

WHAT IS A WILD HORSE?

Visitors to Nevada often ask those of us who live on the wild horse range, "What is a wild horse?"

In 1971 Congress unanimously affirmed, "*Congress finds and declares that wild free-roaming horses and burros are living symbols of the historic and pioneer spirit of the West; that they contribute to the diversity of life forms within the Nation and enrich the lives of the American people; and that these horses and burros are fast disappearing from the American scene. It is the policy of Congress that wild free-roaming horses and burros shall be protected from capture, branding, harassment, or death; and to accomplish this they are to be considered in the area where presently found, as an integral part of the natural system of the public lands.*"

The story, however, goes much deeper than that.

What is a wild horse?

A wild horse is the progeny of the horses that carried the Spanish Conquistadors. His forebearers carried explorers into the West. He is the product of horses that tilled the soil, delivered commerce, pulled the stagecoach, carried the hunter, worked the mine, delivered the mail, moved the cattle, carried the soldier, and brought what was to become the strongest country in the world into the mechanized age.

A wild horse is the product of successive generations of horses that survived by their instincts and wits in a harsh environment shaped by the forces of nature.

A wild horse is a living symbol of American history.

A wild horse is the consummate embodiment of the free spirit of the West.

And in the context of the Earth's total time, a wild horse is an animal that first appeared in the West and has finally returned home.