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Horse and Burro Coalition Launches 2016 Information and Education Campaign

Washington, D.C. — 4 January 2016 —The National Horse and Burro Rangeland Management Coalition (Coalition) launched a public information and education campaign to provide insights to the general public of the challenges excess wild horses and burros pose to western rangelands.

The campaign aims to increase awareness of the need for better management actions to improve and maintain the health of western public rangelands for the benefit of wild horses and burros, wildlife, livestock grazing, and other multiple uses, as well as ensure the best use of taxpayers' dollars.

Brief informative videos will air on multiple outlets, including 9News in Denver, Colorado; the Coalition's website, wildhorserange.org; and numerous national organizations' social media sites beginning January 4, 2016.

Currently, over 64,000 wild horses and burros roam public lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) in ten western states, with an additional 47,000 currently residing in government-funded holding facilities at a cost of more than \$40 million annually to taxpayers. The BLM reports that the land available for wild horses in these ten states is only able to support a population of 27,000. Such overpopulation threatens the health of the entire ecosystem, and the health of the wild horses and burros themselves. Horses and native wildlife are suffering and even dying in various locations in the West because of the lack of sufficient food and water resources to sustain them. For example, in the Cold Creek Herd Management Area in southern Nevada in 2015 the BLM had to conduct an emergency gather to save area horses from starvation.

With a 20 percent annual population increase, nearly 130,000 wild horses and burros will be on the range by 2020. The Coalition believes such an increase will place even more horses and burros and native wildlife at risk as the overpopulation causes rangeland health to deteriorate beyond the point of recovery.

“Wild horses and burros are an iconic aspect of western North America. However, continued uncontrolled growth of horse and burro herds is threatening everything else that relies on healthy rangelands,” says Keith Norris, Chair of the National Horse & Burro Rangeland Management Coalition. “Improved management actions are needed to ensure that horse and burro populations remain in balance with the ecosystem's ability to support them and all of the other uses of our public's rangelands.”

The Coalition hopes this campaign will inform the public of this natural resource management problem and the need to remove the excess horses from the rangelands.

Please visit wildhorserange.org and email horseandrang@gmail.com for more information.

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The National Horse & Burro Rangeland Management Coalition includes a wide range of sportsmen's, livestock, wildlife, and land conservation organizations and professional societies. Collectively, we represent over eight million Americans and focus on commonsense, ecologically-sound approaches to managing horses and burros to promote healthy wildlife and rangelands for future generations.

Organizations in the Coalition include American Farm Bureau Federation, American Sheep Industry Association, Masters of Foxhounds Association, Mule Deer Foundation, National Association of Conservation Districts, National Cattlemen's Beef Association, National Rifle Association, National Wildlife Refuge Association, Public Lands Council, Public Lands Foundation, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Safari Club International, Society for Range Management, and The Wildlife Society.