



DEBATE RAGES OVER THE USE OF BIRTH CONTROL ON WILD HORSES/BURROS

The debate about the use of birth control on wild horses and burros is coming to the forefront.

The question looms why should current population numbers be suppressed with birth control when there are only half the number present now than in 1971 when they were first protected.

The 1971 law is explicit in saying the animals were fast disappearing from the American scene and that there should be *minimal management* of the animals. When population counts were done in 1974, there were nearly 50,000 animals based on a counting system that drastically undercounted the animals by today's standards. Today we are lucky to have 30,000 animals.

The National Academy of Sciences (NAS), whose report was released in 2013, noted that BLM's management practices are *facilitating high rates* of population growth by holding horse populations below levels affected by food limits. "If population density were to increase to the point that there was not enough forage available, it could result in fewer pregnancies and lower young-to-female ratios and survival rates," according to NAS.

ISPMB's horses have held their own even with good feed conditions. An example is the Gila herd that began with 31 animals and 14 years later, they have crested to 100 animals. If these were BLM horses, this year we should have 248 horses. ISPMB's studies have shown that the **stability of the harems has led to reduced growth rates**. This means that the harems

should not be disrupted by removals, separating stallions from mares. We know that once that happens, the stallions lose their mares to younger stallions being released back onto the herd areas.

Bottom line is that roundups whether for removal or birth control injections causes the same problem – increase in fertility rates due to the disruption of the harems. The future for best management practices by the BLM should be in bait trapping when removals are necessary, keeping the harems intact. Even though it is more time intensive, the overall costs in removals and warehousing animals would be and would have been drastically reduced.

The argument against the use of birth control continues for the following reasons: animals would have to be treated yearly which means that the harems would be disrupted constantly. And adding to their disruption, instead of only 50-60% of the animals gathered during a usual roundup, the majority (90%) of the herds must be gathered to implement birth control. This means that there would be almost no harem that wouldn't be disrupted! The result again, increase in fertility rates from disruption. So combating growth rates by using contraception actually increases rates!

We know that permanent infertility can happen after five years of application of the drug to the same animal. And we don't know the far reaching effects of the long-term use of the drug on modeling behaviors for the animals or any side affects if foals were to be born to mares that have received long-term treatments.

The final and *most important* argument against the use of birth control is that we as human beings must select who breeds and who does not breed. In the domestic horse industry, we have failed miserably as breeders of horses. One can easily point to the Quarter Horse industry where the average age of soundness is seven years, the age of a horse just entering its prime of life. That means at age 8 and older, horses are breaking down due to having too much weight on legs that can't support the weight. Nature has provided the best breeding program available for wild horses and that being "survival of the fittest." One just has to look at the legs of a wild horse compared to any other breed of horse. And we know they are generally healthier and happier.

If BLM were to manage wild horses by not disturbing them, they would do more to hold down birth rates in the long run. Removal of "excess" wild horses/burros should only be done by bait trapping to ensure that wild horses and burros truly remain wild. Sadly, instead of feasible minimal management, we now are at maximal intrusive management.

(Note: ISPMB does not discourage the use of birth control in sanctuary settings where horses live together in families and will never breed again.)



YOUR HORSES NEED YOUR HELP • SPRING HAY COSTS ARE HERE We must raise \$150,000

Your horses are in great need now – more than ever. We are always so grateful for your wonderful support! We are still paying off debt when our hay had tripled in price more than a year ago and we are still purchasing

new hay now at reasonable rates. Our Conservation Program has three herds now that don't exist anywhere but at your ISPMB ranch. Their gene pool is saved forever because of your help! We are the only

organization in our country to have so much information vital to the survival of all wild herds. We hope to hear from each and every person no matter what amount. **You can and have made a difference.**



International Society for the Protection of Mustangs and Burros

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GIVING PROGRAMS THAT SUSTAIN YOUR HORSES

MONTHLY DONATIONS:

We are grateful to many donors who have enlisted to donating monthly. Planned monthly income helps ISPMB to assess and meet our needs. If you are interested in donating monthly, please contact our office @ 605-964-6866.

