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First name: Michelle

Last name: Popejoy

Organization:

Title:

Comments: June 22, 2013

Re: Spring Mountains Wild Horse & Burro Complex Project #40960

Good Day!

I am writing to you today to in regards to the rounding up the Wild Horses and Burros in the Spring Mountains and zeroing out these herd populations. I enjoy seeing these animals in the wild on Mount Charleston. I am strongly opposed to the rounding up and removal of these animals from their natural habitat.

I can understand removing an animal that is unhealthy from a herd, but to zero out a whole breed of animal seems to be an extreme and unnecessary measure. Just last weekend, I got the pleasure of spending some time with the herd that resides near the Las Vegas Ski and Snowboard Resort. These animals were healthy and not damaging or harming the environment. If anything, they were enhancing the visitors experience while on Mount Charleston and educating visitors that horses were once wild animals and not always domesticated. I overheard many people talking that day about how they had seen the wild horses and what a rare and special experience it was for them.

In the past, I have had the pleasure of working for The Resort on Mount Charleston and was in charge of the marketing efforts for that property. When engaging those followers on social media, I used my own personal photography to highlight the features of Mount Charleston. One of the features that I spotlighted was the wild horses of Mount Charleston. Anytime I posted images of the horses, the response rate on social was extremely high. The audience was intrigued and delighted to see these animals in their natural habitat. I would also like to point out that these images were some of the most commented and shared photos that on The Resorts facebook page.

I would propose that you use these animals as part of marketing and educational programs for Mount Charleston and the Spring Mountains. I know that a few years back that the state of Nevada was looking for ways to highlight the parks and recreational features of our state. I think that tourist would love a chance to see wild horses and burros while visiting Mount Charleston. In addition, this gives your department the chance to educate about these animals and the area. I think this creates a win-win situation for the animals and the visitors on Mount Charleston and the Spring Mountains..

These animals offer us a chance to see something wild and free in ourselves. I think, that is why we as humans have such a strong reaction to these animals. I hope that you will consider keeping these horses and burros wild and free and using them as part of your marketing and educational programs for Mount Charleston and Southern Nevada.

Thank you for the chance to express my ideas and feelings. I do hope that you will give consideration to my suggestions. Please note, I would be happy to speak to your group about marketing efforts connected to the program that I briefly outlined above.

Sincerely,

Michele L. Popejoy

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