

# Spending Bill Sets Stage for Eradication of America's Mustangs

WASHINGTON, DC, UNITED STATES, December 17, 2019 / EINPresswire.com/ -- Two national horse protection organizations today blasted Congress' decision to increase the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) Wild Horse and Burro Program budget by \$21 million budget to accelerate the roundup and removal of federally-protected wild horses and burros from public lands. In doing so, appropriators ignored requests by Congressman Raul Grijalva, Chair of the House Natural Resources Committee and 11 of his House colleagues, to restrict funding to humane population management with scientifically-recommended fertility control instead of roundups. The funding is part of the final omnibus FY 2020 spending package unveiled by Congressional appropriators today and set to be voted on later this week.

"The \$21 million deal cut in the swamp today by the Humane Society, ASPCA, and National Cattlemen's Beef Association, is the greatest threat our iconic American wild horses have faced in half a century," said Marty Irby, a lifelong horseman and executive director at Animal Wellness Action. "It's a draconian experiment that will ensure mass roundups and incarcerations, surgical sterilizations amidst the hot desert sun, and has paved the road back to horse slaughter on the American taxpayer's dime."

"Congress just unleashed a catastrophic assault on America's cherished wild horses and burros, turning back the clock 50 years to a time when these iconic animals were almost extinct and Congress acted unanimously to protect them," said Suzanne Roy, Executive Director of the American Wild Horse Campaign, the nation's largest wild horse protection organization. "The BLM will now use tens of millions of tax dollars to round up 20,000 horses a year to achieve population levels that the National Academy of Sciences 'not supported by scientific information', and 'not transparent to stakeholders.'"

The funding increase for the BLM wild horse program is the result of a backroom deal cut by Washington, DC lobbyists for the National Cattlemen's Beef Association and other livestock interests and the Humane Society of the U.S., the ASPCA, and Return to Freedom -- organizations that critics say literally "horse traded" the fate of America's mustangs for ulterior purposes.

Some deal supporters stand to benefit financially, either by the replacement of wild horses that are rounded up with commercial livestock on public lands, or from lucrative government



A terrifying wild horse roundup in action

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*Marty Irby, executive director  
at Animal Wellness Action*

contracts to warehouse thousands of wild horses and burros that will be captured, removed and incarcerated under the plan. These contracts are already attracting contractors with no animal welfare experience, like the company pursuing 5,000-horse holding facility that is headed by a South Dakotan who government financial regulators called "a predatory businessman who has fleeced financially distressed consumers across the country with high-interest loans."

"It's disappointing that appropriators were sold a bill of goods by these "humane" organizations that not only ignored the National Academy of Sciences' findings and the overwhelming will of the American people, but also actively

undercut Chairman Grijalva's attempts to protect wild horses from brutal mass roundups and risky surgical sterilization procedures," Roy concluded. "We look forward to working with Congress next year to prevent irreparable harm to America's wild mustangs."

Polling released in October shows finds a strong bipartisan majority and nearly three out of four Americans, oppose the new plan to round up mass numbers of federally-protected wild horses and burros from America's Western public lands.

More information:

[Push to Accelerate Mustang Captures Draws Fire in Congress](#)  
[Chair Grijalva, Bipartisan Group of Lawmakers Write to House and Senate](#) Interior Appropriators Urging Clarity, Funding Limits on BLM Horse Program  
[Poll Shows Majority of Americans Oppose Mass Wild Horse Roundup Plan](#)

The American Wild Horse Campaign (AWHC) is the nation's leading wild horse protection organization, with more than 700,000 supporters and followers nationwide. AWHC is dedicated to preserving the American wild horse in viable, free-roaming herds for generations to come, as part of our national heritage.

Animal Wellness Action (AWA) is a Washington, D.C.-based 501(c)(4) organization with a mission of helping animals by promoting legal standards forbidding cruelty. We champion causes that alleviate the suffering of companion animals, farm animals, and wildlife. We advocate for policies to stop dogfighting and cockfighting and other forms of malicious cruelty and to confront factory farming and other systemic forms of animal exploitation. To prevent cruelty, we promote enacting good public policies and we work to enforce those policies. To enact good laws, we must elect good lawmakers, and that's why we remind voters which candidates care about our issues and which ones don't. We believe helping animals helps us all.

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