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## PUBLIC PRESSURE AND A NEW DIMENSION OF QUALITY—HORSES AND BURROS

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Horses, and to a lesser extent, burros, are symbols of the West. These animals are a part of our heritage and represent a dimension of quality in the environment. Many people think of them as native wild animals, and this conception is understandable when it is realized that horses and burros were among the first introductions by man into North America.

When free-ranging, unbranded horses and burros are classified as feral or exotic animals, a semantic problem of the layman's understanding versus scientific or legal terminology arises. Feral livestock is still livestock and not wildlife. Exotic animals, especially non-game exotics, are frequently considered unwanted intruders. For example, as feral or exotic, horses and burros are not welcome in national parks. Management policy in national parks is that exotics are not to be encouraged and feral animals are regularly removed (Leopold *et al.*, 1963).

State legislative action has usually classified horses and burros as feral or stray livestock under the jurisdiction of state departments of agriculture. Since domestic horses and burros can escape and be assimilated into wild bands, this classification is logical.

Horses evolved in North America, and Dasmann (1964 reported that the last native horses disappeared only 8,000 years ago. Burros probably evolved in arid regions of North Africa and were adapted to conditions they found in the arid Southwest United States.

The history of the modern horse on the North American continent is shrouded in conjecture and contradictory opinions. Columbus is credited with having brought the first horses to the New World. But, the first horses to reach the mainland of North America probably were brought from Cuba by Cortez (Wyman, 1945).

Horses escaped into the wild and came to be known as "mustangs," a word that originated with the Spanish *mesteno* meaning "strayed—wild." The terms are used interchangeably in this paper.

The Indian was quick to take advantage of this new resource, and it seems as if the horse and the American Indian have always been together. Allen (1954) said that horses were the cultural key that gave the Indian the full use of his environment.

With the westward march of civilization, settlers found the bands

of free-running, wild horses to be a nuisance and began killing them by the thousands (Wyman, 1945). Driven to the most remote environments, only the hardiest survived. Underfed and scrubby, "broom-tail," "cayuse" or "jughead" were terms that described them well.

At the end of World War II and during the years immediately following, the demand for horse meat for pet food became overwhelming. The commercial exploitation factor that would bring about the possible extinction of the wild horse had now entered the picture.

Horse removal served two purposes: more grazing land would be come available for domestic users; and horse carcasses provided cheap meat for the processors. It was a lucrative business for the professional hunters, as the only requirements at the slaughtering centers were that the animals be ambulatory and in large numbers. The old technique of rounding up horses with crews of hard-riding horsemen was too slow and costly, so the cowboy took to the air. They drove horses from their meager shelter in the rimrock and canyons, and to expedite taking large numbers, used inhumane methods. Physical injuries were the least concern as these animals were to be killed anyway. By 1949, in Nevada alone, more than 100,000 unowned horses were captured and processed (McKnight, 1964). Throughout the West, where their numbers had been estimated in the millions (Wyman, 1945), they had been reduced to an estimated 14,810 to 28,620 (McKnight, 1959).

Even though the burros were not commercially exploited, they fared no better than the horses. Claims of overpopulation and possible competition with the native desert bighorn led to systematic extermination programs. In California, the public reacted unfavorably to these programs, and, in 1953, broadly protective legislation for the burros was passed. In 1957, the California legislature established a wild burro sanctuary on two million acres of Federal Public Domain. In this case, complete protection, without management, is certainly no panacea. Many observers agree the burros often seem too numerous.

The following is the personal story of Mrs. Johnston. The end result is a demand backed by great public pressure that the horses and burros be allowed to endure.

Although I had heard that airplanes were being used to capture mustangs, like so many of us do when something doesn't touch our lives directly, I pretended it didn't concern me. But one morning in the year 1950, my own apathetic attitude was jarred into acute awareness. What had now touched my life was to reach into the lives of many others as time went on.

By chance, I drove behind a truckload of bleeding and exhausted horses. My curiosity aroused, I questioned the driver and learned the

horses had been caught in an airborne roundup and were destined for slaughter. Outraged, I set about accumulating all the information that was available on the horses, commercial roundups in other areas of the West, methods used, physical abuses, and an estimate of the numbers that were being taken. I learned the removal program was subscribed to by the Bureau of Land Management, which has the responsibility for the protection, management and improvement of the public lands under the terms of the Taylor Grazing Act. This policy was adopted as a result of pressures by the domestic users of the public lands and by hunting interests. McKnight (1964) quoted BLM Nevada State Supervisor, E. R. Greenslet: "This program (of large scale removal) was carried out without cost to the government except some assistance in building holding corrals and truck trails when needed."

