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Comments: Heber Wild Horses

\*How did the FS come up with a count of the Heber Wild Horse herd between 292 and 471 horses, when local advocates that are boots on the ground have stated that the number of the Heber horses has consistently remained between 200 to 300 for the past 20 years?

\*Applying the numbers given above, the FS will have erroneously and enormously inflated the actual count of the Heber herd by 50 to 70%.

\*Given the inflated 50 to 70% count of the Heber horses by the FS, what the FS is actually and intentionally doing is skewing the count to manipulate the numbers so that the reduction of the Heber herd to the set goal of 50 to 104 remaining Heber horses will occur using an apparent randomly set value called the "AML".

\*The FS knows that a herd of 50 to 100 horses could no longer be a viable, nor a sustainable herd. This reduction along with the sterilization of these horses will certainly assure that the Heber Wild Horse herd will cease to exist, as they will die off within the next 20 years or less. Sterilization of stallions should not be an option as it has been proven to not reduce population since one stallion will offset that goal. Also the sterilization of a stallion causes a lasting and detrimental effect to the once proud stallion that is now forced out from his family to live alone.

\*It is of my opinion that the elimination of the Heber Wild Horses is the exact and true intention and goal of the FS and the BLM, as both agencies have fallen to the pressures and/or pay of the ranchers.

\*It must be noted that the ranchers have already reduced the Heber horses by killing, murdering at least 15% of the Heber horses since Oct 2018. It is criminal that law enforcement from various agencies have not arrested not one person in these killings. This is a total disgrace and only allows for more certainty that all of these agencies, including the FS are corrupt and in unison to drive the Heber horses to extinction.

\*A requirement must be included in the upcoming EA to include a detailed plan and course of action on how future investigations of crimes such as shootings, captures, and harassment of Heber wild horses will be handled, including justice to the fullest extent of the law, local, state, and federal. This means fines and jail time must be enforced and taken seriously. Investigations must be thorough and timely, and if resources available are not sufficient to solve the crime, then outside resources must be employed. Perhaps an outside source should be used as the first option since no law enforcement agency of this area has been able, or willing, to solve even one case. The FS and all agencies involved have shown nothing but corrupt collusion with those wanting the horses removed, the ranchers. This plan should also include signage to inform the public that the Heber wild horse herd is a federally protected herd. And this plan must have a checks and balance system in place so that no one person has total control. A panel of honest and fair and unbiased people must work together in forming this plan of action. It is IMPERATIVE this plan is in place and MUST BE UTILIZED. The whole world is watching!

\*THE WILD FREE-ROAMING HORSES AND BURROS ACT (WFRHBA) OF 1971 (PUBLIC LAW 92-195) states:

-"It is the policy of Congress that wild free-roaming horses and burros shall be protected from capture, branding, harassment, or death;"

-The WFRHBA provides for criminal penalties of up to \$2,000 and/or a year in jail for those convicted of a violation of the law. Penalties increased under the Sentencing Reform Act of 1984, as amended.

-Today, violation of the WFHBA is a Class A misdemeanor, and fines can run up to \$100,000 for each offense. Arizona Animal Cruelty Laws must apply also.

\*Other relevant laws include:

-The Heber Wild Horse Territory is considered a "Special Area" by the FS. Special Areas in the National Forest System are designated for their unique or special characteristics, and must adhere to (36 CFR 219.7).

-FLPMA, 43 U.S. Code CHAPTER 35-FEDERAL LAND POLICY AND MANAGEMENT

-The Taylor Grazing Act,  
43 USC Ch. 8A: GRAZING LANDS

-The Public Rangelands Improvement Act

\*The FLPMA is to allow multi-use of public lands, while at the same time balancing and preserving the natural resources and wildlife within. The FS has not adhered to any type balance or preservation. Cattle far exceed the number of horses, and land occupied. Therefore, cattle should be removed and the Heber horses should not be removed in order to obtain the balance intended by the FLPMA. The horses should not have their protected land reduced to allow for an increase in cattle. This is not balance. Next, the FS and the ranchers will be killing the wildlife to spare a blade of grass. Fencing by ranchers on public and protected land for the horses should not be allowed period, and certainly not in a National Forest, a wildlife setting. Who would like to visit a National Forest where cattle exist? Where danger of these cattle exist? It is not natural! Fencing also prevents the horses to have access to water. Cattle are an environmental hazard.

\*IF this proposal goes thru, just like the Flow Chart shows, all roads point to disposal, SLAUGHTER. This is a massacre. I sincerely hope the FS will value and evaluate our comments thoroughly. And that this is not just a procedural appeasement for the public.

\*The Heber Wild Horses are true representations of a true Heritage Wild Horse and our American history, but especially the symbol of the West. They have lived here for 1000s of years. They have fought our battles, and they have died for us. The Heber wild horses are a National treasure and should be protected and preserved. It is a nation unraveled if a day ever comes that a dying cattle industry that is so detrimental to our health and to our environment, so much that people are making the choice not to eat beef, would ever replace the wild horse.