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Title:

Comments: Hello. I was born in Denver and have long considered myself a western woman and have been a horse lover almost from the instant I was born. My grandfather threw me up the back of a horse when I was only a couple of years old and it's been love every since. He introduced me to the horse and the west.

Until recently, I have been under the mistaken impression that our nation's wild horses were a valued, honored and protected national treasure, much like the Bald eagle.

In the last couple of years I have found my "horse fix" on-line following the photographers who capture these wild animals on film and share them with the world, along with some who rescue them. This is when I learned of the horrible war that is being waged against this beautiful, majestic national treasure. These animals are our history. I have been appalled to find that the government and the BLM routinely and cruelly round them up, pen them up and abuse them. Many are injured or die during the roundups. Others are killed if they are not perfect and considered adoptable. And still others are sent to slaughter. Why? To appease the beef industry? What about the tax payer that owns the land on which these horses roam and which the cattle ranchers are granted cheap use of for their cattle. The horses were here first. They helped build this nation.

This past spring I was in Arizona and had heard of the Salt River Wild Horses. I never dreamed I'd get a chance to see them. But I did !! It was the thrill of a lifetime for me and I hope to get the chance

To see them again as well as other wild horse bands but if the government and its management agencies get their wish the wild horse will soon be extinct. That would be a national tragedy. Because once they are gone, they are gone, and a piece of our history will go with it. It will take my heart. With so many animals endangered or near extinction in this world why purposefully do it to another animal, especially one as iconic as the American mustang?

Not only that , but what about the tourism these horses bring to the Heber-Overgaard community...and the State of Arizona. What will the decimation of these horses cost them economically? The public enjoys seeing these wild horses roaming our public lands and I expect there to be economic impacts if you allow these herds to be reduced to nothing. tourism is an important economic factor to these small communities and the USFS is going to hurt them by these actions.

And what about the impact this devastating draft plan will have on the horses removed and the lack of genetic diversity for the small number recommended can stay?

Please reconsider your plan and find a more a better way to sustain and maintain these wonderful animals.

Thank you.