



Registered Charity 60025711276

Secretary : PO Box 333, Nannup WA 6275
Email : wadifarm@bordnet.com.au
Phone : 0417 177 011 Home : (08) 9756 0709

MEDIA RELEASE

The Outback Heritage Horse Association of WA Inc (OHHAWA), the biggest and most experienced wild horse rescue charity in Western Australia, has voiced serious concerns with the proposed "Last Great Muster", a project aimed at mustering and droving 300 – 400 wild horses, purportedly Walers, across Australia from WA.

The project website <http://walerhorserescue.com/> contains very little information regarding the most basic elements of planning necessary to undertake a muster/drove of this size. The initial aerial muster and yarding of the horses for possible weeks on the proposed station, prior to the journey, will be very stressful for the animals. It is likely that mature stallions will be shot as too many stallions would only cause further problems, and there is serious concern regarding the welfare of newborn/young foals and heavily pregnant mares. The suggestion by the organisers that wild mares and young foals will be trucked along behind the main drive until the foals are old enough to travel is regarded as completely unrealistic.

There is, to date, no public mention of a concise management or welfare plan, nor of veterinary supervision during the drive itself. The lack of facts and figures gives serious cause for concern with regard to these and other welfare issues.

Fit, healthy domestic horses would have difficulty with a journey of this length (projected timeframe of the drove is 5-7 months), and the fact that the proposal seeks to drive a mob of up to 400 wild horses is simply too great a risk – for the wild horses involved as well as for those working with the animals, not to mention any inexperienced observers along the way. Despite assurances of professionalism, the very real potential of injuries, death and mental stress on the horses during such a proposed drive cannot, in any way, be justified by the comment "the horses were/are going to be culled anyway". Such a statement does not even come close to justifying such long term stress and potential cruelty to animals.

It is especially concerning that there now appears to be media interest in such an apparently poorly planned venture. The advice of the Waler Horse Society of Australia Inc is that it never recommended the organiser to the station owners, contrary to "Waler Horse Rescue" website statements. We understand the station owners involved have now also expressed concerns. These specifics alone should send warning bells to anyone considering being either financially or physically involved in such a project.

There are many other far less stressful, faster and more reliable methods of rescuing and transporting wild horses across long distances available.

For further information please contact the OHHAWA via our website <http://ohhawa.wildhorses-wa.com/>.