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Establishment of Wild Horse Range in Montana

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ESTABLISHMENT OF WILD HORSE
RANGE IN MONTANA

Mr. MANSFIELD. Mr. President, I am delighted to bring to the attention of the Senate a statement I have just received from the Bureau of Land Management stating that the Secretary of the Interior, Stewart L. Udall, has set aside a 31,000-acre wild horse and wildlife range in the Pryor Mountains along the Montana-Wyoming border. I am sure the distinguished Presiding Officer (Mr. HANSEN in the chair) has received a similar communication, because he is also interested in the wild horse and wildlife range.

Mr. President, this is good news, because it will mean more feed and sustenance for the horses and other wildlife as well.

I am happy that Secretary Udall has brought about the range enlargement and I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the letter I have received from the Department of the Interior and the release from the Bureau of Land Management.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT,
Washington, D.C., September 11, 1968.
HON. MIKE MANSFIELD,
U.S. Senate, Washington, D.C.

DEAR SENATOR MANSFIELD: Public concern for the protection and management of the wild horses in the Pryor Mountains area of Montana and Wyoming has been a matter of major significance.

Since you and your constituents have expressed an interest in this problem, we are enclosing a copy of the latest news release explaining the Bureau of Land Management's position in this matter.

Sincerely yours,

JOHN O. CROW,
Acting Director.

[A news release from the Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, Sept. 12, 1968]

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT ESTABLISHES
WILD HORSE RANGE IN MONTANA

Secretary of the Interior Stewart L. Udall has set aside a 31,000-acre wild horse and wildlife range in the Pryor Mountains along

the Montana-Wyoming border, Bureau of Land Management Director Boyd L. Rasmussen announced. The move is being made to give Federal protection to a herd of wild horses whose future has aroused nationwide attention for several months.

Rasmussen, who visited the rugged mountain area recently, said: "It is essential that we move ahead immediately to designate these lands to provide Federal protection for this national heritage, and as quickly as possible to establish long-term management for both horses and wildlife, including a mule deer herd. After signing this designation, Secretary Udall has authorized me to appoint a special advisory committee to help us study humane and practical means to operate this range, and to advise use of a suitable method to arrive at a balance between the horses and deer and the food available for them."

BLM plans no action to trap or round up horses from the range at this time, Rasmussen said, and future decisions will be based upon consideration of committee recommendations. The committee will include representatives of wild horse organizations, humane societies, wildlife specialists and other broad interests. The committee may consult specialists in other fields related to horses for technical advice where needed.

Since a series of public meetings last spring to discuss preliminary alternatives for management of the Pryor Mountain area, the range available for use by the horses has been increased by the addition of lands within the Bighorn Canyon National Recreation Area.

Rasmussen said, "After visiting this area, I am concerned that the total numbers of animals—horses and big game—may not be in balance with food available for them. I agree with Montana State Director Harold Tysk of BLM and his competent staff that something must be done to halt continued soil and watershed problems which have been brought about by intensified competition between horses and wildlife for food.

"At the same time, we all recognize that these horses are a national asset, and the Pryor Mountain herd is suitable for management of the wild horse so important in Western history," Rasmussen continued.

"Another factor is that forage on 8,000 acres in this area was identified years ago as important for mule deer. Thus I want the best advice possible from a wide range of interests within this committee before developing a multiple use program for the area with our State directors in Montana and Wyoming."