

# **Deleting the Fiction: Abandoned Horses**

## **Part 2**

**March 2008**

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## Deleting the Fiction: Abandoned Horses - Part 2

### Appendix: 1

#### Introduction

The research for Deleting the Fiction, part 2, was compiled in response to numerous articles published during 2007 and 2008, claiming horses were being turned loose in state parks all across the U.S. An inquiry was sent to each state park service in the U.S., as to whether or not they have had cases of abandoned horses, and in some instances as a source for further information, we have inquired as well to state forests, state livestock boards, humane shelters, and law enforcement.

As of March 13, 2008, replies from 36 states reported no horses abandoned in their state parks. Three states confirmed cases of abandoned horses. Florida had 6 cases. South Dakota had a case in which 22 animals consisting of cattle, goats and horses that were left abandoned by the owners on a farm. Of those animals, 5 were horses. Arizona's Ag Department spokesman Ed Herms indicated there were 15 more horses found estray in 2007 than 2006.

The individual state responses are listed in alphabetical order in appendix 6. Nine states have not yet replied to our inquiry.

A short paper, which is a condensed overview of our work up through February 20, 2008 is presented here as well, for quick viewing.

An overwhelming abundance of articles published in the media recently have claimed a national crisis of more abandoned horses in the U.S., but we have researched those claims, and despite the few cases mentioned above, we found most articles were merely quoting from previous articles, while others were based purely on speculation predicting a crisis of abandoned horses.

In the past few months, Kentucky has taken center stage in this 'crisis', and although our investigation of those claims is not yet complete, there is enough information from our correspondence to show the abandoned horse claims were made without verification. We have many more abandoned horse articles than we do abandoned horse cases. The full report on Kentucky is in appendix 3 of this report.

Many of these articles weave horse abuse and neglect cases into the abandoned horse issue. But even the most recent Kentucky article states that actual horse abandonment is rare. More common are cases of horses that have gotten loose from pastures and are estray, and usually the owners of these animals are found. Despite that, every abandoned horse is now blamed on the closure of the U.S. horse slaughter facilities, and never before has the news of a horse that had gotten loose from its pasture, been a such a major focus in the news. The same is true for the neglect and abuse cases. Statistics show that neglect and abuse cases have always been a problem in the U.S., but previously these stories seldom appeared even in the back pages of the news. Now that the debate on the horse slaughter issue has gained national public attention, these cases are now making headline news.

Although our work has been centered on cases of abandonment, we searched the statistics on PetAbuse.com, to record their database on abuse and neglect cases. We found that horse abuse and neglect cases were higher in 2006, and still higher in 2005. Horse abuse has **DECREASED** in the U.S. since 2005, dropping by 553 horses and 23 cases!

2007: 129 cases - 1227 horses

2006: 133 cases - 1387 horses

2005: 152 cases - 1780 horses

Also, abuse and neglect cases in 2007 occurring in the months preceding the closure of the last horse slaughter plant, revealed an average of 12 cases involving 107.6 equines per month—while in the months following the closure, abuse and neglect cases **decreased** to an average of 7 cases involving 79.5 equines per month.

A white paper, which was recently released by a group of veterinarians, known as the Veterinarians for Equine Welfare, stated this regarding the abuse and neglect issue:

**5. Unfounded claims that banning horse slaughter will lead to an increase in equine abandonment and neglect**

No increase in the abandonment or neglect of horses has been documented since the closure of the three domestic slaughter plants in the earlier part of 2007. This is not unsurprising. The horse slaughter business is not providing a service for the disposal of “unwanted” horses, but rather is preying on largely healthy, marketable horses[4] that might otherwise be used for more productive purposes. Several “news” reports surfaced in late 2007 claiming to show an increase in abandonment, but all have proven false. In fact, an article in the Oregonian quotes a local law enforcement officer regarding nine new cases of abandonment. When contacted the officer has denied any knowledge of the claims. A similar story in Kentucky was exposed as a hoax[5].

In fact, when the number of horses going to slaughter declined by nearly 90 percent between the early 1990s and the early 2000s there was no correlating increase in abandoned or neglected horses.[6] To the contrary, the temporary closure of the Cavel plant in Illinois between 2002 and 2004 resulted in a decline in equine abuse and neglect cases.[7]

[http://www.vetsforequinewelfare.org/white\\_paper.php](http://www.vetsforequinewelfare.org/white_paper.php)

Also contained in this report is correspondence from various Horse Councils, the Unwanted Horse Coalition, the AVMA, the AQHA, and as well, some oddly disturbing and even paranoid press releases from the Animal Agriculture Alliance, who feels threatened by any attempt to present any legislation that is aimed at the humane treatment of any animal, and views it as an attack against their entire industry, claiming the animal rights groups have declared a war on them.

Note: The following 2 pages are 'The Short Paper- condensed', which was created to print on one page, front and back, for use as a handout flyer, given to members of Congress during the Americans Against Horse Slaughter lobby effort, March 4th and 5th, 2008, in Washington D.C.

# Deleting the Fiction: False Claims of Abandoned Horses

February 2008

The Short Paper - condensed

Full report online at Kaufmanzoning Horsemeat Website\*, Animals' Angels Website\*, and Commonhorsesense.net\*

**In state after state a concerted effort has been orchestrated through the news media, designed to mislead the public into believing that the closure of U.S. horse slaughter facilities had resulted in a large number of horses being abandoned on public lands, the majority of articles simply repeating the claims made in other articles. In fact, allegations of tens of thousands of cases of abuse and abandonment are unfounded and false. Noteworthy as well is that in every state existing laws make abandoning a horse a criminal offense.**

Members of the American Horse Council (AHC) have alleged that from 90,000 to 320,000 cases of abused or abandoned horse following the closure of U.S. horse slaughter plants in media outlets throughout the country. However, in a December 2007 telephone call to AHC Director of Communications, Sara Chase, stated: *"for the record... neither AHC nor their Unwanted Horse Coalition has ever put out a number, and that none of those quotes should have ever been made."*

While this paper focuses on allegedly abandoned horses, many news outlets have printed claims of rising abuse and neglect as well. Findings on Pet Abuse.com, for horse abuse and neglect cases in 2007 occurring in the months preceding the closure of the last horse slaughter plant, revealed an average of 12 cases involving 107.6 equines per month—while in the months following the closure, abuse and neglect cases **decreased** to an average of 7 cases involving 79.5 equines per month.

## ARIZONA:

Articles in the *Tucson Citizen* and in *AZ CentralNews* alleged that abandoned horses are on the rise in Arizona. Both articles quoted Ed Hermes of the Arizona Ag. Dept. stating there had been a large number of horses seized in Arizona and that owners were simply turning horses loose. But in a February 5th, 2008 telephone conversation with Mr. Hermes, Information Officer of the Arizona Dept. of Agriculture Animal Services, he explained that the numbers used in the Arizona article were actually based on reports of estray or loose horses, and that almost always owners (80%) are located without impounding the horses since these are horses that had only gotten loose from ranches. According to the statistics provided by Mr. Hermes for all of 2007 in the state of Arizona there were approximately 15 more horses for which owners were not found than in 2006 and only 8 more than for the three year average of 98.

## FLORIDA:

The Wall Street Journal reported that 5 horses were found abandoned in the everglades in Florida, however the South Florida SPCA explained, *"There were actually six horses that were abandoned. They were abandoned at a farm."* On the South Florida SPCA website, it was found that 22 animals altogether were abandoned in this case, and this included cattle, goats and pigs.

## ILLINOIS:

An article from Illinois told of 2 horses abandoned in the Shawnee Forest (which local authorities eventually gave to the landowner who had found them). When contacted the reporter further claimed that he has ridden the trails in Shawnee Forest and seen the graves of abandoned horses, and that abandoned horses have been a problem in the Shawnee Forest for years. However, Shawnee National Forest Public Affairs Officer, Rebecca E. Banker, states: *"We have no knowledge of a problem with abandoned horses on the Shawnee. I have checked with our recreation staff and our law enforcement personnel, all of whom are in the field on a regular basis, and they have encountered neither live horses nor horse graves. I am unfamiliar with a publication entitled "The Daily Journal" and they have certainly not been in contact with any of us to verify whether or not we have a problem with abandoned horses."*

## INDIANA:

When questioned about the published claims from Indiana stating horses were being abandoned in Indiana's forests, John Seifert-State Forester, Indiana Department of Natural Resources, Division of Forestry, replied,

*"I can assure you that there are no abandoned horses, or to our knowledge have ever been abandoned horses on Indiana state forests."*

#### **KENTUCKY:**

A widely published article from Kentucky citing abandoned horses was based on horses seen free grazing at a reclaimed strip mine in Eastern Kentucky. After thorough investigation by the Kentucky State Police and animal control officials, it was found they were all privately owned and were not abandoned. Governor Ernie Fletcher responded with a letter saying the report was, *"filled with inaccurate statements and information."* Congressman Ed Whitfield (KY) also investigated the claim and stated, *"There is no crisis and there is no glut of 'unwanted horses' roaming the Bluegrass State or anywhere else."*

#### **OHIO:**

The Ohio Horse Council reported in an Ohio article, that horses were being abandoned in state parks. When contacted, Rick Patterson of the Ohio Horse Council, stated horses were being turned loose in Perry Forest. However, after investigation Land Management Administrator Chad Sanders of the Ohio Division of Forestry, stated *"there was no knowledge of any horses being turned loose in the state's forests."*

#### **OREGON:**

An article in the *Oregonian* stated that Undersheriff Brian Wolfe had investigated 9 abandoned horse cases, and although he tries to find homes for the abandoned horses, 90% of those horses are not branded. When questioned about his statement, Mr. Wolfe said it was true that 90% of the animals abandoned are not branded, but that included dogs and cats, and further, that he couldn't remember investigating any abandoned horse cases himself. The case cited in the *Oregonian* was ultimately marked **"unfounded."**

#### **SOUTH DAKOTA:**

Sen. Frank Kloucek, D-Scotland, of South Dakota, stated in an Associated Press article *"many horses are being abandoned or being sent to ranches and animal shelters that already have too many of the animals."* A reply from Larry Stearns of the South Dakota Livestock Brand Board, who is responsible for stray livestock in South Dakota gave this reply: *"It is difficult to determine if stray horses, recovered in the past, are abandoned, dumped off by someone wishing to dispose of the horse, or just an unbranded stray from the neighbors. Since horse slaughter plants were closed last year, we have not yet seen a big increase in the number of abandoned horses. In 2007, we had 5 strays sold at sales barns. One was sold at Gregory Livestock in Gregory SD, and the other 4 were sold at Philip Livestock in Philip. No owners could be found for these horses. Estrays are usually sold in the area where the animals are found. These applies to cattle as well as horses."* When questioned as to how many cattle were estrays in 2007, Mr. Stearns replied *"We had 14 head of cattle estrays."*

#### **UTAH:**

Harper's Magazine wrote, *"Patricia Evans, of Utah State University's Animal, Dairy, and Veterinary Sciences Department says that more horses are being abandoned now that domestic slaughterhouses have been closed."* But when contacted and asked for evidence, Ms. Evans replied, *"I have decided since speaking on the radio that due to the actions of some groups I am not going to give out the names of those contacted. We were able to find this information and I am sure you can as well as you search deeper. Good luck in your search."* A statement from Utah's Department of Natural Resources Wildlife Division avows, *"We do not have any reports of horses being abandoned on our Wildlife Management Areas."*

- 31 states contacted have responded with no reported cases of abandoned horses on state lands (current to 02-20-08): AL, AK, CT, DE, GA, IN, IL, KS, KY, LA, ME, MI, MN, MS, MO, NC, ND, NH, NJ, NM, OH, OK, OR, PA, SC, TN, UT, VT, WA, WV, WI,
- 3 States contacted have confirmed cases of abandoned horses: Arizona, South Dakota, and Florida
- Remaining states have not yet replied.

