



RESOLUTION 2019-08
IMPACT AND MANAGEMENT OF WILD HORSES AND BURROS

Whereas, the Western States Land Commissioners Association (WSLCA) and its member states manage over 515 million acres of trust lands and minerals that are interspersed with federal lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM); and

Whereas, members of WSLCA have state constitutional mandates to manage millions of acres of lands for economic development, public education, conservation, recreation, and other public purposes provided by state law to assist in funding public education and other state functions; and

Whereas, WSLCA member states lease state trust lands for grazing and wildlife management purposes; and

Whereas, WSLCA member states manage their grazing lands for the long term health of the range and sustainability of forage resources; and

Whereas, millions of acres of trust lands are interspersed with federal lands in Western states where wild horse and burro populations occur; and

Whereas, wild horses and burros are protected under the Wild and Free Roaming Horses and Burros Act of 1971; and

Whereas, according to the BLM, holding capacity of federal lands for wild horses is 27,000 horses; and

Whereas, current wild horse populations on federal lands exceeds 86,000 horses with the population doubling every 4 years; and

Whereas, the BLM is already housing approximately 50,000 horses in long-term facilities which are now at capacity; and

Whereas, the population crisis of wild horses results in the trespass of thousands of wild horses on state trust lands which cause environmental damage, reduce grazing capacity for leased lands, and reduces funding for public education; and

Whereas, the BLM has no plan to significantly reduce the population of wild horses or address the trespass of wild horses on state trust lands which is compounded daily; and

Whereas, Congress has instructed the agency to conduct an analysis that identifies factors for success, total funding requirements, and expected results on potential solutions; and an analysis on long term contractual or partnership agreements between public and private entities for long term housing of horses; and to begin planning protocols for an active sterilization program, while ensuring the health and welfare of the wild horses and burros; and

Whereas, State trust land managers have no ability to herd, round up, or manage wild horses under current law:

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED AS FOLLOWS: The BLM must:

1. Maximize its authority to remove large numbers of horses with a priority of removing horses in trespass of state trust lands; and,
2. Prioritize the removal of mares to reduce the breeding stock on the range; and,
3. Enter into cooperative agreements with appropriate state agencies to reduce range damage, over-grazing, and trespass on state lands; and,
4. Conduct roundups on state lands in coordination with state trust land managers; and,
5. Explore private and state sponsored solutions to the wild horse population crisis; and,
6. Establish a robust adoption program; and,
7. Find on-range fertility control programs to prevent subsequent population growth and adopting new technologies as they evolve; and,
8. Incorporate the results of on-range fertility control research into long term planning; and,
9. Restore damaged range lands in coordination with state trust land managers; and,
10. Work with Congress to authorize and fund aggressive policies to resolve the wild horse population crisis and reduce damage to federal and state grazing lands.

Adopted this 31st day of July, 2019.



President, WSLCA



Secretary, WSLCA

*This Resolution will remain in effect through July 31, 2021
unless otherwise terminated, amended, or replaced by the Association.*

