and probably not representative of most horse trainers.

All in all, the effect of the entire picture is one that is shallow and does not connect on a real human level with any of the animals or the people in it and misses a great opportunity to show the social behavior and qualities of mustangs and that special area where horses and humans can communicate in a deep way. The real qualities of the mustang are not revealed or highlighted in the film, which you would expect in a movie called *The Mustang*. People who have worked with mustangs have seen their special qualities and the depth of the understanding they can have of humans through nonverbal communication.

Bottom line, this movie could have been so much more by heralding the wild horse and its relationship to humankind.

My Name is Ina Ohitika

BY KAREN SUSSMAN
ISPMB PRESIDENT

This is a true story written from the perspective of a wild mare crying out for help.



INA OHITIKA PICTURED WITH SCARLET, THE FOAL SHE STOLE. INA BECAME PERMANENTLY INFERTILE AFTER FIVE STRAIGHT YEARS OF PZP USE.

My name is Ina (e-na) Ohitika, (O-he- ta-ka), Lakota for "courageous mother." I have earned that title ever since the birth of my first foal many years ago. When you finish reading my story you will truly understand the honor in which I carry this name.

The essence of my being, that who I am, will never again exist because I have received a drug, PZP, against my will that has prevented me from ever having a foal again.

Let me start my story from those wonderful days with my family band where, almost yearly, I had a foal to nurture and love, becoming the wonderful "mother mentor" that I am, or should say, was. I was free to make the most important decision in my life, and that was when I wanted to become pregnant again. After all, I followed generations upon generations of mothers before me that knew how important it was to keep our species safe so we could continue our years on earth. My mother told me those past years were beyond my comprehension as we evolved from the times of the Saber-Toothed Tigers and the Woolly Mammoths, long before these two-legged creatures appeared on earth. With this ancient knowledge, my mother assured me that we were designed to continue to survive over eons of time. Part of that survival is having foals, knowing that they will carry on our species. You know, we don't live as long as elephants or the two-leggeds. Actually, our lives are very short on this earth, but we live a wonderful life of freedom and we, ourselves, limit our numbers when we are left alone and our families remain intact.

I've been told that giving us this drug will allow us to grow older and with much more weight than if we were carrying our children into our elderly age. To begin with, my mother would be first to tell you that many mares often don't have foals in their older age. Unless you walked this earth in my "hoof" steps, you would never know how I really feel. Today I am going to share my story. It is a very important story that needs to be told and understood.

I loved spring because the weather was warming and the days were longer. It was a beautiful time too as we mares were preparing to have our foals. We always managed to have our foals in the warmer weather so they could have the best chance at survival. Our stallions protected us from harm and were respectful as