LASTING MEMORIES GARDEN OF HOPE:

A gift to "your" horses in your will or trust will help ensure the safeguarding of their future. We are grateful to all of our donors and members who have notified us of their intent to remember "their" horses. We acknowledge the passing of our following members who have remembered ISPMB in their wills: Ellen Barrios, Mary E. Kent, Martha Simms and Jacqueline Waldeck.

GIFTING ANNUITIES:

This opportunity affords you to make money by giving to "your" horses. A gifting annuity takes advantage of favorable tax treatment that's available only to charitable organizations and their donors. Please contact our office and we'll put you in touch with ISPMB's financial advisor.

ADOPTION/SPONSORSHIP:

ISPMB offers many opportunities to adopt one of our horses. We have approximately 25 horses that would love to find loving homes. These horses have either been raised since they were born or came off the herds in their early lives. We have an adoption application on our website or you can call our office. Help give them a permanent loving home.

Sponsorship of our horses keeps your horses in our herds running free and helps to provide them feed. You'll receive a beautiful certificate with a photo of your very own horse.

PHOTOGRAPHIC WORKSHOP SET AT ISPMB June 14th-17th

wildlife Photography by
Weldon Lee



Sign up for an experience of a lifetime photographing ISPMB's four wild herds. Weldon Lee will teach you everything you wanted to know about photography. His photography has been exhibited at the Denver Museum of Natural History to the Carnegie Museum of Natural History in Pittsburgh.

His photographs of ISPMB's horses shown on our website are for sale with a portion of the profit going to sustain our horses.

Call now for more information and register for the workshop.

Phone: 303.747.2074

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BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE BECOMES INTERNATIONAL

ISPMB is pleased to announce the addition of Dr. Marthe Kiley-Worthington to our Advisory Committee. She is one of the first scientific ethologists to become interested in horse behavior and has spent the last twenty years studying all aspects of behavior and especially cognition. She runs a research center in France.

The committee of six will concentrate on setting the focus of studies at ISPMB.

We know that understanding the true behavior of horses will create the best management tool for wild horses on public lands.



WE APPRECIATE THE MARY H. STORER FOUNDATION'S GIFT

ISPMB was awarded a \$15,000 grant from the Mary H. Storer foundation which will enable us to purchase a new horse trailer.

On average, we travel 300 miles to see our vet. Although it is extremely beautiful here in north central South Dakota, it has few amenities within reach.



Chiricahua, Catnip herd

PRESIDENT'S REPORT By: Karen Sussman

The gargantuan task of saving America's wild horses and burros starts right here at ISPMB's ranch where our four herds live happily in families - never to be separated. It is our studies that hold the greatest hope in saving the herds on public lands. We are well on our way to finding the behavior data necessary to determine good management practices.

Secondly, there is no doubt in my mind that the creation of our Eco-tourism Center is the next necessary step to achieve all of our goals. According to Allan Savory and recent satellite photos, the West is experiencing "desertification" which means that the entire American West will someday look like Phoenix. With overgrazing by livestock for a good 150 years, the habitat has not had a chance to renew itself sufficiently to thrive.

The state of affairs is a far cry from the days when 60 million buffalo and 2 million wild horses roamed the plains and the grass was knee deep. Today, it is hard to find any grass on our Plains that is ankle deep!

The 1971 Act requires the BLM to determine habitat damage and who is causing this damage. For the past twenty years, BLM has not adhered to the law but called for emergency removals due to the drought. Maybe the drought wouldn't have been so bad if the real culprits were removed instead of the horses/burros. (See 1990 GAO Report)

Your support of "your" horses is a masterful opportunity to help ISPMB achieve our goals to save the "last of America's wild horses and burros."



