

Wild For Life Foundation Educational Equine Protection & Awareness Program
Saving America's Horses Initiative

10 Need-to-Know Facts that can Raise Needed Protection for Wild Horses & Burros

1. Modern day horses and burros – both wild and domestic are in fact indigenous to North America. Indisputable Mitochondrial-DNA analysis evidence confirms that modern horse, *E. Caballus* is genetically the same species which was reintroduced in 1519 by the Spaniards. (Source: Jay F. Kirkpatrick and Patricia M. Fazio, *Natural History* magazine, May 2008) Genus *Equus*, otherwise known as the modern day horse, donkey (ass) and zebra are the only survivors of the previously diverse family of 27 genera. Well established Paleontological evidence shows that *Equus Lambei*, otherwise known as the Yukon Horse is the most recent Genus *Equus* in North America prior to extinction and no evidence exists for the origin of *E. caballus* anywhere, except North America.
2. America's Mustangs (wild horses and burros) are mislabeled by most federal and state agencies as a non-native species as a means to deal with wildlife management. However, since horses, burros and zebras originated in and co-evolved with the native environment of North America, as evidenced by molecular biology and documented by the American Museum of Natural History, they should be protected under the legal mandate for U.S. Federal and State agencies to protect native wildlife.
3. The mislabeling and eradication of wild horses and burros on America's public rangelands is a clear demonstration of 'special interests' and 'government agency' support for the competing economic value of commercial livestock and reveals certain agency defiance of their mandate to protect wild horses and burros, a native wild species known to have no economic value.
4. Wild horses and burros when allowed to roam as nature intended, act as gardeners to the rangelands. Their droppings help to replenish the soils, their digestive system produces a perfect fertilizer and they pass along seeds that build up plant life. They compliment the rangelands and wildlife in many ways. (Source: Craig Downer, wildlife ecologist, former BLM range specialist, *Wild Horse Conspiracy*, January 2012) In other parts of the world, such as the United Kingdom (U.K.), governments, scientists, environmental agencies and groups including the Wildwood Trust, are successfully rejuvenating rangelands through the return of wild equids in conservation grazing.
5. Livestock grazing has been the most widespread cause of ecological degradation of riparian/stream ecosystems. (Source: J. Boone Kauffman, Ph.D. Professor of Ecosystem Sciences in the Department of Fisheries and Wildlife, Oregon State University, Corvallis) A congressionally mandated study by the National Academy of Sciences found that in one year, livestock consumed seventy percent of grazing resources on public lands, while wild horses and burros consumed less than five percent. U.S. Federal and State agencies should prevent non-native species such as commercial livestock from having ecologically harmful effects on public rangelands.

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6. A 1990 GAO study determined that the primary cause of degradation in range land areas is poorly managed domestic livestock grazing, which has gone on for well over four and a half centuries. Yet wild horses are blamed fervently by the ranchers and the BLM for the rangeland destruction. The BLM was created by Congress to bring in revenue and heal the degradation caused by livestock grazing, but ironically, it's the livestock ranchers that govern the BLM and they continue to authorize livestock grazing on the vast majority of the BLM's 177 million acres in the lower forty-eight states.

7. When the Wild Free Roaming Horses and Burros Act was passed in 1971, it was passed unanimously by both houses of Congress, and Congress declared that wild free-roaming horses and burros are living symbols of the historic and pioneer spirit of the West; that they contribute to the diversity of life forms within the Nation and enrich the lives of the American people; and that these horses and burros are fast disappearing from the American scene. It is the policy of Congress that wild free-roaming horses and burros shall be protected from capture, branding, harassment, or death; and to accomplish this they are to be considered an integral part of the natural system of the public lands. The 1971 act, in fact, directs the BLM to change their mindset from treating wild horses as feral and instead to protect them.

8. Statistics show that vast numbers of wild equines are disappearing from the American West. In the 19th century, more than 2 million wild horses roamed the West, but they are in fact being zeroed out from their native lands to make room for foreign lands sales and leasing, or for livestock grazing, or for the sale of their meat.

9. The American public, without a doubt is adamantly opposed to slaughtering horses and burros. The circle of life is eternal and in realizing how we came to be where we are, we must also look ahead at where we are going. They are as much a part of the land as we are; their future is our future. (Source: Katia Louise, Wild For Life Foundation, Saving America's Horses, November 2012)

10. Raising awareness and compassion for positive change through education and advocacy is essential to the protection of these animals.

Learn more:

www.SavingAmericasHorses.org

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