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Comments: I am hereby submitting the following information for the administrative record.

White Mountain Independent

'Wild' horses shot and killed near Pinedale
Jan 12, 2007

Bodies of six horses believed to be part of a wild herd under protection by the federal courts were discovered in the forest near Pinedale last week. All six horses had been shot.

A seventh horse was observed limping with a wound in his side and also was believed to have been a victim of the same shootings. In August, a young wild chestnut stallion also was found dead in the Pinedale area; the stallion had been shot in the head. This brings the total deaths of wild horses in the area to at least seven and perhaps eight or more. Hunting season is over and all evidence points to the fact that the horses were killed deliberately by an unknown person or persons.

Dr. Pat Haight, speaking for the Tucson-based Animal Defense Council (ADC), announced today that ADC has joined with the Washington-based Animal Welfare Institute, South Dakota based International Society for the Protection of Mustangs & Wild Burros (ISPMB), Tucson horse advocates, Julianne French and Carol Grubb, and residents across Arizona to offer a reward of $6,000 for information leading to the arrest and conviction of any person or persons responsible for the recent shooting deaths of at least seven wild horses in the Sitgreaves National Forest near Pinedale. The total reward, including an additional $2,500 offered by In Defense of Animals, is now up to $8,500.

Anyone with information about the case is asked to call or email attorney Anthony Merrill at (602) 364-7174 or email at anthony.merrill@bryancave.com.

In December 2005, a federal district court judge for the District of Arizona issued a preliminary injunction prohibiting the United States Forest Service from removing or harming any of the horses in the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forests. The horses killed near Pinedale fall under this injunction. In the December 2005 hearing, after reviewing the evidence and hearing arguments, Judge Frederick Martone determined that the horses could be wild horses protected under the Wild Horse and Burro Act and their removal could cause irreparable harm.

Supporters of the horses believe that historical, affidavit, and pictorial evidence points to the fact that the recent victims of these brutal shootings and all unbranded, free-roaming horses in Apache-Sitgreaves National Forests are wild horses protected under the Wild Horse and Burro Act. The horses of the Heber Wild Horse Territory, or the wild horses of the Rim Country, as these horses have been called, share a rich history of the region going back to 1653 when Father Eusebio Kino wrote in a letter to the Viceroy of Mexico that he had visited the rim region taking horses with him as he searched the area for possible new mission sites. Cowboys ran with the wild horses of this area, called "broomies" by them, during the settlement period of the Mogollon rim in the 18th and 19th centuries. A 14,000 acre wild horse territory also was set aside by Congress for protection of wild horses within this area.

Killing these horses may be found to be a violation of US 95-192, the federal law governing protection of wild horses. Each violation is punishable by a $100,000 fine and one year in prison. Shooting a horse and causing

that horse suffering also is a criminal act under ARS 13-2910, the Arizona Cruelty to Animals law. Persons convicted of animal cruelty can be sent to jail or to prison.

For more information contact the The Animal Defense Council - P.O. Box 4003 - Tucson, AZ 85717 - (520)792-0500

https://www.wmicentral.com/news/latest_news/wild-horses-shot-and-killed-near-pinedale/article_654d0b9f-4171-5d31-b014-3e91d4c1df91.html