

## SCR 4014

As a rancher in western North and South Dakota, from a family who has raised horses our whole lives, I understand that you have to control population of your animals, but as a cattle rancher, if you sold all your young stock and didn't keep replacements, the herd will not flourish. In domestic horse and cattle herds the older ones are sold, in wild horse herds they die off.

With the park service giving some of the mares birth control shots, they are controlling the reproduction of the herds, to some extent. If they want to cull down the herd this is one way of doing so and the older horses will pass away in time. As we follow several nonprofit organizations who follow the horses, we have learned of some of the older horses that did not make it through the last storm and most seem to pass away around age 20.

These horses, well not the ones now, but the ancestors of the horses in the park now were there before the park was ever created. There are approximately 46,000 acres in the park. If the park service is worried about grazing, they should control their prairie dogs. That is what is eating and ruining the landscape of the park.

I have been in the park when they rounded up buffalo with a helicopter. They take out some animals and turn others loose. I don't know what they do with the elk. As far as I've seen the prairie dogs are moving out of the park and to the south. Landowners are not going to be happy when they move onto them. As a landowner who has prairie dogs, that is my personal opinion.

It is my personal opinion that the horses and longhorns should be allowed to remain in Theodore Roosevelt National Park. I feel that it

will be detrimental to the tourism in ND and Medora if they are removed.

My friend and I, raise cattle near Mott, ND and when we need to get away for a day, we usually drive to the park, and I take pictures of the horses and other wildlife that we find. I have met many photographers from other states who come to photograph the horses. If the horses are removed, we will have no reason to visit Medora or the park, meaning we will be among those who will not buy another pass to the park, or spend money in Medora.

Respectfully,

Esther H. Johnson