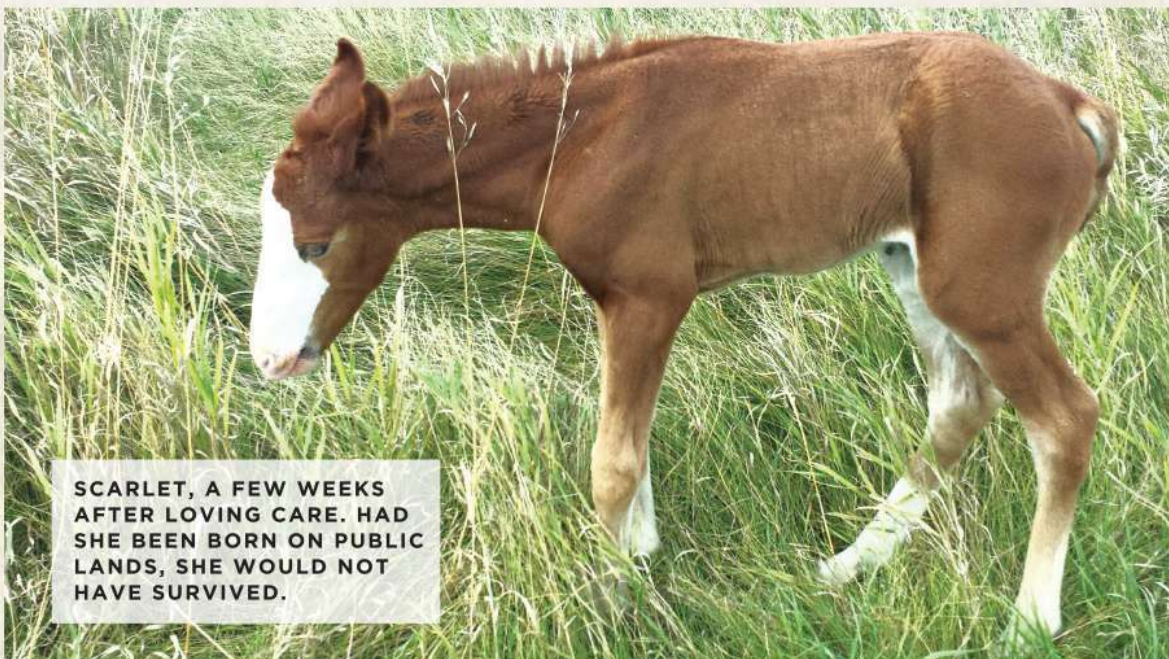
to when we wanted to be bred. My mother told me of the days when there was no one chasing us to capture us and destroy our family structures. She said under those conditions our population increased at 4 percent. She also cautioned me to stay with her until I was five years old and then I could venture out in the world. By that time, I had enough knowledge from my father and mother which made me a brilliant young mare. When I would go out in the world, I would again begin the most important part of my life, procreation, so that our species would survive over eons of time.

I remember my last foal. She was energetic and kept me moving constantly for the next two weeks while she gained her balance and strength. Although I was tired from childbirth, I have learned over time that these would be the most exhilarating and tiring two weeks of my life.

You see, I have been taught to never let my foals out of my sight. These were dangerous times for foals, when they are so vulnerable to predators and are so new to the learning process of survival. Thank goodness that my foal also slept a lot during those times, as all newborn foals do, but I never took my eyes off of her. When she was up frolicking about I was always within feet of her. If anyone tried to approach her, I laid my ears back and let them know to stay away. She loved this game of "follow the leader" that she thought she made up. She would soon learn that this was no game but an important part of survival.

After two weeks, she would blend into our band and begin playing with other foals. This is when the "game" of chase would slow down and I could concentrate on grazing more, allowing her to explore on her own but always with my watchful eye. The older she became, the more she would explore with the members of our herd but always returned to our family. Under the best of conditions, she would remain with our family until she turned five years of age. I, being the good mother, will nurse her for 11 months or longer, depending when I foaled again. Being my last foal, which I did not realize would be my destiny, she nursed from me for nearly four years.

I could not understand why I couldn't get pregnant again but I was told I received the drug, PZP, which made me permanently infertile after five straight years of use. My friends have told me it took them just four years of use and they no longer could foal. Some mothers, after injected for four years, told me that their foals died on the first day of birth for no apparent reason.



SCARLET, A FEW WEEKS AFTER LOVING CARE. HAD SHE BEEN BORN ON PUBLIC LANDS, SHE WOULD NOT HAVE SURVIVED.



SCARLET STANDS FAITHFULLY NEXT TO INA OHITAKA. ONE WOULD THINK IT IS HER MOTHER.

Still not understanding this concept of not becoming pregnant, I now had to take things into my own “hooves” or as the two-leggeds say, “hands.” All the young mares, including my daughter, were having foals. I watched with such envy as those little beings came into the world. I was frustrated that I couldn’t have a foal.

Then early one spring morning, I plotted to take a foal from a young first-time mother. The young mare knew her role but would not defend herself against me because I had stature and was an older mare and commanded respect from her. I swooped in and took the foal with little fight from the unsuspecting mare. Her foal loped off to the tree line where I kept him. He tried to nurse off of me and I encouraged him by nuzzling my nose into his rear and pushing him to my teats. That feeling of having a foal at my side was so exhilarating again. I did my best to have him nurse but I had no milk. For moments, I was in my glory and feeling sublime. Yes, at last, I had a foal again. My life was fulfilled once more.

