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First name: Garnet

Last name: Pasquale

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Thank you for this opportunity to comment on the very important project, that if carried out as in the past, will affect very large percentage of the only remaining Wild Horses and Burros in Southern Nevada. I sincerely believe that would be a tragic mistake.

As immediate past president of America's Wild Horse Advocates (5 years) and Director Elect of America's Wild Horse Advocates and the Spring Mountain Alliance, I have had the opportunity to not only observe first-hand the way the animals are misunderstood and misrepresented by governmental agencies.

However, they are not misunderstood by local citizens and tourists from all over the world. That is why there is a huge local volunteer base just waiting for the opportunity to assist the BLM and USFS in managing these precious resources.

In the past five years, I have also read 100's of pages of FOIA documents that were requested and received by our organization from both the BLM and USFS, some of which date back to mid-2000s. With a few exceptions, those documents are incomplete and do not really document much of anything. They only serve to confirm what I have always believed: the only management goal for the Wild Horse and Burro Program is for removal.

Because the USFS is not usually the lead agency on this issue and the fact that you personally are new to our area, I am going to list just a few examples that you would not otherwise be aware of.

- The January 2.007 Spring Mountain Complex Gather Report states that 34 mares were fertility treated. (See Attachment #1)

At no time since that gather, has anyone of the many observers (on both-sides of the mountain) ever seen more than 3 mares with the fertility marker on her left-rear hip. Where are the other 31?

Also, in the 6+ years since that gather no follow-up on the treated mares by agency personnel has been observed.

- In early February 2.011, a small family of Wild Horses' lead stallion and lead mare were hit by a car very early in the morning on the Cold Creek road. The stallion was killed on impact and the mare had a broken back leg. A call was made to the BLM to come and put her out of her misery. No one showed up until afternoon. She (and everyone who observed it) were made to suffer all that time. About a week later a foal from that same band was hit and killed in the same place. Both drivers were Cold Creek residents rushing to work.

It was at that time AWWA formed a weekend road patrol to alert people to: not only slow down, but to also not feed the horse. We did this thru April of 2011. See attachment #2 A & 2 B

Beginning in March 2011, the residents of Cold Creek pushed for signs along the road, which they had been promised for over 10 years. While the signs are miniscule compared to the ones on the Blue Diamond loop, they were eventually put up in late summer. To my knowledge no other horses have been hit on that road since that time.

- On a weekend morning in early July 2012 a stallion came into center of the village of a Cold Creek with a broken leg from a fight. Again the BLM was called, more than once; eventually a Metro officer came to put him down. But he did not have the proper firearm or ammunition and had to fire several times. All the time while the residents, weekenders, and their children were watching. This is unacceptable.

- We are aware that there are Wild Horses out of the HMA and in Lee and Kyle Canyons. We agree they should

not be there. But no attempt has been made to keep them from going there¹ or to remove them and relocate them back within their HMA. This example alone is where citizen volunteers could make a big contribution instead of just leaving them there and complaining about it until the next big helicopter gather. Note: a fence was planned to prevent this in 2007, but was never built and I believe it is the area (near McFarland Peak)} that is now being scoped again for the same reason. See attachment# 3.

- No conclusive documents have ever been provided to prove what is eating the forage. It is just always blamed on the horses and burros. The numerous elk, deer and rabbits are never considered.

- Other misconceptions are:

The wild horses and burros foal the water-ways. That is completely false. They do not defecate in the water and almost always stay at the water area for a very short time. We have a time-stamped photo collage of a wild horse band going to the large pond, drinking, and leaving within an 8 minute time-span.

- The wild horses do not keep the elk and deer from water or forage. They usually graze in different day parts, the horses in daylight and the elk and deer under cover of darkness, as they are much more skittish. When they both have been observed in daylight they peacefully coexist in close proximity. We also have photos of that.

- The area is called the Spring Mountain National Recreation Area. Viewing and photographing wildlife, including wild horses and burros, is considered recreation by some people, just as hiking, fishing, off- road riding, etc. is considered recreation by others. The agencies are always talking "manage for multiple use". It far past time for the wild horses and burros, and those who enjoy them to get their fair share.

- The weekender ATV riders cause much more damage to the area than all the horses put together could ever do.

- In closing I would like to call your attention to the fact that: at the March 5, 2013 Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board meeting in Oklahoma City one of the recommendation of the Board to the BLM was:

to develop Eco-Tourism sites where wild horses and burros could be accessible for viewing by the public on the open range. The BLM has accepted that recommendation (as well as others from that meeting.)) See page 2 of the June issue of the National Mustang Association Mustang newsletter- attachment# 4.

There is no better place in the entire world to do that- than the Spring Mountains of Southern Nevada.