

With this public comment, I am protesting the Coalition's (for Healthy Nevada Lands, Wildlife and Free-Roaming Horses) letter - and its request for more appropriations for more round ups.

I came out West years ago, like so many people before me, and fell in love with the high desert of Nevada. Endless land fringed with rugged mountains presented me with unlimited opportunity to explore. Now, I call this majestic place home.

We Nevadans pride ourselves on our Western themes: painted, sculpted and displayed all over town and in gift shops - the Pony Express, the Wells Fargo Stagecoaches, the colorful cowboys and cowgirls, the rodeos, the miners. All these historic and pioneering symbols we love have but one thing in common - the horse (and the burro of course).

Last July, however, the wild horse roundups began in earnest. I read and watched as herds of horses, some with foals desperately trying to keep up, were being chased by helicopters in 100-degree weather. Some poor horses dropped down dead from excessive heat and exhaustion, dehydration. Other horses broke their backs and legs, hips and shoulders, as they tried to escape.... or were mis-handled. Foals who could not keep up with their mothers because they were too young were left behind. We are not talking about a few horses either, each day dozens more horses died! And so it was that I read of these stories about my home in utter disbelief!

I thought surely it could not be so, we are after all a nation with animal cruelty prevention laws. Surely it could not be happening in a State that in many respects owes its very existence to the horse. And, as I read on, I came across countless domestic and international publications about the cruelty that was being perpetrated against these wild horses in Nevada. From the western most state of Hawaii (Honolulu Star) to our east coast (NBC News), ALL the major news outlets were carrying this story. And portrayed in NYC's Times Square, for all - visiting from all over the world - to see.

No longer are Nevadans being seen, around our own nation and the world, as proud upstanding citizens honoring our wild horses -- but as people who are in fact brutalizing them. I keep holding on to the belief that this somehow is an aberration, but I am repeatedly shocked yet again. Instead of correcting this awful practice it is continuing unabated, and escalating.

I come as a Nevadan, an ashamed Nevadan, urging that this horse brutality be stopped, NOW.

How on earth can the Coalition be asking for more money to perpetuate this abuse? I hope the SEC will not sign on, acquiescent with this.

Thank you for listening.

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