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June 29, 2011

Mrs. Dorothy Nysten, Director
Wild Horse Preservation League
PO Box 1958
Dayton, NV 89403

Re: **Wild Horse Adventure Program - Ecotourism**

Dear Dorothy:

In response to your question regarding the Wild Horse Adventure campaign, it has been my observation that the increased public awareness from the campaign has produced a rather broad based benefit that may be hard to statistically quantify but nonetheless is growing. I will cite some examples.

Some of the rural outfitters and guides whose primary incomes are produced during hunting seasons are beginning to fill their slack time by taking visitors out onto the wild horse ranges.

Locally, we are seeing increased tourists wanting to go out on the wild horse range. I'm not a professional guide, but a steady flow of visitors are asking to go out when I do range work, which I accommodate when I can. While the largest demographic involves California visitors, there are first time and repeat visitors from several countries in Europe and from Australia along with visitors from distant states.

A few repeat visitors, who are professionals - along with Baroness Antonia Umlauf von Lamisch - have made inquiries into purchasing vacation homes in northern Nevada. Baroness Umlauf is an internationally-acclaimed filmmaker who has lived all over the world. She was impressed with Nevada, drawn here by her interest in our wild horses and even produced a small pro-Nevada documentary.

I have met a number of visitors who enjoyed a number of Nevada attractions who said they came here because they wanted to view wild horses or burros as a part of their vacation experience. Since wild horse viewing is best in the morning hours, visitors from nearby California typically spend one or more nights in Nevada motels when making trips to see horses.

This past year I have seen a marked increase in Nevadans who decided to have horse adventures rather than take trips out of state. I attribute this growth in part to the economy and in part to increased awareness that wild horses can be found and viewed. Nonetheless we benefit when Nevadans spend their vacation money in Nevada.

The Bureau of Land Management and Silver State Industries (a unit of the Nevada Department of Corrections), has been benefiting from increased publicity about wild horses. The Carson City prison adoption program has increased its output by 50 percent.

According to BLM figures, California is the largest adoption market and unless adopters live in Markleeville or Truckee, they are likely to spend the night in the region as the adoptions usually start early in the mornings.

International horse training superstar Pat Parelli - who typically visits major world cities - is conducting a three-day "Wild Horse Taming, Naturally" event in Reno, which is expected to draw visitors from across the country.

The increased awareness of wild horses and related issues has prompted several well-financed out-of-state horse organizations to become directly involved in addressing wild horse issues. In Churchill County alone the groups have been spending about \$1,000.00 a day taking in horses and preparing them for adopters.

These groups are providing full time work for three Nevadans, including one who is a laidoff state worker and one a laidoff county district worker. A substantial portion of these funds are going to local hay growers and haulers, veterinarians and other professionals. These figures do not include substantial outlays by organizations such as Madeleine Picken's sanctuary for which we have no data as yet.

The impacts of the Wild Horse Adventure Program of Nevada campaign - in concert with the efforts of other groups - to promote Nevada ecotourism, are hard to quantify in hard numbers. What I can say with reasonable certainty is that there is a clear trend, with the exception of a drop last May, where the areas I have mentioned have consistently grown in response to increased positive publicity about wild horse related tourism opportunities.

My observations are that a substantial number of these tourists come to Nevada for the unique experience of seeing wild horses, and while here find many other subjects of interest in the Silver State.

Respectfully submitted,

Willis Lamm

Willis Lamm, President