

Actor Fights for Wild Horse Freedom

By NEWS ARCHIVES INTERNATIONAL

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Actor/animal welfare activist Leo Grillo's organization, Horse Rescue of America, has joined other celebrities and corporations in a fight to keep the wild horse in the American West.

"Politicians try to convince the American public that this is all about money," explained actor/animal welfare activist Leo Grillo. "It's really about large corporations that are connected to wealthy politicians. They get the leases from the Bureau of Land Management and then sub-lease them to cattle ranchers for lots more money."

Grillo's heated comments are in response to Interior Secretary Ken Salazar's new federal plan to relocate thousands of desert mustangs to preserves in sharply opposing Eco factions. It has attracted the ire of horse protectors who call Salazar's pricey proposal a "travesty of justice and humaneness." This is why Horse Rescue of America has now joined a growing number of other activists, corporations and celebrities in an allied effort to stop the roundup of these fanciful badges of the American West.

"The BLM runs the public land, which is a quarter of the land mass of the lower forty-eight states, said Grillo. "On that land are the wild horses and burros. It's ironic that these properties are fenced off from the tax-paying public which actually owns it."

Grillo contends it is this land upon which cattle is fed cheaply while the leases are lucrative. "Even friends of politicians get the leases and then sub-lease them for tons more money," he said.

Grillo says relocating the mustangs to unfamiliar and harsh ecosystems would be disastrous. "There's too much rain, fungi and diseases associated with wetter climates that desert horses are not going to be able to cope with," explained Grillo. "If the eastern quadrant of the U.S. were a suitable environment, these horses would have migrated there on their own. They're in the American West where they should be."

Grillo says for only 3% of beef cattle raised in this country, it is the wild horse that is being rounded up. Competing wildlife, like deer and elk, are being killed off by the federal government, he says, because they infringe on the cattle's grazing areas.

"The mustang is being used as a scapegoat," said Grillo. "It was the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) that made this animal a manufactured problem. It keeps changing policy depending on who's in office."

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