The information, though limited, served me well when in mid-June of 1952, I learned of a proposed airplane roundup of wild horses in the Virginia Range of Storey County, adjacent to my ranch. Permission had already been granted by the BLM district office, and Nevada law required that permission also be obtained from the Board of County Commissioners. My husband and I began a crash program to inform and seek the support of as many people in the county as possible. At the permit hearing such a strong protest was registered that the commissioners, on June 16, 1952, outlawed the use of airplanes as a means of chasing, rounding up or spotting during a roundup of wild horses or burros within the county. The victory was not easily won. A group of sheepmen claimed that the horses were injurious to grazing land; and rendering works officials deemed it their right to conduct wild horse chases by airplane, and to corral and transport the animals to rendering works. (*Reno Evening Gazette*, June 10, 1952). It was a small measure of success, but enough to spur efforts to have similar legislation enacted to cover the whole state.

In February, 1955, a bill paralleling the Storey County action was introduced into the Nevada State Legislature, at my request, by State Senator James M. Slattery and was assigned to Committee. Three similar bills backed by other concerned individuals had failed to get out of committee in the past, due no doubt to public apathy. However, I had learned the value of educating the voters to guarantee support and I was willing to try. I wrote to riding groups, humane organizations, prominent citizens, civic organizations and friends. I emphasized that their support must be voiced through their legislators. My efforts to enlist help from the news media failed, except occasionally my "Letter to the Editor" was carried in local newspapers, and

the writer of a weekly horseman's column helped in every way possible. I carefully avoided the pitfall of becoming lyrically sentimental over the animals, and I admitted that mustangs would not, in many instances, measure up to accepted standards of equine beauty. I pointed to the lack of knowledge either to repudiate or justify claims that they were injurious to the range. I reasoned that probably because of their feral or exotic status, little scientific attention had been given to them, surprising in view of the vast ranges, large populations and economic importance involved. It was difficult to point to harassment and abuse by man and at the same time hide my emotions. I needed the support of those appalled by inhumane treatment, but I did not want my words to be categorized as emotional, for there were those who would brand me as oversensitive. However, it was my description of inhumane treatment and my reminder of the loss of an American heritage that gained public support.

So strong was the response to my appeal for help that one of the lawmakers remarked to Senator Slattery, "Who is this Mrs. Johnston? She must know everybody in the State!" (Personal comment Senator Slattery).

The Committee chairman agreed to release the bill with a "do pass" recommendation, provided I would agree to an amendment to prevent the act from being construed to conflict with provisions of any federal law or regulation governing hunting or driving of horses or burros by airborne or motor-driven vehicles. At this point, a piece of bread was better than losing the whole loaf, and I agreed to the amendment with the realization that approximately 87 percent of Nevada's land is federally controlled, and only the rest would be protected. The measure passed the legislature with almost no opposition, and on March 23, 1955, the Governor signed into law the first statewide measure ever enacted to prohibit the airborne and mechanized pursuit and capture of wild horses and burros.

It soon became apparent that an effective program for the protection of all wild horses and burros would require the enactment of federal legislation. In view of the relatively small number of people now concerned it was a project that seemed as unlikely of accomplishment as did a trip around the moon at that time. But, each was to become a reality.

We continued to inform as many people as possible. But, it was two years before the story was carried in the nation's newspapers. California's *Sacramento Bee* was the first, February 21, 1957. Then, it was featured by such magazines as *Reader's Digest* (December, 1957) and *True* (June, 1958).

On January 19, 1959, Nevada's Congressman, the Honorable Walter S. Baring, introduced a measure to prohibit use of aircraft or motor vehicles to hunt certain wild horses or burros on all land belonging to the United States. At this point, more publications carried the story. *Desert* (June, 1959), *Sierra*, *Western Horseman* and *Time* (all July, 1959), and humane organizations and their affiliates were instrumental in awakening interest. European newspapers and magazines covered the story, and as more readers became aware of the plight of wild horses and burros, I received letters by the thousands. To each inquiry of "What can I do to help?", I replied, "Contact your delegations in Washington, ask for an early hearing on HR2725, and solicit the support of your lawmakers when the bill comes up for their consideration." Included also, was the latest information I had and a plea to enlist the help of all with whom the writer might come in contact.

