

Wild Horse Killings in Southern Utah Condemned by Animal Wellness Groups

BLUFF, UTAH, UNITED STATES , October 20, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Today, Animal Wellness Action (AWA), the Animal Wellness Foundation (AWF), and Center for a Humane Economy (CHE), condemned the [mass killing](#) of at least 16 horses, including mares and foals, on federal lands in San Juan County, and called on authorities to take swift action to find those responsible and hold them accountable. According to eyewitnesses, the bodies of 16 horses have been found shot dead and in varying stages of decomposition, indicating they were not shot at the same time.



Wild Horses on Public Lands | Photo Credit: Marty Irby

The horses' bodies were located on land managed by the Bureau of Land Management, but because the area is not designated as a wild horse Herd Management Area, the animals are not protected by the Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act of 1971, which affords wild mustangs and burros limited protections, including protection from deliberate, unauthorized killings by private citizens or entities.

"The discovery of at least 16 dead horses in southern Utah is the latest in a pattern across the western United States of mass killings of wild horses by unknown assailants, who appear to be acting with a brazen disregard for the law, and who could pose a serious threat to people and animals," said [Scott Beckstead](#), director of campaigns and equine welfare specialist for the Center for a Humane Economy. "The link between animal abuse and interpersonal violence is real, and any person capable of such depraved acts of cruelty should be considered a threat to the community at large. For the sake of protecting the public and achieving justice for these horses, we encourage the San Juan County Sheriff to take immediate and aggressive action to identify the perpetrators and hold them accountable."

"Our federal government characterizes our iconic wild equines as unwanted trespassers in their campaign to eradicate these animals from our public lands to make way for more commercial



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livestock,” said [Marty Irby](#), executive director at Animal Wellness Action and an 8-time world champion equestrian on behalf of AWA and the Animal Wellness Foundation. “That characterization is perceived by horse killers that wild equines are fair game for mass extermination. We hope law enforcement will move swiftly to find these sadistic killers and send a strong message that unprovoked killing of animals is a serious crime with serious consequences.”

The killings come on the heels of another mass slaughter of unprotected wild horses in Arizona, where at least 25 wild horses were killed and another 25 are missing in the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest. A herd of federally

protected wild horses in the nearby Heber Herd Management Area have seen at least 40 horses shot and killed since 2018. Horses have also been found fatally shot in other locations, including near Ely, Nevada, in a November 2021 shooting that prompted the BLM to issue a reward offer to help find those responsible.

Animal Wellness Action 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.

The Animal Wellness Foundation (Foundation) is a Los Angeles-based private charitable organization with a mission of helping animals by making veterinary care available to everyone with a pet, regardless of economic ability. We organize rescue efforts and medical services for dogs and cats in need and help homeless pets find a loving caregiver. We are advocates for getting veterinarians to the front lines of the animal welfare movement; promoting responsible pet ownership; and vaccinating animals against infectious diseases such as distemper. We also support policies that prevent animal cruelty and that alleviate suffering. We believe helping animals helps us all.

The Center for a Humane Economy is a non-profit organization that focuses on influencing the conduct of corporations to forge a humane economic order. The first organization of its kind in the animal protection movement, the Center encourages businesses to honor their social responsibilities in a culture where consumers, investors, and other key stakeholders abhor cruelty and the degradation of the environment and embrace innovation as a means of

eliminating both.

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