

m 17171  
**DRAFT**

**AMERICAN HORSE PROTECTION ASSOCIATION, INC.  
AMERICAN HUMANE ASSOCIATION  
AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS  
THE HUMANE SOCIETY OF THE UNITED STATES  
NEVADA HUMANE SOCIETY  
WILD HORSE ORGANIZED ASSISTANCE (WHOA!)**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE, July \_\_\_\_\_, 1991**

Representative of six humane organizations dedicated to the protection of wild horses and burros today accused the U.S. Bureau of Land Management of misleading the American public about threats to wild horses in Nevada. The groups charged that the Bureau has inaccurately portrayed conditions at the Nellis Air Force Range to be representative of other horse herd areas on public rangelands throughout the West, to help justify its plans to cut the Nation's wild horse population by 20,000.

Recent news stories have reported that thousands of wild horses in Nevada are in imminent danger of death from starvation or dehydration due to overpopulation and drought. These reports have been given credence by statements from representatives of the Bureau of Land Management suggesting that there are far more horses than the public lands can support, and that humane organizations are insensitive to the animals' plight.

In fact, the six organizations report, Nellis is not typical of the more than 200 wild horse and burro herds found throughout ten states in the West. The vast majority of these herds, including those in Nevada, are healthy and in no danger of starvation, dehydration or illness. They are in danger of unnecessary reduction or elimination by the BLM -- not because their numbers threaten environmental conditions, but because the Bureau's management policies favor leasing public lands to livestock.

A 1980 report by the General Accounting Office supports the groups' claims. GAO advised Congress that BLM rarely has sufficient data to show that there are too many wild horses, or that they are harming the environment.

The humane organizations believe that Nellis is one of the few cases where wild horse numbers are too high. They support BLM plans to remove about 2,000 wild horses from Nellis to prevent suffering due to inadequate forage and water, and are working to find adoptive homes for the animals.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, CONTACT:**

Robin C. Lohnes, AHPA  
(202) 965-0500

Adele Douglass, AHA  
(202) 543-7780

Barbara Pequet, ASPCA  
(202) 232-5020

Paula Jewell, HSUS  
(202) 452-1100

Mark McGuire, NHS  
(702) 331-5770

Dawn Lappin, WHOA  
(702) 851-4817

DRAFT

AMERICAN HORSE PROTECTION ASSOCIATION, INC.  
AMERICAN HUMANE ASSOCIATION  
AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS  
THE HUMANE SOCIETY OF THE UNITED STATES  
NEVADA HUMANE SOCIETY  
WILD HORSE ORGANIZED ASSISTANCE (WHOA!)

WILD HORSE FACT SHEET

Wild horses have been protected on the public rangelands as a heritage of the pioneer spirit of the West for 20 years. For nearly all of that period livestock interests have fought to keep their numbers low, to insure that the maximum amount of forage is available for cattle and sheep.

According to the Bureau of Land Management, this year the public lands in ten western states will support about 50,000 wild horses and burros. BLM wants to reduce that population to only 30,000. By contrast, more than 4 million head of livestock graze on the public lands each year.

In most herd areas, including those in Nevada, the horses are in good shape. Conditions at the Nellis Air Force Range are an exception. There is inadequate forage and water to support the number of wild horses found there, in part due to persistent drought over the last three years. While some horses are in distress, pictures from Nellis show that many animals are in fairly good condition, and are not about to die.

Approximately 2,000 wild horses will be removed from Nellis this year to alleviate these problems, a step our organizations agree with. In addition, we are working to help find adoptive homes for the animals.

However, because BLM wants to remove another 20,000 wild horses and burros from the public lands, it has an interest in making it appear that most wild horse herd areas are like Nellis, and that wild horses throughout the West are at risk because groups like ours oppose its plans.

In fact, our organizations believe that wild horses and burro herds need to be balanced with the ecological conditions of the range, to insure that habitat for wildlife and wild equines is preserved. However, BLM can demonstrate an ecological threat from overpopulations of wild horses only in a very few areas. Nellis is one such area, but what has happened at Nellis is almost unique.

Last year the General Accounting Office reported to Congress that there are serious questions about the Bureau's wild horse removal plans. In particular, GAO found that:

- \* BLM rarely had sufficient information to determine how many wild horses the range could support, whether the animals were causing damage, or how many should be removed from herd areas.
- \* The massive removals of wild horses begun in FY 1985 have not improved rangeland conditions. The lack of improvement is largely attributable to BLM's failure to reduce domestic livestock grazing, which accounts for 20 times the forage consumed by wild horses.
- \* Paradoxically, although BLM frequently removes wild horses without adequate data of need, it justifies failing to reduce livestock use on the ground that its range condition data is incomplete.

Overgrazing by livestock, especially in riparian areas, constitutes by far the greatest threat to the productivity of the public lands and their ability to support all animals species.

