

## SUMMER 2011 | ALL GOOD WILD HORSE NEWS

**The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) just cancelled a roundup of wild horses due to the effectiveness of the immunocontraceptive Porcine Zona Pellucida (PZP), which slows reproduction in mustangs!**



The helicopter roundup had been scheduled for fall 2011 on the Little Book Cliffs Wild Horse Range near Grand Junction, Colorado. Due to the success of maintaining the Little Book Cliff herd at a number sustainable for the range using PZP, the BLM is now considering using PZP instead of regular helicopter roundups with another herd at Disappointment Valley in Colorado. We at Sky Mountain welcome this major change which keeps wild horses free, stops the injury and death caused by helicopter chases, and is a far more humane, cost-effective method for maintaining wild horse herds.

Here in New Mexico, **Sky Mountain Wild Horse Sanctuary** continues our work with the U.S. Forest Service and Mt. Taylor Mustangs on the PZP Project in the Carson National Forest. Now in our second year darting horses in the wild, 34 mares have been treated with PZP. With the growing number of horses treated, so grows the number of mustangs who will remain free in the Carson. **At Sky Mountain, we are continuously reminded of the need for research, education, and action on behalf of wild horses.** See the excerpt in this newsletter of our opinion editorial co-written with Dr. Jay Kirkpatrick, Director of the Science & Conservation Center, in response to calls for shooting wild horses as a "management practice." Our op-ed was published in the *Santa Fe New Mexican* this spring. We heard from many who were pleased with the science in the piece and our collaborative efforts for wild horses.

See "All Good Wild Horse News Continued" for more actions for mustangs.



## GREETINGS FROM THE FIERY WEST

We hope this finds you all thriving like the Sky Mountain Band. Amidst the drought and wild fires, the horses romp and embody wildness every day. **An unexpected gift of the very serious matter of water drying up is – mud.** It's a wild horse rolling festival as the mustangs coat themselves in grey-black sludge and then take off at a gallop, feeling fine and cooled off. We have taken to calling Sun "the energizer mustang." Now in her thirtieth year, she just keeps going and going. Her beauty and strength are an inspiration and remind us always of why the sanctuary exists.

**In these challenging times, we remain ever-grateful for our members' support.** Your letters, e-mails, the occasional DVD, and contributions are beyond appreciated. To ensure our capacity to keep the horses free and the financial strength of the sanctuary, we have adopted a policy of growing a reserve equal to two years of operating expenses. The board is proud to tell you that we are half way to this goal already. Next up is a new three-year strategic plan we are developing to map out expansion of our efforts on behalf of wild horses.

Four-year old sanctuary member Amanda Laferriere from upstate NY suggested that they share some of their rain with us and we could share some of our sun, making things better for the mustangs and for us all. Here's to that kind of sharing. We wish you fun and whatever brings you inspiration during the rest of the summer.

---Karen & Teresa

The mission of **Sky Mountain Wild Horse Sanctuary** begins with providing refuge where mustangs live wild and free. We seek to foster humane treatment of wild life and a conservation ethic through research, education, and action.

## Op-Ed: Wild Horse Realities

Facing wild horse realities in a thoughtful, humane manner requires an informed approach to the management of wild horses based on science, experience, and creativity and imagination. First, the science. Wild horses are a species native to North America, as evidenced by fossil records dating back 1.4 million years (Kirkpatrick & Fazio, 2009). Molecular biology using mitochondrial DNA analysis proves that modern wild horses here in the West are the same species as the first horses in North America.

Those of us who have spent time in the wild with wild horses, including the authors of this editorial, know that horses do not “tromp down stream beds.” As a prey animal, horses are vulnerable when watering and so they leave water sources when finished drinking. **As for the claims of widespread environmental damage attributed to wild horses, the numbers simply don’t add up.** Thirty thousand wild horses share public lands in ten western states with many other wildlife species – and millions of privately owned livestock. The sheer number of livestock means they have far more potential impact on grazing, water sources, and habitat. A better balance of native wildlife and livestock has the potential for a far greater positive impact on the environment.

Where science, experience, creativity and imagination connect is with Porcine Zona Pellucida, or PZP, an immunocontraceptive in existence since 1972. Twenty years of data and successful management of some wild horse herds have proven its effectiveness. This is in sharp contrast to over one hundred years of efforts to poison, shoot and otherwise eradicate wild horses in the West. PZP provides a humane means to manage wild horse herds in sustainable numbers.

