



November 19, 2008

Death has been averted for thousands of wild horses . . . at least for now

In July we wrote to you regarding the BLM's shocking plan to euthanize thousands of wild horses that have been stockpiled over the years in government holding facilities. Americans responded in volume. Congress and the BLM received tens of thousands of phone calls, letter and emails urging them to find a solution that protects, not kills, our wild horses. Our voices have been heard. At their November 17th Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board meeting, BLM Deputy Director Henri Bisson stated that no decision will be made for 10 months.

The meeting followed the release of a long awaited GAO report that was supposed to take a hard look at the BLM's management program. Instead of addressing the policy failures that resulted in this crisis, the GAO simply affirmed that the BLM did indeed remove more horses from the range than their budget would pay for, and that they needed to explore all options under the law to dispose of these horses (including euthanasia).

With the upcoming change of Administration and a new Congressional session, Return to Freedom will be working hard to educate lawmakers and bureaucrats in Washington D.C about the continued mis-management of wild horses that has created the current predicament.

The incoming Obama-Biden administration presents an opportunity for a new beginning for the federal Wild Horse and Burro Program. **Please contact the Office of the President-Elect and express your concerns and hopes for the future of our wild horses. Urge President-Elect Obama to support solutions that protect America's wild horses and their rightful home on our public lands, and to encourage policy changes within the BLM that honor the spirit and intent of the 1971 Wild Free Roaming Horse and Burro Act.**

Our deepest appreciation goes out to Madeleine Pickens

Wife of oil-tycoon and anti-slaughter advocate T. Boone Pickens, Madeleine Pickens announced her intent to purchase enough land in the west to adopt a significant number of wild horses from the BLM's long term holding facilities. This certainly played a role in staving off the bullet for these horses and we applaud the generosity and commitment of the Pickens family.

However, private bail-outs are not the answer for long term solutions. We must address the systemic problems within the BLM's Wild Horse and Burro program, or it will simply be a matter of time before we are facing this threat again. This is an ongoing battle and we need all of you to stand by our side as we fight for real solutions that will protect America's wild horses for generations to come.