

## Public Comment for Upcoming Commission Meeting

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### Comments:

Concerning the proposed Sandoval County Ordinance to Ban the Feeding of Wildlife:  
The proposed Ordinance demonstrates the County Commissioners', County Attorney's, and certain members of the County Sheriff's Department's stunning lack of insight concerning the wild horses of Placitas.

The County's previous efforts to work with Placitans to resolve horse issues was sabotaged by both pro and anti-horse zealots for whom ego and total victory superseded community and equine well-being. Perhaps the current proposal is a reaction to this. In any case, the Ordinance simply will not work, except to achieve the Commission's long-term goal of starving the horses to death.

Over the past 20 years, the horses have been excluded from tens of thousands of acres of grazing lands, including the area Pueblos, the Buffalo Tract, the Vulcan mines, vast BLM acreage, and several Placitas subdivisions. They have moved north in search of food, water, and places to rear their young. While we humans breed like rats and mindlessly destroy wildlife habitat, the horses simply want to live.

The County program to administer the porcine zona pellucida (PZP) vaccine is proving to be highly effective. The team cannot possibly locate every mare every year, but thus far the results are impressive. Sadly, reducing equine populations to sustainable levels within their current reduced range may well take another 10 to 15 years – unless the proposed Ordinance goes into effect and is enforced, in which case speeding drivers on NM 165 will hasten the process. If Placitas residents stop feeding the horses, they will naturally seek more grass, which is along NM 165, and the subdivisions, Forest Service and Pueblo lands to the south. If you think horses are being killed now, just wait. (BTW: the Forest Service and Pueblo will not solicit public comment; they will simply remove or exterminate the herds as they see fit).

I do not know of anybody feeding horses near NM 165, but if Deputy Mills is correct, such feeding should stop, although the mechanism for doing so is certainly not the proposed Ordinance. Interestingly, the Ordinance does not mention working with the State, County, and residents to reduce speed limits, ticket speeders, create speed bumps, or provide roadway warning flashers. It does not mention the potential for establishing feeding areas far from the highway, or the fact that some Placitas residents actively harass the animals. It does not mention utilizing County or State lands for a preserve, or in any way address the issues of private equine and property ownership.

Many of us put out water, salt blocks and hay for our horses, and some have bird feeders. If some mule deer, oryx or wild horse raids a birdfeeder, will a deputy arrive with a warrant? The Sheriff's Department does not have the resources to keep up with speeders and murderers, let alone bird-loving scofflaws. Be advised: three of the Commissioners are Rio Rancho insurrection-supporting, Qanon-believing, environment-hating Republicans, while the lone Placitas resident lives near the Interstate, and serves only the 10 to 15 percent of Placitans who would like to see the horses exterminated. I know nothing

about the recently appointed Democrat, but he doesn't live here either.

The County and numerous non-profits and individuals have expended incredible efforts to keep the horses safe. I hope the County Commissioners will do the same, and abandon this ill-conceived Ordinance.