

Public Comment for Upcoming Commission Meeting

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Comments:

Dear County Commissioners,

I humbly ask that you withdraw the ORDINANCE TO BAN FEEDING OF WILD HORSES on public property.

Whether you know it or not, you have the power to rip the community of Placitas to shreds. As you can see from the intensity of the public comments this is a polarizing issue.

The ordinance will literally tear this community apart by pitting neighbors against each other and creating an atmosphere of snitching and distrust. Please, I beg of you, have a heart if not for the innocent horses who will surely starve, but for our fragile community. Please help protect nature for our children, grandchildren, and all future generations. This is the last refuge for nature, there is nowhere else for the horses to go. Their "natural range" is gone. The horses are boxed in by development. What are we supposed to do when starving horses start dying on our property or on the roads?

Regarding NMSA § 4-37-1 (1975), we thank you for invoking the power to provide for our safety; however, we believe that starving horses and incarcerating property owners will not secure our safety. The real threat to our safety is speeding and distracted/reckless driving as evidenced in the police reports from collisions along highway 165.

We propose SMALL STEPS. If the real issue here is to minimize collisions along highway 165, we have the following suggestions that are more cost-effective solutions for the government. It is a win win situation. We believe that your constituents will support the following solutions regardless of their opinion on the American Wild Mustangs. Wild horses are not only our beloved national icons in the United States, representing the spirit and tenacity of the West but they are supposed to be federally protected by the government per the 1971 Wild and Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act.

IMMEDIATE SOLUTIONS:

- Enforcement of the speed limit. (Placitas should have the same reputation that Corrales has when it comes to speeding, i.e. exceed the speed limit by even ONE mph and you will be ticketed).
- Better signage especially along the wildlife corridor. Reflective and solar powered warning lights (that are not polluting). This is common practice on roads across the country.
- Ban feeding of horses from vehicles, no dumping food nor feeding any animal (domestic or wild) along highway 165.

FUTURE SOLUTIONS:

- Restore fencing along highway 165. Horses conserve energy, they sleep most of the day. They will not expend unnecessary energy to jump a fence. Added bonus: no tumbleweeds flying across the road and causing dangerous and erratic driving.
- Eco-friendly options for making sure that horses are visible at night.

HORSES HELP US: Horses are far from the ecoterrorists that uneducated people claim:

- While cattle do not have upper teeth and use their tongues to wrap around grass to pull it from the roots, horses only graze the tops of grass blades, allowing grasses to regrow in a healthier state.
- Unlike cattle, horses are not ruminants and therefore, do not have four sections of their stomach. This means that their waste contains more nutrients.
- While cattle enjoy chilling out by water sources, horses are respectful of their ecosystem. Instead of causing erosion and scaring away species diversity (like cattle do), horses tend to drink and move on, leaving minimal impact on stream habitats.

- Since horses are travelers and are also picky about what they eat and avoid consuming pretty flowers, allowing wild flowers to survive. If a horse consumes seeds, they can still germinate after being passed and thus, horses act as important sources of dispersal for plant species.

Additionally, the ordinance still fails to provide any concrete evidence to its claims. Where are the stats, research, and results? Respectfully, this ordinance sounds like a personal vendetta against a specific neighbor. What is really going on here?

Please vote NO on the ordinance to maintain peace in Placitas. Please consider our suggestion to start small. Make small deliberate steps, explore, analyze, document, and evaluate after some time. This will ensure success.

Thank you