

Wild Horse Education
216 Lemmon Dr.
Suite 316
Reno, NV 89506

Dean Bolstad, Acting Division Chief
Division of Wild Horses and Burros
20 M Street, S.E.
Washington, DC 20003

May 31, 2016

Dear Mr Bolstad,

We are writing to you deeply concerned over the recent flurry of correspondence between the Nevada State Office Director John Ruhs and multiple political figures representing the livestock interests in the state. These letters target wild horses, yet do not address the previous deficits in public land management. It is more than alarming that historic practices of politics are being sent to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) as a belligerent challenge to continue to erode the already volatile human environment.

We are all painfully aware of the deficits in the multiple agency programs. It is offensive that a new public relations tagline of a "billion dollar problem" has been added to the wild horses in a purely hypothetical projection into the future when the livestock industry has already cost the tax payer in excess of a billion dollars in the last decade alone. A sense of integrity and perspective is clearly lacking.

In 2013 the National Academy of Sciences report urged broad scale temporary fertility control and data collection to address multiple deficits in the wild horse program. The state of Nevada is the only state that has not a single ongoing program utilizing ZonaStatH or PZP. The *largest fertility control program in the nation* at Fish Creek (nearly 25% of all horses treated nationwide on fiscal 2015) has been essentially shut down. The program is not shut down because of a legal win. To the contrary the IBLA ruled that BLM has the authority to carry out the program. The flagrant disregard for the Code of Federal Regulations by the permittee has gone unaddressed. The program was halted because of political reasons, not for any logical or legal one.

Multiple Herd Management Areas (HMA) in Nevada are candidates for the use of fertility control and others have subset populations that could be treated. No mandate has come from the state office to utilize this inexpensive method to gather data and control population growth. Inaction because of politics is simply not acceptable.

It is even more disconcerting that this same political gamesmanship was utilized to subvert valid restrictions to livestock during drought. Political figures put pressure on the state office to override closures that were held up under legal scrutiny. Willful trespass grazing was minimized and fines reduced further eroding the political climate. Documented violations of multiple aspects of the Code of Federal Regulations by a trespass permittee, in the very same area that fertility control of wild horses has been suspended, have been swept under the rug.

Instead of proactive action we simply see request for funds to do large scale removals of wild horses in the state? We know large scale removals will increase reproduction and push the program further into insolvency. Surrendering to the barrage of outdated demands will keep the program stuck in the same cycle that created the issues.

We beg you to deny funds for removals in all but emergency situations and mandate that the state of Nevada become proactive in its approach to managing wild horses and the rangeland they depend on. We ask you to demand that every district in the state have at least three (3) areas identified for ongoing use of PZP, and implementation begun, by the beginning of the next fiscal year.

If BLM were proactive we could have thousands of wild horses treated in this state by fall. We could begin to control population growth and limit extremely expensive removals to numbers more suitable for adoption.

As always Wild Horse Education stands ready to assist in any way possible to gather the data as we control population growth.

Sincerely,

Laura Leigh, Founder
Representing members of Wild Horse Education
Reno, NV