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## **PRESS RELEASE : SKY PROTEST OF SECRETARY SALAZAR -OVER DENVER-**

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Today a plane and banner message critical of Secretary Salazar are flying over Denver and the Federal offices of the Department of the Interior. Frustrated and angry over continued Wild Horse round-ups, the message sponsors label Salazar the 'Slaughter Czar.'

Recently Secretary Salazar requisitioned \$68 million from Congress which included an additional \$30 million or so to solve the "so called" Wild Horse Problem. Even so, he has published his next plan to round up another 12,000 horses in 2010; these horses may go into long term holding facilities at significant cost to taxpayers. Meanwhile 4,000,000 Cattle will remain on public lands.

Critics of Salazar's plan, as well as officials from the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) which had given "A Big Two Thumbs Up" to Salazar's plan as a first step forward, note their disappointment with Salazar's seeming abandonment of aggressive use of birth control which could otherwise preclude the need for expensive, often brutal, round-ups and the boarding of tens of thousands of Horses.

**BLM Wild Horse Population Management** - The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) under the Department of the Interior (DOI), now headed by Secretary Salazar, has traditionally managed Wild Horse populations in similar fashion to any domestic breeding program. First allowing breeding, then removal (by helicopter round-up), and finally domestic adoption or placement in costly holding facilities waiting an uncertain fate, which could legally include slaughter. With the passage of the Burns Amendment, making sale and slaughter of Wild Horses legal, no Wild Horse is actually safe from slaughter, especially with the mounting costs of this ill thought out program. (See [GAO WH&B Report recommendations](#).)

An alternative population management strategy which utilizes birth control, such as the [21 yr program](#) of PZP immuno-contraception at the [Assateague US National Park](#), has not been utilized widely by the BLM. Another alternative for population control is the allowance of natural predators which, unfortunately, continue to be eliminated as a threat to Cattle.

### **Western "Public" Lands – Thriving Ecological Balance?**

Secretary Salazar states, "Western lands and watersheds cannot support 33,000 Wild Horses." However Don Glen, Washington Bureau Chief of the Wild Horse and Burro Program, verified to the Wild Horse Observers Association (WHOA) this summer that there are 4,000,000 Cattle on these public lands. Many Wild Horse advocates assert that in order to achieve a balance of any kind, it is Cattle that must be removed. Others are asking for a moratorium on round-ups.

Secretary Salazar appears well along the path to eliminating any animal perceived as a threat to Cattle. Due to his decision to affirm the Bush era de-listing of the **Northern Rocky Mountain Grey Wolf** from the endangered species list, these Wolves are now being hunted. So far, 100 of these Wolves have been killed including half of the famous Yellowstone pack, 2 with radio collars. Another perceived threat to Cattle is brucellosis, a disease said to be brought to this county by Cattle, and then spread to the **Bison**. Though brucellosis has not yet been documented to be transmitted from Bison to Cattle, the death toll of Bison killed by

government agents has risen to 3000. According to the [Western Watersheds Project](#), Montana Fish Wildlife & Parks Commissioner Vic Workman recently provided the answer to this question: “[T]he issue in the Bison controversy is not brucellosis, but whether Bison should be kept off rangeland that livestock producers want for their Cattle.” The Yellowstone herd of Bison is said to be the only genetically pure herd remaining, as others are said to have been mixed with Cattle.

### **Special Interest Ties Blocking Due Process**

Both Senator Salazar and Senator Bingaman, from New Mexico, have shown strong ties to the Cattle industry through their votes to put downed, suffering, and diseased animals into America’s food supply via fork lift, electric prod, and other inhumane methods. Equine legislation known as the ROAM Act, which would give back 19 million acres of public lands to the Horses, is currently being held hostage and denied a vote by the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, chaired by Senator Bingaman. Along with Senator Dominici, Senator Bingaman has a long record of blocking Equine Protection Legislation. These bills have passed easily through the House, and Wild Horse protective legislation has even passed in his own state of New Mexico. However, Senator Bingaman is unwilling to allow the American people their due process, though their will is clear. Some say Senator Bingaman is as culpable as Senator Burns, who single-handedly inserted a rider in an appropriations bill to strip Wild Horses of their long standing protection against slaughter without public debate.

### **Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Senators**

Both soft spoken, Secretary Salazar and Senator Bingaman hail as Environmentalist good guys with reasonable environmental scores of approximately 80% by the League of Conservation Voters (LCV). However, their Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) score cards show what WHOA fears is a troubling and darker side, with both earning Brutish scores of 0% during the 109<sup>th</sup> Congress.

### **Wild Horses: Competition for the Beef Industry?**

Are these last 33,000 Wild Horses impacting the bottom line of the Beef Industry? A quick review of the [USDA data](#) on US Beef Imports and Exports will show that Imports from countries around the globe are the competition. Specifically, Canadian Beef Imports have been blamed for depressions in the US Beef prices. Some blame NAFTA and CAFCA. Looking at the USDA charts will show you two surprising, but relevant, facts.

1. The US Imports more Beef (live and dead) than it Exports.
2. The US Imports Beef from all over the world (live and dead) including countries in Saudi Arabia, Costa Rica, and other rain forest areas.

Only 2% of the forage (crops, pasture, range forage) for American Beef is grown on BLM and FS lands, and 89% of the cattle producers are in the East<sup>1</sup>. WHOA asserts, rather than looking at the Wild Horses as competition, perhaps our Beef Export to Import ratios will provide a more realistic answer.

### **The American Culture**

The American Culture has flourished by absorbing the best from a mix of diverse cultures, thereby creating a more humane society. Still a work in progress! Americans did not embrace bull fighting, and they have struggled and finally succeeded in outlawing cock fighting. Americans do not hunt Horses, nor do they eat Horses, Cats, or Dogs. These animals are “sacred” in our rich American heritage. Recently, Americans have succeeded in closing foreign owned Horse Slaughter Plants here in the US, and are currently working to stop the slaughter of American Horses driven across our borders. The voices of the American people so far are falling on deaf ears.

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1. <sup>1</sup> WELFARE RANCHING The Subsidized Destruction of the American West Edited by George Wuerthner and Mollie Mattson

Americans do not want to lose the last of the Wild, Wild West. This includes Big Cats, Wolves, Bison, Bears, Grizzlies and, of course, the Wild Horses. Domestic Cattle fattened on public lands, at the expense of American wildlife, is a betrayal of the public trust. What will be the legacy of Secretary Salazar? For now, regrettably, WHOA asserts it is that of a Slaughter Czar.

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Happy Birthday Betty!

**For immediate release;  
Patience O'Dowd co-founder WHOA  
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#### **Links/Relevant data**

1. Alternatives/Options for the Wild Horse and Burro Program Assateague  
<http://www.rockymountainrider.com/articles/pdfs/0508%20PZP%20Equine%20Birth%20Control.pdf>
2. [GAO Report WH&B](#)
3. GAO Report Humane Slaughter Act
4. <http://westernwatersheds.org/blog/?p=414>
5. USDA Data (Head) [http://www.ers.usda.gov/data/meattrade/Data/Cattle\\_Monthly-Full.xls](http://www.ers.usda.gov/data/meattrade/Data/Cattle_Monthly-Full.xls)
6. USDA Data (BeefVeal) <http://www.ers.usda.gov/data/meattrade/BeefVealMonthly.htm>
7. Cattle Grazing educational Tool <http://rangenet.org/directory/witzemanr/tool/>