

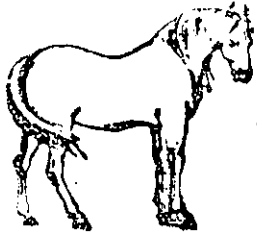
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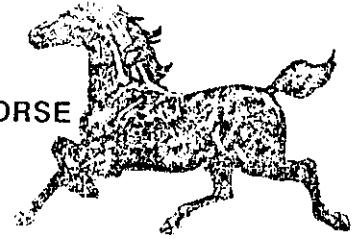
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FOR GOOD RANGE MANAGEMENT AND THE WILD HORSE

WILD HORSES BY CHARLIE FISHER



The wild horse situation is a joke, but it isn't funny. NOTE: I said situation not problem. We don't have a wild horse problem we have a "People Problem". Some people say we have too many wild horses, other's say we don't have enough. Some say they ruin the range, others say that livestock do it and blame the wild horse.

I am not at all happy with the way things are going. We have some ranges with too many wild horses, and we have thousands standing around in corrals eating expensive feed waiting to die of old age. I stand for good range management and for the preservation of the wild horse.

The sad thing about the whole mess is I don't see how it is going to get any better. Some of the people that could help the situation really don't want the problem solved. If one had a magic wand, and could go "Poof" and there would be the right number of horses on the range; there wouldn't be thousands standing around corrals, and all would be happy. The so called horse lovers would be out of business. They wouldn't have tear jerking stories to write to their constituents to get donations. The politicians would not receive letters telling them how part of Americas Heritage is being mistreated. Thus the appropriations would be cut and the bureaucrats back east would have less money to play with.

There are a lot of good people in the Bureau of Land Management. I know and admire many of them. As in all outfits, some of the peoples elevators don't go clear to the top floor. Thus a few give the whole outfit a bad name.

The animal protection groups also have a lot of good people, that mean well and think they are helping the wild horse. Too many use sentimental, half truth, misinformation to get big donations from gullable constituents.

As for ranchers, most of them like to see wild horses on their range, but not so many that they ruin the range. All ranchers aren't the villains the "Horse Lovers" make them out to be. However, as in the other groups, some of them were late for school the first day of the third grade, and never did catch up. They are the type that turn out too many cattle, overgraze the range, and blame it on the wild horse.

My Recommendations:

(1) More of the appropriated money make it to the district offices where it will do the wild horses some good.

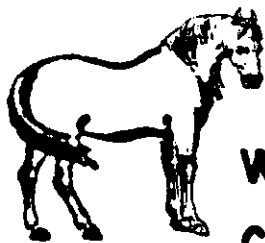
(2) Some of the young horses, with good conformation, replace the "Jug Heads" on the range to up breed the herds.

(3) The remainder of young with good conformation, that have not been adopted, be put on a sanctuary, do not put the unadoptable on sanctuaries, this would propagate the ugly.

(4) The culls sold at auction.

It is very simply with everyone working together for the good of the wild horse we could have good range management and plenty of wild horses running wild and free for all to enjoy.

ASSEMBLY NATURAL RES., AGRICULTURE & MINING
DATE: 5/5/03 ROOM: 3161 EXHIBIT H1-3
SUBMITTED BY: Charlie Fisher



WHAT ARE OUR RANGELANDS FOR?

**CHARLIE FISHER, 3659 GREENACRE
CARSON CITY, NEVADA**



THE WILD HORSE SITUATION IS A JOKE, NO ONE IS LAUGHING.

Cooperation among the various parties interested in rangelands would result in benefits for wild horses, livestock, and wildlife.

Horses are not native to North America, they were brought here by the Europeans. Many people believe the wild horses are descendant of the horses "mustangs," brought to Mexico by the Spaniards. The chances of any of the wild horses on our public lands today being related to them are nil to none. They are domestic horses turned loose. Some of them for many generations.

Thelma Johnston, "Wild Horse Annie" observed inhumane treatment of the wild horses by some unscrupulous "Mustangers" such as the lead stallion being shot in his hindquarters and left to die clawing with his front feet around his hind end. She rallied her followers including grade kids, (and myself). In 1971 she had the Wild Free Roaming Horse and Burro Act passed. It was a good law as far as it went. But it went too far. It should have had a sale clause in it. To sell the culls.

The law put the wild horse under the Secretary of Interior (BLM) and the Secretary of Agriculture (USFS). The law goes on to say, in part "Wild free roaming horses are living symbols of the historic and pioneer spirit of the west...horses contribute to the diversity of animals on rangelands and enrich the lives of the American public."

