

California Nonprofit Offers Nature-Based Solution For Catastrophic Wildfires That Sequesters Carbon

Wild Horse Fire Brigade is a CA-based nonprofit that has developed a proven wild horse herbivory model that protects forests and reduces wildfire and smoke

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/EINPresswire.com/ -- Wild Horse Fire Brigade (WHFB) is a California-based all-volunteer 501-c-3 nonprofit public-benefit corporation that has developed a novel “nature based” solution that will help prevent catastrophic wildfire and at the same time help save and protect America’s wild horses. This innovative plan also reduces climate altering wildfire smoke by natural carbon cycling and sequestering carbon compounds into soils and plants.

The Evolution of Catastrophic Wildfire

[Abundant published science](#) and empirical experience prove that when native species herbivores (deer, elk and wild horses) lived on the western landscape in proper population densities just 40-years ago, catastrophic wildfires were rare. That is because those millions of large-bodied herbivores had been eating approximately 3.2-million tons of annually occurring grass and brush



Fire Suppression is very costly and comes too late for many lives, homes, forests and wildlife that are incinerated – Photo: William E. Simpson II



Some people and NGOs prefer to burn the landscape as 'fire prevention', an oxymoron, verses reestablishing the native species herbivory that keeps grass and brush fuels managed year round

that are now fueling catastrophic wildfires.

Today, native herbivore populations have collapsed due to mismanagement. Deer populations in California and Oregon alone are down about 3-million animals, which are now missing from the landscape due to several factors including; over hunting and trophy-hunting that leads to genetic decline, disease, vehicular accidents and poaching. The relatively few remaining deer are now also subject to disproportionate depredation by Apex predators and additional losses from the evolution of catastrophic wildfire. All of these issues can be resolved, but will require decades of better management.

Right now, according to [Wyoming Public Media](#), over 60,000 American mustangs are languishing in wasteful taxpayer-funded government holding pens and roundups are continuing at an alarming pace. Wild Horse advocates and their lawyers have alleged that nearly a thousand protected wild horses have ended-up in a horrific slaughter pipeline according to another article by GreenWire:

<https://www.eenews.net/articles/documents-show-blm-wild-horses-sold-to-slaughter-advocates-say/>

At the same time, wildfires continue to rage across our Western states year after year causing \$-billions in losses. WHFB envisions repurposing these mustangs via humane relocation from areas of conflict and from expensive off-range holding facilities and placing them into 'critical wilderness' areas that are ecologically and economically appropriate, where their naturally evolved symbiotic grazing will mitigate annual vegetative growth that is a root cause of ongoing wildfire risk.



The seeds of native grasses and plants in horse droppings have germinated as part of the symbiotic relationship between wild horses and the grasses and plants that nourish the horses



A family band of native species wild horses symbiotically grazed-in a fire-break, protecting the forest and wildlife from wildfire

WHFB's approach is a cost-effective, ecologically-sound natural resource management paradigm driven by a sustainable nature-based solution that will help prevent catastrophic wildfire and climate impacting toxic smoke, among many other proven benefits, including naturally recycling and sequestering carbon compounds into soils and plants. The plan is synergistic with the highest environmental socially conscious ESG standards.



A family band of wild horses grazing dry fuels - safer than any other fuel reduction method - Photo: M. Gough

The plan also facilitates more livestock grazing in appropriate areas as it saves and protects America's iconic wild horses, a goal desired by the millions of American horse enthusiasts and owners.

According to a report by the Congressional Research Service (<https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/IF/IF11060>) the US Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) spending is approaching \$150M/year of taxpayer money to hold publicly-owned American mustangs in less than desirable off-range facilities. WHFB's plan can set them free, prevent wildfires and save taxpayers millions of dollars annually by reducing the frequency, size and intensity of wildfires. Reducing wildfire also reduces homelessness of families displaced by the thousands of homes burned annually.

How WHFB Works

WHFB envisions repurposing American mustangs via humane relocation from areas of conflict and from expensive off-range holding facilities and placing them into wilderness areas that are ecologically and economically appropriate, where their naturally-evolved symbiotic grazing will mitigate annual vegetative growth that sustains ongoing wildfire risk. Each mustang that is deployed pursuant to this model will graze 5.5-tons of wildfire fuels annually, and will harmonize with the natural environment and while doing so, will economically eliminate one of the root causes of wildfire: overgrown grass and vegetation.

The Plan works via the natural maintenance of grass and brush wildfire fuels in remote wilderness areas beyond the Wildland Urban Interface ('WUI') via the introduction of large-bodied herbivores (wild horses). This makes defensible spaces around homes and communities on or near the WUI far more effective.

Science supports the fact that vegetative fuel reduction reduces both the frequency, size and

intensity of catastrophic wildfire. Wild horses are native keystone herbivores in north America and reduce fuels at the rate of 5.5-tons per horse, per year. They are symbiotic to forest ecosystems because they make trees fire resilient by grazing fuels under the trees they use for shelter year-round, and their scratching breaks-off low limbs also known as fire ladders. Wild horse droppings fertilize trees and unlike ruminant livestock, horses don't digest the majority of the native plant and grass seeds they eat, resulting in natural reseeding of native flora, which is beneficial to all wilderness ecosystems and resident fauna, right down to pollinators.

Another goal is to support the amendment of Section 1339 of the 1971 Free-Roaming Wild Burro and Horse Protection Act, to allow federal managers to also directly rewild horses into suitable designated wilderness.

Learn more of American wild horses and their history at: PBS Colorado Experience: Native Horses: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HGki2EwrbkA>

Deep dive into how Wild Horse Fire Brigade works (the science): 'American Wild Horses Are Understudied: That Results In Grossly Overlooked Ecological Benefits': <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/620446849/>

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