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SCIENCE & CONSERVATION CENTER
INTERNATIONAL

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Kimberly Frank | Executive Director

From the Executive Director

Dear Friends in Conservation,

Welcome to the first edition of the Science & Conservation Center International quarterly newsletter!

Whether you represent a wildlife conservation group, a zoo, an agency, or one of the many other organizations and individuals across the globe working to advance humane methods of wildlife population control, we are happy to have you onboard.

Since 1998, the Science & Conservation Center has been on the leading edge of research, development, distribution, and field application training for wildlife population control through contraceptive vaccines.

Our flagship product, the Porcine Zona Pellucida (PZP) vaccine, is trusted by more than 250 zoos around the world to manage fertility control in zoo animals. Many other conservation groups and wildlife management organizations also rely on PZP for herd management.

In this newsletter, we are pleased to share an exciting update on the latest advances in wildlife fertility technology, including PZP-22. We'll also introduce you to one of our long-time partners and new team members, and share announcements about upcoming events.

[Have questions?](#) We would love to hear from you!

Simply [reach out](#) with your questions, feedback, requests or ideas. We promise to respond!

Enjoy the newsletter!

Kimberly Frank
Executive Director

Applicator Training Dates Set

The 2025 Applicator Training dates are finalized. Trainings on the SCC campus are schedule for the following dates:



- March 4 - 6
- May 6 - 8
- June 3 - 5
- July 8 - 10
- August 5 - 7
- September 9 - 11
- October 7 - 9

Trainings can also be scheduled off-site for groups of six or more based on Kayla's availability. For more information about the trainings, visit our website at [Applicator Trainings](#).



2025 International Wild Equid Conference Nanyuki, Kenya

We are pleased to announce that two representatives from the Science & Conservation Center have been invited to present at the International Wild Equid Conference in April 2025.

Kimberly Frank submitted an abstract titled, *Managing wild horse herds with limited resources*. Her presentation will highlight the NGO and agency partnerships utilizing PZP in wild horses that represent some of the best fertility control programs in the country.

Kayla Grams, senior biologist, submitted an abstract titled, *Porcine zona pellucida*

immunocontraception vaccine (ZonaStat-H) efficacy in seven free roaming horse populations across western North America. Kayla's research is an outcome analysis of PZP use by NGOs in seven wild horse herds, examining vaccine effectiveness under a variety of conditions.

Find more information about the conference [here](#).



PZP-22: Registration Update

While native PZP vaccine has been recognized as the gold standard for successful wildlife population management, it is apparent that a multi-year version of PZP would greatly expand the usefulness for managing free-roaming wildlife.

The Humane Society of the United States is working collaboratively with the SCC to apply for EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) registration of PZP-22. We anticipate EPA registration toward the end of 2025 or early 2026 (date subject to change).

If you are interested in utilizing PZP-22 at your location upon EPA registration, please [contact Dr. Melissa Esser](#) at the Science and Conservation center to receive updates on the registration progress or call [+1 \(406\) 652-9718](tel:+14066529718).

Partner Spotlight



Friends of the Mustangs

The Friends of the Mustangs (FOM) have been friends to the Little Book Cliffs Wild Horse herd for 43 years and counting. What began with five founding members in 1982 has grown to a 100+ member strong organization dedicating thousands of hours every year to the health and management of the Little Book Cliffs herd, receiving national and state-wide recognition along the way.

The Little Book Cliffs Wild Horse Range in western Colorado was dedicated to the wild horse herd in 1980, becoming the third wild horse range in the nation. Over 36,000 rugged and scenic acres are home to 115 horses. Fertility control began in 2002 when a joint USGS/BLM/FOM fertility control study was initiated. Marty Felix of the FOM was hired on

by the BLM and worked with Melissa Esser of the USGS to dart the horses. Marty and Melissa trained at the SCC and darted 13 mares that first year, and 25 the following year. Gerald Thygerson of the BLM was a key partner in the early fertility efforts and is now a member of the FOM for life. Twenty-three years later and after a detour as an equine veterinarian, Melissa is now with the SCC as our Science Liaison!

Judy Cady, current president of the FOM, says one of the biggest challenges facing their group is finding young blood to carry on the mission. The group has to be creative to find the brawn needed for range projects. Judy's found success with the Western Colorado Conservation Corp youth who have gone "above and beyond" on helping with projects. Funding support lets the FOM pay the youth and has helped with bigger projects like seeding. An Engineers Without Borders group from the local college pitches in to help get new stock tanks in place.

The group's hard work has paid off. Today they dart about 20 horses a year. Before PZP, the herd averaged 37 foals a year, now averaging 17 foals per year. A roundup in September 2024 removed 100 horses, bringing the herd size to within AML. Those horses will be adopted out in June of 2025. The FOM are doing everything they can to find the Book Cliff's horses good homes. To learn more about the horses available for adoption, or the FOM, check out their impressive website [here](#) or find them on [Facebook](#). The SCC is proud to have worked with this group for 20+ years now, and hope for 20 more.



Some of the gorgeous images caught by FOM of the LBC herd.

Wildlife News

Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board January 2025 Meeting

Melissa Esser of the SCC attended the January 2025 Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board Meeting in Sacramento, California. The two-day meeting provided a number of updates and insights:

- BLM is working to hiring a full time Fertility Control Coordinator in 2025 to increase fertility control strategies in HMAs.
- The board recommends the USFS and BLM create five-year plans to reduce population size and growth, plans should prioritize fertility control in every HMA or WHT.
- BLM announced 5 new public-private partnerships aimed at increasing adoptions.
- The Forest Service manages about 20% of the lands and 20% of the free-roaming horses and burros protected under the Wild Free Roaming Horses and Burros Act. They partner with BLM in management of the animals.
- BLM announced nearly \$4 million in the latest Wild Horse and Burro research projects with a significant portion of that going towards fertility control research.

To learn more about the January meeting, visit the the BLM's website [here](#).

Introducing ...



Melissa Esser
DVM, MS
Science Liaison
Diplomate, American
College of Veterinary
Internal Medicine



Monica Stevens Diaz
Lab Technician



Holly Sessoms
**Development
Coordinator**

The SCC is growing! We welcome aboard three staff members. Dr. Melissa Esser joined us last February as our Science Liaison. Melissa is managing the complex task of PZP-22 registration. Monica Stevens Diaz joined us last fall and is keeping our PZP lab up and running. Holly Sessoms joined us in early winter to help us in our nonprofit mission. Growth is good and we look forward to the advancements we'll make with a larger team.

Species Spotlight



The SCC works with zoos across the world to vaccinate giraffes! The first giraffes contracepted were at the Philadelphia and Dallas zoos in 1993. We have learned so much since the early days of contraception, one being that giraffe skin is very thick and hard so a 2" needle is necessary. We also learned that most zoo species are year-round breeders due to their nutritious diets so boosters have to be given every 8-9 months rather than annually. Since 1993, 214 giraffes have received PZP immunocontraception.

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About the Science and Conservation Center International

The Science and Conservation Center is an independent non-profit organization dedicated to the development of humane wildlife contraceptives and methods of application. Our research supports safe, humane, and publicly acceptable wildlife management paradigms.

[Request PZP Vaccine](#)



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Partner: The Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA)

Member: Association of Zoos and Aquariums Reproductive Management Center

Member: European Association of Zoos and Aquaria (EAZA) Reproductive Management Group



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