

2ND TIER APPLICATION REQUEST: NEVADA HISTORIC HORSES OF THE VIRGINIA RANGE SPECIALTY LICENSE PLATE

Shannon Windle is respectfully submitting this request for a Nevada Department of Motor Vehicles Specialty License plate through the Second Tier application process on behalf of Hidden Valley Wild Horse Protection Fund (HVWHPF), an all-volunteer registered 501(c)3 Nevada non-profit corporation, IRS #80-0208865.

The purpose for the funds that will be generated from this request for an approved Nevada Department of Motor Vehicles Specialty License plate under the Second Tier application is for services benefiting the community relating to public welfare and education as described herein.

The cause benefiting from this request is the protection, preservation, promotion, and rescue of the Historic Horses of the Virginia Range, Nevada. The Nevada Department of Agriculture (NDoA) is tasked with the management of these horses, in accordance with Nevada Revised Statute 569. The Virginia Range is the rangeland for these horses, covering close to 400,000 acres. The range is located east of Reno, north of Carson City, west of Fallon, north of Stagecoach, and south of Fernley. It crosses Lyon, Storey and Washoe counties and is bordered on all sides by Interstate 80, Highway 95A, Highway 50, Interstate 580 and (old) Highway 395.

There are currently no other Department of Motor Vehicles Specialty License plates serving this cause. Additionally, no funds from any other existing Specialty License plate are allocated to benefit this cause, which is the Historic Horses of the Virginia Range. Specifically and as an example, the funds derived from the specialty "Horse Power" license plate are not currently, nor have they been in the past allocated to any effort associated with the Historic Horses or that of the public safety issues surrounding the Virginia Range. There is no record or acknowledgement from the "Horse Power" organization indicating it has provided funds towards this cause. Additionally, as stated on the www.nvhorsepower.org website, the 'vision' for the funds from the sale of the "Horse Power" license plate "will help the second chance horses and burros receive protection, shelter, good care and homes" and the mission of the Horse Power organization is to "financially aid those groups, organizations, and individuals that care for wild, stray, 2nd chance, horses, burros or mules." This clearly indicates the "Horse Power" organization's focus is on equids in general which are cared for by others and does not focus on methods to increase public safety or attempt to encourage horses to remain in the wild. Moreover, this request covers a specific and very large area of land and population of horses not served by the "Horse Power" organization. Unfortunately, requests for clarification from the "Horse Power" organization have gone unanswered. The remarks herein have been made based on observations, common knowledge amongst local area non-profit wild horse organizations, and the absence of open communication from the "Horse Power" organization about where the 'Horse Power' license plate funds are allocated. As such, there is no indication or evidence of a perceived or actual conflict regarding any other organization or agency supporting efforts to fund this specific cause to responsibly and humanely manage the Historic Horses of the Virginia Range through the Department of Motor Vehicles Specialty License plate program. The approval of this Specialty Plate request would provide a similar outcome as

that of the Pyramid Lake and Lake Tahoe specialty plates to support different efforts and areas – different horses, different goals.

WHAT HVWHPF DOES

Hidden Valley Wild Horse Protection Fund (HVWHPF) is an all-volunteer registered 501(c)3 non-profit Nevada corporation, officially founded in 2008. Our federal tax ID# is 80-0208865. For over 30 years, volunteers from the Hidden Valley community have led a grass roots effort to ensure public safety as well as the preservation and protection of the historic wild horses that graze the Virginia Range east of Reno, Nevada. The current wild horse population across the entire range is estimated at 2,000 horses. While the areas at the foot of the western slopes of the Virginia Range have seen a substantial growth in development over the last decade, so has HVWHPF kept pace with this growth and installed additional fences and cattle guards from the Hidden Valley community through to the Damonte Ranch community. Volunteer efforts are currently underway to extend fencing in a southerly direction through the Virginia Foothills, Toll Road, and Steamboat and Pleasant Valley communities.

