

Statement of Tara Tucker

My name is Tara Tucker. I attended the round-up at the Jackson Mountains near Winnemucca, NV on Saturday, June 9th and Sunday, June 10th. I attended the gather as an observer in order to research a dramatic film I am producing titled WILD HORSES. I would like to note that I attended the gather without any expectations and was not prejudice towards anyone. I attended strictly for research purposes so that I can produce WILD HORSES to the best of my ability and also hoping to discover truth. My eyes were opened.

I was one of the three observers present. The second was my director, Stephanie Martin and the third was Laura Leigh.

The following is true to the best of my ability:

I had never met Laura Leigh prior to June 9th. I had known of her name through my limited research of the issue. Laura Leigh amazed me with how she interacted with the BLM public affair officers. She cooperated with every single one of the PAOs rules and restrictions.

To my finding, the BLM was not as cooperative. Laura Leigh politely made several requests that went ignored. On June 9th, a mare escaped the trap only to leave her foal within it. After a long pursuit the mare was finally caught. Laura asked the two supervising PAOs if they could call Gene Seidliz in the base for permission to document the reunion of the two. At first they acted as if they did not understand the request. Laura said it was important that they make the request at that moment so as not to miss the reunion. This didn't happen. We eventually were allowed to see the two together but not the reunion as requested. On other occasions, she asked if they could communicate certain requests to base and they used the excuse that their satellite phones didn't work yet I cannot tell you how many times Kaitlin and Artulia called the Local BLM Office (I believe they spoke with Heather) to communicate their constant "tweets". On June 10, the temperatures escalated. Laura asked about the temperature at the trap. They communicated with Allan Shepard who was the Incident Commander and he communicated that he did not have a thermometer at the trap site to gauge the temperature. One of the PAOs walked down to their truck to get a temperature reading which we all know is not accurate. According to the gather rules, the max temperature was 84. They said it was 79. They chose to continue with the gather. Laura was disappointed with the decision, but never intervened.

Another important point to remark was that the trap was not set up correctly. After the horses were lured into the trap site by the helicopter the trap bent into an L Shape. The trap should have been set directly in front of the Canyon from which the bands emerged. The result was that the horses would be lured in, only to become confused about where to go. The trap was not on level ground and we documented horses jumping into ditches to get away from the helicopter. By this time the horses showed signs of exhaustion; some looked lame. Because we were unable to see the other side of the canyon, we were

unable to determine how long these horses were pursued. Another factor that exacerbated the confusion in the trap site was the dust. At one point, the water truck came in and watered down the area but this happened only a handful of times. Many horses escaped. What followed was an excruciating pursuit which often lasted another 30 minutes to an hour and a half. On several occasions this involved very young foals. On other occasions, we were able to see horses go lame after being pursued by the helicopter and the wranglers. It is important to point out that after the horses escaped the trap that they would sometimes be pursued for an additional 5-10 miles beyond what they had already been run. On the second day, three horses were euthanized for "non gather related injuries". I can tell you exactly which horses were euthanized. I saw them being run by the helicopter. All but one foal who was euthanized off-site.

The helicopter pilot should be subpoenaed about how far those horses were run prior to arriving at the trap site.

Lastly, I should remark about the two observation areas that we were restricted to. The first one was four hundred feet above from the trap site and 100 feet away. From this position we could not see the horses entering the wings of the trap site nor the trap as our view was obscured by rocks. All we were able to see was a portion of the trap site. On the second day, we were moved to a position situated in front of the trap at least 1/3 of a mile away. The only reason we were able to see anything was because we had two cameras with 400mm lenses. Without these, we wouldn't have seen a thing. The reason given was that we had to remain 500 feet from the helicopter yet at times, the helicopter came very close to our observation spot when it was in pursuit of a stray horse.

Videos:

Band of horses entering trap/Stallion escaping

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KY2X-Ivlass>

Foals rounded up by Helicopter and Wrangler:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J8CmyznbKCU&feature=plcp>