



FREE-ROAMING HUMANE HORSE MANAGEMENT FOR LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY

Animal Protection New Mexico (APNM) has worked with 49 Tribal communities (Pueblos, Tribes, and Navajo Nation chapters) to assist with equine feed, gelding, humane euthanasia, wellness clinics, training Tribal staff in the use of PZP birth control vaccine, and the implementation of humane herd management plans for free-roaming horses. Private funding sources, while critical to date, have proven unsustainable for the full scale of the work needed now and into the future.

During the 2025 legislative session we will request state funding for the following three projects:

SAN FELIPE PUEBLO

APNM has worked collaboratively with San Felipe Pueblo since 2014 to help address equine and other animal issues. In 2023, we paid for Pueblo staff to be trained in the use of PZP and worked with our contractor, Mt. Taylor Mustangs, to support the Pueblo's Department of Natural Resources in drafting a humane herd management plan. We are now assisting with the implementation of this herd management plan, including paying for equipment and supplies, as well as for consultation and field time with contractor Mt. Taylor Mustangs. A budget for this project for fiscal years 2025 and 2026 is estimated to be \$200,000.

RAMAH NAVAJO CHAPTER

APNM has worked in partnership with Ramah Navajo Chapter since 2018. This work has consisted of equine feed assistance, castration for stallions, PZP birth control for mares, seasonal low-cost equine wellness clinics for community members, training of Department of Natural Resources staff in PZP use, and conducting a herd survey with engaged community youth. While the Department of Natural Resources staff have been treating domestic community mares with PZP, they have so far not had the capacity to expand the work to free-roaming horses. The Director of the Department of Natural Resources would like to hire two additional contractors to focus on the darting of free-roaming horses. The project budget for fiscal years 2025 and 2026 is estimated to be \$225,000

STATE LAND OFFICE & NAVAJO NATION

APNM has worked with the central Navajo Nation to train agency staff members in the use of PZP and arrange multiple community equine wellness clinics. We recently learned that the State Land Office is interested in the humane and sustainable management of free-roaming horses on state trust land, and in particular, they have been discussing with us one tract of state trust land, "SlashB-Berry Ranch," that is reported to be home to over 500 free-roaming horses. The Navajo Nation is interested in leasing the land for agricultural purposes from the State Land Office, which intends to have a humane horse management provision in the lease agreement but does not have the capacity to conduct the work themselves. They are interested in collaborating with APNM and the Navajo Nation to help manage the horses and improve the long-term health and sustainability of the state trust land. The project budget is estimated to be \$816,000 for the initial phase. APNM is still working on securing agreement from all parties, including the New Mexico Indian Affairs Department, which is a potential fiscal agent for the request.

Please see the other side of this page for a summary of the science and impacts such a monumental effort would have, courtesy of Mt. Taylor Mustangs and Tufts University.

Managing for Balance: Free-Roaming Horses & Fertility Control on the SlashB-Berry Ranch

Managing free-roaming horses using fertility control protects the health of the herds and the land they occupy. The fertility control approach to horse management proposed here is cost-effective, sustainable, and respects the horses, the land, and the values that communities place on each.

We propose to treat approximately 300 adult female horses, representing about 80% of the female population, with ZonaStat-H, a highly effective, extensively studied immunocontraceptive vaccine. ZonaStat-H is registered for use in free-roaming horses with EPA and the New Mexico Department of Agriculture. The proposed project is for free-roaming horses on the SlashB-Berry Ranch, based on an estimated 700 horses with 350 females. This project can be adapted for other free-roaming herds for management that is grounded in science, data, technology and respect for horses and the land.

- Approximately 300 adult female horses will be captured in corral traps during project years 1-2.
- While in the corrals, captured mares will be injected with an initial dose of ZonaStat-H via darting. Horses will be held for two weeks, darted again with a second dose of ZonaStat-H, and released.
- Vaccinated horses will be carefully described, photographed, and entered into a database to monitor effects of the vaccine on the herd size and to assist in future contraceptive applications.

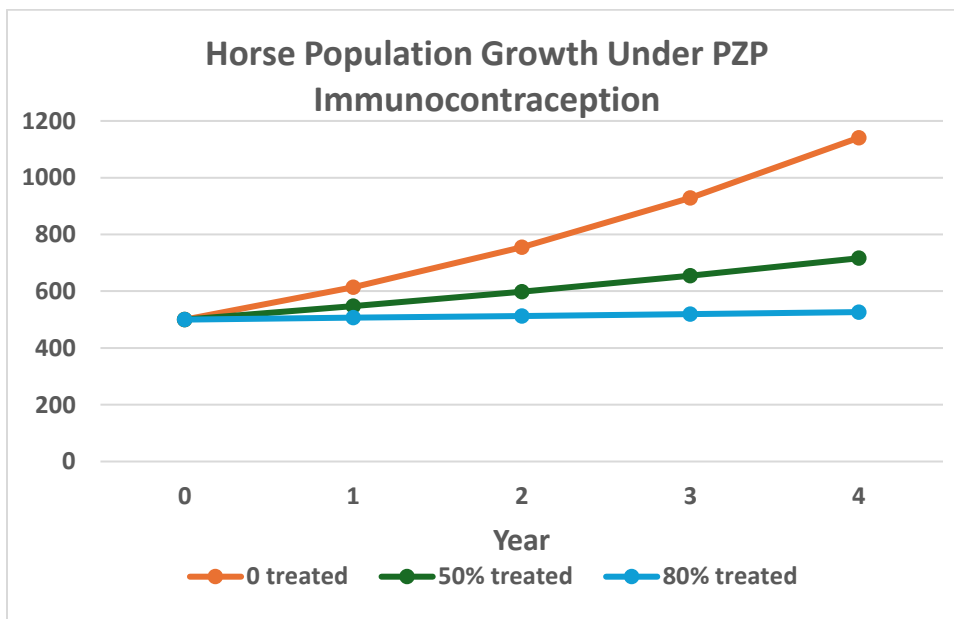
Why Use Fertility Control?

- Can stabilize horse populations in 1-2 years, balancing herd numbers on the range
- Is safe for horses and field personnel
- Avoids costly and controversial roundups and offers management that is respectful of differing viewpoints regarding free-roaming horses

Why Use ZonaStat-H (PZP)?

- More than 35 years of testing and application to free-roaming horses and burros have shown that PZP is safe and highly effective
- PZP is the only contraceptive that has been scientifically demonstrated to reduce or stabilize populations of wild horses and other wildlife, in a wide range of environments
- Free-roaming horse herds are now managed successfully using PZP alone

Projected Results



Projections based on field data from Cedar Mountains HMA, UT, and Sand Wash Basin HMA, CO (Grams et al. 2022, *Wildlife Research* 49:738)