The move to save these animals gained momentum throughout the nation. Similar or identical measures were introduced by Representatives Coad of Iowa, Loser of Tennessee, O'Konski of Wisconsin, and by Senators Mansfield and Murray of Montana, Neuberger of Oregon, Douglas of Illinois, Cannon of Nevada, Cooper of Kentucky and Bush of Connecticut. The fact that Members of Congress reacted affirmatively to their constituents from so widely separated geographical locations indicated nationwide support.

An Associated Press release of July, 15, 1959 stated, "Some Congressmen hope the matter will be settled soon. Seldom has an issue touched such a responsive chord in the hearts of their constituents. Their offices have been overwhelmed by mail."

The *Christian Science Monitor*, July 21, 1959, "Members of Congress have been startled by an unusual stampede of mail in recent weeks. They have been bombarded with thousands of letters from constituents, not about world affairs, about inflation or taxes—but about wild horses."

The *Kiplinger Washington Letter* of July 18, 1959, "Congress is deluged with protests over use of planes and trucks by hunters who run down range mustangs, rope them, kill them and sell them to processors."

The "Wright Slant on Washington" (a report from Congressman Jim Wright of Texas) July 20, 1959, "Am I going to be susceptible to pressure? . . . You bet your boots I am."

A Congressional hearing was scheduled for July 15, 1959, at which I was summoned to testify. On July 14th, at a news conference, I was interviewed at length by representatives of leading news media. By nightfall, the story of my arrival in the nation's capitol was in nearly

every major newspaper throughout the land and on the front page of many.

In the House Judiciary Chamber, with press galleries filled and before a capacity audience, I related the story of the slaughter of the wild horses and burros to the seventeen Congressmen of the committee. It is a matter of record that I stressed the need for knowledge and management as well as humane treatment. For more than two hours, I testified and was interrogated.

Department of the Interior representatives argued for an amendment to allow the BLM to continue the use of airborne and mechanized methods for the capture of the animals. I countered that the amendment would put the stamp of approval of Congress on what had long been going on and would render the legislation useless for the purpose for which it was intended.

On August 11, 1959, the House Committee on the Judiciary unanimously recommended its passage without amendment, and in its report No. 833 included this definition: "The world 'wild' refers to horses or burros existing in a wild or free state on public lands. The language used is broad enough to apply to any horse or burro existing in a free or wild state on public land or ranges, and this plus the requirement that they be unbranded is sufficient to differentiate these horses from horses whose ownership can be traced to some individual. It would be noted that this classification does not rest upon the origin of the horses in terms of bloodlines or similar technical limitations." The bill passed the House on August 17th without debate and the Senate passed it on August 25th. It became Public Law 86-234 with the signature of President Dwight D. Eisenhower on September 8, 1959.

In its slow and stormy course from the Court House of my county to the White House of my country, a course that took seven years and three months, it was the increasing support by public pressure that brought accomplishment.

Interest in the wild ones did not subside once the legislation was enacted. My mail continued to be heavy, and invitations to speak before civic groups multiplied. Many realized that steps to provide for the security of the horses' future would likewise have to be taken and they continued in their demands.

By order of Secretary of the Interior Stewart L. Udall, December, 1962, a 435,000-acre wild horse refuge was established in southern Nevada. A news release from his office had this to say: "The refuge was established in answer to pleas from thousands of admirers of the free-ranging animals, some of whom are thought to be remote descendants of the early Spanish mustangs. . . . To many people, the wild horses are a symbol of an inspiring era in the West."

Located in the northeast corner of the Nellis Air Force Base practice range, northwest of Las Vegas, it was planned to develop the horse refuge into a national park type of attraction and at the same time provide for research and evaluation of resource management practices. (*A Management Plan for the Nevada Wild Horse Range*, prepared by the Nevada State Office, Bureau of Land Management, March, 1966.) In response to my inquiry as to how the plans were progressing, Mr. Boyd L. Rasmussen, Director of BLM in Washington, informed me in his letter of November 30, 1967, "We were well aware of the military requirements at that time, and felt that management of wild horses would be quite compatible since the area is so large. Optimistically, we hoped that military requirements would lessen . . . the Air Force must increase its use of the area . . . and cannot allow public access. For the time being, we must continue the Nevada Wild Horse Range in its present status." The 1966 Management Plan was put aside and is now unavailable.

