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Organization:

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Recommended Change:

The Heber Wild Horse Territory Management Plan needs to include a well thought out plan for protecting the horses. 36 CFR 222.60(a) says, "The Chief, Forest Service, shall protect, manage, and control wild free-roaming horses and burros on lands of the National Forest System and shall maintain vigilance for the welfare of wild free-roaming horses and burros that wander or migrate from the National Forest System." It states, "shall protect". The Forest Service Supervisor, or the Media Liaison, or both have made statements to multiple media outlets that the horses are only protected if they're on the Territory. This is not true. The Forest Service is obligated to protect the horses "on lands of the National Forest System", etc.

Supporting Reason:

The Forest Service has not adequately protected the horses and will not admit their obligation to protect the horses. In the past 18 months, at least 36 horses have been killed, with most of them confirmed shot to death. More horses would have been confirmed shot to death in early 2019 had the Forest Service not been on furlough due to the government shutdown, thus delaying the investigation into the killings. Had necropsies been performed timely, evidence would have been recovered that confirmed death by gunshot. I have video evidence to support this claim of bullet holes in horses where the Forest Service determined the cause of death to be "undetermined". By the time the investigation had begun, evidence had already been destroyed or consumed by carnivores. The Forest Service proposes an AML of 50-104 horses. At that number and with the extent of the killings in just 18 short months, the horse herd could be decimated in short order without proper protective measures in place. The horse killer(s) is/are still out there.

Reference/Citation/Additional Info.:

36 CFR 222.60(a)

36 CFR 222.60(b)(10)

36 CFR 222.65 Protection of wild free-roaming horses and burros when they are upon other than the National Forest System or public lands.