#### **CONCLUSION:**

**Claims of a national crisis of abandoned horses are unfounded, deceptive and dishonest. We do not have a wave of abandoned horses in the U.S. What we do have however, is an attempt to overwhelm the public with a wave of fictitious, articles about abandoned horses, designed to coerce lawmakers**

into making sham-based decisions.

\*For fully detailed report 'Deleting the Fiction: Abandoned Horses' part 1 & 2, go to:

<http://www.kaufmanzoning.net/horsemeat/>

<http://commonhorsesense.net/>

[http://www.animals-angels.com/index.php?pageID=start\\_us&sessionLang=us](http://www.animals-angels.com/index.php?pageID=start_us&sessionLang=us)

## **Deleting the Fiction: Abandoned Horses part 2**

### **Appendix: 2**

#### **Articles with confirmed cases of abandoned horses**

##### **ARIZONA (106 horses - 15 more horses found in 2007 than were found in 2006)**

<http://www.tucsoncitizen.com/daily/local/75038.php>

Abandoned horses on rise in Arizona

JEREMY THOMAS 1/25/08

Excerpt:

Many horses don't make it to shelters. More frequently, according to the Arizona Department of Agriculture, owners are simply turning horses loose in the wild. The agency doesn't have an exact number for horses abandoned in the wild, but it was a sizeable portion of the horses it seized last year, said Ed Hermes, an Agriculture Department spokesman. "It's definitely a statewide problem," he said. The agency seized 528 horses on public and private land in 2007, up from 454 the year before. Hermes attributed that increase primarily to feed costs, as well as a lack of demand for older horses no longer fit to work or perform.

The Agriculture Department also is strapped dealing with the horses it seizes, Hermes said. The agency's policy is to pick up stray horses not being fed and watered and to hold them up to 14 days while trying to locate the owners. If owners can't be found, the horses are put up for auction.

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#### **The real Arizona numbers, explained:**

Clearly, Arizona has a larger problem with stray horses than any other state reporting. This may be the result of the size of farms compared to those in less arid states and the resulting long, desolate stretches of fencing. Even so, the problem is far less acute than reported.

Ed Hermes, the Information Officer of the Arizona Dept. of Agriculture Animal Services, explained in a telephone conversation that the numbers used in the Arizona article were actually only the number of *reports* of estray or loose horses, and that 80% of the time they are able to quickly locate the owners and the horses are not impounded, since these are horses that had only gotten loose from ranches. According to the statistics given by Mr. Hermes, for 2007 the other 20% of horses in which no owners were found equaled approximately 106 horses (not 528). However this is only 15 horses more than were found in 2006 and only 8 horses more than the average for the past three years (98 horses/year).

**FLORIDA: (6 horses)**

An article in the Wall Street Journal " " reported 5 horses had been abandoned in the Florida east everglades.

After searching the Florida SPCA website we learned that case involved a farm owner who left his farm, leaving behind 22 farm animals, which included goats and cattle along with these horses. ( [http://www.sPCA-sofla.org/Nov2007rescue/nov2007\\_rescue.htm](http://www.sPCA-sofla.org/Nov2007rescue/nov2007_rescue.htm) )

When contacted, the Florida SPCA stated there were actually 6 horses abandoned.  
From Florida's SPCA:

Date: Tue, 8 Jan 2008 06:21:45 -0800  
From: laurie\_horses@

hello,  
there were actually six horses that were abandoned. they were abandoned at a farm in an aera know as east everglades. the police agency that we worked with was the miami dade agriculture unit. the horses we found in miami daed florida.  
we know who the owner was, and have not been able to locate them.  
laurie at helpthehorses

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**SOUTH DAKOTA (5 horses)**

**Horse slaughter plant idea in SD withdrawn**  
**The Associated Press**  
**Published Tuesday, January 29, 2008**

Excerpt:

The nation's last horse slaughter plant at DeKalb, Ill., closed in September. Two Texas plants closed in 2006. The three plants had exported meat to Europe and elsewhere for human consumption.

Kloucek said horses that once went to those plants now are sent to slaughter in Canada and Mexico. He said many horses are being abandoned or being sent to ranches and animal shelters that already have too many of the animals.

<http://www.wctrib.com/articles/index.cfm?id=30468>

**Replies from SD USDA**

SD SSO <nass-sd@nass.usda.gov> wrote:  
From: "SD SSO" <nass-sd@nass.usda.gov>  
Date: Thu, 7 Feb 2008 10:22:24 -0500  
From: Steve Noyes, Deputy Director

USDA/NASS, South Dakota Field Office  
Subject: Horse Data

The USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service does not keep track of abandoned horses in the United States. We have no information on this. I don't know of any agency tracking this information since those who are abandoning horses certainly don't want anyone to know. They are not reporting this.

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South Dakota Department of Agriculture  
Sam.Holland@state.sd.us wrote:  
Subject: FW: Information request  
Date: Mon, 4 Feb 2008 10:14:32 -0600

From: <Sam.Holland@state.sd.us>

South Dakota does not have such records. thank you, Sam

Sam D Holland, DVM,  
State Veterinarian, Exe. Secy.  
South Dakota Animal Industry Board

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**Reply from SD Brand Board**

tojim.sdsga@midconetwork.com,  
dateThu, Feb 7, 2008 at 4:44 AM

Dear Mr. Reed,

I am hoping to get some information on estray or abandoned horses in the state South Dakota.

An article put out by the South Dakota Horse Sales mentioned the South Dakota Brand Inspection Board as the agency that picks up abandoned horses in your state.

Could you please inform me how many horses have been picked up by the South Dakota Brand Inspection Board since Jan. 2007 and if these horses were estrays, abandoned and left by their owners on private property or left purposely out on roads, parks, etc....

Could you also provide information as to if any horses that your agency picked up ended up in court due to South Dakota animal cruelty laws, and your agency's policy on horses that are picked up and no owner is located.

I appreciate your help and I look forward to hearing back from you.

Best regards-

Julie Caramante

Here is part of the article:

<http://www.sdhorseales.com/acrofiles/voters.pdf>

ATTENTION -SD VOTERS

Plan Erupts into Controversy at So. Dak. State Legislature

On Tuesday, January 29th, Senate Bill 170 was put before the legislature

At least 90,000 horses each year need disposing off after being culled due to old age, untrainable, no longer able to afford the feed, out dated pedigrees, bad conformation, unsoundness, both breedable and ridable, etc. The majorities are now shipped at great expense and paper work, to Canada and New Mexico now, for processing. This extra expense has caused the base of the horse market to drop 50%.

\*\*Horses turned loose to fend for themselves or picked up in western South Dakota by the Brand inspection board are putting a hardship financially on them with boarding, veterinarian care, & feed. This will only get seemingly worse with the blind horses struggling to find water and feed, and the other HORSES suffering with pain & illness.\*\*

**Larry.Stearns@...** wrote:

Julie,

The SD Brand Board is responsible for estray livestock according to state statutes. We had a small number of estray horses in 2007. The estray horses that we found on public or private pastures were transported to a sales barn and sold. That is our policy on handling estray animals where we can not find an owner. Horses found on the reservations have been typically handled by the tribe.

We have not had any cases go to court for animal abuse issues in 2007.

It is difficult to determine if estray horses, recovered in the past, are abandoned, dumped off by someone wishing to dispose of the horse, or just an unbranded stray from the neighbors. Since horse slaughter plants were closed last year, we have not yet seen a big increase in the number of abandoned animals. The potential is there, but fortunately we have not yet seen this.

I am sure you have seen the same articles that I have about the potential for 100,000 abandoned horses per year and the Board is concerned with the prospect for increased estrays or abandoned horses.

If you have any other questions, please contact me.

Sincerely,

Larry

Larry Stearns  
Director, SD Brand Board

-----Original Message-----

**From:** Julie Caramante

**Sent:** Friday, February 08, 2008 11:13 AM

**To:** Stearns, Larry

**Subject:** Re: SD Brand Board

Dear Mr. Stearns-

I appreciate your quick response.

Can you give me an exact or approximate number on how many estrays have been picked up by the SD Brand Board since Jan. 2007? In that number, can you provide how many horses have gone back to their owners and how many horses were sold at a sales barn? Can you also please tell me what sales barn or barns your agency takes the horses to when no owner has been found.

Thank you very much for your assistance.

Sincerely-

Julie Caramante

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**Larry.Stearns@...** wrote:

Julie,

In 2007, we had 5 strays sold at sales barns. One was sold at Gregory Livestock in Gregory SD, and the other 4 were sold at Philip Livestock in Philip. No owners could be found for these horses. Estrays are usually sold in the area where the animals are found. These applies to cattle as well as horses. As I said before, we have not yet felt the impact of increased stray horses since the horse slaughter ban in the US.

Larry

**From:** Julie Caramante

**Sent:** Friday, February 08, 2008 1:09 PM

**To:** Stearns, Larry

**Subject:** RE: SD Brand Board

Mr. Stearns-

I am sorry to bother you again. I have one more question.

You speak about stray cattle and I am wondering what the stats are on those animals. Can you tell me approx. how many stray cattle your agency has picked up since Jan 2007 and how many have gone to auction due to not being able to find the owner?

Thanks so much,  
Julie Caramante

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Subject: RE: SD Brand Board  
Date: Fri, 8 Feb 2008 15:05:56 -0600  
From: <Larry.Stearns@...>

Julie,

Not a bother. We had 14 head of estrays that were delivered to nine different sales barns.

These too were sold in the areas that they were found. Most of them were unbranded and no one was missing them or could claim them.

Hope this answers your questions.

Larry

## Deleting the Fiction: Abandoned Horses, Part 2

### Appendix 3

#### **Kentucky - not the home of an abandoned horse "crisis"**

3 articles appeared in Kentucky's news media so far this year, all claiming a crisis of abandoned horses in Kentucky.

Below is a summary, written in response to these articles, using the information collected from our investigation into the claims of Kentucky's abandoned horses.

Following are the excerpts from all 3 articles claiming reports of abandoned horses, replies to inquiries on abandoned horses from Kentucky State Parks and Kentucky State Police, as well as correspondence from Ginny Grulke, Executive Director of the Kentucky Horse Council, Lori Neagle of the Kentucky Equine Humane Center, Dr. Doug Bryars, Kentucky Horse Council board member and consulting equine specialist, and from the Kentucky Division of Wildlife Resources.

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After police investigated claims made in a widely published article early last year about hundreds of horses abandoned at a reclaimed strip mine in Kentucky, it was found that the horses were all privately owned, and had only been turned out to graze as was commonly done in previous years.

Even though the findings of the investigation were reported publicly in the media, and despite Kentucky's U.S. Representative Ed Whitfield's letter in the press stating: *"There is no crisis and there is no glut of "unwanted horses" roaming the Bluegrass State or anywhere else. Beyond the inaccurate reporting, it is tragic that the pro-horse slaughter movement has managed to manipulate the mainstream media"*, the rumors and articles about Kentucky's horse crisis and abandoned horses, have currently been flooding headline news.

Several more articles have recently appeared in which the executive director of the Kentucky Horse Council, Ginny Grulke, claims she's received lots of reports of abandoned horses, and Lori Neagle of the Kentucky Equine Humane Center admits abandoning a horse is rare, but tells of receiving a call from the US Army Corps of Engineers about 9 abandoned horses, although nothing further is mentioned as to the outcome of those horses.

Dr. Doug Byars, listed only as a veterinarian and equine consulting specialist, states in the articles that the horses are either being abandoned or starving, although they don't know the numbers, they know they're increasing, and they now have a feral horse problem. He also commended the Kentucky Horse Council for all the work they're doing to handle the horse crisis. Not one of the articles mentions that Dr. Byars also happens to be a Kentucky Horse Council member of the board.

The articles also say that the Kentucky Wildlife Management Area is contending with abandoned horses as well.

