

COMMISSION FOR THE PRESERVATION OF WILD HORSES

MINUTES OF THE OPEN MEETING

SEPTEMBER 25, 2001

RENO, NV

Members Present:

Frank Cassas, Chairman

Mike Kirk, Vice Chairman

Cindy Cherrigan, Commissioner

Julie Von Tobel Gleason, Commissioner (via telephone)

Cathy Barcomb, Administrator

Others Present:

Terry Woosley, BLM

Mark Morse, Las Vegas BLM (via telephone)

Gary McFadden, Las Vegas BLM, (via telephone)

Billie Young, National Wild Horse Association

Kelly Anrig, NDOT

Scott Thorson, NDOT

Chairman Frank Cassas opened the meeting with Commissioners Kirk and Cherrigan present and Commissioner Julie Gleason patched in via telephone conference call from the Las Vegas BLM office.

6) *Discussion and Decision: Speed Limit issues in the Red Rock HMA outside of Las Vegas where numerous horses and burro's have been killed by cars. The Commission will consider requesting the NDOT to reduce the speed limit for public and animal safety.

Kelly Anrig and Scott Thorson from NDOT explained that speed limits are set via studying traffic in an area and needs. In the particular area of SR159 in question the speed limit had been increased from 45 to 60 in Feb. 2000. They explained that since it was a main thoroughfare that many motorists were traveling faster at 60 plus. They felt it was more dangerous for people to be traveling at the variation of the 45 mph speed limit among those others exceeding the limit so had increased the speed to 60 for consistency with what the public was actually traveling.

Both Commissioner Gleason and Billie Young from the National Wild Horse Assn., expressed concern that the speed limit should have been enforced instead of increasing the speed in light of public safety with horses being hit and killed along with the increased recreational values of the area causing other safety issues. They both expressed that by enforcing the speed limit that motorists would use the expressway with the higher speed rather than this highway. They also noted that a person had just died as a result of a horse/vehicle accident and asked how many other people needed to die before this issue got the attention it needs.

Mr. Anrig expressed that NDOT had been conducting a study of accidents and traffic with results due in Oct. 2001. After that they would be in the process of setting up a safety audit including BLM, police, NDOT, etc. He felt that by mid Oct. they would be looking at putting up fences and turnouts. Commissioner Gleason remarked that she felt this was a much needed positive move. Gary McFadden, BLM, stated that law enforcement needed to be more effective on the "no feeding" of animals issue. He noted that last year 22 horses and burros had been killed along that stretch of highway.

It was noted in discussions that the possibility of NDOT not getting all of the accident reports may be hurting the study. If the police are not reporting the accident because they had not been called it would not get in the database. BLM promised to send NDOT all of the accident information they had for comparison. Cathy Barcomb suggested that BLM also include a map to NDOT of the exact locations of where the animals had been hit.

Commissioner Gleason thanked them for coming and asked to be included in the planning meetings.

1) *Discussion and Decision: Approval of the Minutes of the Commission Meeting Held on April 6, 2001

Commissioner Kirk moved to approve the minutes of the meeting held on April 6, 2001, seconded by Commissioner Cherrigan, unanimously approved.

2) Discussion: Update on the National Wild Horse and Burro Foundation: Presentation by Frank Cassas, Chairman

Frank Cassas reported that the legislation presented had been approved for the formation of the Foundation and commitment of funds from the Commission to be matched by Congressional funds approved for expenditure by BLM. He reported that an attorney had been hired to start the paperwork to be filed to form the foundation and an initial advisory committee had been formed. He added that he anticipated that the Articles of Incorporation were done and would be filed shortly and

the By Laws completed thereafter. He reported that the initial Board of Trustee's had been named as himself, Dawn Lappin from WHOA, and Jack Hansen, a rancher from California. He finished by saying that he would continue to keep the Commission updated.

3) Discussion: Update on the Nevada Prison Holding/Training Center, "Nevada Wild Horses and Inmates in Life Development (Nevada Wild), presentations by Cathy Barcomb, Administrator, and a Representative from the Nevada Department of Corrections

Cathy Barcomb, Administrator, explained that a grant request had been developed for presentations that would request help in funding the program. She reported that Commissioner Julie Gleason and Billie Young had obtained a donation of a used 2 horse trailer for the program. The trailer was given to the prison which turned around and completely painted and restored the trailer into almost new condition. She reported that there would be a presentation of the trailer to the State at the wild horse show in Las Vegas on Oct 7th.

Terry Woosley, BLM, reported that the contract between the prison and BLM was being re-written to better suit the needs of both agencies and should be signed shortly. Terry added that they were hoping to add in a "gelding" option at the prison because the wranglers were so busy processing horses for adoption that gelding was hard to keep up with safely. They were trying to streamline both programs to facilitate better coordination for shipping and adoptions.

Commissioner Cherrigan noted that her horse "Reno", had been trained in the program in 3 months and John Tyson from channel 8 had done a video on the training and her horse that would be airing on TV that week.

