



Society for Range Management

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Secretary Ken Salazar
Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington DC 20240

Secretary Salazar:

The Society for Range Management (SRM) strongly supports your proposal for improved management of wild horse and burro populations and protection of our public rangelands. SRM represents land users, land managers, and range scientists across the United States. Our goal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of rangelands and to improve rangeland health. We feel that your proposal for wild horse and burro management is a promising first step in maintaining the health of our public grazing lands.

The Society has written letters in opposition to the H.R.1018 and S.1579 bills that would amend the present Wild and Free-Roaming Horse and Burro Act. H.R.1018 and S.1579 would drastically alter the federal wild horse and burro management programs on public lands. SRM believes this legislation would further complicate management of wild horse and burro populations leading to rangeland habitat degradation. This would include soil and stream bank erosion and negative impacts on fish and wildlife populations and habitat. It may also affect the livestock industries dependant on these lands. These bills set a dangerous precedent that may result in a movement away from a balanced multiple use management on our public rangelands.

SRM believe your proposal seeks to support a program to manage wild horse and burro populations as well as sustain the mandated multiple use management of our public rangelands. The proposal supports maintaining a sustainable population of wild horses and burros on western rangelands while establishing new preserves across the United States for excess animals, expanding efforts for the adoption program, and using aggressive fertility control strategies to limit population growth. The consequences of following these actions should be sustainable wild horse and burro populations, improved rangeland health, increased private adoptions, and minimizing the escalating costs of the present wild horse and burro program.

The Society for Range Management is sympathetic with the challenges the BLM faces associated with maintaining a balanced approach to management of our Nation's public rangelands; therefore, we strongly support your current proposal and encourage you to continue discussions with members of Congress to implement this program.

Sincerely,

Don Kirby, President
Society for Range Management

Ken Johnson, Executive Vice President
Society for Range Management

MISSION: To promote the professional development and continuing education of members and the public and the stewardship of rangeland resources
VISION: A well-trained and highly motivated group of professionals and rangeland users working with productive, sustainable rangeland ecosystems