We contacted Ginny Grulke of the KHC, and asked her for any documentation on the abandoned horses she mentions in the articles. She wrote back stating that she was not referring to abandoned horses, but was referring to abuse and neglect cases. She went on to say that there were however, reported abandoned horse cases, although she had no documentation, and there was no agency in Kentucky that kept those records. And even though she stated in her letter that the numbers of abandoned horses were really not the problem, a few days later she was quoted again in another article, making more claims about *"lots of reports of abandoned horses from people who are credible, although her group has been unable to compile 'quantifiable numbers'."*

We wrote to Lori Neagle and asked about the outcome of the 9 horses on the US Army Corps of Engineers land, and she replied that she didn't know because she only received a call, but the caller didn't leave any contact information, and never called back. She was then asked if she had any documentation for ANY abandoned horses, to which she replied, she did not.

After writing to Dr. Byars and asking him about the abandoned horse numbers he referred to in the articles, he replied there was no national system to collate the numbers, and to contact the Unwanted Horse Coalition. (The Unwanted Horse Coalition has folded into the American Horse Council and is run primarily by members of pro-slaughter organizations, such as the AVMA, AAEP, AQHA, and many horse breeding associations)

The reply from a letter asking about the abandoned horses mentioned in the article that the Kentucky Wildlife Management Area was currently contending with, stated that at present, they were not dealing with any horses on their wildlife management areas, although they had dealt with it before in the past.

The Kentucky State Police, as well as Kentucky State Parks, both replied that they had not received any reports of any abandoned horses.

Letters sent to the US Army Corps of Engineers asking about the 9 abandoned horses on Army Corps land, received no response.

As to the abuse and neglect claims made in these articles, no doubt there is a problem. Abuse and neglect cases have always been a problem, although they have never received so much national attention in headline news until now. Usually abuse cases were hidden in the back pages, and were basically unnoticed and ignored. But the closure of the slaughter plants have brought these cases to the forefront, as though they had never happened until the slaughter plants closed.

But statistics from the national database on PetAbuse.com for horse abuse and neglect cases revealed that abuse and neglect cases had actually decreased in 2007 from previous years.

2007: 129 cases - 1227 horses

2006: 133 cases - 1387 horses

2005 152 cases - 1780 horses

Horse abuse and neglect cases were higher in 2006, and still higher in 2005. Horse abuse has DECREASED in the U.S. since 2005, dropping by 553 horses and 23 cases!

But the question remains that in addition to the neglect cases, why is the Kentucky Horse Council making these claims of abandoned horses as part of a horse crisis in Kentucky? In one of the articles Ginny Grulke does state that many people have contacted her and feel the only solution would be to reopen the 'humane' horse slaughter plants, although in her letter she states she's not pro horse slaughter. So, if she's not trying to promote reopening the U.S. horse slaughter plants, is it likely she's hoping they will receive more funds to their donation request, needed to help them with their current horse crisis? Or maybe the answer lies in this part of Ginny Grulke's email:

*"As to why the original abandoned horses article was written, I think it's just that reporters like DRAMA and nothing better than horses running loose. We DO have horses running loose here in some places, but - at least as of now - it is not causing a problem that we are called on." And this: "Abandoned horses really are NOT the problem here in terms of numbers, however, although there certainly ARE abandoned horses!"*

But no documentation or evidence to verify it. Obviously, reporters are not the only ones who like the drama.

**Excerpts from Kentucky articles claiming a "crisis" of abandoned horses**

**The Courier-Journal  
Friday, January 18, 2008  
Byron Crawford**

**Horse owners can do little as crisis grows**

The Kentucky Horse Council is hurriedly gathering information from the state veterinarian and various horse interests across the state to assess what it says is a growing crisis in horse care in a state famous for its horses.

"I don't have hesitation about using the word crisis," said Ginny Grulke, executive director of the council. "It's a multicaused situation ... where you get to a tipping point and all of a sudden all the causes come together in a perfect storm."

Lori Neagle of the Kentucky Equine Humane Center in Nicholasville stated that on Wednesday, she was contacted by the Army Corps of Engineers in Pikeville regarding nine abandoned horses on Corps property.

The Kentucky Horse Council, which is dedicated to the protection and development of the equine industry, estimates the state could have as many as 3,500 extra horses this year as a result of the low market prices.

<http://www.courier-journal.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=2008801180430>

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**The Courier-Journal  
February 27, 2008  
Byron Crawford**

**Kentucky's unwanted-horses crisis spiraling**

The Kentucky Horse Council has set up a hot line to handle calls regarding unwanted, abandoned and starving horses following a recent emergency meeting among horsemen, veterinarians, rescue groups and animal control agencies.

"Last week we got two calls on herds of 30, and over the weekend I got a call about a herd of 50," said Ginny Grulke, executive director of the council. "Yesterday, we heard about a herd of 20 that had dwindled to 10 over the winter, and it was presumed they had died. These are not one or two horses in someone's backyard."

Problems began to surface last year after the slaughter of horses was banned in the United States, and a summer-long drought drove hay prices to record levels in Kentucky.

Dr. Doug Byars of Lexington, a consulting equine critical care specialist, said that as long as there is no market for unwanted horses, the problem will continue to grow.

"They're either abandoned or starving, and abandonment would include horses being just turned loose," he said. "So we have a feral horse population ... we don't know the numbers, but we know that they're increasing."

Grulke said a majority of horsemen who have contacted the Kentucky Horse Council believe that resuming humane horse slaughter in the United States would be the only reasonable solution, though many believe it would be all but politically impossible.

<http://www.courier-journal.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20080227/NEWS01/802271126/1008/NEWS01>

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**Herald Leader.com**

**Mar. 02, 2008**

**By Jim Warren**

### **Hungry, hungry horses**

Last year's drought slashed hay production; now equine groups say they're seeing many more cases of neglect and abandonment

There are few hard numbers to track the problem, but equine leaders tell of skinny, undernourished horses showing up at auctions, and recount stories of horses going hungry, being given away to anyone who will take them or -- in a few extreme cases -- being left to fend for themselves.

"I've been using the word *crisis* to describe the situation, and I think that's still true," says Ginny Grulke, the council's executive director.

Dr. Robert Stout, Kentucky's state veterinarian, says no statewide figures are available on how many horses have been abandoned or neglected or how many, if any, have died.

"There's no system for capturing that kind of data," Stout said. However, Stout says he's convinced there is a problem.

Ginny Grulke, the horse council director, says that while she's received "lots of reports of abandoned horses from people who are credible," her group has been unable to compile "quantifiable numbers."

Indeed, some groups, like the Humane Society of the United States, contend that reports of abandoned horses in Kentucky and elsewhere are wildly overblown. "We've been unable to find a factual basis for most of the stories we've seen," society spokeswoman Stacy Segal said.

When U.S. slaughterhouses closed, some in the equine industry predicted that thousands of old or unwanted horses would be abandoned or left to starve because owners no longer would be able to have them slaughtered.

"We're not talking about championship horses, but horses that are unwanted or that are no longer of any service," Byars said. "Now, these horses have no value, and with the slaughterhouses closed there is no outlet for them. So, you're getting these reports of abandoned horses and horses not being fed."

Others, however, argue just as passionately that many reports of horses going unfed this winter are being pushed by those who want U.S. slaughterhouses reopened, or who are interested in seeing that slaughter shipments to Mexico and Canada continue.

"They tried to keep that business going by saying that when the U.S. plants closed, there would be abandoned horses everywhere. But none of that has really happened," insisted Pendleton County's Shelly Price, co-founder of a group opposed to horse slaughter.

Such cases of outright abandonment are rare, according to Lori Neagle of the Kentucky Equine Humane Center. Most of the horses the equine humane center receives are voluntarily surrendered by their owners. But there are other unusual stories.

"I've had calls from people who said they woke up one morning, looked outside and saw some strange horses in their field that someone had just dropped off," Neagle says.

On top of everything, stories keep circulating about horses abandoned on public lands, mainly in Eastern Kentucky. But no one could provide confirmation of any large cases.

Rodney Holbrook, U.S. Army Corp of Engineers resource management officer at Fishtrap Reservoir in Pike County, says at least eight unclaimed horses have been running loose on reservoir property for months.

Dave Baker, a spokesman for the Kentucky Division of Wildlife Resources, said the department is contending with horses running loose on some of its wildlife management areas. But he said he didn't know how many horses are involved. It's unclear whether the horses were abandoned, or simply left by owners looking for free pasture, Baker said.

<http://www.kentucky.com/news/state/story/334736.html>

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**Email correspondence from Kentucky Horse Council, Executive Director, Ginny Grulke**

Sent: Wednesday, February 27, 2008 9:37 PM  
To: director@kentuckyhorse.org  
Subject: Horse crisis in Kentucky

February 27, 2008

To Ginny Grulke  
Kentucky Horse Council,

Dear Ms. Grulke,

I read an article today in the Courier Journal which claims an unwanted horse crisis is occurring in Kentucky. Last year a similar article appeared which claimed horses had been turned loose in Kentucky, but the claims made turned out to be false. Rep. Ed Whitfield investigated the claims, and Kentucky police found that the horses were privately owned, and had not been abandoned. I also have a letter from Gov. Fletcher in which he states there is no abandoned horse crisis in KY.

In this article you state you got 2 calls on herds of 30, and over the weekend got a call on a herd of 50. The article doesn't say what the calls were about. Can you please tell me if these calls were about abandoned horses, or abuse and neglect cases?

I know that authorities must be called on these cases and the animals seized by the proper authorities, since abandoning, abusing and neglecting a horse is a criminal offense, and must be reported. Can you please tell me which authorities were called, and where these cases occurred, and direct me to where I might be able to find the documentation on the horses you received the calls on?

I will look forward to your reply. Thank you for your time.

Valerie James-Patton

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Sent: Thursday, February 28, 2008  
From: Ginny Grulke

The cases I cited were not abandoned horses but underfed horses. However there are also situations of abandoned horses. Even though the Spring 2007 story was wrong (and the KY Horse Council DID NOT verify that rumor even though we had reporters calling us asking us to do so) that does not negate the real cases we have of abandonment. But we are getting reports more about fenced, starving horses right on the owners land.

Here in Kentucky the local (county) officials are responsible for these cases. County officials do not have the funds or places to put the horses if they were to confiscate them and then feed them until the case comes to court. We are trying to fix this situation with some legislation where an owner whose horses has been confiscated posts a bond, and if he cannot pay for their upkeep while the case is being investigated, then he loses title to the horses and they can be sold or given away. Until that legislation passes, county officials are reluctant to cite an owner since there is no "teeth" behind it and they are stuck with the very high bill (what if they had to confiscate, feed and treat 30 horses??)

So the KY Horse Council approach (in addition to reporting our cases to Animal Control, the local Sheriff, the State Vet and/or the State police) is to try to "feed in place", ie offer the owner hay at a free or reduced price, to be delivered and fed on their property. This is the best short term solution to keeping the horses alive and prevent further suffering. We are also getting photos taken of the horses, if that can be done, so that we have documentation.

There is no statewide system to document reports of abuse and neglect. Neither the counties nor the state agencies are required to keep this information. This is another area we are working in, so that the best estimate we have right now is just our own records.

Kentucky has a long way to go. I appreciate your concern because this is all about the HORSE. We are working as best we can to fix this state's problems – this is my second year in this job and trying as hard as I can to raise awareness and get the horse industry in Kentucky to take a lead with solutions. And contrary to some accusations, KHC is NOT pro-slaughter. I own horses which are well fed and cared for responsibly. I do not want to see horses slaughtered. But in addition, it is stomach churning to come to work every day and get more calls on horses that are skin and bones. There are two of us here to cover all of Kentucky and so we need help from the industry. This is what I am trying to do and just can't spend time fighting with people accusing me of making up stories. I hope that is not what you are implying in your email. If there are concerned owners in California, please donate to our SoHo fund ([www.kentuckyhorse.org](http://www.kentuckyhorse.org)).

