



**Wild Horses of Coyote Canyon**

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Before the Spanish settlement of California, Coyote Canyon was home to a small band of Cahuilla Native Americans. The 1775-6 the Feges and Juan D'Anza expeditions first introduced horses, cattle, and mules to the Canyon natives. By 1850 Natives led by Garra, raided the local Warner Ranch, drove the captured ranch livestock to Coyote Canyon. Wild horses and cattle thrived in Coyote Canyon. At the turn of the century, native ranchers still referred to wild Coyote Canyon horses as their "ranch ramada." Cattle and horses roamed the Canyon's reaches until the 1970's after California State Park terminated historic grazing rights.

The horse herd remained small, about 40, until their removal in 2003 through a state and federal land management oversight. Nineteen fat and pregnant mares were shipped to a South Dakota Sanctuary. The foals did not survive. Through the efforts of

Backcountry Horsemen of California, aided by State Senator Bill Morrow and California BLM Wild Horse and Burro Manager, four of the stallions were rescued to preserve the unique gene pool.

Coyote Canyon has since been nominated as the first historic Wild Horse District ever nominated to both State and Federal Register of Historic Places. Members of Backcountry Horsemen formed the Coyote Canyon Caballos D'Anza, a non profit organization, to restore the herd to genetic viability for eventual release in their native range. The four stallions currently reside with Manager/Director Robert Hayden and wife Kathleen near Warner Springs. The restoration will take a minimum of five years of selective breeding and maintenance as part of a BLM partnership pilot program.

The preservation of this irreplaceable heritage is in the public interest so that its vital legacy of cultural, educational, aesthetic, and inspirational benefits will be maintained and enriched for the future generations of Americans.

State and Federal Mandates  
1966 National Historic Preservation Act The historical and cultural foundations of the Nation should be preserved as a living part of our community life and development in order to give a sense of orientation to the American people.

## **1971 Free Roaming Wild Horse and Burro Act**

"Congress finds and declares that wild free roaming horses and burros are living symbols of the historic and pioneer spirit of the West; (and) that they contribute to the diversity of life forms within the Nation and enrich the lives of the American People".

## **California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) section 15380. Endangered, Rare or Threatened Species**

A plant or animal may be treated as rare or endangered even if it has not been placed on an official list when its survival and reproduction in the wild are in immediate jeopardy from one or more causes. Includes loss of habitat, disease, and predation.

"Rare", although not presently threatened with extinction, when the species is existing in such small numbers throughout its native range.

For more information/ donations contact

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