The next development, and dramatically indicative of the intense interest of the public, was the report in *National Observer* (April 11, 1966) of the long smoldering controversy over some 150 horses in the Pryor Mountains along the Montana-Wyoming border. Residents of the area contended that the horses were descendants of those ranging in the Pryors when some of the first settlers came there in 1894, and they should be allowed to remain as an historical attraction. Montana game officials claimed the horses were depriving the deer of browse. The BLM, contending that the vegetation on the federal land involved required protection, decreed that the horses must be removed. In Lovell, Wyoming, the town nearest to the horse range area, the Chamber of Commerce organized its campaign to resist destruction or removal of the horses.

Almost immediately protest letters criticizing the Bureau's policy began pouring in to the Governors of Montana and Wyoming, the BLM, Congressmen and local officials in the area. In the face of such strong opposition, BLM agreed to postpone decision on the fate of the horses for two years.

BLM in defense of its position on horses and burros in May, 1967 issued *Fact Sheet: Wild Horses*. BLM acknowledged that it shared with many people an interest in preserving and protecting the remnants of the wild horse herd. Any horse roaming free, and uncontrolled could be called a wild horse, and the numbers estimated on public domain were 17,300 horses and 8,100 burros. The fact sheet attributed the drastic reduction in horse density to disease, starvation, roundups, and concluded by saying that solutions to wild horse problems would be found when all concerned could work together.

The April, 1967, issue of *True* magazine related the Pryor Mountain furor. Articles in newspapers appeared from time to time, and as more people became aware of the situation, protective efforts accelerated.

In a nationwide news release, September 14, 1967, BLM announced a four-point policy which assured that positive efforts would continue for the preservation of wild horses and burros. The policy provided for a planned management program where the aesthetic value of wild horses or burros was determined to be a public asset; where forage and water was limited and the wild horses and burros competed with livestock or wildlife, BLM would work with interested groups; where reserved forage is set aside for horses and burros, the Bureau would establish cooperative management agreements with state and local authorities and other interested groups; where numbers become too plentiful, the agency would work with state and local authorities in gathering excess animals to reduce the herds to manageable numbers. The news release was concluded by the Director alluding to BLM awareness of public pressure. He said, "We feel that the public has amply demonstrated its concern for these animals and look upon them as representatives of a colorful and historic chapter in the story of the West."

Hardly was the ink dry on the BLM policy statement, when the Montana Livestock Commission went into action to protect the domestic users of the public land within its borders. On December 4, 1967, the commission resolved that the ownership of livestock, including horses and burros, without specific responsibility, was contrary to the policy of the Livestock Commission of the State of Montana and that in the creation of any refuge area, state lines should be fenced in order to determine jurisdiction and eliminate confusion of responsibility and policy. This was clearly an indication of opposition by the cattle industry in the State of Montana, and timed to particularly affect the Pryor Mountain horses.

Upon expiration of the two-year reprieve the Bureau of Land Management on March 14, 1968 presented three alternatives for managing the Pryor Mountain Horse Area. Referred to by *Newsweek* (May 13, 1968) as a choice of "remove, remove, remove," the first one called for the removal of all but 30 to 35 horses by corral trapping, then to allow an increase to a maximum of 50 to 60 animals when the watershed recovered. The second called for herd reduction to 10 or 15 with a future potential of about 30, and with a healthy deer herd to be maintained; the third called for the removal of all the horses and the introduction of a huntable bighorn sheep herd.

Public clamor grew increasingly bitter and by June, the Bureau



had received thousands of letters and had held 24 public hearings. In a news release (June 16, 1968) by the Billings, Montana, District Office of BLM, Dean Bibles, District Manager, stated: "While we have been urged to establish a wild horse refuge in the Pryor Mountains, no group has volunteered to sponsor these horses so far. Because of requirements of Montana livestock law, someone will have to assume responsibility for them." Decision was to be reached in August, 1968.

Upon announcement of the requirement of sponsorship for the herd the Pryor Mountain Wild Horse Association was formed by residents of the area and volunteers from other parts of the country. Late in May, Dean Bibles outlined five requirements that the sponsors would have to meet. Among them were that the horses would have to be purchased from the "State or States" (Montana—Wyoming) and would be branded by the sponsor with a properly recorded brand in both states. Other specific requirements were to be worked out in accordance with BLM's horse policy, (*Lovell Chronicle*, June 20, 1968). We who were willing to sponsor the herd refused to comply with the branding requirement.

