

Reasoning for Adoption of Kiger Horse as Oregon State Horse

There are romantic, scientific, historic and economic reasons to recognize this horse. Some include:

1—Publicly owned—They belong to all

Unlike other breeds that are exclusively owned by private parties, as a federally recognized Mustang herd, these horses are owned by all Oregonians. All have the opportunity to experience the horses by viewing them in the wild.

2—International Interest—Tourism/Scientists/Artists/Motion Pictures

Sought after by people in many countries.

- Kigers are now owned by people in Europe, Canada and Mexico and are being exported to New Zealand. Note—To bring a single horse to Europe is approximately \$15,000; to New Zealand, over \$25,000

The Kiger has been studied by researchers all over the world.

- Antonio Márquez of Spain is researching a documentary focused on the ties between the ancient horses in Almonte, (the region of Spain from which many Spanish explorers drew their horses) and the Oregon Kiger.
- Reinhard Oelke of Germany, an avid supporter of the Kiger since the 1970s has studied the Kigers for decades and wrote the critically acclaimed book *Born Survivors on the Eve of Extinction. His studies and writings* focus on the important genetics of the breed.

Kiger Tourism

- A 2015 Kiger event in Burns, OR drew over 400 people from Canada, Europe, New Zealand
- A new Kiger festival in Lake Oswego was started with the help of a tourism grant with an express purpose to bring these unusual horses to the public—to encourage people to learn about the wild herds and the treasures in Eastern Oregon.
- Ranch families in Harney County are supplementing their income with the tourism of travelers who are interested in seeing wild Kigers. One such business is Steens Mountain Guest Ranch in Diamond, OR. Because of the Diamond's remote location, this always results in overnight stays in Eastern Oregon.

Celebrated by international Breyer Horse Co. with production of several Kiger series (1991-1996)

Celebrated in the children's Animated film, "Spirit of the Cimarron". The lead character of Spirit, the Kiger Mustang, was voiced by none other than Matt Damon

3—Genetic Importance

These horses are genetic treasures. They are truly a heritage breed that needs to be preserved and studied. Their hardiness and disease resistance are of significant value. Kigers carry the primitive coloration patterns of the ancient wild horses with earth tone bodies, leg striping, dorsal striping and outlined ears. This is the only American breed that preserves this primitive coloration. University of Kentucky has done extensive genetic testing on the herds and there are large databases of genetic research at UC Davis and Texas A&M as well.

4—Historical Significance—ties to Oregon's Ranching history

These horses represent the Old West. The bloodlines produced some of the best ranch horses known to the early settlers and the Great Basin Cowboys. Horsemen and geneticists from all over the world know this, yet many Oregonians do not know they have this coveted treasure in right in their own backyard.