



## EDITORIAL | The BLM Slaughter Conspiracy

by John Holland & Valerie James-Patton

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### The BLM Slaughter Conspiracy

"Pure propaganda" was Bureau of Land Management (BLM) spokesperson Tom Gorey's reaction in a recent AP interview when asked about the growing accusations that his agency is in the process of virtually exterminating the very herds of wild horses and burros that it is supposed to protect.

However, Gorey's denial of the BLM's intentions rings false in the light of recently uncovered documents from the BLM itself and of its own published plans and estimates. It is not possible to interpret these in any way other than a plan to virtually eradicate the wild herds.

Two internal-use BLM reports were obtained earlier this year through the Freedom of Information Act; [Alternative Management Options Plans](#) from October 2008 and the [Team Conference Calls Report](#) from July - September 2008. In these documents, BLM members presented, analyzed and discussed several management plans aimed at reducing the population of the wild horses on the range as well as those in holding facilities.

Proposals for reducing the populations included adjusting herd sex ratios with some of the horses returned being gelded, and an increased use of the contraceptive PZP, the use of other unauthorized fertility drugs called Gonacon and SpayVac and even surgical sterilization of mares (a process that has resulted in 10% mortality).

Also found in the Team Conference Calls report were these notes submitted by Don Glenn:

*"Sally had an e-mail from a person in Canada who wants 10,000 horses that he would slaughter the horses and send them to a third world country. Don is going to send the email. Jim said he has a demand for horses going to Denmark, but they are having a problem getting titled horses."*

Adding further to the plan for sending wild horses to foreign countries, the following recommendations were submitted to BLM from BLM's advisory board members at the June 15th, 2009, [Advisory Board Meeting](#) held in Sacramento, Ca:

*"that BLM advertise and market sale eligible animals (with the intent clause) in foreign countries with known good homes by offering "select sales" for sale eligible animals 11 years of age and over, and for younger animals that have been offered for adoption three times during a 90 day period and that BLM continue to explore opportunities to foster foreign aid by providing sale eligible animals (with the intent clause) to foreign countries for agricultural (nonfood) use."*

The BLM's response to these recommendations was that it is considering these plans as part of a 5 year strategy plan.

Clearly, the BLM has already been corresponding with foreign countries to market the wild

horses with the intent to send the horses to slaughter. The board recommendation that the sales include the "intent clause" was clearly a fig leaf. The BLM is well aware that it would be impossible to enforce the intent clause in foreign countries.

But if that were not an obvious enough fig leaf, then the reference to "countries with known good homes" is a laughable one. It comes as no surprise that the notes from Don Glenn, who is also a member of the advisory board, were not mentioned at the advisory board meeting.

While Tom Gorey may continue to claim that it's pure propaganda that the BLM is in the process of eliminating the wild horses, the notes regarding the slaughter of our wild horses in foreign countries, combined with the advisory board recommendation to sell the horses to foreign countries proves otherwise.

The BLM's plan is now clear. They will first ignore the 1971 Wild Free Roaming Horse and Burro Act and gather virtually all the wild herds, working year-round until only a few small, sterile bands remain free. If delayed in one place, they will simply shift their schedule and gather at another as they did with Buckhorn when Calico was delayed.

The cost of feeding these captured horses, along with the 37,000 already in holding, will then precipitate an enormous financial crisis. This will leave the BLM with no option but to euthanize or ship to slaughter most of the horses in holding.

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*Equine Welfare Alliance is an umbrella organization representing over 115 organizations and hundreds of individuals across the United States and several countries worldwide.*