



THE HUMANE SOCIETY
OF THE UNITED STATES

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Humane Society of the United States Lauds BLM Plan to Reform Failing Wild Horse Management Program

Group urges Congressional leaders to support more humane and fiscally responsible plan

(Oct. 7, 2009) – The Humane Society of the United States expressed cautious optimism in reaction to a comprehensive plan from Interior Secretary Ken Salazar and Bureau of Land Management Director Bob Abbey designed to transform the Bureau of Land Management's wild horse and burro program from one that is often inefficient, costly and inhumane to one which is technologically advanced, fiscally sound and more humane.

The new approaches described by Secretary Salazar would celebrate and protect America's wild horses and burros while reducing the costs associated with their management and care by:

 Showcasing special, unique herds, designated by the Secretary or Congress, in an effort to promote understanding and appreciation for America's "Living Legends"

 Establishing wild horse and burro preserves in the Midwest and the East to reduce current off-the-range management costs.

 Balancing population growth rates with adoption demand through the application of new on-the-range activities such as the expansion of fertility control programs, the strategic manipulation of sex ratios, and the release of non-reproducing herds onto existing Herd Management Areas (HMAs).

One fertility control method supported by The HSUS is the immunocontraception vaccine Porcine Zona Pellucida (PZP) which has tremendous potential for managing wild horses in an effective, humane and cost-effective manner. Peer-reviewed studies have shown that by treating more mares with this drug and returning them to the range, rather than detaining them indefinitely in holding centers, the cost of managing wild horses could be reduced by as much as 14 percent per year, saving taxpayers more than \$6 million annually.

"This promising strategy will enable the agency to finally get off the treadmill of rounding up and warehousing horses, and manage these majestic creatures more efficiently where they belong – on the range - saving millions of tax dollars annually," said Wayne Pacelle, The HSUS' president and CEO. "A more humane and fiscally sound program will be of great benefit not only to our treasured wild horse and burro populations, but also to the American taxpayer."

BLM's efforts to explore and develop new, innovative ways to manage its wild horse program come in the wake of a firestorm of controversy following the agency's announcement in June 2008 that the agency would consider euthanizing or selling for slaughter more than 10,000 wild horses currently housed in federal holding facilities to solve its fiscal problems. The disturbing announcement generated an enormous amount of public and congressional opposition to proposed plan and the call for a more progressive, humane one.

In July, the House of Representatives passed H.R. 1018, the Restoring Our American Mustangs (ROAM) Act, championed by Natural Resources Committee Chairman Nick Rahall, D-W.Va., and National Parks, Forests and Public Lands Subcommittee Chairman Raúl Grijalva, D-Ariz. The legislation provided an even more comprehensive set of reforms, including restoring the longstanding prohibition on commercial sale and slaughter of wild horses and burros, and prohibiting euthanasia of healthy and adoptable wild horses in federal care.

-30-

Media Contact: Pepper Ballard: 240-818-3831; pballard@humanesociety.org

Follow The HSUS on [Twitter](#)

The Humane Society of the United States is the nation's largest animal protection organization — backed by 11 million Americans, or one of every 28. For more than a half-century, The HSUS has been fighting for the protection of all animals through advocacy, education and hands-on programs. Celebrating animals and confronting cruelty — On the web at humanesociety.org.

If you would rather not receive future communications from Humane Society of the United States, let us know by clicking [here](#).
Humane Society of the United States, 2100 L Street, NW, Washington, DC 20037 United States