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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Spring Mountain complex scoping

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The AMLs for wild horses and burros living in this complex are too low to ensure genetically viable and thriving populations. The low population numbers will also destroy the great ecotourism potential of these herds, which live near Las Vegas, an international tourist destination.

I urge you to work with the Spring Mountain Alliance (SMA) and other community members on a plan to manage these horses on the range at appropriate levels utilizing proven PZP fertility control. SMA volunteer PZP darting teams will be trained and certified to dart as early as September 2013.

Find ways to keep wild horses and burros within the Complex by repairing and expanding water sources and implementing other range improvements to help the animals utilize all suitable habitat areas.

Any individuals that are removed should not be subject to helicopter roundups. USE bait trapping methods and work with the Spring Mountain Alliance to identify and remove only the most adoptable horses and burros and conducting vigorous local adoption drives. Due to the current stockpiling of 50,000 wild horses and burros in government holding facilities, removals must be kept to an absolute minimum.

The National Academy of Sciences' June 2013 report clearly stated that the BLM's business as usual for managing wild horses and burros is expensive and unproductive and must immediately change. This proposal ignores these important and independent scientific findings that removal increases the birth rate in the remaining bands. If PZP treatment of most mares had been continued after the 2007 roundup, the Spring Mountain Complex wild horse population could have been sustained close to current AML without need for another costly roundup in 2014.

There is still time to change course to a more sustainable, humane and less taxpayer costly management approach for the Spring Mountains Complex. Due to their proximity to Las Vegas, an international tourist destination, these herds hold great ecotourism potential. Please take this opportunity to implement an experimental volunteer/agency plan that truly protects these national icons on the range so that they may live their lives as nature intended while being enjoyed and appreciated by visitors from all over the world.

Thank you for your consideration.

Marta Williams

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