



441 G St. N.W.
Washington, DC 20548

February 22, 2017.

Mr. Douglas A. Glenn
Director, Office of Financial Management
Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, NW, MS--2557
Washington, DC 20240

ATTN: Nancy Thomas

Dear Mr. Glenn:

This letter is to inform you of a new U.S. Government Accountability Office engagement on Horse Welfare—code 101429. The enclosure provides information on the engagement. If we determine it is necessary to visit locations other than those specified in the enclosure, we will advise you.

We would appreciate your notifying the appropriate officials of this work. The next step will be to set up an entrance conference. At that meeting, we will request that your agency identify a point of contact for this engagement.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Anne-Marie Fennell". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Anne-Marie Fennell
Director
Natures Resources and Environment

Enclosure

Information on New Engagement

Engagement subject: Horse Welfare

Engagement code: 101429

Source for the work:

GAO is beginning this work in response to a request made by the Chair of the House Agriculture Committee and the Chair of House Appropriations Committee, Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies.

Issue(s) under review/Objective(s)/Key question(s):

1. What is known about changes and trends in the U.S. horse market since 2010?
2. What impact, if any, has the prohibition on USDA funding for horse slaughter inspection had on horse welfare and on states, local governments and Indian tribes?
3. What is known about the number of abandoned and unwanted horses in the U.S. and associated environmental impacts?
4. What is the current capacity of animal welfare organizations and shelters to accept and care for unwanted and abandoned horses?

Agencies and anticipated locations (HQ and field) to be notified:

Department of the Interior (HQ), including the Bureau of Land Management's Wild Horse and Burro Program and the Bureau of Indian Affairs. We will determine possible field locations after we learn more about the activities of regional and field offices.

Other departments/agencies to be contacted:

This is a multiagency effort that will also involve the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Estimated start date for the work: Immediately

Time frame for holding the entrance conference: Immediately

GAO Team(s) performing the engagement: Natural Resources and Environment

GAO contacts:

Steve Morris, Director, 404-679-1998, morriss@gao.gov

Joe Cook, Assistant Director, 202-512-4744, cookjh@gao.gov
Joseph Capuano, Analyst-in-Charge, 617-788-0557, capuanoj@gao.gov