RESOLUTION 2016-02
IMPACT AND MANAGEMENT OF WILD HORSES AND BURROS

Whereas, the Western States Land Commissioners Association (WSLCA) and its member states manage over 440 million acres of trust lands and minerals that are interspersed with federal lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM); and

Whereas, members of WSLCA have state constitutional mandates to manage millions of acres of lands for economic development, public education, conservation, recreation, and other public purposes provided by state law; and

Whereas, WSLCA member states lease state trust lands for grazing and wildlife management purposes; and

Whereas, WSLCA member states manage their grazing lands for the long term health of the range and sustainability of forage resources; and

Whereas, millions of acres of trust lands are interspersed with federal lands in Western states where wild horse and burro populations occur; and

Whereas, wild horses and burros are protected under the Wild and Free Roaming Horses and Burros Act of 1971; and

Whereas, according to the BLM, holding capacity of federal lands for wild horses is 25,000 horses; and

Whereas, current wild horse populations on federal lands exceeds 67,000 horses with the population doubling every 4 years; and

Whereas, the BLM is already housing 46,000 horses in long-term facilities which are now at capacity; and

Whereas, the population crisis of wild horses results in the trespass of thousands of wild horses on state trust lands which cause environmental damage, reduce grazing capacity for leased lands, and reduces funding for public education; and

Whereas, the BLM has no plan to significantly reduce the population of wild horses or address the trespass of wild horses on state trust lands which is compounded daily; and

Whereas, State trust land managers have no ability to herd, round up, or manage wild horses under current law:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the BLM must:

1. Maximize its authority to remove large numbers of horses with a priority of removing horses in trespass of state trust lands; and
2. Prioritize the removal of mares to reduce the breeding stock on the range; and
3. Enter into cooperative agreements with appropriate state agencies to reduce range damage, over-grazing, and trespass on state lands; and
4. Conduct roundups on state lands in coordination with state trust land managers; and
5. Explore private and state sponsored solutions to the wild horse population crisis; and
6. Work with Congress to authorize and fund aggressive policies to resolve the wild horse population crisis and reduce damage to federal and state grazing lands.

Adopted this 13th day of July, 2016.

_____, President
Western States Land Commissioners Association

_____, Secretary
Western States Land Commissioners Association