4) Discussion: An update on the status of the Wild Horse Program in Nevada including but not limited to gathers, drought, fires, and proposed new programs.

Terry Woosley, BLM, reported that 6,223 horses and 31 had been removed from BLM Nevada in the past year which impacted 16 herd management areas (HMA) including 2 emergency gathers at Little Owyhee and Jakes Wash. He noted that there was still 3,600 horses to be removed prior to March 1, 2002. He added that 45 HMA's had been censused. Mr. Woosley that currently 1,400 horses were being held at Snow's Livestock Holding Facility in Fallon.

Commissioner Cherrigan questioned Terry Woosley regarding a report from a rancher in Elko area that the Midas Elko area horses were in very bad condition. Terry asked Commissioner Cherrigan to supply him with more information about the situation since BLM hasn't had any reports of problems in that area. Cindy said she would.

Mr. Woosley reported that 20% of the Little Owyhee HMA had burned and that the emergency gather removed 600 horses and the area had sufficient forage for the remaining population.

5) Discussion: Upcoming Wild Horse and Burro Show in Las Vegas, NV, presentation by Julie Von Tobel Gleason.

Commissioner Gleason reported that the wild horse show in Las Vegas would be Oct. 6th with the BLM adoption and trailer presentation on the 7th. Commissioner Gleason requested that Mr. Woosley contact Maxine Shane with BLM regarding the fact that the PSA's for the show had not been sent out as of this meeting. He agreed. Commissioner Gleason reported that there were still 3 classes that needed sponsorship. Also ads for the program were \$25/business card, \$75/ for ½ page, and \$100/full page. She encouraged everyone to attend.

7) **PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD**

Commissioner Gleason reported on an adoption she had attended in Ohio along with BLM and members of the National Wild Horse Association. The adoption was done as a celebration of bringing the horse, Ceilo Lido, to its new home. She explained that the adopter had been in Las Vegas and had gone on a ride with the National Wild Horse Association. On that ride she seen a buckskin horse on the horizon that she had fallen in love with and become associated with wild horses because of that. Julie added that on a subsequent gather and adoption, the buckskin had come in for adoption. The woman was notified and adopted the horse, had it trained in Las Vegas and was making a big production/celebration for the homecoming of the horse to Ohio. She had arranged for media attention for the event and buffet lunch for all in attendance. Commissioner Gleason explained that the facility in Ohio was incredible their own lake, indoor riding arena and barns, 130-140 people at the reception, Dr. Gus Cothran spoke on genetics in wild horses, Dr. Rick Redden spoke on wild horse hoof/leg specialties and herd dynamics, and Julie spoke on the Wild Horse and Burro Foundation and the Nevada prison program. Julie finished by saying that the entire event was very positive for the wild horse program and that the adopters passion's for the horses came through loud and clear.

Commissioner Gleason also reported that she had been taking her two foals over to the Red Rock Visitor Center every other Friday for live animal day. The tourists/visitors are able to see and pet wild horses. She added that she see's many local tour busses and many people had been over from Europe and all over the United States. She added that she felt the time spent there was very positive for the horse program and had generated much interest in adoption.

Billie Young from the National Wild Horse Association suggested that BLM look into developing posters, etc. to hand out to highlight special horses and adoptions to promote the program. Terry Woosley replied that they had looked into posters but had developed the trading card program to highlight special adoption stories.

Ms. Young also expressed her concern over the wild horses in the Cold Creek area with 26 horses anticipated for the population and the threat to genetic viability.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Chairman Frank Cassas reported that he had been working full time on creating the National Wild Horse and Burro Foundation in addition to serving as Chairman of the Commission. He regretted to report that he didn't have the time to commit to both and do justice to both so he was resigning his position on the Commission effective today, Sept. 25th, 2001. He noted that he was brought on the Commission to conduct public hearings and prepare a report which was the Commission's Strategic Plan. He felt the main goal of the Plan, the Foundation, was about to be finalized. He added that he would not be able to give time to both and would be devoting all his time to the Foundation and that he was committed for a year or more to insure that the Foundation got its feet off the ground.

All Commissioners and Administrator individually thanked Mr. Cassas for his dedication and years of service to the Commission and finalization of the Plan.

Chairman Cassas opened the floor for nominations. Commissioner Cherrigan asked Commissioner Gleason if she would accept a nomination for Chairman. Commissioner Gleason agreed. Commissioner Kirk seconded the nomination, unanimously approved.

Commissioner Gleason nominated Commissioner Kirk as Vice-Chairman, seconded by Commissioner Cherrigan, unanimously approved.

8) *Set Next Meeting Date

It was recommended to hold the next Commission meeting in Las Vegas some time between the 7th and 16th of December. The Commission directed Cathy Barcomb to set up a meeting.

9) *Adjournment

Commissioner Kirk motioned to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Cherrigan, unanimously approved.