



WILD HORSES: ONLY A BALANCE WILL WORK

Sustaining America's Wildlife

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Op-Ed by M. David Allen

I respect and applaud Interior Secretary Ken Salazar's perspectives on solving the wild horse crisis. All wildlife will suffer if we continue to manage wild horses according to the status quo.

Wild-horse herds are flourishing. Some people feel we must give them more space but land is a limited commodity. There's only so much to go around, and elk, deer and other wildlife as well as farmers and ranchers are already using our dwindling, open landscapes.

The concept of harvesting wild horses is an emotional topic for people who don't understand or subscribe to the concept of how "culling some will strengthen the whole." But that concept helped make America a world leader in wildlife conservation. There is no logical reason why populations of wild horses cannot be managed in the same way as elk and deer.

The American rancher is not the boogey man, either. He works hard to make the land provide us with sustenance and his herds graze the land for its own good as well.

Secretary Salazar offers possible solutions such as fertility control and more sanctuaries. These may work in some areas but would prolong the inevitable problem of too much competition for too little habitat.

Remedies cannot be based on emotion. We must use common sense. We don't live in a zoo. Wild things need wild places but since man lives here too, and in greater and greater numbers, there has to be a balance. Only a balance will work.

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