To date, volunteer projects have included raising funds for the purchase of materials, installation of new fencing, modification of cattle guards to be horse guards, and maintenance of existing fencing that stretches approximately 8 miles along the lower slopes of the Virginia Range. The organization also monitors herd health and safety, cares for injured horses and foals on the range, moves horses out of congested residential streets and byways, works with local area developers, attends and presents to public meetings and forums, testifies before the legislature to ensure Nevada laws remain fair and humane, works on the establishment of processes to ensure the humane management of the Historic Horses of the Virginia Range, holds monthly membership meetings, and raises funds and awareness at many events throughout the year, all of which are open to the general public.

HVWHPF has operated the largest wild horse rescue in northwest Nevada since September 2012. It currently has 151 wild horses in its care, has rescued 205 Virginia Range wild horses removed from the range by the NDoA, 137 of which were sent through the slaughter pipeline. It has adopted out 91 horses to good, quality forever homes and other rescues, and has seen its herd grow by 44 foals from mares that foaled shortly after they were rescued. HVWHPF continues to seek out quality trainers to gentle and train its horses and to find each horse a good, quality forever home.

Its mission is to protect, preserve, and rescue the historic wild horses of the Virginia Range, Nevada, by creating a safe and healthy environment where they can flourish and be embraced by an appreciative public for generations to come. It works with other local area wild horse advocacy groups to ensure the rescue and safe harbor of orphan foals from the range, has several members who are certified in Technical Large Animal Rescue, and encourages the promotion of ecotourism in the northern Nevada area as a means to diversify and expand the local economy. HVWHPF is part of a local coalition of non-profit organizations currently working with the Nevada Department of Agriculture to implement a cooperative agreement that will authorize these groups to actively assist and participate in the humane management of the Historic Horses of the Virginia Range.

HVWHPF GOALS / WHAT WE WANT TO ACCOMPLISH

Hidden Valley Wild Horse Protection Fund believes in the value derived for the community from the humane and effective management of the Historic Horses of the Virginia Range. Encouraging the herds to remain higher up on the slopes and in the highlands rather than seeking access to low laying new and existing housing developments and dangerous roadways is a major objective for HVWHPF. Developing working partnerships between private property owners, public agencies, and non-profit charitable organizations to create rehabilitation projects and opportunities designed to enhance the vegetation across the range, developing alternative water sources, and continuing the fence line project in a southerly direction are simple and realistic methods to attaining that objective.

HVWHPF reaches its goals through processes designed, created and implemented to promote public safety and animal welfare as well as public education and raising awareness with regard to the historic horses of the Virginia Range. The success of its proactive approach can be measured in the dramatic reduction in horse-to-vehicle strikes tracked in the Damonte Ranch residential community between 2009 and 2013 by the organization's volunteers. HVWHPF's records reflect a dramatic decline in the number of horse-to-vehicle strikes after a successful collaboration between existing property and home owners, new home developers and HVWHPF volunteers to successfully and fully fence out the Damonte Ranch community. These numbers reflect a drop from 18 horses fatally struck and/or euthanized during the winter of 2009-10 to only 3 horses fatally struck and/or euthanized in the winter of 2012-13 after the fence out project completion.

Continuing the fence out project around the entire Virginia Range, using appropriate materials for the task, is a vital step to ensuring public safety and the protection of these horses from excessive contact with humans and vehicles. By simply altering a habit using a diversionary technique, one can establish safer grazing patterns and alter migratory paths that benefit the horses as well as the safety of the public. Creating "safe crossing" zones along highly congested traffic areas is a viable and realistic approach to effectively and humanely manage these animals. There is already one such location in the Dayton area along Highway 50 which is being used by the horses to cross under the highway instead of over it, thus increasing public safety and the protection of the horses.