Ginny Grulke, Executive Director  
Kentucky Horse Council  
Where All Horses Count  
4063 Ironworks Parkway, Ste. 2  
Lexington, KY 40511

Sent: Friday, February 29, 2008  
From: director@kentuckyhordse.org  
To: John Holland@.....

John,

The story last spring was blown out of proportion, but just because that story was hyped up, does not mean therefore that a year later there are not abandoned horses. The conditions are much more "ripe" for abandonment with high hay prices, less going to slaughter, and a bad economy. Those are THREE factors, I am not claiming to know what the impact is of any of the three. I do not see any data that proves that reduction in slaughter numbers have NO impact on either abandoned, or underfed horses.

And by abandoned I mean the following diverse sets of circumstances:

Man gets job transfer, can't sell horse, leaves horse in pasture.

Person takes horse to auction, can't sell horse, leaves horse in stall behind auction barn (Multiple of these)

Person takes horses to Army Corps of Engineer land and sets free (actual report from Army Corps)

BUT (Big BUT!).. these numbers are dwarfed by the number of underfed ("starving") horses standing in pastures that their owners own.

The question is why.

I DO NOT WANT TO JUSTIFY SLAUGHTER, and I am afraid to give you what I think has happened in SOME CASES. But if I say this, please don't post on the blogs that KHC is PRO-SLAUGHTER!! But please listen to the explanation I have.

People with very little money have bred horses, sold what they could and took the rest to the auction where there was a minimum price they could get (a few hundred dollars) when the "killers" bought them. (AGAIN, PLEASE DON'T INTERPRET THIS EXPLANATION AS A CONFIRMATION THAT I THINK THIS WAS RIGHT!!)

So when the killers bought them, the owner benefited in two ways: 1. Got a few dollars, and 2. No longer had to feed them.

The rest of the horse sellers benefitted because those horses were off the market and so their horses could be priced a bit higher.

When slaughter is eliminated (well reduced, since they are still going to Mexico and Canada), the person cannot sell them at the auction or perhaps they get \$50 instead of \$200... and so they take them home and throw them out in the pasture to fend for themselves.

What we are seeing now is actual horses not being fed (Or being minimally fed), which I mentally put into three types of circumstances:

1. The person who doesn't have concern for the welfare of animals - those people need to be prosecuted, and they probably have a long history of this kind of behavior regardless of hay prices or economy.

2. The financially strapped person who is concerned for horses, loves their horses, but because of the economy and the hay prices being doubled, they can't afford to feed them. (And they can't sell them because there are too many horses out there and no one wants to feed more horses)

3. The ignorant person who regardless of the situation just doesn't know how to feed a horse properly. These people need education.

Some people want to prosecute all three types of people. I would say that if we had a way to confiscate and hold all the horses that fell into this condition, then some gradient level of prosecution would be feasible.

Unfortunately, there is not enough money in the state (it would take LOTS) to house and feed all these horses. Therefore, our approach is to feed in

place. If we know of someone who falls into #1 type, we can go back later and prosecute. That is assuming we can tighten laws and also get the cooperation of the county animal control and sheriff.

As to why the original abandoned horses article was written, I think it's just that reporters like DRAMA and nothing better than horses running loose. We DO have horses running loose here in some places, but - at least as of now - it is not causing a problem that we are called on. But the very fact that ANYONE would just leave a horse on Corps property or at the auction house seems to be an omen. I just hope it is temporary.

Ginny Grulke, Executive Director  
Kentucky Horse Council  
Where All Horses Count  
4063 Ironworks Parkway, Ste. 2  
Lexington, KY 40511  
www.kentuckyhorse.org

### **Letters from Lori Neagle of the Kentucky Equine Humane Center**

From: Valerie James-Patton  
Date: Sun, Mar 2, 2008 at 11:12 AM  
Subject: Army Corps - abandoned horses  
To: info@kyehc.org

March 2, 2008

To Lori Neagle, Executive Director  
Kentucky Equine Humane Center

Dear Ms. Neagle,

In a Jan 18th article in the Courier Journal, titled 'Horse owners can do little as crisis grows', you were quoted as saying you were contacted by the Army Corps of Engineers in Pikeville regarding nine abandoned horses on Corps property. But the article does not go further into explanation. I've been doing research on abandoned horse cases, and would appreciate any information you can give me about these 9 horses. Can you tell me if these were actual abandoned horses, or if they were horses that were loose, and returned to their owners? If no owners were found, can you tell me what the outcome of this case is?

I would very much appreciate any documentation, police reports, etc., regarding this case. Also if you could direct me as to who to contact at Army Corps about this matter, that would be very much appreciated.

Thank you so much for any help on this. I will look forward to your reply.

Valerie  
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On Wed, Mar 5, 2008 at 7:45 AM, lneagle@kyehc.org wrote:

Hi Valerie,  
Sorry, but I don't have any additional information to give you.  
I received a call regarding 9 horses that were thought to be abandoned and was asked if KyEHC

were able to take them. We said that we would gladly take them but have never heard back on their status and do not have any contact info.  
Good luck with your research.

Lori Neagle  
www.kyehc.org

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Sent: 3/5/2008 10:57:31 AM  
To: lneagle@kyehc.org  
Subject : RE: Re: Fwd: Army Corps - abandoned horses

Thank you Lori. Do you have any documentation on any of the horses from the recent articles, which mentioned abandoned horses in which no owners were ever found?  
I appreciate any help at all on this.  
Valerie

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On Wed, Mar 5, 2008 at 8:10 AM, lneagle@kyehc.org wrote:

Valerie,  
Those were people who called into KyEHC for information so we don't have their contact information.  
Lori

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Sent : 3/5/2008 11:29:13 AM  
To : lneagle@kyehc.org  
Subject : RE: Re: Re: Fwd: Army Corps - abandoned horses

Lori,  
Do you have any documentation on ANY recently abandoned horses which no owners could be found?  
Valerie

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On Wed, Mar 5, 2008 at 9:05 AM, lneagle@kyehc.org wrote:

Hi Valerie,  
Sorry, we don't have any.  
Lori

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**Letters from Dr. Doug Byars, Kentucky Horse Council board member**

Sent: Monday, March 03, 2008 8:06 AM  
Subject: Re: (no subject)  
Dear Ms. Jacobson

Unfortunately, the actual number of unwanted horses is unknown since there is no national system to collate the different categories and numbers. The only designated national group that I know of is the Unwanted Horse Coalition headed by Dr. Tom Lenz, but I don't think they have a network in place that would include rescue facilities, "help" agencies, and most importantly, the local or regional authorities.

Hopefully you will come across someone assembling the counts,

Doug Byars

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To: tdbyarseqa@aol.com  
Sent: Monday, March 03, 2008 4:56 PM  
Subject: Re: (no subject)

Dear Dr. Byars,

Thank you for your prompt reply.

I'm afraid you might have misunderstood me. I only wanted the statistics on abandoned horses from Kentucky from you. And, since "unwanted" is such an amorphous term, subject to great debate, I have not concerned myself with that.

I read your name in the article concerning the spiraling numbers of cases in the state, referencing the Horse Council and was hoping you could provide me with more concise information. Unfortunately, I can't use reports of calls made to any group or organization as substantiation in my research paper. I need law enforcement or animal control documentation, something with dates, numbers and dispositions.

If any source of the information occurs to you, I would appreciate it if you would let me know.

Thanks again.

Joyce Jacobson

**Reply from Kentucky State Parks**

RE: [Park:] Abandoned horses in Kentucky state parks  
Date: Thu, 28 Feb 2008 13:01:36 -0500  
From: "KY State Parks" <kentuckystateparks@ky.gov>

We are not aware of any reports of abandoned horses at Kentucky State Parks. If you have specific information about such reports, please feel free to let us know.  
Thank you.

KY State Parks

**Reply from Kentucky State Police**

RE: Abandoned horses in Kentucky  
Date: Wed, 5 Mar 2008 13:47:25 -0500  
From: "KSP Media Relations" <KSPMedia@ky.gov>  
To: "Valerie James-Patton"

We have no reports of seizing any horses that have been abandoned.

Kentucky State Police  
Media Relations Dept

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**Letter to U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (no reply)**

Sent: March 5, 2008  
To: LRL-POC-Outreach@usace.army.mil

March 5, 2008

To US Army Corps of Engineers

An article appeared in the Kentucky.com news on March 3rd stating:

Rodney Holbrook, U.S. Army Corp of Engineers resource management officer at Fishtrap Reservoir in Pike County, says at least eight unclaimed horses have been running loose on reservoir property for months.

I'm looking for any information on these horses, and what the outcome is on these horses. Can you please provide me with any documentation on how this situation has been handled, if these horses have been caught, and what shelter these horses would go to?

Thank you. I appreciate any help on this matter.

Valerie James-Patton

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**Letter to Kentucky Wildlife Division**

Sent: March 4, 2008  
To: info.center@ky.gov  
March 4, 2008

To Kentucky Division of Wildlife Resources

I read an article in Kentucky.com news called "Hungry, hungry horses", March 02, which stated:

*Dave Baker, a spokesman for the Kentucky Division of Wildlife Resources, said the department is contending with horses running loose on some of its wildlife management areas.*

Can you please tell me if these horses have been found, and if so, can you tell me how the situation is being handled? Can you tell me what agencies will be handling the matter, and can you please provide documentation on these horses?

Thank you,  
Valerie James-Patton

Subject: Horses on WMAs  
Date: Mon, 10 Mar 2008 13:28:33 -0400  
From: "Marraccini, Mark (FW)" <Mark.Marraccini@ky.gov>  
CC: "Garland, Chris (FW)" <chris.garland@ky.gov>

Ms. James-Patton--

**At present we do not know of any horses on our wildlife management areas.** We have contended with some in the past, however. In those cases we have had we have made every attempt to notify local landowners. Then, if the horses are not removed, we round them up, take them to the stock yard and they are held for a certain number of days. If they are still not claimed they are sold at auction.

I hope this helps you in some way.

Mark Marraccini  
Office of the Commissioner  
Kentucky Department of Fish & Wildlife Resources  
# 1 Sportsman's Lane  
Frankfort, KY 40601

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Date: Mon, 10 Mar 2008 11:04:49 -0700 (PDT)  
From: "Valerie James-Patton"  
Subject: Re: Horses on WMAs  
To: "Marraccini, Mark (FW)" <Mark.Marraccini@ky.gov>

Mr. Marraccini,  
Thank you so much for your reply. However the article just came on March 02, and sounds as though this is a current problem your department is dealing with.

So, just for clarification purposes, there are no horses abandoned in the wildlife management areas at this time?

Also, if I may ask, when you stated that you have dealt with this problem in the past, can you tell me if this problem occurred before or after Sept, 2007?

If this did occur anytime after Sept., 2007, I would like to ask for any documentation on these cases.

Thank you so much for your time.  
Valerie James-Patton

## Deleting the Fiction: Abandoned Horses part 2

### Appendix: 4

#### Various Articles of Fiction from the Animal Agriculture Alliance

Various press releases have been put out by the Animal Agriculture Alliance stating that animal rights activists are to blame for this horse crisis, and they consider any legislation by "*vegan driven animal rights groups*" a threat.

Another Agriculture Alliance press release dated March 30, 2007, quoted from the March 15, 2007, Jeffrey McMurray article, "*Kentucky inundated with unwanted horses*", about Kentucky's horses being abandoned in a strip mine, which we know turned out to be untrue. The press release in March claimed that "*thousands of horses in Kentucky and other parts of the country were starving due to the results of activist groups opposing horse slaughter*". The Texas plants didn't close until January 19, 2007, and Cavel in Illinois, didn't cease operations until September 21, 2007, and throughout the entire year, thousands of horses were being exported to Mexico, Canada and Japan. Even if there had been these starving horses back in March, it would be impossible to lay blame on the closure of the Texas plants, with Cavel still operating, and with the constant flow of thousands more exported over the borders. Other press releases warn their industry members "to do a better job countering attacks by animal-rights groups", and "we have got to go on the offense".