In the meantime, construction by BLM of an elaborate corral-type trap at one of the major watering holes was well under way—at an estimated cost of \$40,000—(*Casper Star-Tribune*, September 18, 1968). A nationwide ABC-TV news broadcast in July, 1968 featured the Pryor Mountain horses and their possible fate. The public renewed its pleas in their behalf, and the Interior Department was nearly buried in telegrams, letters and telephone calls. Many complaints cited lack of scientific knowledge as a reason to continue to delay action. Work on the trap continued in spite of the many protests. Time for final decision was rapidly drawing near, with preparation for horse capture nearing completion.

All other efforts to halt the BLM having failed, in late August, 1968, the Humane Society of the United States, with Lovell, Wyoming, rancher Lloyd Tillett, filed suit against the Secretary of the Interior and other officials of the BLM to bring the proposed removal program to a stop. At the hearing on the application for a restraining order, BLM officials stated the Bureau had no intention of destroying the mustangs, and that if any decision were made, there would be ample opportunity for all to be heard and all rights to be preserved. Upon this assurance, the temporary injunction was dismissed on the grounds it was premature. Left standing was the petition for a permanent injunction. (*News of the Humane Society of the United States*, September-October, 1968).

Plans for trapping the horses were abandoned, and on September

12, 1968, the BLM announced the establishment by Secretary Udall of a 31,000-acre wild horse and wildlife range in the Pryor Mountains along the Montana-Wyoming border to "give Federal protection to a herd of wild horses whose future has aroused nation-wide attention for several months." The Director said, "It is essential that we move ahead immediately to designate these lands to provide Federal protection for this national heritage." At the same time, the Secretary authorized the appointment of a special advisory committee to help in the study of humane and practical means to operate the range.

The committee, appointed by Director Rasmussen, is comprised of eight members:

William G. Cheney, Executive Officer, Montana Livestock Commission, Helena, Montana; Dr. C. Wayne Cook, Chairman, Department of Range Management, Colorado State University; Fort Collins, Colorado; Dr. Frank C. Craighead, Jr., Wildlife Naturalist, Moose, Wyoming; Frank H. Dunkle, Director, Montana Fish and Game Department, Helena, Montana; Mrs. Velma B. Johnston, President of the International Society for the Protection of Mustangs and Burros, Reno, Nevada; Clyde A. Reynolds, Mayor, Lovell, Wyoming; Mrs. Pearl Twyne, President, American Horse Protective Association, Great Falls, Virginia; George L. Turcott, Chief, Division of Resource Standards and Technology, Bureau of Land Management, Washington,

The committee held its first meeting October 16-20, 1968, in Billings, Lovell and on the horse range. Two more meetings will conclude the preliminary studies and pave the way for the committee's recommendations. With the establishment of an advisory group, one of my major aims these last ten years was reached. I hope the committee will recommend other goals toward which so many have worked, and personally will emphasize the need for study.

The horses and burros have become a dimension of quality in whose behalf the public has expressed itself forcefully and will no doubt continue to do so. That public opinion is a strong factor in the determination of value is dramatically demonstrated in a summary of developments over a comparatively short period of time.

It is significant that twelve years ago a BLM official boasted of the number of horses taken in his agency's program of range clearance (at negligible cost to the government); on September 12, 1968, the BLM Director referred to horses as a "national heritage," and the bureau has expressed interest in trying to save them. Yet there has been no lessening of the pressures against them by other users of the range.

That out of the limbo to which their feral status relegated them,

they are now given federal protection in at least two refuge areas.

That from being the victims of indiscriminate reduction programs and the scapegoats for many of the natural ills and domestic abuses that have befallen our public lands, their future in one specific area at least is to be decided only after the most careful consideration by acknowledged experts in their fields.

That where their welfare was once of so little concern as to merit only space afforded to a "Letter to the Editor" in a local paper in the least populated state of our nation, their welfare was the subject of a twelve-page photo essay in *Life* (January 17, 1969) whose circulation numbers in excess of seven million.

That from a long-standing need to establish research from which to manage, the University of Nevada, Reno, has begun an active and broad research interest in mustangs; and the University of Nevada and the University of California, Berkeley, are attempting to initiate intense studies on burros.

Public interest, backed by public pressure, indicates a feral livestock classification will not be accepted, and it is also evident that these animals must be considered desirable exotics, if still exotics. This may mean a federally legislated designation of status. Late in the last session of Congress, I initiated a movement to have these animals classified as endangered wildlife, but it has been pointed out to me that to include these controversial animals under the broad use of the term "endangered wildlife" may injure the concept for other animals which also need protection.

Possibly there is a more acceptable designation which will afford impetus to a program for protection, research and management of mustangs and burros. I will investigate alternatives because public pressure has accelerated in recent weeks.

