

Extreme Cruelty On Full Display As The Bureau Of Land Management Moves Ahead With Nevada Blue Wing Round-Up

Wild Horse Organizations And Advocates Unite To Call For Immediate Federal Investigation As The Blue Wing Death Toll Rises

UNITED STATES, August 1, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Triple digit temperatures, foals younger than permissible in the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Comprehensive Animal Welfare Program (CAWP) and dangerous air quality from wild fire smoke have not slowed round-up and removal of the horses at Nevada's Blue Wing Complex. Horses are dying at higher rates than ever. All done at taxpayer expense.



Round-ups are supposed to be prohibited during peak foaling season, this very young baby horse proves the failure of that policy

A video, <https://videopress.com/v/NGavM5zQ> , has emerged from Blue Wing showing two mounted employees of contractor, Utah based, C. D. Warner Livestock LLC, chasing a wild horse to exhaustion. When she collapses, one rider dismounts, pulls the horse's tail hard enough to lift the weak mare off the ground and then lets her body slam back down. After unsuccessfully dragging her with a lariat around her neck to make her stand, he kicks her head and strikes her.

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It (the video) sends a message to all enforcement agencies, local, state and federal, that BLM believes they are above the law, and confident that they will not be held accountable.”

Britta Hesla, Legislative Liaison

In a telephone interview with Laura Leigh, founder of Wild Horse Education (WHE), an organization observing the Winnemucca Roundup and most BLM roundups, Leigh stated, “The incident commander (IC) is in charge on site.

The IC for Winnemucca is BLM Wild Horse and Burro specialist. Every action requires his

approval. This IC is responsible for more than 40 deaths last year, including a stallion with a broken leg, chased for miles by helicopter before being shot and killed.” “This IC is now responsible for 39 deaths at Winnemucca to date (July 30, 2024) and responsible for allowing the behavior of contractors in this incident. When this IC is in charge, the death rate of wild horses is 4 - 4.5 times that of others. WHE is currently battling BLM in court regarding abuse, violations of their own CAWP and lack of accountable rule making.”



Air quality warnings stated danger to humans and animals, recommended avoiding exertion, but the round-up continued

(www.wildhorseeducation.org) Leigh pointed out, “any person in the public that runs a horse into the ground and then kicks it in the head, would be charged criminally. This should apply to the BLM.” Leigh is “begging the public to call their congresspersons and ask them to ‘designate specific funding for rule making to create an enforceable welfare policy.’” Laura Leigh concluded saying, “Nothing will stop abuse except for an enforceable policy.”

Law professor, dedicated equine advocate, Scott Beckstead, stated, “The appalling violence and cruelty inflicted on an exhausted wild horse by a BLM contractor are not only criminal under Nevada law but also blatant violations of the BLM’s own animal handling regulations. The contractor should be immediately terminated by the BLM and face arrest and prosecution by local law enforcement. More importantly, this case should serve as a wake-up call to Congress and the American people regarding the BLM’s unacceptable treatment of our federally protected wild equines in its zeal to benefit private livestock companies.

“The behavior in this video is heinous, and is not an isolated incident. Greater and lesser abuses by BLM and its paid contractors cannot and should never be tolerated or ignored. Penalties according to the law must be enforced immediately and employment of these individuals, and those responsible for them, terminated.”, stated Barbara Moore, VP of Equine Collaborative International. Moore added, “The American public has tolerated this behavior far too long. BLM is a rogue agency that portrays itself as being above the law.”

“As a tax paying American, I pay attention to BLM’s round-ups. The July 26 incident is outrageous. A horse was run in extreme heat and drifting smoke from California fires for over an hour. The horse collapsed. With a lariat around the exhausted horse’s neck they tried dragging her to her feet, when that failed they kicked her in the head. This is egregious animal abuse, torture and criminal activity. All involved need to be held accountable so that justice can be served and American taxpayers will not be funding illegal activity.” said wildlife advocate, Teresa Callahan.

Gail Bumsted, Advocates for Wild Equines Lobby Coalition (AWE) stated, "This horrific incident is part of a collection of evils, perpetrated by BLM on our iconic wild horses and caught on film by advocates. I call on our federal government to stop this pattern of abuse, paid for by taxpayers. AWE urges members and all Americans to contact President Biden, 202-456-1111, and Congresspersons, 202-224-3121, demanding an immediate halt to all round-ups."

The Cloud Foundation's Founder and President, Ginger Kathrens, and Executive Director, Kerry Ferguson added, "The abusive actions captured by observers at Nevada's Blue Wing Roundup demonstrate BLM's horrific management methods. Thirty-nine wild horses & burros killed. How many will have to die before Congress acts to halt the helicopters and stop the roundups? The Wild Horse and Burro Act was created to protect and preserve the wild horses on our public lands, but BLM's actions do the opposite."

Britta Hesla, equine advocate, legislative liaison stated "As of June 11, 2024, BLM National Office, Department of Interior awarded and paid C. D. Warner Livestock, LLC, \$624,900 for roundups June 16, 2024 through September 1, 2024, resulting in taxpayer funding of animal cruelty, torture, and murder. In four weeks, at Winnemucca, BLM is responsible for 39 equine deaths. The video shows malicious intent and blatant disregard for innocent lives. It sends a message to all enforcement agencies, local, state and federal, that BLM believes they are above the law, and confident that they will not be held accountable. Advocates and equine organizations request the following:

- Retraction of contract for C. D. Warner, LLC
- Immediate removal and termination of the rangers shown in the video
- Immediate halt to all BLM roundups until a full investigation is conducted by an objective third party. DOI should be eliminated from participation or leadership of any part of the investigation.
- Criminal charges against the men shown in the video
- Federal investigation of the Winnemucca BLM Field Office IC for history of extreme cruelty and excessive equine deaths during his tenure, and suspension until such investigation concludes.
- Failure by designated congressional oversight committee should also be held accountable.
- Congress should designate specific funding for rule making, per Wild Horse Education's expert recommendations.

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