



THE HUMANE SOCIETY
OF THE UNITED STATES

Eric L. Bernthal, Esq.
Chair of the Board

Jennifer Leaning, M.D., S.M.H.
Vice Chair

Jason Weiss
Second Vice Chair

Kathleen M. Linehan, Esq.
Board Treasurer

Wayne Pacelle
President & CEO

Michael Markarian
Chief Program & Policy Officer

Laura Maloney
Chief Operating Officer

G. Thomas Waite III
Treasurer & CFO

Andrew N. Rowan, Ph.D.
*Chief International Officer
& Chief Scientific Officer*

Roger A. Kindler
*General Counsel
Vice President & CLO*

Amy C. Rodgers
Secretary

DIRECTORS

Jeffrey J. Arciniaco

Eric L. Bernthal, Esq.

Jerry Cesak

James Costos

Anita W. Coupe, Esq.

Neil B. Fang, Esq., CPA

Jane Greenspun Gale

Cathy Kangas

Paula A. Kislak, D.V.M.

Jennifer Leaning, M.D., S.M.H.

Kathleen M. Linehan, Esq.

John Mackey

Mary I. Max

Patrick L. McDonnell

Judy Ney

Sharon Lee Patrick

Judy J. Peil

Marian G. Probst

Jonathan M. Ratner

Joshua S. Reichert, Ph.D.

Walter J. Stewart, Esq.

Andrew Weinstein

Jason Weiss

David O. Wiebers, M.D.

Lona Williams

Via electronic mail

July 15, 2013

Neil Kornze, Principal Deputy Director
The Bureau of Land Management
Washington, D.C. 20240
Email: nkornze@blm.gov

Dear Mr. Kornze:

On behalf of The Humane Society of the United States (The HSUS), I am writing to express our deep concerns about the living conditions for the 1,800 wild horses currently held at the Palomino Valley National Adoption Center (PVC) near Reno, Nevada and to urge the BLM provide these animals with adequate shelter.

Nevada is experiencing record heat with temperatures last week exceeding 100 for at least five consecutive days. We recently learned that in response to the extreme weather conditions, the BLM has installed a sprinkler system and this is a critical step, but is no substitute for the relief that shade provides to animals in desert terrains during the hottest months of the year.

We were surprised to read on the BLM's "From the Public" response to the public's concerns about the welfare of these animals:

http://www.blm.gov/wo/st/en/prog/whbprogram/history_and_facts/from_the_public.html#shelter

While we agree that "wild horses and burros are accustomed to open environments," needless to say, PVC is not an "open environment" where these animals can seek shade if need be. For the BLM to claim that the agency is meeting their needs because the animals "do well coping" in hot temperatures is, with all due respect, a complete cop out. To "cope" means to "survive" – regardless of the weather conditions, animals held by the BLM should not have to simply "cope" in short-term holding facilities. The point of a short-term holding facility is to prepare these animals for adoption so they should *thriving* – not just *surviving* – in these facilities.

BLM also claims that "No illness or ill effects have occurred as a result of the animals not having shade, not now and not in the past" Since, to the best of our knowledge, BLM has not conducted necropsies on the animals that have died at PVC since the heat wave began, there's no way for BLM to make that claim

Celebrating Animals | Confronting Cruelty

with absolutely certainty, but even if there were, just because these animals have not become sick or died from lack of shade does not mean they have not suffered unnecessarily as a result.

Like food and water, shelter is a basic need for any animal held in captivity, and contrary to BLM's claims, wild horses are no different. BLM requires adopters to provide shelter for animals in their care. All we're asking is for BLM's holding facilities to meet the same standards required for potential adopters. For these reasons, not only should the BLM immediately provide adequate shelter for the 1,800 animals in their care at the PVC facility, the agency should also expedite plans provide shelter for animals at all of its short-term holding facilities.

I can be reached using the contact information listed below if you wish to discuss this issue. In the meantime, we sincerely hope the BLM will quickly move to do the right thing by the animals at PVC and install adequate shelter as soon as possible.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Holly Hazard', is positioned below the word 'Respectfully,'.

Holly Hazard, Senior Vice President
Programs & Innovations
The Humane Society of the United States
Tel: 301-721-6484
Email: hhazard@humanesociety.org