

National Park Service Pulls Back on Plan to Depopulate Wild Horses from Theodore Roosevelt NP

Wild horses within the national park bring ecological services and economic boon to western North Dakota

WASHINGTON, DC, UNITED STATES, April 27, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Animal Wellness Action and the Center for a Humane Economy celebrated news that wild horses will not be rounded up and removed from Theodore Roosevelt National Park (TRNP), according to an announcement made yesterday by U.S. Sen. John Hoeven. The senator said he's secured a commitment from the National Park Service to maintain — rather than remove — wild horses inside the park. There are fewer than 200 wild horses in the 70,000-acre park.



Wild Horses on Public Lands | Photo Credit: Marty Irby

“The National Park Service was right to walk back its plan to remove the immensely popular wild horses living inside the bounds of Theodore Roosevelt National Park,” said Wayne Pacelle, president of Animal Wellness Action. “Wild horses are a sight to behold and are also a key draw for thousands of visitors who drive millions in economic activity to gateway communities in the rural reaches of the state.”

Animal Wellness Action recognized the stellar work of Christine Kman in North Dakota in helping rally so many North Dakotans, including the state's leading politicians, to speak up for preserving the presence of the wild horses in the national park.

“We are beyond thrilled that the National Park Service heard the voices of the people and terminated its current environmental assessment,” said Kman, who lives in Dickinson and is president and co-founder of Chasing Horses Wild Horse Advocates. “We are thankful to our state and federal officials and especially Senator John Hoeven for partnering with us to save this historic wild horse herd.”



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Christine Kman, wild horse advocate

Sen. Hoeven included report language in the Fiscal Year 2024 spending bill for the Department of the Interior Department.

Pacelle and Kman noted that while Sen. Hoeven’s announcement this week about an agreement stays plans to remove the wild horse community, the public should be cautious about the NPS’s intentions. “We hope that we can count on everyone’s support as we move forward to get lasting federal protection for this herd,” added Kman.

Animal Wellness Action had [earlier sent a letter to Director Charles Sams](#), demanding that the Park Service scuttle its proposed plans to remove free-roaming wild horses from the Theodore Roosevelt National Park (TRNP). Options varied from reducing the herd to only 35-60 horses, which requires the removal of about 150 horses, to accelerating the reduction of the herd to zero wild horses through a phased-in approach.

If future population control is a core NPS objective for wild horses, it can be achieved by the application of fertility control rather than physical removal, added Pacelle. Fertility control is already widely used by NPS, the Bureau of Land Management, and other Interior Department land and wildlife management agencies. In the future, that’s the only option that should be considered, rather than round ups and removals.

The wild horses drive tens of thousands of people to come to western North Dakota and are an economic engine for rural communities. North Dakota Governor Doug Burgum and both chambers of the state legislatures have also called for the NPS to maintain protections for wild horses at TRNP.

“These horses have cultural and ecological value for Theodore Roosevelt National Park,” added Pacelle, “and it’s time for the National Park Service to accept the verdict of ecologists, business owners, and other key stakeholders who note that these horses are right where they belong.”

ABOUT

Animal Wellness Action is a Washington, D.C.-based 501(c)(4) whose mission is to help animals by promoting laws and regulations at federal, state and local levels that forbid cruelty to all animals. The group also works to enforce existing anti-cruelty and wildlife protection laws. Animal Wellness Action believes helping animals helps us all. X: @AWAction_News

The Center for a Humane Economy is a Washington, D.C.-based 501(c)(3) whose mission is to help animals by helping forge a more humane economic order. 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. The Center believes helping animals helps us all. X: @TheHumaneCenter

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