Karen and Scarlet
Photo credit: Barb Begeman



Meet Peepers! She was born blind in the Gilas and remains with her friends at the Ranch

Adopt an ISPMB Wild Horse

SEE ABOUT ADOPTING ONE OF OUR
MAGNIFICENT HORSES WHO UNDERSTAND
THAT ONLY GOOD COMES FROM HUMANKIND.

CALL OUR OFFICE OR GO ON LINE
AND FILL OUT AN APPLICATION.

WWW.ISPMB.ORG



Gypsy and Dawn – both from AZ and were part of our ISPMB's rescue program.

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN TO BEGIN • QUEST FOR OUR TOURISM CENTER

ISPMB has begun efforts to develop a sustaining capital campaign so we can secure property in the right location to combine *tourism with conservation*.

We are selecting an elite group of people for our campaign. Our goal is to raise 5 million dollars. Moving to the right property will allow us to *grow our own hay and become financially self-sufficient through tourism*. Tourism is the largest industry in our state. With three million tourists traveling the state, our Center will afford a tremendous opportunity for education and call to action.

If you are interested in assisting our efforts in our Capital Campaign, please contact Karen Sussman, president, ISPMB @605-430-2088.



Winter photos by Joe Miranda White Sands herd.



photos by, Joe Miranda's Catnip herd



Gila stallions photo by, Wally Jarratt



BLM UPDATE ON THE DISAPPEARING HERDS

BLM's target removal schedule for this fiscal year will remove 1,981 animals this year and will additionally vaccinate 772 mares with the birth control drug, PZP, so they will not be able to reproduce.

BLM is quoted on their site saying, "Limits on the Wild Horse and Burro Program's budget and on the number of additional horses and burros that can be accommodated in off-range holding space means that fewer animals will be removed than in previous years."

Does this mean that with the new Congress, the ban will be lifted on selling wild horses to the highest bidder as suggested in the Burn's amendment? Only time will tell. **The majority of the horses that now reside in holding pastures SHOULD NOT have been removed from public lands as they have never been determined to be "excess."**

BLM will plan to zero out six wild herds in Nevada this year leaving only 173 out of the original 303 Herd Areas recognized after 1971.



SCARLET'S STORY ISPMB GAVE ME the GIFT OF LIFE



My story starts on September 27, an unusually hot day for this time of the year in South Dakota. My mother looks just like me and I am told that I am her first foal. Being brand new to the world, I had no idea what to expect. I just knew I was hungry and wanted to nurse from my mother. A skirmish broke out and I was whisked away by two mares. It seemed my mother was defenseless in trying to protect me.



All I remember is that it was so hot and I was thirsty. I tried to nurse from each of the mares but there was no milk. Soon I was too tired and weak. As the day began to wane, I plopped to the ground too tired to move.



Then my life changed drastically just when I thought I couldn't go on. A diesel truck rolled through the pasture and stopped right in front of me. I heard voices saying, "The kidnapper is at it again!" There was worry in the voices as they stood over me. I would soon learn to call these two-legged women Mama Karen and Auntie Clare. Before I could blink an eye, I was picked up and put into this big truck and taken to the farm house.



It was touch and go for the first 24 hours. I learned that when I was hungry Mama Karen or Auntie Clare were there to give me milk and encourage me to be strong. Every twenty minutes I woke up just to make sure there would be milk there for me and surprisingly there was!!!



After a week in the ranch house and Auntie Clare leaving for her home in Washington, I got my own accommodation in a house right next to the ranch house. It was wonderful as it was filled with hay, shavings, water, and a friend named Lightning. She is six months old and showed me how to eat hay.

Photos courtesy Clare Miles

Now that three months have passed, I have learned so much. My meals come regularly every three hours except at night. Mama Karen and I go for walks often. Sometimes I just go out in the pasture and play with Lightning and her friends. But mainly I love my walks through the fields and over the dirt and snow covered roads behind the ranch. There is so much to see and I love life.