Their February 13, 2008 press release, even goes as far as to state: "*The animal rights movement has declared war on animal agriculture.*"

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#### **Animal Agriculture Alliance Press Release**

**March 30, 2007**

#### **Vegan-Driven Activist Groups Cause National Animal Welfare Crisis**

– In mid-March an Associated Press (Jeffrey McMurray article ) report indicated that thousands of horses in Kentucky and other parts of the country were starving due to the results of activist groups opposing horse slaughter. The AP article quoted one man saying he had to choose between feeding his horse and feeding himself. The thousands of starving horses were the direct result of the anti horse slaughter initiatives led by activist groups.

Activist groups were directly responsible for the legal actions that have forced three horse processing facilities, two in Texas and one Illinois, to close. As a result, the price of horses has declined markedly. Rather than sell the horses some owners are setting them free, others are letting them starve and, worse yet, refusing to call the veterinarian for perfectly treatable conditions, causing an unspeakably horrible animal welfare crisis.

“This sad state of affairs is the direct result of the anti-horse slaughter movement, led by the vegan-led Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) and other animal rights organizations,” said Kay Johnson, Executive Vice President of the Animal Agriculture Alliance. “These groups claim to care about animal welfare, but when faced with an animal welfare disaster caused by their efforts, they callously insist that the market will sort itself out or, worse yet, coldheartedly dispute that this crisis exists, while leaving seriously underfunded local animal rescue operations to save animals. It is time for the federal government to intervene and stop these American icons

from being used by vegan groups as political pawns in the quest to impose their vegetarian agenda on our nation.”

Johnson explained that this crisis is a prime example of the danger of the public being misled by groups purporting to care about animal welfare when their actual goal is nothing short of the pursuit of a vegan society where people don't eat meat, wear leather or wool, use seeing eye dogs, or even use medicines derived from animals.

In addition to the animal welfare crisis this situation is causing, the Chicago Tribune reported that the Illinois closing alone will cost 50 people their jobs and end \$30 million a year in foreign trade.

The Animal Agriculture Alliance, a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization, is a broad-based coalition of individual producers, producer organizations, suppliers, packer-processors, private industry and retailers. The Alliance's mission is to communicate the important role of animal agriculture to our nation's economy, productivity, vitality, security and that animal well-being is central to producing safe, high-quality, affordable food and other products essential to our daily lives.

[http://www.animalagalliance.org/main/home.cfm?Section=2007\\_0330\\_Vegan&Category=PressReleases](http://www.animalagalliance.org/main/home.cfm?Section=2007_0330_Vegan&Category=PressReleases)

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**Excerpts from Agriculture Press Releases:**

**Agriculture Industry Threatened By Animal Rights  
(02/05/07 07:00)**

NASHVILLE (DTN) -- Recent initiatives like the one last fall in Arizona to ban veal crates and gestation crates for hogs show that it's time for the agriculture industry to do a better job countering attacks by animal-rights groups.

-- Recent victories by animal-rights groups should serve as a wake-up call to ranchers, farmers and livestock feeders to do a better job countering the attacks on livestock production in the country, according to some livestock advocates. "All of agriculture, we've played the fence too long," said former Texas Congressman Charlie Stenholm, now an agricultural lobbyist. "We have got to go on the offense."

"We don't have time not to address these people anymore," said Trent Loos, a rancher, journalist and vocal livestock supporter.

With losses to animal-rights groups in courts, state initiatives and in Congress, livestock producers are struggling with how to counter the growing influence of groups like the Humane Society of the United States.

"Too many people in agriculture say 'My dog's really not in that hunt,' and when your dog gets into that hunt, you are looking for friends with you and they are saying the same thing," Stenholm said. "We've all got to get into it together."

As spokesman for the Horse Welfare Coalition, which represents more than 200 agriculture organizations trying to keep horse slaughter legal, Stenholm knows the challenges of defending the industry.

The livestock industry must counter the claims of animal activists, rather than come to livestock trade meetings and complain that people don't understand animal agriculture, Loos said.

"We have been absent from the conversation," Loos said.

<http://www.hpj.com/dtnnewstable.cfm?type=story&sid=18302>

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**Animal Agriculture Alliance Press Release  
January 15, 2008 -**

**Tsunami of Horse Abuse Cases Sweeps Nation  
Eliminating Horse Processing Devolves into Undeniable National Horror**

\*An undeniable tsunami of horse abuse cases has swept across the USA since the de facto ban on horse processing - pushed by vegan driven animal rights groups - went into effect in early 2007. In the past few months alone, major media outlets including the Chicago Tribune, Coeur D'Alene Press, Portland Oregonian, Austin American Statesman, Seattle Times, UPI, Washington Post, Rockford Register Star, Associated Press, and The Wall Street Journal chronicled cases of horse abuse and neglect from all across the nation including Illinois, Idaho, Oregon, Texas, Washington, Colorado, Virginia, Alabama and Florida.

Animal rights activist groups are responsible for the legal actions that forced three horse processing facilities, two in Texas and one Illinois, to close. As a result, the price of horses has declined markedly. Rather than sell the horses some owners are setting them free, others are letting them starve and, worse yet, refusing to call the veterinarian for perfectly treatable conditions, causing an unspeakably horrible animal welfare crisis.

"This sad state of affairs is the direct result of the anti-horse slaughter movement, piloted by the vegan-led Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) and other animal rights organizations," said Kay Johnson-Smith, Executive Vice President of the Animal Agriculture Alliance. "These groups claim to care about animal welfare, but when faced with an animal welfare disaster caused by their efforts, callously insist that the market will sort itself out or, worse yet, coldheartedly dispute that this crisis exists, despite the undeniable documented surge in animal abuse cases. All the while, they leave seriously underfunded local animal rescue operations to save animals."

"It is time for the federal government to intervene and stop these animals, considered by many to be American icons, from being used by vegan groups as political pawns in their quest to impose their vegetarian agenda on our nation," added Johnson-Smith. "Additionally, it is time for all governments—federal, state and local—to recognize these groups for what they are, extremists attempting to use animal welfare as a tool to advance their radical vegan agenda."

\*\*The Animal Agriculture Alliance, a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization, is a broad-based coalition of individual producers, producer organizations, suppliers, packer-processors, private industry and retailers. The Alliance's mission is to communicate the important role of animal agriculture to our nation's economy, productivity, vitality, security and that animal well-being is central to producing safe, high-quality, affordable food and other products essential to our daily lives.

[http://www.animalagalliance.org/main/home.cfm?Section=2008\\_0115\\_Tsunami&Category=PressReleases](http://www.animalagalliance.org/main/home.cfm?Section=2008_0115_Tsunami&Category=PressReleases)

**Animal Agriculture Alliance Press Release  
February 13, 2008  
Animal Welfare: Building Bridges Across the Food Chain**

- The animal rights movement has declared war on animal agriculture—on everyone who is involved in providing Americans with meat, milk and eggs. Worse yet, the animal rights groups are garnering over \$400 million a year to fund their campaigns.

[http://www.animalagalliance.org/main/home.cfm?Section=2008\\_0213\\_Animal&Category=PressReleases](http://www.animalagalliance.org/main/home.cfm?Section=2008_0213_Animal&Category=PressReleases)

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**Deleting the Fiction: Abandoned Horses part 2**

**Appendix: 5**

**Correspondence and Claims made by Horse Councils, the Unwanted Horse Coalition, the Horse Welfare Coalition, the AVMA, and the AQHA**

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**Information on the Unwanted Horse Coalition**

A number of groups, like the American Veterinary Medical Association and the Horse Welfare Coalition, whose members include the AVMA, AAEP, and the AQHA, all opposed to the AHSPA. The Horse Welfare Coalition's website is registered to SciWords, a PR firm that works for the slaughterhouses.\* And the Coalition's spokesman, Charles Stenholm, is a former Democratic House member from Texas whose Washington law firm also represents the slaughterhouses. The owner and operator of this coalition's website is attorney, John Linebarger, who represented the two horse slaughter plants in Texas, and whose name appeared on the court documents filed to keep them open.

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**Hay and Forage.com  
More Horses Being Abandoned  
Feb 5, 2008 2:27 PM**

A press release from the Unwanted Horse Coalition says economic factors, including high hay costs, are among the reasons cited in news reports for a growing number of unwanted and abandoned horses in the U.S.

<http://hayandforage.com/ehayarchive/more-horses-being-abandoned/>

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**Ban only hurts horses it tries to protect**

They shoot horses, don't they?

Posted on Sat, Jan. 26, 2008 10:15 PM

By Blake Hurst

The ban on horse slaughter has guaranteed that more horses will be mistreated and will be abandoned. "We have cases where they have been turned loose in parks," said Dave Howell of the American Horse Council. "They've been turned loose in coal mine areas, they've been turned loose on private property." The Wall Street Journal recently reported on the issue, discussing abandoned horses in the Everglades, and the financial strains felt by a shelter trying to care for its population of 57 horses. \*The American Horse Council has documented 212,000 starving horses in the United States.\*

Horses are still being slaughtered in Mexico and Canada, and a small number of U.S. horses are being exported to both places. Slaughter conditions in Mexico are much less humane than in U.S. plants. This equine rendition is another unintended and tragic consequence of the ban.

<http://www.kansascity.com/273/story/462442.html>

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The Brownfield Report  
brownfieldnetwork.com

**Unwanted horses, 212,000 and counting**

*Friday, October 12, 2007, 7:43 AM*

*by Dave Russell*

It is one of the biggest issues the American Horse Council is dealing with and Dave Howell, chairman of the American Horse Council's State Horse Council Advisory Committee tells Brownfield it is really big.

"So today we are facing over 212,000, documented starving horses in the United States," said Howell.

Brought about by the horse slaughter ban, the issue is one that no one seems to have an answer for - not even the American Horse Council.

"We have cases where they have been turned loose in parks, they've been turned loose in coal mine areas, they've been turned loose on private property, but until the public becomes aware we have a crisis I don't think we're going to get any reaction because most people feel like, hey this animal is a beautiful animal, it's a pet and we need to protect it, not realizing it weighs 1200 pounds, takes a bale of hay a day, takes an acre and a half per horse to feed, what are we gonna do with the unwanted horse, we don't know, we don't have an answer," Howell said.

<http://www.brownfieldnetwork.com/gestalt/go.cfm?objectid=943CE7A6-C376-4B3B-6F92B49C22B9756C>

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**AVMA**

From: terrygean  
To: avmainfo@avma.org  
Subject: unwanted horse articles on the website  
Date: Sat, 23 Feb 2008 17:46:40 -0500

I was looking at your website

[http://www.avma.org/issues/animal\\_welfare/unwanted\\_horses\\_news\\_articles](http://www.avma.org/issues/animal_welfare/unwanted_horses_news_articles).

I would like the following information for the following questions for the last full year you have.  
Can you tell me how many unwanted horses there are in the US?  
Can you tell me how many abandoned horses there are in the US?  
Can you tell how you got your documentation for your numbers of abandoned horses?  
Can you tell how you got your documentation for your numbers of unwanted horses in the US?

Thank You  
Terry

-----  
From: Susan Majchrzak  
Sent: Monday, February 25, 2008 10:29 AM  
To: 'terrygean@'  
Subject: RE: unwanted horse articles on the website

Dear Terry:  
Thank you for contacting the American Veterinary Medical Association. You can find the answers to your questions and more by going to our Web site, using the link below. If you should have any further questions, please feel free to contact us.

