

RB

April 4, 2014

AMERICAN
QUARTER
HORSE
ASSOCIATION

Pima County Board of Supervisors
130 W. Congress Street, 11th Floor
Tucson, AZ 85701

Dear Board of Supervisors,

On behalf of the nearly 300,000 members of the American Quarter Horse Association, I am writing to you to state our support for the citizens and horsemen of Pima County, who are working together to preserve the historic Rillito Racetrack, a cornerstone facility within American Quarter Horse racing.

The American Quarter Horse Association is the world's largest breed organization, with more than 5 million registered horses in more than 80 countries. Arizona is a powerhouse state within the American Quarter Horse industry, ranking among the top 20 in terms of owners with more than 50,000 Grand Canyon State residents owning nearly 52,000 American Quarter Horses.

Additionally, Arizona residents Tom Finley, Robert Kieckhefer, Rick Johns and C.W. "Bill" Englund all have served as presidents of AQHA.

Rillito Racetrack is designated with the American Quarter Horse Foundation as a historic site, and the historical marker placed there in 1996 acknowledges its significance to the industry.

To understand our support of the Rillito Racetrack and the designation of the marker, one only need look at Tucson's long and storied tradition with the American Quarter Horse and American Quarter Horse racing.

In 1934, a group of horsemen around Tucson formed the Southern Arizona Horse Breeders' Association, the forerunner of what in 1945 became the American Quarter Racing Association; this group would eventually become part of the American Quarter Horse Association.

Arizona horsemen opened Rillito Racetrack in 1943, and it is the site where modern American Quarter Horse racing came of age. This famous track on the banks of the Rillito River was the birthplace of many racing innovations still in use today. Innovations such as the photo finish, racetrack design and race standardization were developed on Rillito's acres.

It was the site of numerous historic races, and the blood of horses such as Shue Fly, Joe Reed II, Piggins String and Hard Twist carries on in the American Quarter Horses of today. Modern horses, too, have made starts at Rillito, including three-time champion, millionaire and AQHA Supreme Race Horse Rylees Boy. Great horsemen, too, come from Rillito, with racing legends such as Kentucky Derby-winning trainers Bob Baffert and Todd Pletcher, and four-time AQHA champion jockey Joe Badilla Jr.

This historic site epitomizes the pioneer spirit of the West and in particular Tucson. Thousands of people enjoy the races at Rillito each day of live racing, and the racing industry provides more than 5,000 jobs, \$110 million in income to Arizona households and \$19 million in revenue to Arizona's state and local governments.

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In 1984, voters agreed that the track should be preserved, and its enduring popularity indicates that opinion continues. This historic and popular place should not be allowed to disappear in a cloud of bulldozer dust.

We at the American Quarter Horse Association join the Arizona Quarter Horse Racing Association, the Pima County Horsemen Association and the Historic Rillito Racetrack, Inc. in making application to preserve the Rillito Racetrack, its grandstand and clubhouse as a National Historic Site.

If at any time we can answer questions about Rillito Racetrack's significance to American Quarter Horse racing, please do not hesitate to call.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Johnny Trotter', written over a horizontal line.

Johnny Trotter
AQHA President

Subject: FW: Rillito race track
From: John Maynard (jmaynard@santacruzcountyz.gov)
To:
Date: Wednesday, April 2, 2014 4:12 PM

From: John Maynard
Sent: Wednesday, April 02, 2014 4:07 PM
To: district3@pima.gov
Subject: Rillito race track

Sharon,

I received a call yesterday from the president of the Santa Cruz County Fair and Rodeo Association, Jim Cosbey. He is very concerned about plans Pima County may have to tear down part of the Rillito Race facility and develop soccer fields on the site.

He explained how important Rillito is to the quarter horse racing network in Arizona. Altering your facility could mean the closing of the Sonoita quarter horse racing program. I hope you will defer any decision until your staff has looked at the economic impacts this facility has upon the statewide racing program.

Please don't interpret this as "meddling" in Pima County affairs as I don't mean to do so. I just hope you will defer a decision until you look at the statewide impacts your decision may have upon quarter horse racing in all of Arizona.

Most respectfully submitted,

John Maynard

Supervisor

Santa Cruz County