



**ALBERTA WILDERNESS ASSOCIATION**  
*"Defending Wild Alberta through Awareness and Action"*

Don Livingston  
Land Management Planning Officer  
Clearwater Forest Area  
Box 1720, 4919-51 Street, 2nd Floor Provincial Bldg  
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T0M 1T0

March 22, 2005

**Re: Feral Horse Management along Eastern Slopes**

Dear Don,

Thank you for requesting Alberta Wilderness Association's (AWA) participation in stakeholder meetings regarding feral horse management along the Eastern Slopes. Unfortunately, we will not be able to participate; however, further to your request we are providing a written response.


AWA's primary concern regarding feral horse populations on the landscape is their impact on native species and habitat. Management steps should be taken if it is determined the horses jeopardize the native ecology or species, particularly of those natural regions that are poorly protected and recognized as sensitive or ecologically significant. AWA has some history regarding feral horse management in certain areas of the province. The Association advocated for the removal and relocation of feral horses from the Suffield Wilderness Area. At the time, the horses were compromising this internationally significant ecosystem and action was necessary.

Management options should also be contemplated if some of the population is negatively impacting public safety, particularly along major highway corridors. Any plans for feral horse management should however not result in further impact to existing protected areas or areas of ecological concern. We would expect that no discretionary access or use be given to existing protected areas in the name of feral horse management.

We also expect that any option for managing these animals be conducted humanely and legally. Management must be based upon the most available and up to date research, data and assessment in terms of their population numbers, distribution, and impact on native wilderness and wildlife before making any decision affecting their existence on the landscape.

Please keep us advised of the outcomes of the meetings.

Sincerely,

  
Lara Smandych  
AWA Conservation Biologist