

Spirit of America
Horse Article
1/12/07

Karen Tremmel
2405 Vandervort Rd
Lutz, FL 33549
727-512-0030
Back_2nature@hotmail.com

Wild Horses-The Spirit of America

Horses are prey and their predators are human. Man remains the only real enemy to the horse and because of this somewhere, not so deeply, buried in the horse's instincts remains that memory. Primitive man 3000 years ago observed horses as food, as well, used the horse as a beast of burden. Horses still respond with an ancient flight from trouble response to humans. Bolt, run and ask questions later. Perhaps it is this same lack of trust and this inability to completely domesticate the horse that endears horses to us. The image of horses running along a beach, prairie or pastoral field is one of pure freedom and inspiration.

Many people believe that the Spanish originally brought horses to North America. What they don't realize is evidence of the first known horse on earth, the Hyracotherium, or eohippus "Dawn Horse" survived to the end of the Eocene epoch right here in North America. Approximately 8,000 years ago, Equus became extinct in the New World and did not return until the Spanish brought horses back to the Western Hemisphere in the 1400's. The reintroduced horses survived and became abundant. But the wild horse of 2007 is in immense danger. "More than 100,000 horses have been slaughtered in the United States or shipped for slaughter abroad this year." The Humane Society of the United States: http://www.hsus.org/legislation_laws/. Government agencies regularly issue permits to capture and slaughter wild horses and burros in regions around the United States, while rescue organizations work tirelessly to save them. "Horse slaughter opponents will have to start from scratch next Congressional session despite last-minute efforts asking for a Senate vote on the American Horse Slaughter Prevention Act, S. 1915. The 109th Congressional session adjourned for the holidays on Dec. 8, 2006 without taking action on the bill." <http://www.thehorse.com/viewarticle.aspx?ID=840> 0

In 2004 U.S. Senator Conrad Burns (R-Montana) slipped into the 3,300-page federal budget a rider that opened the door to the slaughter of thousands of wild horses. "I think what we should do is put some language in this thing that allows the BLM to sell excess wild horses," Burns said. "I'd prefer to sell 'em to whomever. Maybe some of them will end up going to slaughter." -- Senator Conrad Burns, (4/30/04, Billings Gazette).

After it was discovered that the sales of horsemeat went up 41% the House voted to reinstate the ban. Currently laws inadequately protect horses. The Courier Journal of Louisville, Kentucky recently reported, "There are only 27,000 wild horses and 4,000 wild burros on government land in Western states. Allowing the sale of these animals could endanger the species." Other resources state that there are less than 40,000 wild horses left in North America.

The American Humane Society issued this update: "On January 25, 2004, a bill was introduced by U.S. Representatives Nick J. Rahall (D-WV) and Ed Whitfield (R-KY) that, if passed, would bring back the original ban on the sale and slaughter of wild horses and burros put into place by over 30 years ago. This bill would once again prevent wild horses and burros from being sold and slaughtered for human consumption abroad, in countries such as Germany and Japan. Today horse meat (and by products) is sold on open market. With the recent beef scare the demand for horse meat has increased in European countries."

Facts About Horse Slaughter:

"There are only three slaughterhouses left in the U.S. - two in Texas, and one in Illinois. All three slaughterhouses are owned by a Belgian company.

These three slaughterhouses kill more than 100,000 horses per year - 100% of the horsemeat is sent to Europe and Japan for fine dining. In fact, horsemeat is not sold in the U.S. and it's illegal in some states to sell horsemeat for human consumption." <http://www.endhorseslaughtering.com/>

In a letter from country singer Willie Nelson: "Horses have always been a symbol of America's free spirit. No other animal stirs such an emotional reaction. They have carried our leaders into battles, pulled our wagons into the untamed West, and thrilled us through sport...no animal should be hauled across the country under the unhealthy and cruel conditions slaughter-bound horses face. Following their faithful service to humankind, our horses should not be killed at one of the three foreign-owned slaughterhouses in the United States so diners abroad can feast on their flesh...support the American Horse Slaughter Prevention Act, S. 1915" <http://www.saplonlineorg/willieletter.htm>

Help save our wild, natural heritage. Let's not allow the day to come when horses lose their freedom to run wild and free. Preserve out the heritage of the equine's ancestors and their predecessors of 25 million years ago. Horses are symbols of America. With great concern and effort the eagle was saved and remains on the increase in North America. With this same concern wild horses can be protected, as well. Let's not allow the Spirit of America to disappear...back to nature?

Karen can be reached at: back_2nature@hotmail.com
