

I am writing in support of maintaining the TRNP wild horse numbers at a minimum of 150 to ensure a genetically viable herd. Please listen to the science of what is required for these horses- whose native home is TRNP- to be sustainable. I am a Kentucky native who travels across the US to observe, sit with, and photograph the wild horses. TRNP is one of the easiest places for me to do this because I can often find them and observe them from my car or hike short distances. Most of the places I travel to requires a high clearance, 4 wheel drive and a lot of hiking carrying my equipment. But not TRNP. This is one of the few places people can go to see wild horses that is handicap accessible and safe for elderly and kids (because they can see the horses often from the car!) At my photography shows I am often asked where my customers can go to see these wild horses. I inform them that TRNP is by far the easiest! Yes, the backdrops are beautiful but if there are no wild horses I won't be going there anymore. My only reason for going is the wild horses. I can see bison anywhere, even here in Kentucky but the horses are unique to TRNP and is what sets it apart from other beautiful places with bison, prairie dogs, coyotes, and elk. I feel bad for the Airbnb hosts we rent from when we go there twice a year because they won't get our business anymore if the horses aren't there and cared for so they can survive. I feel bad for the restaurant owners, golf course (where my husband golfs while I am at TRNP sunrise to sunset) and the musicals and shows we often go to while there. I guess the Smithsonian will no longer be stating that TRNP is one of the best places to go to view wild horses. I do not understand why less than 200 wild horses are such a priority to be removed or reduced! That is a philosophy that seems to me to be the total opposite of the Teddy Roosevelt stood for when it comes to wildlife and the historical importance of the horse. One of the things I so enjoy telling my customers at photography shows is that these horses are descendants of the original Badland horses with historical lineages that trace all the way back to the horses surrendered by

Sitting Bull in the late 1800s!!!! How can that tidbit not be shared with TRNP tourists? How can anyone not get excited at the prospect of seeing these wild horses? I would suspect most people are used to seeing bison at Yellowstone or any of the hundreds of other places they can be seen including 2 hours from my hometown in Kentucky! But the wild horses! Their history, their survival skills, their families, their interactions with each other, their beauty...THAT is what makes TRNP come alive for me and many others. Everyone I have observed in the park over the past decade gets pumped when they even just see a glimpse of a wild horse. That is what they talk about. That is what smile about! As I advocate for all wild horses across the US, it amazes me that the issue of managing the wild horses is so difficult for those in charge. Listen to the people who are there a lot more often than me! People who live nearby and frequent the park multiple times weekly to monitor and document these horses. Listen to the scientists and the people who study the nature of these wild animals. Listen to what works in other places, the birth control darting, understand the ages of the horses there and how removal of certain ages will impact the viability of the herd. Listen to what happens when stallions are removed and put in a pen together, the fights, the stress, the injuries. These are wild animals. Listen to the people who study them and have documented them for years and to the people who know what works in other places. This isn't a hard 'problem.' Collaborate with those who disagree with rerducing or eradicating them. Find out why and together find solutions. Effective leadership for the win!