

Welcome to TimesPeople [Share and Discover the Best of NYTimes.com](#) 6:35 AM [Log In or Register](#)  
 What's this? No, thanks

HOME PAGE MY TIMES TODAY'S PAPER VIDEO MOST POPULAR TIMES TOPICS [Get Home Delivery](#) [Log In](#) [Register Now](#)

**The New York Times** **Opinion** Search All NYTimes.com

WORLD U.S. N.Y. / REGION BUSINESS TECHNOLOGY SCIENCE HEALTH SPORTS OPINION ARTS STYLE TRAVEL JOBS REAL ESTATE AUTOS  
 EDITORIALS COLUMNISTS CONTRIBUTORS LETTERS THE PUBLIC EDITOR

EDITORIAL  
**Wild Horses**

Published: November 19, 2008

Wild horses are a symbol of the American West. And while they are protected by law, the agency charged with protecting them seems to have forgotten that their wildness is what makes them so precious.

**The Board Blog**

Additional commentary, background information and other items by Times editorial writers.



[Go to The Board »](#)

There are about 33,000 wild horses on the open range. To control the herds and keep land open for cattle grazing, the federal Bureau of Land Management has rounded up many more horses and tried to put them out for adoption. But adoptions are not keeping up, and some 30,000 horses remain in holding pens. Until the past few days, the bureau had been planning to cull another 6,000 horses from the wild by killing them.

Fortunately, the bureau has halted that rush to euthanasia after Madeleine Pickens — the wife of T. Boone Pickens, the oil tycoon — offered to create a one-million-acre refuge for the wild horses already in captivity. Mrs. Pickens plans to sterilize the horses on her land and says she will take any additional horses the federal government wants to cull from the wild herd.

Sterilization is the best solution for long-term wild horse management. The federal Bureau of Land Management is finally coming to understand that and is now working with the Humane Society on very promising contraception studies in two herds. The bureau also needs to consider buying back some of its range permits from cattle ranchers. We suspect that in this economic climate, some ranchers would be glad to part with them. The bureau then could leave wild horses on the range — instead of capturing them and paying to feed them — until aggressive contraception comes into play.

We wish Mrs. Pickens the best with her plan for a wild-horse refuge and hope it moves forward quickly. It would empty the federal government's corrals and restore a significant measure of freedom to animals that are an emblem of freedom.

A version of this article appeared in print on November 20, 2008, on page A42 of the New York edition.

[More Articles in Opinion »](#)

**Past Coverage**

- [Tycoon's Wife to Buy Land as a Refuge for Wild Horses](#) (November 19, 2008)
- [Mustangs Stir a Debate on Thinning the Herd](#) (July 20, 2008)
- [GRASS ROOTS; Range Rescue](#) (November 15, 2004)
- [U.S. Agents Seize Horses of 2 Defiant Indian Sisters](#) (February 7, 2003)

**Related Searches**

- [Horses](#) [Get E-Mail Alerts](#)
- [Animals](#) [Get E-Mail Alerts](#)

[More Articles in Opinion »](#)



**MOST POPULAR**

E-MAILED BLOGGED SEARCHED

- [Thomas L. Friedman: Madam Secretary?](#)
- [Dick Cavett: The Wild Wordsmith of Wasilla](#)
- [Practical Traveler: Unused Frequent-Flier Seats in a Flash](#)
- [A Sea of Unwanted Imports](#)
- [Flavorful Gravy Makes Thanksgiving](#)
- [Maureen Dowd: Two for the Price of Two](#)
- [Use of Antipsychotics in Children Is Criticized](#)
- [The Dead Tell a Tale China Doesn't Care to Listen To](#)
- [Teenagers' Internet Socializing Not a Bad Thing](#)
- [Legal Tangles of 'Project Runway' Keep It Frozen on the Catwalk](#)

[Go to Complete List »](#)

**The New York Times** **T MAGAZINE**  
 nytimes.com/tmagazine

**The world's most traveled man**  
 Also in T Magazine:  
[Bond backlash](#)  
[How to host a fashion week](#)  
[Check out the new travel issue of T Magazine](#)

Welcome to TimesPeople  
What's this?



Share and Discover the Best of NYTimes.com

6:35 AM

Log In or Register  
No, thanks

Bureau of Land Management  
Pickens, T Boone Jr

Get E-Mail Alerts  
Get E-Mail Alerts

ADVERTISEMENTS



INSIDE NYTIMES.COM

HOME & GARDEN »



A Cup of Good Cheer

HOME & GARDEN »



Ordering Out for More Space

MUSIC »



Making Girls Dance: All in a Night's Work

OPINION »

### Campaign Stops: Parents, Unite!

Despite the excitement over Barack Obama, our schools are not getting enough attention.

WORLD »



Threats May Mean North Korea Will Talk

OPINION »



Op-Ed: What's So Special About a Team of Rivals?

Home | World | U.S. | N.Y./Region | Business | Technology | Science | Health | Sports | Opinion | Arts | Style | Travel | Jobs | Real Estate | Automobiles | Back to Top  
Copyright 2008 The New York Times Company | Privacy Policy | Search | Corrections | RSS | First Look | Help | Contact Us | Work for Us | Site Map