

**Ep #54: The White House Budget Request for 2026  
Opens the Door to Massacre Wild Horses - the Time to  
Speak Up is Now**



**Full Episode Transcript**

**With Your Host**

**Carol J. Walker**

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## **Ep #54: The White House Budget Request for 2026 Opens the Door to Massacre Wild Horses - the Time to Speak Up is Now**

Have you wondered what the future may hold for our wild horses with the prospect of Project 2025 looming over our country? If so, this episode is for you. I'm your host, Carol Walker, and let's get started.

Welcome to the *Freedom For Wild Horses* podcast, the place to find out about wild horses in the American West and what you can do to help them stay wild and free. If you love wildlife, wild horses, and the freedom that they stand for, this show is for you. I'm your host, Carol Walker. Let's get started.

This has been a very challenging time for our wild horses, as well as for the people who love them. The Bureau of Land Management announced that they will proceed with the roundups to zero out Salt Wells Creek, Great Divide Basin, and one-third of Adobe Town herds in Wyoming, even though the 10th Circuit Court has not yet ruled on our appeal to stop it.

Now, the 2026 presidential budget request has no language in it to stop the slaughter of wild horses for the first time since 2017. Our wild horses, not only in holding facilities but also still free on our public lands, are at risk of being killed. As the pressure to sell off our public lands increases, the likelihood that our wild horses will be pushed off them increases.

The Appropriations bill for fiscal year 2026, which begins on October 1st, 2025, is not in its final format yet. However, the Senate and the House Appropriations Committees are at work drafting the final bills right now. The budget for the Wild Horse and Burro Program has been reduced by almost 30%, leaving only enough dollars to pay for the costs of holding and feeding 64,000 wild horses and burros at facilities. The prohibition against killing healthy horses and burros and selling them without limitation (slaughter) has been removed.

The BLM would be allowed to give wild horses and burros away to state, local, and federal agencies and approved individuals. Nonprofits and even foreign governments can request these horses through governmental

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channels. At which point, they lose their protected status. And the BLM gets to distance itself from slaughtering wild horses by handing them off to other agencies who can then make a profit selling them to slaughter.

You might think, "Oh, the budget has been reduced. That means no roundups, right?" That is not what it means. There are over 10,000 wild horses scheduled to be rounded up and removed from their homes before fiscal year 2026. And those 10,000 wild horses and burros will be added to the 64,000 already in holding facilities. Do you see where this is going? It's just too expensive to keep these horses in holding. We don't have the money. We need to get rid of them.

Laura Lee puts this eloquently in her most recent newsletter: "For anyone to throw killing wild horses in holding outright or through sales to slaughter as an option without any actual willingness to prove that such a loathsome undertaking is truly warranted is outrageous." Yes, it is outrageous.

This is straight from the Project 2025 playbook, from pages 528 to 529. It outlines the following: "The BLM's multipronged approach in its 2020 report to Congress included expanded adoptions and sales of horses gathered from overpopulated herds, increased gathers, and increased capacity for off-range holding facilities and pastures, more effective use of fertility control efforts, and improved research in concert with the academic and veterinary communities to identify more effective contraceptive techniques and strategies. All of that will not be enough to solve the problem, however. Congress must enact laws permitting the BLM to dispose humanely of these animals."

One way to get around Congress having to enact laws that would be extremely unpopular with the American public is to do this through the budget and removing protections against killing wild horses and burros. The easiest way to dispose of the wild horses in holding facilities, of

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course, would be to kill them at the facilities where they are being held, most of which are private, so there's no fear of public scrutiny.

What can we do to prevent this massacre? Call your senators and representatives. Tell them you are a constituent of theirs and you would like to see wild horses continue to be protected from slaughter and from being sold without limitation. And that should be in the 2026 Appropriations bill. Tell them to stop the helicopter roundups removing wild horses from our public lands.

You can call the switchboard in Congress at 202-224-3121 and ask to be connected to your representatives. Or use the links I have posted on my website. Your voice for our wild horses is essential right now. In no universe is killing thousands of healthy wild horses and burros an option or okay. It is straight out a monstrous abomination. And as citizens of the United States, it is our duty to protect them.

Thank you for listening to this episode of *Freedom for Wild Horses*.

Thank you for listening to this episode of *Freedom for Wild Horses*. If you want to learn more, follow me at [www.wildhoofbeats.com](http://www.wildhoofbeats.com) for more information and for ways to help America's wild horses. See you next time.