

California Legislature

October 15, 2018

Vicki Christiansen
Acting Chief, U.S. Forest Service
United States Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250

RE: Wild Horse Roundup in the Modoc National Forest

Dear Acting Chief Christiansen:

We the undersigned members of the California State Legislature, urge you to take immediate action to halt the wild horse roundup in the Modoc National Forest. According to the United States Forest Service (USFS) website, a roundup of 1,000 federally protected wild horses from the Devils Garden Wild Horse Territory in the Modoc National Forest near Alturas, California, is scheduled for this week. We understand that this is the first roundup of wild horses of this type in thirteen years.

We understand that the USFS and the Bureau of Land Management have a statutory obligation under the *Wild Free Roaming Horses and Burros Act of 1917* to protect wild horses and burros on federal land. However, we also understand that after a holding period of 30 days, during which horses will be offered with limitation, the USFS intends to sell captured horses over the age of 10 without protecting them from slaughter. This could very well mean that many of these horses will end up being sold to slaughter plants.

Californians strongly oppose the slaughtering of horses, as demonstrated by the 1998 ballot initiative that banned this practice in the state. Since horse slaughter plants are also barred from operating in the United States, U.S. horses purchased for slaughter are shipped to Canada or Mexico to horse slaughter plants that produce horsemeat for human consumption.

Republican and Democratic administrations have respected federal and state law's clear intent to prevent the sale of federally-protected wild horses for slaughter by ensuring that the USFS maintained a no-slaughter policy for the much smaller number of federally-protected wild horses and burros it manages. We ask that you promptly halt the wild horse roundup until a commitment can be made to all of the below:

1. Provide a copy of all agreements and memoranda of understanding's (MOU's) for the roundup, holding (including construction of short-term holding facility) and disposition of Devil's Garden horses captured in the 2018 roundup, including all agreements, MOU's, or other contracts between the Forest Service and the Modoc County Farm Bureau and the UC Cooperative Extension and the Bureau of Land Management;
2. Provide credible assurances and follow up with evidence that no wild horses from the Devil's Garden Wild Horse Territory that are sold will wind up slaughtered;

3. Return all older horses for whom safe and humane long-term placement cannot be found to the Wild Horse Territory after mares are vaccinated with PZP fertility control; and
4. Work with the American Wild Horse Campaign to implement a pilot fertility control program for the Devil's Garden wild horses and to develop a long-term plan to humanely manage California's largest and most significant wild horse population.

We look forward to your prompt response.

Sincerely,

TODD GLORIA
 Assemblymember, 78th Assembly District
 Majority Whip

AD 43
 Brian Wrensch
 AD 77

AD 20
 John Mah
 AD 29

SD 13
 Jerry Hill

AD 50
 RB

SD 15
 Jim Beall

AD 10
 Man Levine

AD 15

SD 11
 Scott Wiener

SD 27
 Hog

AD 66
 Cathleen Galgiani
 SD 05

AD 21
 Ash Kahn

AD 61
 David Chin
 AD 17

AD 56
 Ed

AD 45
 Jesse Gabriel

SD 26
 Ben Allen

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Monique Jim