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Opinion

Finally! BLM's getting realistic on wild horses

Rapidly breaking events and growing public pressures are forcing the Bureau of Land Management in Nevada to take a clearer stand on the protection and preservation of wild horses.

In the headlines again, more dead horses in isolated central Nevada, shot to death by mindless vandals.

These instances of violence and mayhem, coupled with the increasingly strident protests of animal protectionists, has given the BLM cause to rethink its positions on wild horse matters.

The BLM is now suggesting a wild horse sanctuary in northeastern Nevada, where it might be easier to protect and control the state's wild horse herds. It appears to be a worthwhile suggestion deserving of further consideration.

The BLM has also recently abandoned its transparently self-serving practice of allowing fee-waivered group adoptions of wild horses.

That particular maneuver never did make sense. By allowing the "adoptions" and then quickly averting its gaze, the BLM could claim it just didn't know about those things that were so painfully obvious to everyone else: that the horses were going for dog food. The BLM's explanations simply didn't stand up to scrutiny and it was forced to stop the practice. It was about time.

Americans, inside and outside Nevada, have made it clear, over and over again, that they love, cherish and want to preserve the nation's wild horse herds. That preservation is to take place at the expense and inconvenience of other enterprises taking place on public lands — principally cattle-raising.

It has been established that, left unmonitored and uncontrolled, wild horse herds could eventually overrun and ruin the state's open lands. That cannot be allowed to happen. But in establishing equilibrium, the BLM needs to show more enterprise. And it needs to do it in an above-board manner.