



Chasing Horses Wild Horse Advocates  
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Chairman Patten and Committee Members:

My name is Christine Kman. I am the co-founder and president of Chasing Horses Wild Horse Advocates. We are a nonprofit organization based in Dickinson, ND that advocates for the wild horses in Theodore Roosevelt National Park. Thank you for allowing me to testify in support of SCR 4006. I am asking that the committee give a "Do Pass" on this resolution.

Our organization, along with the State of North Dakota including our state and federal legislators have spent the last 3 years fighting for the wild horses of TRNP to remain IN the park.

Since the park has a clear history of trying to eliminate the wild horses from the park, and some very questionable management practices, we have worked with our legislators to draft SCR 4006.

There are two other national parks that have federal protection for their wild horses: Cape Lookout National Seashore in North Carolina and The Ozark Scenic Riverways National Park in Missouri.

There can be no arguing North Dakota's rich equine history.

Still, the park tried!

In March of 2024, they released the paper that we believe was crafted to try to refute the historical significance of the wild horses and help prepare them to litigate over the findings of the State Historic Preservation Officer, Bill Peterson. He sent a letter to the park weeks before they abandoned their plans to remove the horses that emphasized the historical significance of these horses.

The state of North Dakota clearly recognizes the value of the wild horses of Theodore Roosevelt National Park. The state heard overwhelming testimony in 2023 when SCR 4014, a resolution asking that the wild horses be allowed to stay in the park, was passed here unanimously. This committee has also heard from hundreds of people from around the world that have contacted you asking for a "DO PASS" on this resolution.

We also know that no matter what anyone's personal feelings are on wild horses, one fact remains clear: These horses drive tourism in our state. A simple formula that I have shared with all of you as part of my testimony shows that the wild horses that currently call Theodore Roosevelt National Park home bring AT LEAST \$37 MILLION DOLLARS to North Dakota's economy EVERY SINGLE YEAR!



In January of 2023, Governor Doug Burgum held a press conference offering the park whatever resources were available from the state of North Dakota to allow the horses to stay. He continued sharing this sentiment with the park up until his last days in office.

The ONLY response his office EVER received from the park was that the state should remove the horses from TRNP, take ownership of them and put them in a state park where they could manage them the any way they choose. Needless to say, Governor Burgum never took them up on that offer. He knew, as most of us sitting in this room today know, that part of the draw of these horses is that they reside in the badlands of North Dakota and in a national park named to preserve the legacy of President Theodore Roosevelt and his time in North Dakota. As you know, Theodore Roosevelt National Park is also unique as it is the ONLY national park named for a person.

When the park was forced to abandon their Environmental Assessment in April of 2024, we celebrated, but warned everyone that it would just be a matter of time before the park was back again with a new plan to try to eliminate the horses.

6 months later, our words became reality. The park gave the state 2 weeks notice that they would be rounding up all the wild horses, hand injecting all the mares with a very controversial birth control drug called GonaCon, and removing up to 15 horses that were non-responders. The aggressive use of GonaCon is just another attempt for the park to silently eliminate the horses. Please note: as part of an experiment between the park and Colorado State University on the horses in the park, they found that 2 injections of GonaCon have caused 19 of the 24 mares to STILL not return to fertility since their 2nd injection in 2013.

The park also told us that during the October 2024 helicopter roundup, they would also be taking DNA samples from all the horses to collect data to help them better manage the herd.

That March 2024 report shows that in 2022, the park already had DNA on 98% of the horses. We know from the [usaspending.gov](https://www.usaspending.gov) website that helicopter contracts to roundup the horses were put out for bid AT LEAST 60 days before the roundup. Remember, the state of North Dakota and the taxpaying public were only given 2 weeks' notice.

During the roundup, 15 mares were fitted with GPS collars. The park tells us that they need to monitor the land usage of the horses to help determine future management plans. That March 2024 report also shows that the park already knows the land usage of the horses.



The park's actions over the last 3 years has rightfully sparked anger from the general public. The October roundup and the tracking collars have elevated a movement, independent of our organization, to boycott Theodore Roosevelt National Park.

Since 2023, the Medora City Council passed 3 of their own resolutions asking that a viable and healthy herd of wild horses remain in TRNP. The Billings County Commission passed one of their own.

The History of the park shows the need for oversight from this federal agency. In 2023, Attorney General Drew Wrigley said, "Yes, this is a national park, but it falls under the stewardship of the state of North Dakota."

We could not agree more. And that is why we ask that this committee give a Do Pass to SCR 4006 today.

Christine Kman

President

Chasing Horses Wild Horse Advocates

[www.chwha.org](http://www.chwha.org)