[http://www.avma.org/issues/animal\\_welfare/unwanted\\_horses\\_faq.asp](http://www.avma.org/issues/animal_welfare/unwanted_horses_faq.asp)

Sincerely,  
Sue Majchrzak  
Communications Division  
American Veterinary Medical Association  
smajchrzak@avma.org

~~~~~

## AQHA

From: terry

To: jhancock@aqha.org; lulrich@aqha.org  
CC: jrosche@theman eater.com  
Subject: The article in MU : 2nd request for information  
Date: Sun, 25 Nov 2007 20:39:11 -0500

Ms Hancock

I read an article published in the Maneater, a paper from MU. In that article you made a statement that the bill, (the bill to ban horse slaughtering for human consumption in the U.S.) keeps unhealthy horses from being slaughtered and caused some horse owners to lower the price or give away their horses for free. The bill to stop horses from being slaughtered in the U.S. has yet to pass. It is still legal to slaughter horses for human consumption in the U.S. The Texas plants were closed because the U.S. Court of Appeals 5th Circuit Court up held law from 1949 that outlawed the sale of horsemeat . The Illinois state legislature pass the legislation that the horsemen and the citizens wanted to make horse slaughter for human consumption illegal in their state. The U.S. Court of Appeals 7th Circuit upheld Illinois decision to ban slaughter horses for human consumption after Cavel appealed the Illinois legislation.

According to 2001 field studies conducted by emple Grandin 70% of all horses at the slaughter plant were good, fat, or obese condition; 72 % were considered to be "sound" of limb; 84% were of average age; and 96% had no behavioral issues. Some states have laws that you can be prosecuted if you sell a sick, lame or debilitated horse, the horse be fit to work. But if you have a horse in bad health why would you want to sell it to slaughter? Why would you want to let a horse that is in bad health be trucked up to 28 hrs without food or water? Horses were being trucked long distances before the plants closed. Mr. LeRoy Baker of the famous Sugarcreek auction in Ohio is a slaughter horse buyer. He trucked his horses to Texas. Which was twice the distance than trucking them to Quebec. I have FOIA's of Mr. Bakers owner/shipper papers of horses sent to slaughter that state the destination of the horses. Did you know that there were many horse slaughter plants in the U.S. back in the 70's, 80's and even in the 90's apx 14. There was one here in my state of Ohio, in Cardington. The reason that the plants started closing was because of a lack of demand for horse meat in Europe. Horse slaughter is a business just as slaughter of cows, pigs, chickens, goats and sheep. The difference is that we do not eat horses in the U.S. There have been many polls that show the majority of Americans do not want their horses slaughtered for human consumption. Most people involved in the anti-horse slaughter issue do not care that the Europeans eat horsemeat. Nor are they telling them they can't eat horsemeat. They are telling them to eat their own horses not our. It is not our culture to slaughter and eat horses. Back in the late 90's the USDA tried to introduce American's to horsemeat on their website but removed it after protests from the American people and horse owners.

Did you know that horses have been shipped to Canada and Mexico to slaughter for years? That horses being shipped to slaughter in those Countries did not start as a result of the U.S. plants closing. Mr. Nickerson and Mr. Keihl of N.Y. have been shipping horses to Canada for decades. And Mr. Fred Bauer from my state of Ohio. has been shipping horses to Canada for years. Mr. Geron Gold (Roping J Ranch) from MI. has been shipping to Canada for years. And Bouvry of Alberta has been buying apx 2500 horses per year from my state of Ohio for years. I know this because of Ohio record requests.

Doesn't it seem logical that hay shortages due to the drought threw out the U.S. could be a big reason the price of horses has dropped? I have attended many slaughter auctions but could you tell me what the bottom floor price was before the Texas and Illinois plants closed? I didn't know there was one.

Which brings me to the number one reason I emailed you. Your statement in the article that, "We've even had people call about horses that are just being left at auction houses." Could you please tell me who the people are that told you this? Could you tell me what states these auctions are in? And could you tell me what auctions? Could you also send me any info that you have to substantiate these claims? State have laws about abandoning animals. I would like to do some investigating of my own to confirm or not confirm your statement in the article.

And please if you make the statement that horses will be abused/neglected if the bill to stop horse slaughter passes would you please finish the statement. Would you remind people that it is against the law to abuse/neglect/abandon your animals. That all states have animal cruelty laws on the books that make abuse/neglect/abandonment of an animal a crime. That people who do this are criminals and it is a crime that is punishable by the law. That it is every person ( horse owner or non horse owner) responsibility to report any crime to the proper authorities. I think when the first part of the statement about abuse/neglect/abandonment is made without stating it is a crime it sounds as if this crime is acceptable in our society and by the law. Which we know it is not. Maybe the AQHA could make a section on the website with the laws for each state to help people to familiarize themselves with their state cruelty laws.

I also am offended by the statement, "horses will be abandoned/neglected/abused if the bill to stop the slaughter of horses for human consumption is passed" because it sounds as if horse owners are a bunch of criminals. That sounds bad for horse owners and the horse industry.

Thank You,

Terry

I have many FOIA'S (freedom of information requests) from USDA in regards to slaughter horses if you are ever interested.

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From: Terry  
Sent: Saturday, December 29, 2007 10:38 AM  
To: Jennifer Hancock; Luann Ulrich  
Cc: MO U. newspaper  
Subject: FW: The article in MU : 3rd request for information

My 3rd request for information.

In the article published in the Maneater, a paper from MU the following statement was made by Jennifer Hancock.

"We've even had people call about horses that are just being left at auction houses."

My question is what auction houses, what states. I need this information to confirm your public statement. To decide if your statement is credible. There would be police records of these incidents, it is against the law to abandon and animal. States have laws on the books that someone who finds an abandoned animal must follow certain procedures before being able to dispose of an animal. The finder cannot just take the animal and dispose without following the proper procedure.

I hope that you will reply to my request after 3 requests for the information.

Terry

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Subject: RE: The article in MU : 3rd request for information  
Date: Wed, 2 Jan 2008 08:29:56 -0600  
From: JHancock@aqha.org  
To: terrygean@; lUlrich@aqha.org

Thank you for your e-mail. Our member's privacy is of utmost importance to the American Quarter Horse Association therefore we do not release specific details of calls we receive. – Jennifer

Jennifer K. Hancock

Director of Media Relations and Communications Specialist  
The American Quarter Horse Association  
www.aqha.com

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**(OHIO HORSE COUNCIL)**

To: ahc@horsecouncil.org  
CC: kcarter@horsecouncil.org; suegray@nchsecouncil.com  
Subject: Jay Hickey abandoned horses  
Date: Tue, 27 Nov 2007 15:12:37 -0500

Mr. Hickey,

I just got of the phone with Katy Carter from your office. I told her I have read a few articles lately that were stating that horses are being abandoned. These articles are sensationalizing scenes of abandoned horses running over picnic blankets or horrific accidents after hitting abandoned horses running down our highways. These articles are trying to scare the American public into believing that we have an abandoned horse problem in the United States. And one of the reasons for the abandoned horse problem was because of the American horse slaughter plants closing. And this is wrong.

First I don't believe that any person in the Media should print anything they cannot document. And I don't think that anyone, especially someone who holds a position with a title should use their title to try to hold credibility to statements they cannot document. They should not spread rumors or play whisper down the alley. They should be able to produce the documentation when ask for it. I am a person who deals in facts, not rumors, not stories, not 'I heard', or 'my friend', or 'I know'. Unless you provide documentation you are not credible.

All states have state laws addressing abandoned animals. There is a procedure that is to be followed. The local police or sheriff must me notified. Notice must be put in the paper and/or posted in public places with the description of the found animal for a certain number of days. If someone does not notify the authorities of an abandoned animal they found they to are breaking the law and must want to get a free animal.

When I investigated some of these inaccurate claims of abandoned horses and contacted the person in the article making the claim of abandoned horses I was told they had no documentation. That they got their numbers of abandoned horses from the AHC. So I called the AHC this morning, looking for the documentation of abandoned horses that some people claim

your organization has. I was told by Katy Carter that the AHC has NO documentation of unwanted or abandoned horses. I am sure that the AHC would not want people to think the AHC is misleading the American Public by reading statements claiming that there are 1 or 2 hundred thousand abandoned horses in America when that is not true. So I am asking the AHC to either produce the documentation of the abandoned horses or give the public and me a statement that the AHC has no documentation of abandoned horses. I also think that the AHC should notify all of the state horse council orgs. that they have no documentation of abandoned horses. The AHC needs to correct the inaccurate information of abandoned horses that people are claiming the AHC has documentation of.

Could the AHC also remind people when they speak on the issue of abandonment/abuse/neglect that it is against the law? That it is a crime punishable by law. And that people who abandon/abuse/neglect their horses are CRIMINALS. Stating that it is a crime needs to be added to the sentence when talking about abandonment/abuse/neglect. Sometimes you just need to remind people.

I will also be contacting the reporters of the articles as I am concerned about their journalism.

I have also attached a pdf file of an article from my state of Ohio that a Diane Jones states the President of the OHC says there are abandoned horses in the forests. The file also includes my emails to Ohio Dept. Of Natural Resources stating that no horses have been abandoned in Ohio forests.

I will be looking forward to your reply.

Thank You

Terry Torrance

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From: KLuedeke@horsecouncil.org  
Subject: RE: 2nd request to Jay Hickey abandoned horses  
Date: Tue, 4 Dec 2007 09:18:56 -0500

In response to your question, no one at the AHC has documented how many horses there are in the U.S. that are unwanted. No one at the AHC has spoken to the press or given an interview to any media indicating how many horses there are in the U.S. that are unwanted. If you see an article reporting that the AHC has, I suggest that you contact the reporter directly about this and question him/her.

~~~~~

**Deleting the Fiction: Abandoned Horses part 2**

**Appendix: 6**

**U.S. State Replies on Abandoned Horses**  
**From U.S. state park systems, forest services, police departments, or livestock boards**  
(listed alphabetically)

Inquiries were submitted to 48 states, excluding Alaska and Hawaii  
36 states responded that they had no reports of abandoned horses  
3 states, Arizona, Florida, and South Dakota confirmed cases of abandoned horses  
9 states have not yet replied to the inquiry submitted on abandoned horses (as of 3/10/08)

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**ALABAMA**

Subject: RE: abandoned horses in Alabama forest & parks  
Date: Fri, 25 Jan 2008 10:03:26 -0600  
From: Tim.Whitehead@dcnr.alabama.gov  
CC: twishum@dcnr.state.al.us

Alabama State Parks have no abandoned horses in any of our Parks. Thanks.

Tim

Alabama State Parks  
Department of Conservation & Natural Resources  
64 North Union Street  
Montgomery, Al 36130

~~~~~

**ARIZONA**

Clearly, Arizona has a larger problem with stray horses than any other state reporting. This may be the result of the size of farms compared to those in less arid states and the resulting long, desolate stretches of fencing. Even so, the problem is far less acute than reported.

Ed Hermes, the Information Officer of the Arizona Dept. of Agriculture Animal Services, explained in a telephone conversation that the numbers used in the Arizona article were actually only the number of *reports* of estray or loose horses, and that 80% of the time they are able to quickly locate the owners and the horses are not impounded, since these are horses that had only gotten loose from ranches. According to the statistics given by Mr. Hermes, for 2007 the other 20% of horses in which no owners were found equaled approximately 106 horses (not 528). However this is only 15 horses more than were found in 2006 and only 8 horses more than the average for the past three years (98 horses/year).

**ARKANSAS**

Date: Thu, 31 Jan 2008 08:00:17 -0600  
From: Christina.fowler@arkansas.gov

We do not have any records on file regarding domestic horses in Arkansas forests. However, the Ozark National Forest may have information regarding this matter.

-----Original Message-----

Christina Fowler  
Arkansas Forestry Commission  
3821 W. Roosevelt Road  
Little Rock, AR 72204

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**CALIFORNIA** - no reply

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**COLORADO** - no reply

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**CONNECTICUT**

"Nelson, Eric" <Eric.Nelson@po.state.ct.us> wrote:  
Subject: RE: abandoned horses  
Date: Wed, 16 Jan 2008 08:27:07 -0500  
  
From: "Nelson, Eric" <Eric.Nelson@po.state.ct.us>

Per your request, we have searched our records from January 1, 2007 to the present and we have no record of any horses having been abandoned on any Department of Environmental Protection property.

Sincerely,  
Colonel Eric C. Nelson  
Director  
DEP  
State Environmental Conservation Police

~~~~~

**DELEWARE**

"Wilson Joanna C. (DNREC)" <Joanna.Wilson@state.de.us> wrote:  
Subject: RE: Abandoned horses  
Date: Wed, 23 Jan 2008 16:09:43 -0500  
From: "Wilson Joanna C. (DNREC)" <Joanna.Wilson@state.de.us>

I checked with our Park rangers and was told we have not had any reports of abandoned horses in Delaware's state parks.

