

Wild Horse Welfare Org Urges Suspension of Roundup During Heatwave

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ELKO, NEVADA, UNITED STATES, July 13, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Wild Horse Education](#) (WHE) has sent a letter to John Raby, the Nevada State Director of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) urging suspension of roundups in the eastern part of the state during a dangerous heatwave heading for the area. Temperatures are expected to soar this weekend lingering through next week. The extended heat index creates a danger for humans and wild horses under the pressure of an ongoing helicopter drive trap operation.



The BLM is currently conducting two distinct roundup operations north of highway 50. These massive roundups of wild horses target over 3000 wild horses for capture in both the Ely and Elko districts. One young foal has already died due to colic, a painful condition that can result from stress and dehydration. Additional deaths at these operations have included a young mare that broke her neck in a collision with trap panels and a broken leg during an escape attempt during capture.

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Laura Leigh, founder of Wild Horse Education

“July is an extremely vulnerable time for pregnant and nursing mares and foals even under the best of conditions,” stated Laura Leigh, President of WHE. “Add in the stress caused by the disturbance from a helicopter chasing wild horses in a dangerous heatwave and you have a recipe that creates abuse.”

"Preventing abuse should be what BLM is aiming for, not making excuses why they should continue their standard practice of waiting until disaster strikes to respond. And when they do respond, it is usually too little, too late." Leigh stated, "Roundups result in far too many deaths each year at trap and in holding pens after capture. BLM says they care about the horses but never take any proactive action to protect them from harm unless they find themselves in court."

BLM responded to the letter sent by the organization stating that BLM will have a veterinarian onsite and follow the Comprehensive Animal Welfare Policy (CAWP), but are not considering suspending operations at this time.

WHE has done extensive monitoring of wild horse roundups. In 2022, WHE released a [revealing report](#) that delves into the manner in which the agency performs oversight of the CAWP program and found it woefully inadequate. The agency has done minimal monitoring, implemented no consequence for repeat violation and has created no revision to the inadequate protocol.

CAWP was a program adopted by the agency in fiscal year 2016 after relentless litigation against abuse by WHE. It took the agency until 2021 to even hire someone to run the program.

"We don't have time for the agency to catch up to the rest of the world when we are dealing with issues that determine life or death," said Leigh. "Temperature alone is an outdated method to measure when precautions need to be taken due to heat. Heat Index is a term we all need to know as climate change impacts increase. A heat index of 80 indicates caution needs to be taken. But 7:30 this morning that threshold had already been broken. By Sunday the threshold of Extreme Danger is highly likely."



Newborn captured 7/12/23



Captive Stallion

The organization points out that consecutive days of a high heat index increase risks and that the impact of a helicopter drive is not limited to a single run or species.

“A trap is set for multiple days in one location. Wild horses in the area are moving due to that disturbance for days in a row... and they are not the only wild species impacted. This is serious and deserves more than a standard regurgitation from BLM public affairs.”

The organization is asking that the public join them in asking that the roundups be suspended.

[You can take an action item on their website.](#)

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