Establishing and maintaining a healthy, sustainable horse population is an important aspect of the humane management and promotion of wild horse ecotourism in northern Nevada. The introduction of fertility control and a 'laissez faire' approach to allowing nature to take its course is the preferred method HVWHPF would encourage in reaching a stable, healthy population level. Working collaboratively with the NDoA, the Humane Society of the United States, American Wild Horse Preservation Campaign and other local and national wild horse organizations, this coalition is already on track with the planning and preparation for execution of a substantial fertility control program focusing solely on the historic Virginia Range horses. In order for a program of this magnitude to be successful, it must be followed through with on an annual basis until agreed upon predetermined appropriate baseline population levels have been reached. Thereafter, a fertility control maintenance program must

be implemented in order to sustain those population projections, track the program's success, and develop long term population levels and expectations that will reflect and complement the goals of the surrounding communities and economic development.

Finally, this program is an ideal opportunity to encourage our community to participate and assist in the humane management of the Historic Virginia Range Horses. These herds have a huge following of admirers and enthusiasts from our local community, across the State of Nevada, this country, and from around the globe. Both the City of Reno and the Washoe County Commission have recently approved and signed resolutions in support of and protection for Nevada's wild horses. Offering a Virginia Range Historic Horse Specialty License plate to Nevadans will allow many different levels of participation and interaction from the public by building programs designed for various levels of volunteerism. Additionally, the support for this specialty license plate will help to reflect the pride so many Nevadans hold for these horses. The role the horse has played in building our Nevada history as well as growing our current ecotourism industry is of great interest and importance to many on the local and national scale.

Implementing a means with which to increase public education and awareness about the State of Nevada historic wild horses of the Virginia Range is an important goal of the Hidden Valley Wild Horse Protection Fund and its members. The challenges and rewards of preserving one of America's treasured icons is the main stay of what drives the volunteers of the Hidden Valley Wild Horse Protection Fund. Raising awareness and teaching the public about the horses, their status in this state, the role the horse has played in our American and Nevadan culture, and the pride we have for this beautiful gift are all relevant and significant topics that can be developed into an educational program for people of all ages and walks of life.

The development of a museum and central information stations across the Virginia Range that offer an informational and interactive experience to help draw and excite visitors to this region is another major goal of the HVWHPF. Imparting our rich and rugged history while incorporating the many natural and man-made attractions found in this region with the thrill of seeing a wild horse is a dream come true for many foreign and national tourists. Bringing the story of the wild horse to our public school system, senior citizen groups, and as an adult continuing education option will offer Nevada's citizens an opportunity to learn about and play a greater role in the future of the wild horse in America and in their backyards.

ALLOCATION OF FUNDS DERIVED FROM AN APPROVED NEVADA DMV SPECIALTY LICENSE PLATE

The allocation of funds received from an approved Nevada Department of Motor Vehicles Specialty License plate program would begin with heavily weighted focus on public safety and minor emphasis on the public education aspects pertaining to the Historic Horses of the Virginia Range. The balance of funding for these two areas would reverse over time as public safety issues become matters of maintenance and repair and public education becomes the driving focus for ecotourism based projects. Funding would be allocated toward the purchase of the materials, resources, and labor needed to

increase public safety and develop educational opportunities central to the horse population across the range. Areas of particular and immediate concern regarding public safety have been identified as the southeastern sector of Reno, Geiger Grade from Reno to Virginia City, Moundhouse along Highway 50 and Highway 50 between Dayton and Stagecoach and through Silver Springs. The implementation of measures designed to mitigate these concerns and reduce the financial burden for various State of Nevada departments and divisions, such as the Nevada Department of Agriculture and the Nevada Highway Patrol, are discussed in brief in the following paragraphs.

Funding the installation of alternative water sources and maintenance of existing water sources is a critical element in creating a successful means of affecting the movement of horse herds across the range. Identifying strategic locations and development plans to include gaining approvals, permits, and access are factors to be taken into consideration in the installation of wildlife guzzlers – watering systems created to accommodate all types of wildlife for the areas they serve. HVWHPF is in contact with a private property owner who is actively pursuing this avenue of development that will benefit all wildlife within access to the area of the guzzler on this piece of private property. This project will be used as the development model for subsequent alternative water source projects.

