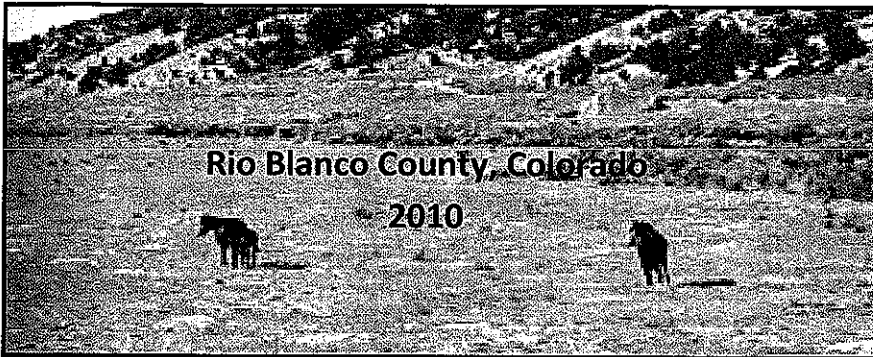


# Supporting Sustainable Range for Multiple Uses



Rio Blanco County, Colorado

2010

## Wild Horse and Burro Program Background:

The Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act (WFRHBA) was established in 1971 to protect wild horses and burros on federal land, placing them under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and United States Forest Service. Today, these western legends have far surpassed sustainable population levels in many areas. In response, Interior Secretary Salazar has proposed a draft management plan, which is the agency's latest attempt to address the ongoing problem. The proposed plan does not put the program back on a sustainable path. In fact, it continues failed practices of the past.

## We Support the WFRHBA which provides BLM directive and responsibility to manage our public lands:

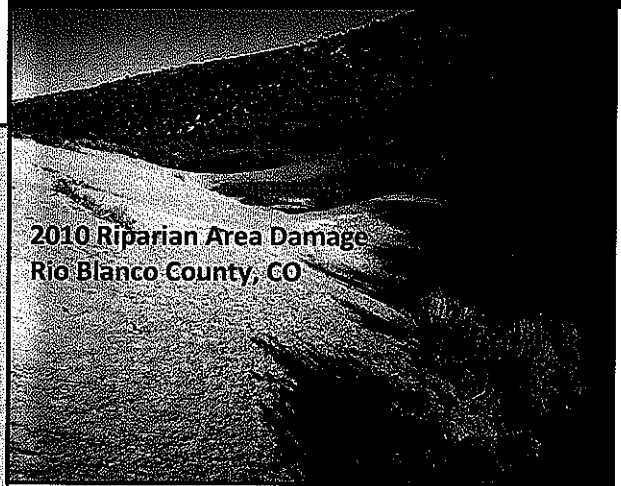
1. The Secretary is to manage wild free-roaming horses and burros "to preserve and maintain a thriving natural ecological balance and multiple-use relationship in that area."

**We understand the dilemma of what to do with the horses once they are gathered. Therefore, we support all the sections of the WFRHBA including:**

1. "The Secretary shall cause additional excess wild free roaming horses and burros for which an adoption demand by qualified individuals does not exist to be destroyed in the most humane and cost efficient manner possible."
- "Method of Sale - An excess animal that meets either of the criteria in paragraph (1) (*more than 10 years old or offered for adoption at least 3 times*) shall be made available for sale without limitation, including through auction to the highest bidder, at local sale yards or other convenient livestock selling facilities..."

## Current Management is Unacceptable

- The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) estimates the "appropriate management level" (AML) on the range to be 26,000. There are now more than 38,000 wild horses on the range.
- The resulting damage to soil, forage, riparian areas, wildlife and habitat is well-documented. The horses themselves will suffer from dehydration, mal-nutrition, and starvation if not managed.
- With a herd reproduction rate of 20 percent per year and no natural predators, the population is capable of doubling in just four years.
- In addition to the 38,000+ on the range, there are an additional 40,000 horses and burros being held in corrals and pastures, accounting for approximately 70 percent of the total program budget due to BLM's unwillingness to follow the WFRHBA which calls for the sale of excess horses "without limitation"



2010 Riparian Area Damage  
Rio Blanco County, CO

## We Oppose:

- Reducing the number of horses removed from the range which is detrimental to the range and counterproductive to BLM stated objective.
- Expanding Horse Management Area's (HMA), which is contrary to statute and is detrimental to the rangeland health. Unlike other livestock, horse numbers and grazing patterns are not managed closely, and herds are not removed seasonally, leading to range degradation.

**White River & Douglas Creek Conservation Districts**

Phone (970) 970-250-6825 E-mail [calliegi@gmail.com](mailto:calliegi@gmail.com)

[www.wildhorserange.org](http://www.wildhorserange.org)