



**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STATE TRUST LANDS
RESOLUTION 2021-03**

Impact and Management of Wild Horses and Burros

Whereas, the National Association of State Trust Lands (NASTL) and its member states manage over 500 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 NASTL 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, NASTL member states lease state trust lands for grazing and wildlife management purposes; and

Whereas, NASTL 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 26,785 horses; and

Whereas, current wild horse populations on federal lands exceeds 95,000 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, various stakeholders have promoted a humane strategy to greatly reduce horse populations in the west, create more off-range storage options, and encourage the implementation of effective birth control measures; and

Whereas, the current drought in western states is leading to grave conditions on public and state lands already being overgrazed by wild horse populations that far exceed Appropriate Management Levels; and

Whereas, the BLM has implemented emergency horse gathers due to drought while attempting to comply with Congressional mandates of implementing the Path Forward recommendations of stakeholders; and

Whereas, Congress has provided funding and direction to implement a strategy of large horse gathers, off-pasture storage options, and birth control measures; and

Whereas, the BLM has yet to fully implement the directives of Congress; and

Whereas, wild horse trespass on state trust lands is an ever-increasing problem not being addressed by BLM and state trust 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. Establish large scale off-range horse storage capacity to help solve the wild horse population crisis; and
6. Establish a robust adoption program; and
7. Fund only effective on-range fertility control programs to prevent subsequent population growth and adopting new technologies as they evolve; and
8. Restore damaged range lands in coordination with state trust land managers; and
9. Work with Congress to authorize and fund aggressive policies to resolve the wild horse population crisis and reduce damage to federal and state lands.

Adopted this 21st day of September, 2021.



President, NASTL



Secretary, NASTL

*This Resolution will remain in effect through July 31, 2023
unless otherwise terminated, amended, or replaced by the Association.*