



## American Wild Horse PRESERVATION CAMPAIGN

August 8, 2011

Dean Bolstadt , Acting Division Chief  
Bureau of Land Management  
Wild Horse and Burro Division  
20 M Street, S.E.  
Washington, DC 20003

VIA FACSIMILE: 202-912-7182

Dear Mr. Bolstad:

We are writing on behalf of the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) and the American Wild Horse Preservation Campaign (AWHPC) to express our serious concern and outrage over the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM's) conduct of the Triple B roundup, specifically with respect to the treatment of foals during this capture operation.

The ASPCA is the first humane organization established in the Americas and, with one million supporters, serves as the nation's leading voice for animal welfare. The AWHPC is a national coalition of more than 45 conservation, humane, historic preservation and public interest organizations dedicated to protecting and preserving America's wild horses as part of our national heritage for generations to come.

The ASPCA and AWHPC have sent an observer, Deniz Bolbol, to witness the Triple B roundup, and we are deeply disturbed from her observation regarding the treatment of foals.

As you may know, the Triple B roundup, currently underway in northeastern Nevada, is being conducted at a time when foals are young (many just 1-2 months old) and vulnerable. These tiny foals are unweaned and still very dependent on their mothers, yet they are being stampeded by helicopter at full run speed for miles in high summer temperatures. Ms. Bolbol, our onsite observer, has regularly observed these foals unable to keep up with their families, falling behind exhausted, yet still chased relentlessly by the helicopter.

This is clearly visible on the video that we have posted at this link:

**<http://youtu.be/OoV9ak7HZLk>**

The stampede is particularly traumatic for these young animals, whose skeletal and muscular systems are still developing and whose tender hooves are easily damaged in the stampede.

Once captured, the foals are placed into a separate pen. These babies are accustomed to nursing every 2-3 hours and have just been subjected to extreme physical exertion in high summer temperatures, yet they are being denied not only the comfort of their mothers, but also access to

water. Our observer has documented these foals standing in the hot sun for up to seven hours without access to water before they are loaded onto a trailer and brought to temporary holding, where they are supposed to be reunited with their mothers. After our observer repeatedly complained that these foals were being deprived of water, the BLM has occasionally provided water, but access to water is not consistent.

The trauma inflicted on these young horses is significant, and evidenced by the fact that the majority of horses who have died in the Triple B roundup to date have been foals. For the surviving foals, the trauma of the roundup can be long-lasting, as Dr. Bruce Nock, tenured faculty member at Washington University School of Medicine notes in his report, "Dangers of Summer Stampedes for Wild Horses":

*The high ambient temperatures of summer [roundups] aren't the only problem. The year's crop of foals are only months old during their first summer. It may seem like the young should be more resilient and more able to survive stampedes than older horses. That may be so in some ways. But early development is a fragile time when stress/trauma can have a devastating impact that can last a life time."*

Of course, the trauma of stampeding young foals in helicopter chases could be avoided altogether by delaying all roundup operations to fall, a time when foals are older and stronger, and more able to withstand the physical exertion of a helicopter chase.

**As a result, the ASPCA and AWHPC reiterate the call on the BLM to place a moratorium on all wild horse roundups, pending the results of the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) review of the wild horse and burro program.** This review is currently in its initial stages and promises to deliver recommendations for a scientific approach to improving this troubled federal program.

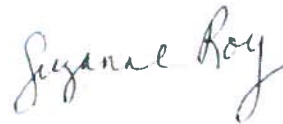
**At minimum, we call on the BLM to immediately suspend all summer roundups, to avoid the stampeding of tiny vulnerable foals, as well as other horses in the high temperatures and low water conditions of the desert at this time of year.**

Our onsite observations of the Triple B roundup lead us to conclude that the BLM's treatment of horses, including very young foals, at the Triple B roundup, is inhumane and unacceptable. Protocols to prevent this egregious situation must be implemented immediately.

Sincerely,



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