Over the last several decades the Virginia Range has been subjected to wildfires that have rendered various areas of the land practically barren. Unfortunately, there have been no actual follow-up efforts made to rehabilitate those affected lands. Restoring, rehabilitating, and maintaining range lands through re-planting and re-seeding projects designed to enhance the natural resources across the entire Virginia Range, where permitted, will be an important funding priority. Ensuring the availability of adequate water and feed for all wildlife on the Virginia Range will in turn benefit all the communities and housing developments in and around the range by encouraging the animals to remain higher up on the slopes and in the highlands. HVWHPF will be partnering with the newly formed non-profit organization *Virginia Range Wild Horse Sanctuary* as well as private property owners to assess the need for and develop rehabilitation projects as needed. Working cooperatively on rangeland projects with the advice and council from agencies such as the Nevada Division of Forestry and the University of Nevada Cooperative Extension agencies and others to develop programs with realistic expectations that have already been successfully implemented elsewhere will enrich the diversity of vegetation and wildlife on the Virginia Range. Earmarking annual projects in a collaborative partnership with other organizations and agencies with expertise in their own fields of study will ensure success that will benefit a wide range of stakeholders.

While HVWHPF believes that the historic horses of the Virginia Range should remain wild and free, it also realizes that there will always be some horses that need to be removed from the range for the purpose of their own safety and that of the public. Rescue arrangements must be incorporated into a humane management program for the “domestication” of these horses to include board, feed, medical care, farrier service, transportation, training, and adoption. The support of rescue operations, training, and adoption programs for wild horses removed from the range will be a focal point of funding resources. Ensuring the rescue of these horses from entering the “slaughter pipeline” through Nevada’s livestock auctions is of critical importance to HVWHPF development programs. The current protocol initiated by the NDoA is to release these horses at such sales in the event local non-profit organizations

are not able to purchase them directly from that agency. HVWHPF wants to ensure the Historic Horses of the Virginia Range are not subjected to this type of treatment and that funds will be available for their rescue and training projects.

The development of educational materials for distribution to classroom settings as well as tourism-oriented operations will be an important path for funding resources. Raising awareness about the historic horses of the Virginia Range, the history and culture surrounding the evolution of the Comstock, and the emigration of the pioneers who settled the West all draw the interest of the local community as well as people from around the world. Growing this interest and delivering the information will help to promote Nevada's ecotourism industry which will in turn bring more of a diverse visitor base to the Reno/Sparks/Tahoe region. Funding for a museum, viewing areas, interactively educational elements, and information centers surrounding the culture, history, and historic horses of the Virginia Range is a practical and achievable goal for funding from this Specialty License plate. Including presentations and course curriculum in our local school and continuing education systems will help our community to better understand the importance of maintaining a balanced ecosystem and respect for the natural resources in our high desert climate. Projects of this type will also open the door to many hands-on opportunities and participation for many local residents of all ages.

Reaching a healthy, sustainable population of Historic Horses of the Virginia Range is a major concern for HVWHPF. Volunteer training and the employment of a fertility control program is both critical and complex in its design and implementation. Tracking, reporting, and logging activities are important elements in the deployment of a successful fertility control program. Identifying the correct resources and training options capable of providing reliable, accurate, and meaningful data collection for use in project development and assessment are critical elements of measuring the success of a well-executed program. Funding support for this program will be of high priority to HVWHPF.