For more experience, creativity and imagination in humane methods of wild horse management - such a project is underway here in New Mexico. Anthony Madrid, Carson Wild Horse Coordinator states, “We implemented this contraceptive project where we are treating mares in the field with PZP. We are working to expand the contraception project in the future so we can minimize the number of wild horses that will be required to be gathered in the future.” “We cannot kill our way out of this challenge,” states Karen Herman of Sky Mountain Wild Horse Sanctuary. **“History and past efforts at ‘management’ through shooting horses have shown us that. It is the ultimate in a failure of imagination and humanity. We can do better using science and innovation, and we are, right here in the Carson.”** ---Written by Karen Herman & Jay Kirkpatrick, Ph.D. (excerpt)

## All Good Wild Horse News, Cont’d:

Early in 2011, wild horse advocates argued before the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit in the case *In Defense of Animals v. Bureau of Land Management*. In Defense of Animals’ attorney eloquently argued that wild horses are native to North America, prompting questions from the circuit judges and comparisons of the effects of roundup on wild horses to other wildlife issues such as the impacts of climate change on polar bears and net fishing on dolphins. The advocates were appealing a decision of the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of California, which had denied their request to halt completion of a BLM roundup in the Twin Peaks Herd Management Area in northeast California and northwest Nevada while the case was pending. **While the Ninth Circuit has not yet released a decision on the issue, In Defense of Animals achieved a critical milestone in bringing this important, relevant argument to the attention of the influential Ninth Circuit.**

They had another success in April this year when the Eastern District of California refused to grant the BLM’s request to dismiss the case. **Thank you to In Defense of Animals for their ground-breaking work.** To learn more about the science that shows wild horses are a native species, go to [www.skymountainwild.org](http://www.skymountainwild.org), click on the “In the News” link, and scroll down to “Wild Horses as Native North American Wildlife.”

## Welcome to our Newest Members

Tim Ream  
Thomas Lincoln  
Leona Woelk  
Sue & Robert Strauss T

Delores Jacobs  
Hannah Lynde  
Pat Rudolph  
The Andes Family

Jim Verheul & Sabrina Jones  
Doug, Muriel, & Donna of the Spanish Mustang Foundation

## Our Gratitude for Continuing Support from our Current Members:

Shirley & Dean Harmison  
The Laferriere Family  
Lenore & Tom Lanka  
Copper & Bramble Tritscheller  
Sylvia & Jim Dulaney  
Teresa Jacobs  
Elinor Herman  
John Greenspan & Julie Bodnar

Judy & Paul Classen  
Ellen Fogarty  
Lori Colt  
Boo Frith  
Steve Bonadio  
Kathy Verheul  
Eileen Gauna  
Anne Stauffer & Norton Francis



*Lauren Lucey in Memory of Nancy Kassell  
Susan Bardes in Memory of Lawana Frith  
Diane & John Ellis in Memory of Alan Stonecipher  
The McMahon-Cannizzo Family in Memory of Zach  
In Honor of Jai and his deep bond with gorgeous mustang Stella  
Jessie & Joel Solomon and Family in Honor of Lawana Phelps Frith  
Sue & Pete Herman in Honor of John Verheul  
Copper & Bramble Tritscheller in Memory of Lawana Phelps Frith  
Candice Lazarus in Memory of Marjorie de Muynck*

Thank you to Sandra Filippucci of [www.cyberNuns.com](http://www.cyberNuns.com)  
for the improved design of this newsletter.

We at **Sky Mountain Wild Horse Sanctuary** believe that through creating connections between wildlife, wild habitat, and humans, a better world is possible.



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**505.795.3508 | [www.skymountainwild.org](http://www.skymountainwild.org)**

*Sky Mountain Wild Horse Sanctuary  
is a 501C3 nonprofit corporation*

**We invite you to become a member of the sanctuary through our “Wild Humans for Wild Horses” Membership Campaign. We invite current members to share our newsletter with others.**

Our long-term vision for the sanctuary is permanent range of at least tens of thousands of acres in northern New Mexico where wild horses run free throughout their lives. We provide a safe, permanent refuge for wild horses rounded up and removed from their home territories here in New Mexico and in the future, from other states. Our intention is to share the sanctuary by developing adventures including summer camps for kids with a special focus on children in foster care, and tours for sanctuary members and others interested in wild horses, wildlife, and the environment.

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**Please make checks payable to:  
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15A Loma Vieja Lane  
Santa Fe, NM 87506**

**We respect your privacy, and Sky Mountain Wild Horse Sanctuary  
does not sell or otherwise share our donor information.**

Contributions are tax deductible.

Thank you for helping to keep wild horses running free!