

Advocacy groups offer reward for justice for two Onaqui stallions brutally killed

Federal investigators have no leads for killings in March, reward offer stands: \$38,500

WASHINGTON DC, UNITED STATES, July 13, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- This is an investigation by federal law enforcement. The public may call the anonymous tip line with any information: 800-722-3998.

Utah — An ongoing criminal investigation by the Bureau of Land Management into the shooting deaths of two beloved Onaqui stallions in the west desert of Utah has yet to yield any leads, despite a reward offer of \$38,500 by the BLM and advocacy groups, including Red Birds Trust, a Utah-based 501c3 nonprofit organization that advocates for the Onaqui horses.



Jasper and Arshan were gunned down in March as they stood together, investigators say.

The two stallions, known by the names of Jasper and Arshan, were found on March 19 alongside Simpson Springs Road, both shot through their necks.

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Junpei, a young horse who traveled with Jasper and Arshan and benefited from their protection, has been missing since the two dead stallions were discovered, although there is still an ongoing effort to locate him.

The Onaqui wild mustangs are perhaps the most famous and revered of all the wild herds in the western U.S.,

drawing locals and tourists from around the world alike to the remote wild rangelands of Utah's west desert. Because of the herd's popularity and the constant presence of tourists, photographers, and enthusiasts, they are more tolerant of human presence than most wild herds.

From their proximity to each other when their dead bodies were discovered, Jasper and Arshan, who traveled together and were close friends, appeared to have been standing side by side when they were shot and killed.

Jennifer Rogers is the founder and director of Red Birds Trust and operates Wild Horse Photo Safaris, a for-profit wild horse tourism and photography business based in Tooele, Utah, about an hour from where the Onaqui horses live. "Jasper and Arshan's deaths have left a noticeable absence on the range, as they were well-known as protectors of other more vulnerable members of the herd," said Rogers. "These crimes also have the local community on edge with concerns for their own personal safety with the killer(s) still at large."

Scott Beckstead, director of campaigns for Animal Wellness Action and Center for a Humane Economy, has visited the Onaqui horses on a number of occasions, and echoed the call for justice for the two stallions. "The killing of Jasper and Arshan was a deliberate act of premeditated, vicious cruelty, and as we know, individuals who commit violence against animals are more likely to commit violence against people," he said. "We are grateful to the Bureau of Land Management for taking this matter seriously and offering a reward, and for working hard to find the perpetrators. Somebody knows something, and we call on anyone with helpful information to come forward to help bring the cowards responsible to justice."

Wild horses living on designated areas of federal public lands are protected by the Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act of 1971 and harming them is a federal offense.

The investigation by federal law enforcement is ongoing and members of the public are asked to come forward and call the anonymous tip line with any information they may have. That number is 800-722-3998.

ABOUT

Animal Wellness Action (Action) is a Washington, D.C.-based 501(c)(4) organization with a mission of helping animals by promoting legal standards forbidding cruelty and to encourage enforcement of our laws. We believe helping animals helps us all.

The Center for a Humane Economy ("the Center") is a non-profit organization that focuses on influencing businesses to pay attention to animal cruelty in their operations and to eliminate harmful practices. We believe helping animals helps us all.

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