Before the law was passed many ranchers used wild horses as a source of work and saddle horses. The herds were regularly culled and quality studs introduced to maintain hybrid vigor. When new blood onto the herd is stopped, numbers increase, and feed becomes short. It doesn't take long for inbreeding to kick in. Results in not too sharp looking animal.

We have some ranges that are being overgrazed by too many livestock, others with combination wild horses and livestock, and others with just wild horses. Yet we have many ranges that have the right number of wild horses and cattle.

According to the latest figures from BLM we have about 53,000 wild horses on public land, with about 38,800 head in Nevada. About 500 head in corrals (adoption centers) and about 5,000 head on sanctuaries at a cost of \$3,000,000 per year.

If the wild horse is a living symbol of the historic and pioneer spirit of the west, what are cattle, sheep, cowboys, and Indians? If the public lands become "Livestock Free By '93", they will become an endangered species.

We know how to manage wild horse populations. There are examples of excellent range management programs where wild horses, cattle, and wildlife exist together. In order for such examples of good range management to function, ALL the parties involved must cooperate and management agencies must use their funds properly to make the system function.

Charles Fisher

Charles Fisher invited me over to talk about wild horses. I found out everything I wanted to know about them and even some things I didn't know I wanted to know.

Fisher is making a huge, 3-foot-by-2-foot scrapbook containing information about his involvement with wild horses. In the book, illustrated by Carol Floto, he traces the history of the wild horse in America from 1519, when Cortez brought horses to Mexico. He describes the importance of the horse in the settling of the West.

The big scrapbook is full of clippings about legislation concerning the wild horse. In 1969 Wild Horse Annie, or Velma Johnston, a crusader to save the horses, was instrumental in getting a bill passed by Congress that prohibited the use of motorized vehicles to chase wild horses. Later, in 1971, Public Law 92-195 further protected the wild horses and burros.

Fisher is well-qualified to have an opinion on the wild horse issue, for he was born and raised on a cattle ranch in Montana along with his 10 brothers and sisters. As a youth he chased wild horses and helped with roundups on his horse, Headlight.

During high school he had further experience chasing wild horses in the Pryor Mountains. He went to Billings Polytechnic and earned degrees in chemistry and biology, then to Washington State University to earn a degree in animal husbandry.

Fisher married Rhoda Hanson in 1946 while he was still in school. He showed me his picture in cap and gown, holding their tiny son, John.

Fisher started working with the Bureau of Indian Affairs a year after he was graduated from college. He was stationed at Plumer, Idaho and Nespelen, Wash., as an extension agent and a soil conservationist. He went on to Spokane, then to our Stewart Indian Agency as a range conservationist. He retired in 1979.

The sincere man has been active in the Society for Range Management; he received an award in 1979 as Rangeman of the Year and the Dedication Award in 1981.

There are many opinions on the wild horse situation. On one side, some would like to destroy all the wild horses; a few ranchers feel the horses are ruining the land for their cattle. On the other hand, some people want to save all the wild horses and simply leave them alone. As I understand it, Fisher, along with a third group, wishes to let the finest of the horses go free to multiply and create a better stock. The lesser horses would be culled from the herds.

The subject is not one to be treated lightly. Tempers flare and emotions run high.

Fisher, who cannot stay out of controversy, once gave a speech about his views on the wild horse issue. He thought he would add a little humor by saying he had talked it over with his horse, Napoleon, and together they decided that when the horse was too old to hunt Fisher would take him to be auctioned. His statement caused quite a stir and Fisher's scrapbook contains several articles printed in newspapers for and against his statement and his talking horse.

Napoleon has been with Fisher since he was born 30 years ago and is now too old to hunt. Fisher smiled and said he could never part with his pal and constant companion.

One time when Fisher was chasing horses on Indian land he came upon a colt, standing near his dead mother; it was thin and starving. He took the colt to his home, fed it well until it became strong and healthy. The colt was raised with the Fisher's dogs and it felt free to push open the sliding door and come into the house. Fisher taught it to go into his daughter, Sid's, room and awaken her by pulling off her quilt.

Fisher realized his mistake too late. When Sid Fisher was grown and had been away at school for a time, she brought a girlfriend home for a visit. Imagine the shock of the young lady guest when she was awakened in the morning by a horse standing over her, pulling off the quilt.

I am going back to the Fisher's soon to meet Napoleon; he may have something to tell me.

Around Douglas and Beyond by Jane Lehrman