

**SUBMITTAL TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

706



FROM: Community Health Agency, Department of Animal Services

SUBMITTAL DATE:
February 7, 2011

SUBJECT: History of the Reche Canyon Area Wild Burro Project

RECOMMENDED MOTION: That the Board of Supervisors:

- 1) Receive and File the History of the Reche Canyon Burro Project.

BACKGROUND: On October 25, 2005, the Riverside County Board of Supervisors tasked Robert Miller, Director of Animal Services, with creating a way to prevent the number of traffic accidents involving burros in the Reche Canyon area and create a comprehensive herd management plan.

Mr. Miller assigned Rita Gutierrez of Riverside Animal Services and Betsy Ritchie (then of Moreno Valley Animal Services) with organizing a task force to control the burro population. The burro task force came to the conclusion that little could be done to remedy the problem of burros being hit in the roadway, as the burros fell under the jurisdiction of Fish and Game Code 4600.

(Continued)

Robert Miller, Director of Animal Services

FINANCIAL DATA	Current F.Y. Total Cost:	\$ 0	In Current Year Budget:	n/a
	Current F.Y. Net County Cost:	\$ 0	Budget Adjustment:	n/a
	Annual Net County Cost:	\$ 0	For Fiscal Year:	n/a
SOURCE OF FUNDS: n/a				Positions To Be Deleted Per A-30 <input type="checkbox"/>
				Requires 4/5 Vote <input type="checkbox"/>

C.E.O. RECOMMENDATION:

APPROVE

BY: Debra Cournoyer
Debra Cournoyer

County Executive Office Signature

Policy Policy
 Consent Consent
 Dept's Recomm.: Per Exec. Ofc.:

Prev. Agn. Ref.:

District: 5

Agenda Number:

2.9

BACKGROUND CONTINUED:

Fish and Game Code 4600 placed the burros in a protected status, and even in cases involving a severely injured animal, Animal Services was not authorized to administer aid. The problem was presented to the local Senators and Assemblymen and Assemblyman Bill Emmerson agreed to champion the cause of changing the current burro law by introducing Assembly Bill 222. The bill was passed and signed by the Governor of California and Government Code Section 53074.5 was enacted authorizing local animal control agencies to manage the burro population in Reche Canyon area.

Since the enactment of the new burro code, Riverside County Animal Services has started a burro castration project. This project was initiated by first performing an accurate herd count by helicopter observation and identifying food and water sources. Each spring the burros are captured in a humane trap or corralled, vaccinated, micro-chipped, castrated and given a reflective neck band to make them more visible when crossing roadways. Furthermore, local road signs were added or made more prominent to warn vehicle traffic of potential dangers.

Each year, Department of Animal Services staff with the aid of volunteers have assembled the burro catch pens and provided water to the animals. Dr. Allan Drusys has performed all of the castrations, and his veterinary staff has carried out the micro-chipping, reflective banding, and vaccinating of each burro.

According to witnesses in the area the numbers of burros crossing the roads has been reduced since the project began and the number of burros involved in vehicular-related accidents has decreased, as reported to the department.

As of July 2010, the department has castrated 34 burros, and vaccinated, micro-chipped and neck tagged a total of 48 burros. The department will continue to monitor and manage the herd population as necessary and report any significant changes to the Board of Supervisors.