Then out of nowhere came the two-legged who watched over all of us whom we call Wild Horse Medicine Woman. She knew this was not my foal and we were in a chase together for the next hour. I dodged behind the trees, keeping the foal on the opposite side of me, away from her. I tried to defend myself by kicking out at her and even charging her, but the two-legged was not afraid, she just kept coming after me. The foal finally tired out. It was at this time that the two-legged came in and swooped up the foal, while he was lying on the ground, and herded him back to his real mother.

In fact, she stood there until I finally stopped watching and moved away with my family. Although what the two-legged didn’t know was that I would someday do this again. My heart was breaking in that I did not have a foal at my side. Didn’t the two-legged know that? I guess I made my mark because, after that, every day a two-legged would come and watch me.



MARES AND FOALS FROM THE GILA HERD.

About two weeks later, it happened again. I had a brilliant opportunity to take another foal from an unsuspecting young mare. I was good at stealing now and I made sure that no one was there to see me. Again, I was so nurturing and loving to this foal. I nuzzled her behind and pushed her to nurse from me. Even though I didn't have milk, it felt good.

By early afternoon, the two-legged came out to monitor our herd. When she spied me with another foal, she knew it wasn't mine. She didn't come right away to take the foal but walked around the herd to determine who was without a foal. The foal's real mother was not too far away and easy to detect with milk dripping from her teats.

We did another dance again. I was pushing the foal away and trying to escape once again. I would run one way and then quickly turn and go in the opposite direction. There seemed to be no maneuver that I could use to evade the two-legged. I tried fighting again but the two-legged told me that if I kept the foal, that the foal would die. It was imperative that I give this foal up. The opportunity came and the two-legged grabbed the foal and pushed it back to its real mother. Again I slinked back into the tree line and watched at a distance. My fighting spirit shrank and my sadness overcame me. I was depressed. I decided to be by myself all day long.

As we moved into the early summer month of June, I decided to take my chances again. I couldn't tolerate seeing all the beautiful foals and their mothers, knowing I was barren.

This time it was early, early morning just before the sun came up. Again, I was successful on my mission. There I was strutting about with a newborn foal at my side. My tail was flying high in the breeze of the morning and the sunlight was creating a sparkle on my coat. I was overcome with the feeling of elation. My life was complete now. The foal was nursing from me or least trying to nurse even though there was no milk. As the sun rose out of the East, I was grazing but watching carefully so this foal did not stray from me. Yes, I exhibited my greatest mothering techniques only to be dashed once again by this two-legged. This time I did not try to kick or fight as much but I did move away so she couldn't catch "my" foal. It wasn't long before help arrived and a pen was built to put the real mother and foal together to keep them from me. Even with my best skills exhibited trying to keep this foal, the two-legged always seemed to win.



INA OHITIKA (RT) WATCHES AS WILD HORSE MEDICINE WOMAN TAKES AWAY THE FOAL OHITIKA STOLE FROM ITS REAL MOTHER.



ON HER WAY TO INTENSIVE CARE IN THE RANCH HOUSE, SCARLET RESTS IN THE FRONT SEAT OF THE TRUCK—TOO TIRED AND WEAK TO MOVE.

By July, I decided to take a different tact. I took another foal but his mother stayed right by my side and the foal became confused and began to nurse from both of us. I kept this position for a good part of the day. Yes, there she was again! She noted that there were two of us with one foal. She walked up to me and again tried to explain that this behavior could not continue or there would be plenty of foal deaths which to account for. Her demeanor was that of "understanding" my plight but also being firm. After all, this was foal number four this year. She remained until she was sure the foal's mother would keep her. Of course, I moved away from the foal during this time and pretended to mind my own business. My head hung low and I just stood far away. I think she thought that I would finally give up.



MARES AND FOALS FROM THE GILA HERD.