Additional funding opportunities that could be set aside each year for the development of special projects include but are not limited to:

- Public Service Announcements created and produced to support and promote public safety messages, on topics such as no feeding, safe driving in areas of wild horse movement, range land rehabilitation, volunteerism, etc.
- Annual exposition and other public events, including horse adoptions, that showcase the valuable assets that are the Historic Horses of the Virginia Range
- The creation and implementation of equine therapy programs to benefit at risk youth, war veterans, and disabled children and adults
- Special programs designed to offer terminally ill children and adults the opportunity to interact with wild horses in a meaningful yet safe environment
- Sponsorship of a Western Nevada Mounted Law Enforcement Color Guard team representing various local area law enforcement and fire protection agencies such as Reno PD, Sparks PD, Washoe Co Sheriff, Reno FD, Sparks FD, Truckee Meadows FPD, NHP, Storey Co Sheriff, Storey Co FD, Lyon Co Sheriff, Lyon Co FD, UNR PD, and Washoe Co School District PD, etc.

BENEFIT TO COMMUNITY

Hidden Valley Wild Horse Protection Fund realizes the funds derived from this endeavor will fill a sorely needed niche and provide a positive impact to Nevada's state coffers. It is the expectation of the Hidden Valley Wild Horse Protection Fund that the approval and implementation of a Virginia Range Historic Horses Specialty License plate will generate funds that will help to offset the financial burden on the State of Nevada as thus the Nevada tax payer for decades to come. The Nevada Department of Agriculture is the responsible agency for the ongoing management of the state owned Historic Virginia Range Horses. That agency's budget planning lacks the inclusion of the materials and resources needed to reach the level of public safety that should be deemed adequate for such an extensive task. Additionally, with an expectation of fewer horse-to-vehicle strikes, law enforcement and other various resources tasked with processing such incidents, will have more time and available resources to apply to the challenges and areas of critical concern to their agencies.

By creating a safer environment and enhancing the range land across the Virginia Range, the efforts derived from this proposal are expected to decrease the number of horses in residential areas and along congested roadsides. In doing so, public safety in and around the Virginia Range will be increased while opening public education opportunities as a result. The installation of fencing and horseguards (modified cattleguards), range land enhancement, the addition of alternative water sources, implementation of fertility control measures, the introduction of public awareness and promotion of the Historic Horses of the Virginia Range are all attainable and reasonable projects. Additionally, engaging the public to play an active role in the humane management of the horses coupled with all other measures included in this proposal provide for a measurable improvement in the health, viability, and sustainability of a beautiful part of our home called the Virginia Range.

SUMMARY

The approval and authorization of this Specialty License plate application for the Historic Horses of the Virginia Range and the funds derived from sales of the plates will provide the Hidden Valley Wild Horse Protection Fund with the means to offer a great public service to the people living and travelling in and around the Virginia Range. Funds resulting from this Second Tier program will be derived from those Nevadans who believe in the value of the Historic Horses of the Virginia Range and those who have the desire to participate in the development and improvement of the horses' future on the range. HVWHPF will work in partnership and cooperatively with other organizations and agencies to ensure the funds derived from this program are allocated to projects that are well-developed and managed by those with the appropriate knowledge, experience, and expertise to affect the changes and achieve the desired outcomes and results expected.

Your consideration of this application for approval of a Historic Horses of the Virginia Range specialty license plate is greatly appreciated.

Respectfully,

Shannon Windle

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www.hiddenvalleyhorses.com

www.wildhorseadoption.org

OUR MISSION: To protect, preserve, and rescue the historic wild horses of the Virginia Range, Nevada, by creating a safe and healthy environment where they can flourish and are embraced by an appreciative public for generations to come.

Included in this package are the following:

\$20,000 surety bond

proposed color specialty license plate design featuring the Virginia Range stallion “Ghost” – provided with the authorization of photographer and local Reno resident Ellen Holcomb

IRS tax exempt letter

State of Nevada tax exempt letter

2013 – 990 form

HVWHPF 2013 Financial Statement

Nevada Secretary of State 2014 Good Standing

HVWHPF brochure

HVWHPF window sticker

HVWHPF No Feed door hanger

HVWHPF December 2014 donation solicitation letter

HVWHPF list of major fund raising events 2013 - 2014