

Kate Klein, District Ranger
Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest
Black Mesa Ranger District
P.O. Box 968
Overgaard, AZ 85933

June 13, 2007

Dear Ms. Klein-

I am writing to express my support for the proper management of the historic Herber Wild Horses found within the U.S. Forest Service Herber Wild Horse Territory.

While the Bureau of Land Management has always been in the "spotlight" regarding the management of the wild horses and burros of our Nation, the United States Forest Service was equally mandated to preserve and protect those found on USFS managed lands for the American people.

As such, I am requesting that you take your "charge" seriously, as I deeply care about their future preservation and the preservation of their habitat.

There is concern that perhaps USFS has failed to recognize how highly valued many citizens regard them in their free and natural state. Despite being charged with protecting them by Congress, apparently USFS also had to be counseled again with their legal mandates by an Arizona Federal District Judge.

Though I was under the impression the obvious did not need to be restated, that because it was a federal law to care for, protect and properly manage our Nations wild horses and burros, it did not need to be repeated again and again, obviously, I assumed incorrectly.

So let me state this in clear and no uncertain terms.

I am requesting and supporting proper management of the Herber Wild Horses. This includes all unbranded, unclaimed horses in the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest to be managed in such a way as to preserve and protect them with sufficient habitat available to ensure their populations are genetically viable.

An agreement has been reached regarding their management and care and USFS needs to honor that agreement, not just because it has been legally mandated to you at least twice, but also because you have a responsibility to the public, our resources and our children.

In the course of your management activities, if it is determined that some wild horses must be removed to maintain balance with the surrounding resources, I strongly urge you to provide good stewardship and respect by using truly humane removal methods, not just what is the most expedient and cost effective – these animals have been here a very long time and should be treated with the recognition that they are sentient beings, not “stupid animals” who feel no pain and will not “remember” how they were handled.

Adoption programs, knowledgeable people and organizations with good, solid reputations for caring about the welfare of animals need to be utilized so that the Herber Wild Horses are given the best possible care for their well being and continued preservation as the unique and distinctive wild horses they are.

It is disturbing to hear that there is a history of these magnificent creatures being shot and killed with little or no concern whatsoever by USFS. You have been specifically charged with the protection of these wild horses, that Congress specifically mandated that those who would seek to harm them, capture, harass, and kill them would be punished.

Yet, what are you doing about this? Are you just sending a signal to all that, “It’s okay, go ahead and kill them for all we care?” If you fail to enforce the law, what is the purpose of employing you? As someone who has been given the responsibility to maintain “law and order” and to prevent rogue behavior out there in the “wild”, I urge you to work diligently in finding the responsible parties for this unnecessary and cruel destruction of something so precious. They should be held accountable and a message should be sent, LOUD & CLEAR to anyone else thinking about committing these kinds of crimes.

Please take my concerns and comments seriously. I love wild horses.

Thank you for this opportunity to participate in the preservation of our Nations resources.

Sincerely,

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