



NATIONAL HORSE & BURRO RANGELAND MANAGEMENT COALITION

*Advocating for commonsense, ecologically-sound approaches to managing horses and burros
to promote healthy wildlife and rangelands for future generations*

DATE: 31 August 2015

TO: Kent E. Walter, Bureau of Land Management, White River Field Office
220 E. Market Street, Meeker, CO 81641

RE: Decision Record for the 2015 West Douglas Herd Area Wild Horse Gather and Removal,
DOI-BLM-CO-NO5-2015-0023-EA

FROM: National Horse & Burro Rangeland Management Coalition
Keith Norris, Chair, keith.norris@wildlife.org, 301-897-9770 x309

Mr. Walter,

The National Horse and Burro Rangeland Management Coalition (Coalition) supports the BLM's efforts to comply with the Wild Free-Roaming Horse and Burro Act of 1971 (Act) by removing excess horses from the West Douglas Herd Area (WDHA).

Our Coalition includes a wide range of sportsmen, livestock, wildlife, and land conservation organizations and professional societies. Collectively, we represent over eight million Americans and focus on commonsense, ecologically-sound approaches to managing horses and burros to promote healthy wildlife and rangelands for future generations.

Our Coalition recognizes unmanaged horses and burros negatively impact rangeland ecosystems. Horses and burros are known to compact soils and graze vegetation extremely low to the ground, reducing the ability of plants to re-grow. Additionally, horses and burros compete with native wildlife for food and water resources and impact habitat used by these species. Excess horse and burros are not compatible with a thriving natural ecological balance that is required by the Act.

The BLM's Environmental Assessment indicates the WDHA does not have sufficient habitat to support healthy horse herds. As a result, horses are overgrazing vegetation and wandering onto private land in search of food and water. The presence of horses in this area exceeds the carrying capacity of the land, and thereby threatens the natural ecological balance of the region.

We encourage you to proceed with implementation of your selected action (Alternative A) and use multiple methods to remove all excess horses from the WDHA. We believe this action supports rangeland health, native wildlife, and the multiple uses of the range.

Thank you for your efforts to manage the WDHA in a manner that will restore a thriving natural ecological balance between the native wildlife and multiple uses of the range.

Sincerely,

Keith Norris, Chair
National Horse & Burro Rangeland Management Coalition

American Farm Bureau Federation • American Sheep Industry Association • Masters of Foxhounds Association • Mule Deer Foundation
National Association of Conservation Districts National Cattlemen's Beef Association • National Rifle Association
National Wildlife Refuge Association • Public Lands Council • Public Lands Foundation • Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation
Safari Club International • Society for Range Management • The Wildlife Society

Contact us at horseandrange@gmail.com or visit us on the web at wildhorserange.org