



January 2, 2008

Shocking Killing of Burros by State Employees

As we bid farewell to 2007, we want to thank all of you who helped Return to Freedom continue our mission to protect America's remaining wild horse herds. Whether you made a donation, volunteered, or wrote a letter, your support truly helped us provide care for over 200 wild horses and burros, and continue our fight to implement more ethical wild horse management policies.

While you celebrate the holiday season and begin a new year, please keep in mind the plight of America's wild horses and burros. Round ups are ongoing, with more wild horses now living in captivity than in the wild. Moreover, over 9000 wild horses remain threatened with slaughter. We must continue to let our lawmakers know that the American wild horse is our living heritage, and worth saving.

We need to send the same message to the land management agencies that are entrusted with the care of our wild horses and burros. Sadly, **over 70 wild burros were recently shot to death by State employees at Big Bend State Park in Texas.** A recent news article uncovered that, over the past year, burros at Big Bend State have been the victims of shootings by Park officials. This Park-sanctioned removal policy is driven primarily by a plan to introduce big horn sheep into the Park, presumably to enhance a state-run big game hunting raffle program.

The 35-year veteran Park employee who exposed the shootings was transferred and ended up quitting. An investigative officer also quit in disgust, reporting that burros were left to suffer a slow death, shot in the belly, hips, and that orphaned babies were left to fend for themselves. To justify the shootings, Park officials cited a Sierra Club policy recommending use of firearms to control wild burro populations.

Please contact the Sierra Club at information@sierraclub.org to protest their endorsement of such an inhumane practice, and State park officials at David.Riskind@tpwd.state.tx.us to denounce the shootings.

Remind them that this nation was built on the backs of horses and burros and that we want to see them treated humanely and ethically. There are alternatives. For example, the National Park Service uses non-hormonal wildlife contraception to manage population growth of the wild horses on Assateague Island.

On behalf of the horses, thank you.
Return to Freedom