

To whom it concerns:

I am writing as a wild horse advocate to implore you to support the resolution to federally protect the wild horse herd at the Theodor Roosevelt National Park. These horses are beloved by the public and draw wildlife observers, photographers and historians alike who come from across our country to witness them in their natural glory. The American mustangs have been hunted down and rounded up based on unsound science from the BLM, often influenced heavily by the agriculture lobby to ensure cow populations graze without competition on our public lands. However, we now know that American mustangs are in fact native wildlife that date back thousands of years on this land. They play an important, vital role in the ecosystem. Wild horses graze in a way that promotes plant diversity and regeneration. They consume vegetation that can fuel wildfires, which can help limit the intensity and spread of fires. Wild burros and horses also are a source of finding water in arid regions, increasing water access to other animals in plants in the area. As of 2024, we have reached a tragic truth – that there are more wild horses being kept in cruel holding facilities funded by expensive taxpayer funded private contracts, than our wild horses living freely on our public lands. Wild horse advocates see on a weekly basis, wild horses that are sold at auction (torn from their family, terrified and unhandled) and often flipped until they end of in the slaughter pipeline – where they are shipped to Mexico or Canada bound to slaughter. It is an American tragedy that shouldn't be happening on our watch.

Additionally, I am also writing in support of a state working group that will work in collaboration with the park to help manage the herd. By having an objective, independent working group that advocates for wild horse preservation, mutual goals for wildlife can be met with consideration of top scientific research and conservation considerations. As an American citizen, I demand you protect our most precious, native wildlife in the American mustang herds of the Theodore Roosevelt National Park. They belong to all of us.

Thank you for your consideration,

Dr. Cody Traweek