It is our hope that this presentation will bring to the attention of professional wildlifers that these animals merit their concern.

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#### DISCUSSION

DISCUSSION LEADER MANES: Thank you, Mrs. Johnston. First of all we would like to call for points of clarification.

DR. DOUGLAS PIMLOTT (University of Toronto): I'm particularly interested in knowing why it was considered to be so important from Mrs. Johnston's point of view that she kept from being emotional in this issue. I think that in all of these issues the most important factor involved is human emotion. Personally, I don't see anything wrong with human emotions when they are well based, and I think this is what is going to enter in public opinion. But we make a studied attempt so often to avoid emotion, and I would like very much to understand why a private citizen would feel so strongly about keeping this very important element out of her presentation on this question.

MRS. JOHNSTON: There isn't a thing wrong with emotion. It is a very important part of our lives; but when a woman begins on it, fighting a man's battle in a man's world, she has three strikes against her to begin with and I had to learn to talk on that level. What feelings I have are something different.

MR. MANNUS: Any other questions?

MISS ANN FREE (Washington *Star*, Baltimore *Sun*): Could Mrs. Johnston and Dr. Pontrelli tell us about the burros? I thought that they got a little short-shirted in the paper.

DR. PONTRELLI: The burros were kind of an adopted son for Mrs. Johnston's concern. There are many groups very interested in burros and concerned about their safety and future. The burros, in fact, were slighted in the paper. They have not had the amount of public pressure generated over them and we made the point of emphasis in the paper public pressure.

I think Wally Macgregor who wants to ask a question next can say in California that's not the case.

We didn't go into it very much. It is a complicated problem. We would have but there was time limitation on how much we could write.

MR. WALLACE MACGREGOR (California): I'm glad Mike made that comment because I was going to jump all over him.

In California it is a greater crime of the fish and game laws to shoot a burro than to shoot a man. The penalty is more severe.

I want to compliment Mrs. Johnston. She pointed out in her paper that complete protection is not a fantasy, and management is required. Since complete protection has been installed in California, the Department has been somewhat negligent in the attention we have given the burros. From a research standpoint we have tried to remedy this. We did contribute to U. C. students last summer. Unfortunately, budget cuts eliminated this for future work. We hope we can do this in a nonfinancial way. We do have a real problem with burros in California and our whole desert ecological system. In certain areas the burros are being destructive, and in other areas we don't have problems.

I think it is a matter of finding out where the balance is. Can we fit the burro and other animals together?

On the Colorado river these burros will slumber and water with the bighorns. Wells, in his work, showed that in Death Valley much of the competition between burro and bighorn was not for water in the area because of the free-flowing springs. The bighorn depend upon natural springs for water during the summer.

The burros drink these and go a little farther to the river, and they have an adverse effect on the bighorn. We are finding out in some areas that a controlled burro population will be an asset, but I think an uncontrolled burro population can very definitely be a detriment to our native wildlife and to our native forests.

MR. DON ALDRICH: (Montana Wildlife Federation): We have not been in agreement with the program as it has been carried on, and I feel obligated to at least make one comment.

The endangered species in the Montana mountains is the mountain sheep, but it's already gone. The second endangered species is the mule deer, and it is being depleted. The third endangered species is the horse, and it is depleting itself through removal of the vegetation and soil.

I would like to ask Mrs. Johnston if she feels, with the emotion that has been built up to protect these horses, if they are going to be able to control the

population. I am afraid that the facility to control it has grown beyond the land manager, and the resource manager. Does she think with this committee which is doing the study they can make recommendations that will keep those animals in numbers compatible with the habitat that's available?

MRS. JOHNSTON: I believe a fair assessment of any solution would necessarily have to await the conclusion of the meetings of these specially appointed wild horse advisory committees. It is comprised of representatives of the various interests involved, all outstanding people in their field.

We have had the one meeting. On the 23rd of March we meet again and on the 24th right in the area. Believe me we have gobs of homework to do. This is not just a passing fancy. We are going into it very deeply, very thoroughly, most conscientiously. Dr. C. Wayne Cook of Colorado State University is our chairman, and we have William Chaney of the Montana Livestock Commission, Mr. Frank Dugal, representing fish and game from Montana, and Dr. Craighead on the animal biology, and me and Mrs. Twine locally here, and the mayor of the town in the vicinity.

Now, you've got to have faith in this committee because it is essential, and hopefully we can contribute something real great after our meetings.

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