I hope that's what you need. If I can be of further help, please let me know.

Joanna Wilson  
DNREC Public Affairs

~~~~~

**FLORIDA**

From Florida's SPCA:

Date: Tue, 8 Jan 2008 06:21:45 -0800  
From: laurie\_horses@

hello,  
there were actually six horses that were abandoned. they were abandoned at a farm in an aera know as east everglades. the police agency that we worked with was the miami dade agriculture unit. the horses we found in miami daed florida.  
we know who the owner was, and have not been able to locate them.  
laurie at helpthehorses

~~~~~

**GEORGIA**

Date: Thu, 10 Jan 2008 14:41:25 -0500  
From: Cindy.Reitinger@dnr.state.ga.us

I am the statewide naturalist for Georgia's State Parks and I am not aware of any reports of abandoned horses in our state park system.

Sincerely,  
Cindy Reitinger  
Georgia State Parks & Historic Sites  
2 Martin Luther King Jr. Drive  
Suite 1352 East  
Atlanta, GA 30334

~~~~~

**IDAHO**

Subject: RE: FW: Abandoned horses  
Date: Mon, 10 Mar 2008 16:12:21 -0600  
From: "Jennifer Wernex" <jwernex@idpr.idaho.gov>

Just received word from North Region.  
Zero abandoned horses reported.

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RE: FW: Abandoned horses  
Date: Fri, 29 Feb 2008 10:16:37 -0700  
From: "Jennifer Wernex" <jwernex@idpr.idaho.gov> Add Mobile Alert

South Region has a response also – no abandoned horses reported within Idaho’s Southwestern State Parks.

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Jennifer Wernex <jwernex@idpr.idaho.gov> wrote:

There have never been horses abandoned in Idaho State Parks located in East Idaho.

Jennifer

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**IOWA** - no reply

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**ILLINOIS**

To <rbaner@fs.fed.us>  
12/28/2007 10:37 PM  
Subject: abandoned horses in Shawnee forest

I read an article in The Daily Journal that stated there were abandoned horses in the Shawnee forest. Can you tell me how many horses have been abandoned in that forest? Who would I contact to get the documentation (police reports, etc) for the abandoned horses in the forest? Can you tell me what has happened to the abandoned horses from the Shawnee forest?

I talked to the reporter who wrote the article in the Daily Journal and he told me that he has gone on trail rides in the Shawnee Forest and that you can see many places where abandoned horses and have been buried. Can you tell me how many horse graves there are in the Shawnee Forest? The reporter also told me that there has been an abandoned horse problem in the Shawnee Forest for years. Is this true? If so, what has the Forest mgt. tried to do to stop this problem?

Thank You,  
Terry Torrance

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Subject: Re: abandoned horses in Shawnee forest  
From: rbanker@fs.fed.us  
Date: Thu, 3 Jan 2008 12:48:16 -0600

We have no knowledge of a problem with abandoned horses on the Shawnee. I have checked with our recreation staff and our law enforcement personnel, all of whom are in the field on a regular basis, and they have encountered neither live horses nor horse graves. I am unfamiliar with a publication entitled "the Daily Journal" and they have certainly not been in contact with any of us to verify whether or not we have a problem with abandoned horses.

\*\*\*\*\*

Rebecca E. Banker  
Shawnee National Forest  
Public Affairs Officer

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**INDIANA:**

Date: Thu, 14 Feb 2008 18:12:01 -0500  
From: jseifert@dnr.IN.gov  
CC: tlyons@dnr.IN.gov; BRamey@dnr.IN.gov

This message was sent to me. I can assure you that there are no abandoned horses or to our knowledge, has ever been abandoned horses on Indiana state forests. I would be interested in see the story you have referenced in your email. Thanks for your concern.

John Seifert  
IDNR Division of Forestry

~~~~~

**KANSAS**

Robert Baker <RDBaker@khp.ks.gov> wrote:  
Date: Wed, 16 Jan 2008 08:36:16 -0600  
From: "Robert Baker" <RDBaker@khp.ks.gov>  
Subject: Re: abandoned horses

We have no reports of this.

Lieutenant Robert Baker  
Kansas Highway Patrol  
122 SW 7th Street  
Topeka, Kansas 66603  
E-Mail- RDBaker@khp.ks.gov

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**KENTUCKY**

RE: [Park:] Abandoned horses in Kentucky state parks  
Date: Thu, 28 Feb 2008 13:01:36 -0500  
From: "KY State Parks" <kentuckystateparks@ky.gov>

We are not aware of any reports of abandoned horses at Kentucky State Parks. If you have specific information about such reports, please feel free to let us know.  
Thank you.

KY State Parks

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Reply from Kentucky State Police

RE: Abandoned horses in Kentucky  
Date: Wed, 5 Mar 2008 13:47:25 -0500  
From: "KSP Media Relations" <KSPMedia@ky.gov>  
To: "Valerie James-Patton"

We have no reports of seizing any horses that have been abandoned.

Kentucky State Police  
Media Relations Dept

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**LOUISIANA**

Parks <parks@crt.state.la.us> wrote:  
Subject: RE: abandoned horses?  
Date: Wed, 19 Dec 2007 13:56:13 -0600  
From: "Parks" <parks@crt.state.la.us>

At this time, our Administrative Office has not received any reports of abandoned horses at our sites. Thank you for your inquiry.

Regards,  
Sharon E. Broussard  
Public Information Office  
Louisiana State Parks  
Baton Rouge Administrative Office  
<http://www.lastateparks.com>

**MAINE**

Subject: RE: abandoned horses in Maine parks & forests  
Date: Wed, 26 Dec 2007 09:19:37 -0500  
From: Stephen.McCausland@maine.gov

I am not aware of any reports of abandoned horses in Maine.

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**MARYLAND**

Thu, 28 Feb 2008 16:34:47 -0500  
From: "Customer Service" <customerservice@dnr.state.md.us>  
Subject: RE:'MDDNR=568-684' Abandoned Horses - Maryland

We have checked with the Law Enforcement Records Center and Natural Resources Police, and they do not have any reports that they can locate on horses abandoned in Maryland's state parks.

Diane B. Feheley  
Maryland Park Service

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**MASSACHUSETTES** - no reply

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**MICHIGAN**

From: DNR-RightNowWeb@michigan.gov  
Sent: Thu 12/27/07 10:36 AM

Recently you requested personal assistance from our on-line supportcenter. Below is a summary of your request and our response. We will assume your issue has been resolved if we do not hear from you within 48 hours.Thank you for allowing us to be of service to you.

If your issue remains unresolved, please update this question

-Response

(Cheryl Greaney) - 12/27/2007 10:36

AMI checked with the Forest Division and they are not aware of this problem in any Michigan forests and I can say that we are not having this problem in state parks in Michigan.

Michigan Department of Natural Resources

**MINNESOTA**

From: Chuck Kartak <Chuck.Kartak@dnr.state.mn.us>  
Date: Tue, 22 Jan 2008 20:16:17 -0800 (PST)  
Subject: Re: Abandoned Horses  
Chuck Kartak <Chuck.Kartak@dnr.state.mn.us> wrote:

I have checked with our four regional park managers and we are not aware of any abandoned horses in Minnesota State Parks in 2007.

Chuck Kartak  
Deputy Director  
DNR Division of Parks and Recreation

~~~~~

**MISSISSIPPI**

From: "Noel Hughes" <noelh@mdwfp.state.ms.us>  
Date: Mon, 14 Jan 2008 13:40:19 GMT  
Subject: Response to your MDWFP.COM web comment.

Thanks for your interest. I am not aware of any domestic horses abandoned in our parks.

Noel Hughes  
Parks  
(Mississippi Dept. of Wildlife, Fish, and Parks)

~~~~~

**MISSOURI**

Subject: Re: abandoned horses in parks  
From: moparks@dnr.mo.gov  
Date: Tue, 8 Jan 2008 11:49:10 -0600

The Missouri state park system has not had occurrences of horse abandonment at this time.

Angie Even  
Missouri State Park System  
Department of Natural Resources  
P.O. Box 176, Jefferson City, MO 65102

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**MONTANA - no reply**

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**NEBRASKA**

Date: Fri, 29 Feb 2008 10:32:42 -0600  
From: "Suzanne Ridder" <Suzanne.Ridder@ngpc.ne.gov>  
To: "Jim Fuller" <jim.fuller@ngpc.ne.gov>, valerie\_jamespatton@  
Subject: Re: Abandoned horses - Nebraska

We have not had any abandoned horses left at the State Parks in Nebraska. Thank you.

Suzanne Ridder  
Nebraska State Parks Division  
2200 North 33rd Street  
Lincoln, NE 68503  
(402)471-1623  
suzanne.ridder@ngpc.ne.gov

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**NEW HAMPSHIRE**

Subject:RE: Abandoned horses  
Date:Tue, 15 Jan 2008 15:45:39 -0500  
From:"Sandra LePage" <slepage@dred.state.nh.us>

Thank you for your inquiry. There have been no recorded incidences of abandoned horses in New Hampshire State Parks.

Sandra LePage, Bureau Secretary  
Dept. of Resources & Economic Development  
NH State Parks & Recreation

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After polling the Division's State Park Supervisors, there are no known incidents of abandoned horses within state parks.

Sincerely,  
Torene Tango-Lowy

Department of Resource and Economic Development  
Division of Parks and Recreation

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**NEW MEXICO**

RE: Abandoned horses  
Date:Mon, 14 Jan 2008 09:01:53 -0700  
From:"Parks, NM, EMNRD" <nm.parks@state.nm.us>

We have not had any reports of abandoned horses since 1/2007.

Annette Tafoya  
NM State Parks  
Santa Fe, NM 87507

~~~~~.

**NEW JERSEY**

Date: Thu, 31 Jan 2008 15:37:38 -0500  
From: "Annette Timmerman" <Annette.Timmerman@dep.state.nj.us>  
CC: "Barbara Marshall" <Barbara.Marshall@dep.state.nj.us>  
Subject: NJDEP Email Response #012138

Lynn Fleming, Assistant Director of the New Jersey State Park Service has asked me to forward her response to your recent email as follows:

I am writing in response to your January 13, 2008 email inquiring whether we had any reports of domestic horses being abandoned in New Jersey's state parks and forests.

Please be advised that we have no information in our files on this matter, nor are we aware of this occurring in any of New Jersey's state parks or forests.

I trust this information is helpful to you.

Sincerely,  
Lynn Fleming  
Assistant Director  
State Park Service

~~~~~  
**NEW YORK** - no reply

~~~~~  
**NEVADA** - no reply

~~~~~  
**NORTH CAROLINA**

From: lewis.ledford@ncmail.net  
CC: adrienne.mccoig@ncmail.net; Susan.Tillotson@ncmail.net  
Subject: Re: abandoned horses  
Date: Mon, 26 Nov 2007 12:16:43 -0500

Your recent email was forwarded to me for response. I am not aware of any horses being abandoned in the state parks in North Carolina. I have asked our operations chief to confirm, but reports no staff having knowledge of incidents such as this. If you have any specific information that lead to your inquiry that you can share, please let us know. Our operations chief is Susan Tillotson, susan.tillotson@ncmail.net . I understand that a recent article appeared in the Charlotte Observer within the last two weeks the identified this possible scenario in urban areas, which could be exacerbated with the increased costs and feeding challenges associated with the drought in the southeast. Law enforcement in state parks is handled by our rangers and superintendents.

