

Public Outraged after Wyoming Bureau of Land Management's Bait Trapping Operation Separates Nursing Foal From her Mother

UNITED STATES, February 28, 2024
/EINPresswire.com/ -- On Thursday, February 22, the Cody, WY Bureau of Land Management, which is running a bait trapping operation of the well-known McCullough Peaks wild horses, captured a still nursing foal, just shy of 6 months old, and abruptly separated her from her mother without a weaning process. [Studies by Kentucky Equine Research](#) found that in the wild, natural weaning occurs over the course of several months beginning when the foal is 9 to 11 months old.

Known as Thora by thousands across the country and around the world, those who visit the herd and follow it on social media are devastated by her removal that goes against the agency's own [Comprehensive](#)

[Animal Welfare Policy for Wild Horse and Burro Gatherings](#). Under the title, Bait Trapping, Attachment 1-9, Rule 1. C, the policy states, "Mares/jennies and their dependent foals must not be separated unless for safe transport."

Thora's story follows a tragic incident when a filly, named Kat Ballou, died from acute head and neck trauma during a bait trap capture of 10 horses by the same agency on January 22, according to a BLM report quoted by the Cody Enterprise.

Advocates for Wild Equines (AWE), an advocacy and lobbying group, implore concerned citizens to contact government officials, including President Biden, Vice President Harris, Wyoming Governor Mark Gordon, Cody Mayor Matt Hall, and Park County Commissioners, demanding the immediate return of Thora and all nursing foals to their mothers. (Contacts below)

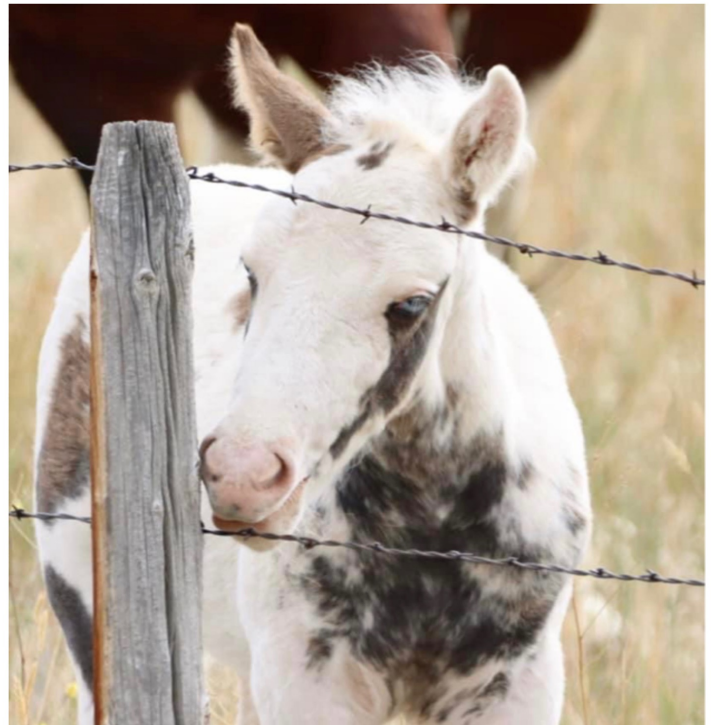


Photo of baby Thora by: Heather Hellyer

Thora's global recognition and the devastation felt by her removal resonates deeply with advocates like Heather Hellyer, founder of Save Our Wild Horses. She explained, "People traveled from around the world and the US to see the filly Thora with her look-a-like sire, the stallion Thor. To remove her at just under 6 months old when she was still nursing from her dam, Takoda, every couple of hours was a cruel and unnecessary action by the Bureau of Land Management. If the Bureau wants to gain the public's trust, they will return her and the other young foals to their families on the McCullough Peaks range," stated Hellyer.

Scott Beckstead, equine advocate and law professor at Willamette University, expressed his opinion that officials with the agency deliberately took baby Thora from her mother, targeting the most beloved animals and acting with extreme cruelty toward the most vulnerable, as a punishment to the 6,000+ horse supporters who opposed the roundup during a public comments period held last year. Beckstead underscored the need for accountability within the BLM's Wild Horse and Burro program.

Lorna Torrey-Palermo, Founder of Advocates for Wild Equines (AWE) expressed that the McCullough Peaks roundup and baby Thora's removal is, what she feels, another example of the agency's disregard for public sentiment and ethical treatment of wild equines. "In the push to remove thousands of wild equines from public lands, the agency has removed the most iconic and beloved wild horses from the west and in some cases destroyed them, even as multiple offers to purchase and/or rescue them were left on the table," said Torrey-Palermo.

Jetara Séhart, founder/president of the Love Wild Horses Foundation, condemns the separation of nursing foals from their mothers and the destruction of federally protected wild horses, labeling it as a crime against Mother Nature and humanity. She says wild horses are a wildfire and climate mitigation keystone species, as well as a sacred icon for freedom and asks the public to join their movement to keep the horses wild and free. Séhart says, "Please be a voice for young baby 'Thora' and the last of America's wild horses' to survive in peace and freedom before more lives are lost- today and for future generations."

Chad Hanson, Director of the Wyoming Mustang Institute, feels the BLM's actions in the McCullough Peaks should raise concern among scientists, veterinarians, and horse enthusiasts. Hanson stated, "The Bureau maintains a set of guidelines for the ethical treatment of our wild horses. If the agency fails to operate by its own standards, an honest inquiry should follow."

Chris Kman of Chasing Horses, Wild Horse Advocacy, urges the Department of the Interior to address what she and many other advocates feel is ongoing mismanagement by the BLM and the National Park Service, calling for taxpayers to take action in this election year.

Torrey-Palermo feels that the BLM's Wild Horse and Burro program appears to be accountable to no one in authority. "We, as the American taxpayers, must demand that morality and purpose be foremost in allocating funds to this agency," said Torrey Palermo.

Calling the BLM to express concerns in the past has done nothing to improve the treatment of wild horses, advocates say, and they are now imploring elected officials to take action.

Torrey-Palermo, emphasizes the BLM's moral responsibility to return Thora and other nursing foals to their mothers, in response to public sentiment for ethical treatment of wild equines.

Advocates for Wild Equines asks the public to call and email the following contacts and demand the foal, Thora, and all foals still nursing, be returned to their mothers on the McCullough Peaks Herd Management Area in Wyoming.

President Biden and Vice President Harris at the White House:

Comment line: 202-456-1111

Switchboard: 202-456-1414

president@whitehouse.gov

U.S. Capitol Switchboard

U.S. House and Senate members:

202-224-3121

Wyoming Gov. Mark Gordon

(p) 307.777.7434

WYGOV@public.govdelivery.com

Cody Mayor

Mayor Matt Hall

(p) 307-527-3461

mhall@codywy.gov

Park County Commissioners

Lee Livingston

Commissioner 307-899-3057

Lee.Livingston@Parkcounty-WY.GOV

Dossie Overfield

Chairman 307-587-5388

Dossie.Overfield@Parkcounty-WY.GOV

Scott Mangold

Commissioner 307-202-0527

Scott.Mangold@Parkcounty-WY.GOV

Lloyd Thiel

Vice Chairman 307-272-937

Lloyd.Thiel@Parkcounty-WY.GOV

Scott Steward
Commissioner
Scott.Steward@Parkcounty-WY.GOV

Jackie Oliveri
AWE- Advocates for Wild Equines
coreteam@advocatesforwildequines.com

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/691762426>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2024 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.