



# **Nobody's Horses: The Dramatic Rescue of the Wild Herd of White Sands**

*Don Höglund*

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Descended from the greatest horses of the American West, the wild horses living on the White Sands Missile Range in New Mexico -- one of the most dangerous places on Earth -- were a national treasure and a living legend. Big, strong, beautiful, and fierce, their ancestors were the mounts of the famous lawmen, hardy cowboys, and notorious outlaws who had once ruled the Wild West. Over the years, these far-flung herds of the Land of Enchantment had inspired many myths, and were said to be guarded by an implacable band of enormous, ghostly stallions that kept them from harm.

But in 1994, after decades of suffering through droughts, food shortages, and all the dangers that go with living on a military-weapons testing site, scores of horses suddenly died. And almost two thousand were in such dire straits that they were unlikely to survive. In a race to prevent more tragic deaths, large-animal veterinarian Don Höglund was called in to organize and lead a team of dedicated cowboys, soldiers, and other professionals in removing the surviving horses and their babies to safety. Then would come the challenge of rehabilitating them, and eventually placing them in loving homes with people who could meet the needs of the highly spirited wild animals.

For the first time in book form, *Nobody's Horses* tells the dramatic story of these noble horses' celebrated history, their defiant survival, and their incredible rescue.

During the complex rescue, stampedes, escapes, and injuries ensued as well as struggles with animal rights activists and army officials. Everyone was in constant danger from unspent munitions on the ground and missile testing in the air. Cowboys, Native Americans, and ranchers -- all of whom cared deeply about the fate of the horses -- clashed in a battle of wills. And, of course, there were the horses themselves -- wild, extraordinarily powerful animals, not easily managed or moved, who would become known to their rescuers as fascinating, individual characters -- the wily old mares who evaded capture and led their bands to water and food, the beautiful colts and their amazing resilience and ability to bond with humans and each other, and the magnificent, powerful stallions who protected their harems and young against humans and predators. Luckily Höglund's team was also extraordinary, and their mission a celebrated success for all the people involved, the horses that were rescued, and the grateful families who adopted these living pieces of an American legacy.

Filled with history and heroism, adventure and rivalry, and, ultimately, the heartwarming alliances between horses and people, which made the whole endeavor worthwhile, *Nobody's Horses* will stir the emotions and imaginations of horse lovers, humanitarians, and anyone who loves an uplifting tale of second chances. It's a story of how Nobody's Horses became Everybody's Horses.

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