I wear a coat because the temperatures are below zero now.

On our walks, Mama Karen tells me so much. She said that my mother's herd is extraordinary to study because normally foals wouldn't be born as late as I was and behavior's like the two mares that kidnapped me happen because they can't have foals and want foals very badly. She said she feels sad for the Kidnapper because mares are supposed to get pregnant and nurture their babies. This is what nature intended and when they can't, they become frustrated.



I felt so lucky to be alive when Mama Karen told me that my mother's herd here at ISPMB is the only breeding herd left of Sheldon horses and are safely kept here in a conservation program. She told me the week I was born that the Sheldon Wildlife Range eliminated all of my relatives. They are gone forever just like the buffalo were gone a hundred years before me. Now for sure I realize how important my life is and I appreciate how much I am doted upon. I am so thankful!



Mama Karen tells me that ISPMB is studying the effects of birth control (PZP) on my mother's herd. Birth control was stopped in 2012 because further treatment would cause permanent sterility in mares. This is a very big study that will take several years but will have very important information.



Mama Karen said that our studies are extremely important to welfare of all wild horses. She never lets me worry but I hear her talking about the need for more hay. You see, we need to purchase our spring hay and I hope you'll help. My milk is \$150/week and my mother's herd known at the Catnip



Herd needs hay! We need 135 large round bales at \$50/bale every month just for them.

I hope you can help because living here has been a blessing!

With gratitude,
Scarlet

REMINDERS

- Please send us your e-mail address so we can send you alerts and reduce mailing costs.
- Pass our newsletter onto a friend and help ISPMB grow.
- We do not share or sell our mailing lists. Your name is safe with us.

Give the Gift of an ISPMB Membership

\$35 annual membership
\$15 Seniors and 18 and under





Spirit of The Ancients

International Society for the Protection of Mustangs and Burros

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Check out: our website for the latest news and pictures:
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ISPMB Historical Trivia

In 2005, Ford Motor Company became involved thanks to ISPMB's National Spokesperson, Stefanie Powers, and prevented 16,000 wild horses from being sold to slaughter due to the terrible Burns amendment. Thank you Ford Motor Company and Stefanie!



Help us KEEP THEM WILD!

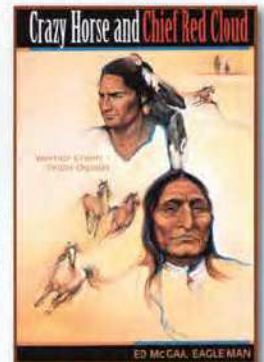
Two Great Books!

Wild Horse Annie and the Last of the Mustangs

All proceeds benefit ISPMB
Velma's original organization!.

CRAZY HORSE AND CHIEF RED CLOUD

We thank Ed McGaa, Eagleman, for the donation of his excellent book about these two warrior Oglala chiefs. All proceeds will be donated to ISPMB for hay!



Only \$26.⁰⁰
includes shipping

To order books, order a membership or simply make a donation go to our website:
www.ISPMB.org • Call: 605.964.6866 • Email: ISPMB@lakotanetwork.com

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WE CAN PUT ANY SIZE DONATION TO WORK! THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY!

Other Ways YOU CAN HELP

- Carrots for Rita \$5
- Senior feed for our elders \$18
- A bale of hay for one horse \$100
- Feed two horses for a month \$200
- Purchase a bag of milk for a foal \$125
- Sponsor a Horse \$150
- Sponsor an Orphan \$500
- Sponsor a Band \$1000
- Sponsor a Herd \$5000
- Feed four herds per month \$50,000
- Feed four herds for six months \$300,000



Orphaned foal playing on his walk.

"this is what we think of winter."

SEARCH WITH GOODSEARCH

Please go to Goodsearch.com and sign up as your charity, the International Society for the Protection of Mustangs and Burros. Each time you do a search on this search engine, ISPMB receives one penny. It all adds up and can help sustain your horses!