

Bureau of Land Management Held Public Hearing for Motorized Vehicle and Aircraft Use in Wild Horse and Burro Roundups

ATLANTA, GEORGIA, UNITED STATES, April 28, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The BLM, Bureau of Land Management, held a Zoom virtual public hearing Wednesday, April 26th, to receive public comments regarding the use of motorized vehicles and aircraft in the removal of wild horses and burros from public lands. They also accepted written comments through 5PM Mountain time. Having previously received unanimously passed Federal protection on this issue, wild horses and burros lost this legislative safeguard in 1976.

During the 1950s, Velma B. Johnston, who later known as "Wild Horse Annie," learned about the merciless and chaotic manner in which wild horses were being handled on western lands. Velma Johnston led a successful grassroots campaign to gain Federal protections for the horses and burros. She became known for involving school children in her campaign. Newspapers also became involved in her crusade and published articles about the exploitation of wild horses and burros.

With the passing of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, Congress formally granted the BLM "new authorities and responsibilities, [amended or repealed previous legislation](#), and prescribed specific management techniques". Protections for wild horses and burros were amended in this Act to permit the use of motorized vehicles again.



We find wording reflecting the changes to allow the use of use of motorized vehicles and aircraft in FLPMA 1976 SECTION 404 - [Transportation of Captured Animals; Procedures and Prohibitions Applicable](#) Sec. 404 [16 U.S.C. 1338a]. "In administering this chapter [i.e., the Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act], the Secretary may use or contract for the use of helicopters or, for the purpose of transporting captured animals, motor vehicles. Such use shall be undertaken only after a public hearing and under the direct supervision of the Secretary or of a duly authorized official or employee of the Department."

The meeting convened at 3PM Mountain Time. Callers from across the country, who were registered to speak, were each given two (2) minutes to address their concerns. Many people brought up the same topics.

The public asks that the matters discussed be given serious consideration for implementation and not become a procedural formality only. A few of the subjects covered during the session included:

- . Requests to install cameras in the helicopters to document the roundups,
- . Comments regarding the BLM's [Comprehensive Animal Welfare Program](#),
- . The number of large-scale horse and burro removals taking place,
- . The number of injuries and deaths occurring during the helicopter chases, and
- . The distances horses and burros are forced to run during captures.

Members of the public supporting wild horse protections ask that these issues be addressed. They continue calling on the President, Congress, and the Bureau of Land Management to use taxpayer funding to maintain the range and keep the horses in their designated HMAs rather than spending the money on roundups and holding facilities. Supporters believe, if animal



removals are necessary, the BLM should first remove livestock from HMAs, then provide the food and water resources necessary to maintain the horses that are the Federally designated primary beneficiaries of these lands.

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