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First name: Eva

Last name: Martin

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Manahoo,

My name is Eva Martin, I grew up in Lee Vining, graduated high school from LVHS. Just as my mother did. My family have been long time residence of Mono Lake, we are one of the original families of the basin. My great grandfather Nick Dondero was a potatoe farmer and well known for it too, my great grand father John Dondero Sr was a sheep herder, and my grandfather John Dondero Jr, wrangled mustangs in his younger days, and lived his entire life in the Mono Basin, raising 5 children with my grandmother Violet Andrews.

My family is very familiar with the wild mustangs, it has been a source of our history, from a job my grandfather had in his teens and early 20s to our mother taking us out to see wild horses run and be free. We would sit at our grandfather's ranch or out where the horses are designated to roam now and our grandpa would tell us how the horses would wonder all the way to south tufa and even onto his ranch property by the lake, toward lee vining creek. Until the powers that be, removed them from the basin and drew their imaginary lines in the sand.

Some say the horses don't belong in our basin, some say they are destroying rock formations, wetlands and grass lands. Our family has stories of these horses being a source of traded goods, food and travel. These horses worked hand in hand with the indigenous community to manage sage brush over growth, which is a fire hazard in our basin. The indigenous people Kutzadikaa profited and survived off of these horses. They were not a nuisance to us, but a blessing. These horses embodied what it was to live and survive in the Mono Basin, tough, resilient and free.

I don't think we are looking at this situation from the correct view, I think we need to look at what the horses can provide to us as people. I see them giving wild fire management, which in turn gives us our wild grass lands back. I see job opportunities for people who do want to help manage horse population, not by removing them and sending them down south, but medically manage the population; Wranglers, veterinarians and like minded folks. Selling smaller herds of them to Ranches who specialize in mustang rehabilitation so we know, we've done right by the beings that have lived on this land far longer than any state or federal entity.

Rounding them up, sending off to some over populated corral is the easy thing to do. But it does NOT make it right. Foals get trampled in these corals, the old die from hunger and stress, Stallions fight until they are bloodied. I do not support the removal of the 699 head herd! They belong in the Mono Basin, they should be protected.

I am a Kutzadikaa women, it's our job as keepers of this land to do right by these creatures.

Thank you for taking time to read my email.

Attached are photos taken about a month ago.. some foals still have their umbilical cord. Stop the round ups.