Not so, it was a very hot early September day. The climate was changing and September now had days that were in the high 90s unlike the frosty days of years past. It seemed the two-legged was not doing her daily visits like before. She probably thought foaling season was over! It was still a great day to have a foal and this new mother did just that. There was a beautiful sorrel filly with a bald face. Of course, she didn't look anything like me because I was solid colored and much darker. Yet, I spied this little foal and took her for most of the day. I was the greatest Mom to her. I loved her, nuzzled her, and pushed her to find milk. By the end of the day, this little filly was down and became too weak to stand. I nudged her withers with my hoof but she wouldn't stand. She could barely lift her head. All day without milk at these temperatures was just too much for this foal.

Then the two-legged appeared and quickly left again only to bring in the farm truck. She walked right up to me with her hands on her hips and for the first time, I didn't fight. I stood there watching with more sadness than anyone could ever know – not only the sadness of losing another foal but knowing that this foal may never get up. I watched as the two-leggeds lifted the foal into the truck and carried her away. This filly would not be reunited with her mother but ended up in the living room of the ranch house where she received intensive care.

When the two-legged came out again to see me many weeks later, she sat with me and poured her heart out to me. She wanted me to know that the little filly survived and was named Scarlet. The two-legged began to cry as she told me this story. Scarlet will never know what a horse family will be like except for those other orphaned foals that she grew up with. She will never experience having a foal or understand how important survival of the species is. She would never have that mentoring by powerful mares, like me, that was so important for her continuing existence and important for species protection for the next eons of years. She admired my wisdom and my strength and fortitude. She wished things could be different for me. She said that my glorious wisdom learned from ages past, destroyed by this drug, will never again be passed onto future generations. She said that humans could not, in any way, make sound decisions on who should and should not breed like my herd did. She acknowledged that my wisdom, honed over the ages, was the perfect acumen in making those determinations.

As her tears were flowing down her face, she promised me that this would never happen again to another mare. That my story will be told and changes will come before it is too late. She told me that she has witnessed what my mother told me in my early years about population growth; when we are left alone and our families are kept intact, our population is stable and grows at a rate in the single percentage digits, not the 20 percent that the BLM touts.

She said there is no overpopulation of wild horses. She said long before I was born, in 1974, there were nearly 60,000 wild horses and burros on public lands. These counts were visual counts and could be underestimated by 50 percent. She alluded to the fact that there could really have been far more than 60,000 wild horses and burros at that time. She reiterated the importance of the 1971 law which said "wild horses and burros were fast disappearing from the American scene." After all, at the turn of the 20th century, there were at least 2 million wild horses roaming in 17 states west of the Mississippi.

She said, why would two-leggeds want to limit our population when our gene pool almost disappeared? Especially when there were 60,000 wild horses and burros which were considered threatened and endangered at that time in 1971. She told me that the domestic horse industry does not have the beautiful genetic diversity that we in the wild have. She said this is because the two-leggeds are in charge of breeding. She was adamant that using this drug decreases the genetic diversity of the wild horses and requires horses from other areas to be transplanted into these areas. This disrupts and changes the beautiful horse cultures of the different herd areas. She said, only we should make the decision who breeds and who does not...

As she wiped her tears dry, she made a promise to me that the TRUTH will be told! She assured me that changes will come from speaking this TRUTH.

THE TRUTH MUST WIN OVER REPEATED LIES AND MISINFORMATION



SCARLET, NOW VIBRANT, WITH AUNTIE CLARE, WHO HELPED IN HER RESCUE ONE YEAR AGO

Please help ISPMB with a donation to bring the truth forward. Please share my story so others do not have to ever endure pain and suffering as I do daily. Please tell everyone, there is NO OVERPOPULATION. Remind them that when our herds are left alone and our families are left intact, we grow at very slow rates!

Yours in truth,

Ina Ohitika

Your Generosity Helps The Horses!

WE CAN PUT ANY SIZE DONATION TO WORK:

\$5...carrots for one horse

\$10...small bale of hay for one horse

\$20...senior feed for our elders

\$90...large bale of hay*

\$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 Gila herd for a year**

* Feeds an average horse for approximately a month

**Become a lifetime member of ISPMB.



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