We emphatically disagree with BLM's primary management objective for most wild horse herd areas, which is to cut back wild horse populations to make room for cows or sheep. This, not Nellis, is the real tragedy of the wild horse program: sacrificing a part of America's national heritage to provide a tax-subsidized benefit to a small portion of the livestock industry.

A copy of the Executive Summary of the GAO report, entitled "Improvements Needed in Federal Wild Horse Program," is attached.

7-16-91

**DRAFT**

AMERICAN HORSE PROTECTION ASSOCIATION, INC.  
AMERICAN HUMANE ASSOCIATION  
AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS  
THE HUMANE SOCIETY OF THE UNITED STATES  
WILD HORSE ORGANIZED ASSISTANCE (WHOA!)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July \_\_\_\_\_, 1991

The humane organizations listed above have released the following joint statement concerning wild horses on the Nation's public rangelands:

Recent news stories, including a segment on the NBC Evening News of July 11, have reported that thousands of wild horses in Nevada are in imminent danger of death from starvation or dehydration due to overpopulation and drought. These reports have been given credence by statements from representatives of the Bureau of Land Management suggesting that there are far more wild horses than the public lands can support, and that humane organizations are insensitive to the animals' suffering.

The news stories have focused on conditions at the Nellis Weapons Test Site in southern Nevada, which are poor. There is inadequate forage and water to support the number of wild horses found there, in part due to persistent drought over the last three years. Nevertheless, pictures of the Nellis horses show that most are in fairly good condition, and are not about to die.

Approximately 2,000 wild horses will be removed from Nellis this year to alleviate these problems, a step our organizations agree with. In addition, we are working to help find adoptive homes for the animals.

However, Nellis is by no means typical of the more than 200 wild horse and burro herds found throughout ten states in the West. The vast majority of these herds, including those in Nevada, are healthy and in no danger of starvation, dehydration or illness. They are in danger of unnecessary reduction or elimination by the BLM -- not because their numbers threaten environmental conditions, but because the Bureau's management policies favor leasing public lands to livestock. In fact, overgrazing by livestock, especially in riparian areas, constitutes by far the greatest threat to the productivity of the public lands and their ability to support all animals species.

Because BLM wants to remove another 20,000 wild horses and burros from the public lands, it has an interest in making it appear that most wild horse herd areas are like Nellis, and that

# DRAFT

wild horses throughout the West are at risk because groups like ours oppose its plans.

In fact, our organizations believe that wild horses and burro herds need to be balanced with the ecological conditions of the range, to insure that habitat for wildlife and wild equines is preserved. However, BLM can demonstrate an ecological threat from overpopulations of wild horses in a very few areas. Nellis is one, but what has happened at Nellis is almost unique.

We emphatically disagree with BLM's primary management objective for most wild horse herd areas, which is to cut back wild horse populations to make room for cows or sheep. This, not Nellis, is the real tragedy of the wild horse program: sacrificing a part of America's national heritage to provide a tax-subsidized benefit to a small portion of the livestock industry.

#### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, CONTACT:

Robin C. Lohnes, AHPA  
(202) 965-0500

Adele Douglass, AHA  
(202) 543-7780

Barbara Pequet, ASPCA  
(202) 232-5020

Paula Jewell, HSUS  
(202) 452-1100

Dawn Lappin, WHOA  
(702) 851-4817

LAW OFFICES  
HANNA, GASPAR & OSBORNE  
SUITE 078  
2550 M STREET, N. W.  
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20037  
(202) 296-7666

RUSSELL J. GASPAR  
RAY L. HANNA  
WOODLEY B. OSBORNE

OF COUNSEL  
MORRIS H. DEUTSCH

FAX: (202) 296-7490  
FRANKFURT, GERMANY OFFICE  
EDWARD J. BELLEN OF COUNSEL  
AM SALZHAUS 4  
D 6000 FRANKFURT AM MAIN  
WEST GERMANY  
(69) 28164748

TELEFAX TRANSMITTAL FORM

TO: Dawn Lajapia FAX NO.: (702) 851-4817  
FROM: Russell Gaspar DATE: 7/16/91  
NO. OF PAGES: 3 TIME: 12:30 p.m.  
(Including transmittal form)

MESSAGE: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

This telefax originates from the Washington office of Hanna, Gaspar & Osborne. If there are any problems regarding the receipt of legible copies or of the number of pages listed above, please call the following number: (202) 296-7666 (Monday-Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.)

THE INFORMATION CONTAINED IN THIS FACSIMILE MESSAGE IS INTENDED ONLY FOR THE USE OF THE DESIGNATED RECIPIENT(S) NAMED ABOVE. This information may be an attorney-client communication, and as such, is privileged and confidential. If the reader of this message is not the intended recipient, or an agent responsible for delivering it to the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that any dissemination, distribution or copying of this communication is strictly prohibited. If you have received this communication in error, please notify us immediately by telephone and return the original message to us by mail. Thank you.