Lewis Ledford, Director  
North Carolina State Parks and Recreation  
www.ncparks.gov

**NORTH DAKOTA**

RE: Abandoned horses  
Date: Mon, 14 Jan 2008 09:42:17 -0600  
From: "-Info-Parks & Recreation" <parkrec@nd.gov>

I am not aware of any horses that were abandoned but I did forward your email to each of our parks and asked them to reply back to you if they had any information.

Emily Gullicks  
Administrative Assistant  
North Dakota Parks & Recreation

~~~~~

**OHIO**

From : Sanders, Chad <Chad.Sanders@...>  
Sent : Friday, November 2, 2007 2:51 PM  
To : <terrygean@...>  
CC : "Shuman, Tom" <Tom.Shuman@...>  
Subject : RE: horses turned lose in Perry Forest

Ms. Torreance  
I spoke to our folks at Perry State Forest about your question, apparently you had called them as well.  
We do not have any knowledge of horses being loosed at state forests. I haven't found anyone who knows anything about your question. Sorry for the delay in response.  
I will continue to try to find any information on this from our other constituent groups.  
Thank you for your note  
Chad

Chad Sanders  
Land Management Administrator  
ODNR - Division of Forestry  
~~~~~

**OKLAHOMA**

Subject: RE: Email Inquiry from Webpage  
Date: Wed, 26 Dec 2007 09:31:03 -0600  
From: "Becky Brewer" <Becky.Brewer@oda.state.ok.us>

I have not ever been contacted in reference to any abandoned horses in the state of Oklahoma. Therefore I cannot give you any report. For police reports you would need to contact local jurisdictions. Dr. Brewer

Becky Brewer  
Becky L. Brewer-Walker, D.V.M.  
State Veterinarian  
Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry  
Animal Industry Services

**OREGON**

Date: Mon, 10 Mar 2008 19:32:35 -0700  
From: "Tim Wood" <Tim.Wood@state.or.us>  
CC: "Park Info" <Park.Info@state.or.us>  
Subject: Abandoned State Parks

Ms. James-Patton,

To your question, there have been no reports of abandoned domestic horses in state parks in my memory. If you have some specific question about a location or timeframe, I would be happy to investigate further.

Tim Wood  
Director  
Oregon State Parks

~~~~~

**PENNSYLVANIA**

To: ra-askdcnr@state.pa.us  
Subject: Abandoned horses  
From: NR, ForestRecreation (forestrecreation@state.pa.us)  
Sent: Thu 12/27/07 11:35 AM

We have received no notifications regarding abandoned horses on Pennsylvania State Forest Lands.

~~

Subject: RE: Abandoned horses  
Date: Wed, 2 Jan 2008 08:55:19 -0500  
From: rwarrick@state.pa.us

Thank you for your email. We have not had any incidents relating to the abandonment of horses in Pennsylvania State Parks, so I would say we do not have a problem. I forwarded your email along to our Bureau of Forestry in the event they have come across this on their lands. Good luck with your research!

Thank you,

Rachel S. Warrick  
Park Manager  
Operations & Training Section  
Bureau of State Parks  
DCNR

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**RHODE ISLAND**

"Steven T. Wright" <riparks@earthlink.net>  
Subject: Re: Abandoned horses  
Date: Thu, 28 Feb 2008 13:25:55 -0500

Thank you for your e-mail regarding RI State Parks. We are an urban state park system and we have not had a problem with abandoned domestic horses.

Steven T. Wright  
Acting Chief  
DEM Division of Parks & Recreation  
2321 Hartford Avenue  
Johnston, RI 02919

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**SOUTH CAROLINA**

Subject: Inquiry of horses  
Date: Wed, 16 Jan 2008 10:52:51 -0500  
From: "Barbara Stroman" <bstroman@scprt.com>

Thank you for your inquiry. There are no records that any horses have been abandoned within our state parks.

Barbara Stroman  
Administrative Assistant  
S.C. Department of Parks, Recreation & Tourism  
State Park Service

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**SOUTH DAKOTA**

**From:** Larry Stearns  
**Sent:** Friday, February 08, 2008

**Larry.Stearns@...** wrote:

In 2007, we had 5 strays sold at sales barns. One was sold at Gregory Livestock in Gregory SD, and the other 4 were sold at Philip Livestock in Philip. No owners could be found for these horses. Estrays are usually sold in the area where the animals are found. These applies to cattle as well as horses. As I said before, we have not yet felt the impact of increased estray horses since the horse slaughter ban in the US.

Larry Stearns  
Director, SD Brand Board

**TENNESSEE**

Date: Wed, 20 Feb 2008 13:17:25 -0600  
From: Tim.R.Phelps@state.tn.us  
Subject: Re: FW: Abandoned horses in Tenn. 2nd request for information

In checking with our State Forest Foresters, State Forest Unit Leader, and Ag. Crime Unit, we have not encountered this issue on TN State Forest System. You may want to check with the TN Dept. of Environment and Conservation who manages the TN State Parks and the TN Wildlife Resources Agency.

Tim Phelps  
Information & Education Program Specialist  
Tennessee Department of Agriculture  
Division of Forestry  
Ellington Agricultural Center

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Tue, 04 Mar 2008 08:11:20 -0600  
From: "Shane Petty" <Shane.Petty@state.tn.us>  
CC: "Ask TNStateParks" <Ask.TNStateParks@state.tn.us>  
Subject: Horses

We have never had any horses abonded in states parks.  
ask.tnstateparks@state.tn.us <ask.tnstateparks@state.tn.us>

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**TEXAS - no reply**

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**UTAH**

Date: Mon, 26 Nov 2007 10:26:56 -0700  
From: parkcomment@utah.gov  
Subject: Re:

Hello,

I have not heard of any horses being turned loose in any of our Utah State Parks.

Sincerely,  
Utah State Parks  
1594 W North Temple  
Suite 116  
Salt Lake City UT 84116  
(801) 538-7220  
(877) UT-PARKS  
www.stateparks.utah.gov

Utah link:

<http://extension.usu.edu/equine>

**VERMONT**

FW: Abandoned horses  
Date: Mon, 14 Jan 2008 09:55:06 -0500  
From: "Mckeen, Nate" <Nate.Mckeen@state.vt.us>

I am not aware of any such incidents in Vermont State Parks.

Thank you,  
Nate McKeen  
Chief of Park Operations

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**VIRGINIA**

Date: Tue, 15 Jan 2008 13:20:42 -0500  
From: "pco pco" <pco.po-richmond.dom-richmond@dcr.virginia.gov>  
Subject: Re: Abandoned horses

We have not had any horses abandoned in Virginia State Parks in the past year.

Thanks for writing.

Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation.  
203 Governor St.  
Richmond, VA 23219  
www.dcr.virginia.gov

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**WASHINGTON**

RE: Abandoned horses  
Date: Thu, 28 Feb 2008 08:46:50 -0800  
From: "Barnes, Cathie (PARKS)" <Cathie.Barnes@PARKS.WA.GOV>

I just spoke to our Visitor Protection Officer and he reviews all the reports from all the State Park Rangers and there are No records of any abandoned horses in any Washington State Park. Thank you for your inquiry.

Cathie Barnes  
Information Center  
Washington State Parks  
360/902-8844

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**WEST VIRGINIA**

Subject: Abandoned Horses  
Date: Mon, 14 Jan 2008 11:36:11 -0500  
From: "Dave Lombardo" <davelombardo@wvdnr.gov>

I have never had a report of abandoned horses in a WV State Park.

Dave Lombardo  
District Administrator  
WV State Parks

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**WISCONSIN**

:RE: Abandoned horses  
Date: Wed, 16 Jan 2008 09:04:24 -0600  
From: "Fritz, Jason R - DNR" <Jason.Fritz@Wisconsin.gov>  
To: "Tolley, Sabrina J - DNR" <Sabrina.Tolley@Wisconsin.gov>,

We have had no reports of abandoned horses.

P Jason R. Fritz  
Chief Ranger  
Bureau of Parks and Recreation  
Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

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**WYOMING - no reply**

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## **Deleting the Fiction: Abandoned Horses part 2**

### **Appendix 7:**

#### **Conclusion**

The media has recently published numerous stories reporting that people are abandoning horses in state parks all across the U.S.

Abandoning a horse in any state is a criminal offense, by either a misdemeanor or a felony, depending upon the individual state's laws. For every abandoned horse, there should be documentation and police reports to verify abandoned horse claims.

Responses from 39 states out of the 48 states that replied to the inquiry of abandoned horses in their state parks stated they had no reports of any abandoned horses.

The media is merely being manipulated once again by the horse slaughter industry and its supporters, and the American horse owners in this country are not the criminals they are being reported to be.

According to an article from the San Francisco Chronicle, October 24th 1998, critics of Prop. 6 claimed that it's passage will result in the unintended consequences that the 3,000 California horses that were previously sent to slaughter in 1997, would now be abandoned and left to starve:

#### **Excerpt from**

#### **California 1998 article about Prop. 6:**

(Prediction that 3,000 California horses would be abandoned and left to starve, did not occur.)

#### **Prop. 6 Bans Slaughtering Horses to Eat Only small percentage are now butchered Tyra Lucile Mead, Chronicle Staff Writer Saturday, October 24, 1998**

State figures show that 3,112 out of the state's estimated 1 million horses were shipped to slaughter last year -- just 0.3 percent of the total.

There are horse lovers who fear that passage could have unintended consequences -- that more horses will be neglected or abandoned, and that an unregulated black market will spring up.

Critics also fear that many of the horses that now go to slaughter -- about 3,000 last year -- will be abandoned and left to starve.

<http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?file=/chronicle/archive/1998/10/24/MN44492.DTL&type=printable>

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Just as California never had the 3,000 abandoned horses that critics predicted would result from Prop. 6, America will not end up with 100,000 abandoned horses the critics are predicting as the result of passing the American Horse Slaughter Prevention Act.

Currently we have more fictitious articles circulating in the media about abandoned horses than we have of abandoned horses. There is no tsunami of horse abuse cases, at least not any more cases than there previously has been, and the supporters of the American Horse Slaughter Prevention Act have not declared a war on the agriculture industry to promote vegetarianism, as the Animal Agriculture Alliance claims. U.S. parks do not have abandoned and starving horses running loose, fending for themselves. There is not an abandoned horse crisis in Kentucky.

But there is a crisis of poor journalism by reporters who are writing fabricated and exaggerated articles in which they hope the public and congress members will accept as the truth. The public does expect the truth from articles in the media, and it's a disgrace to journalism and to honest reporters, that some reporters fail to see anything wrong in publishing fictitious articles, which are nothing more than outrageously exaggerated and sensationalized rumors. What happened to honesty and reporting the truth? Aren't they supposed to research and find the facts before publishing their articles? Are these journalists no longer accountable to any kind of code of conduct?

Representative Whitfield was absolutely right when he stated that it's a shame that the horse slaughter supporters have manipulated the media. But because they have, it's up to every one of us to question and verify these articles, search out the truth, and report it to others, through blogs, forums, or letters to editors. We can't let ourselves fall for this propaganda from the horse slaughter industry and their supporters, and we can't let them get away with their intention to make the general public believe it either. We owe it to ourselves to find the truth, and even more so, we owe it to America's horses.