
Board of Directors
Date July 16, 2025; 7:30 pm
ZOOM Meeting

MONTANA QUARTER HORSE ASSOCIATION

Board members present: Tyrell Burklund, Michele Shaw, Britt Kissock-Robinson, Cathy Dekker, Michele McGuigan, Josh Shengle, Rita Church, Tracy Tiner

National Directors: Gary Lynn Olson, Nancy Weaver, Marilyn Randall

Meeting called to order by Board member Cathy Dekker; President Tyrell Burklund joined meeting later. Tracy T. made a motion to approve the June 18, 2025 minutes. Michele S. seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Finance: Laura reported financial reports. Michele S. made a motion to approve the amended financial report as presented. Second to the motion by Tracy T. Motion carried.

Old Business: Discussion regarding purchasing the AQHA Shotgun for a raffle. Michele S. made a motion to purchase the Shotgun and raffle 250 tickets at \$25/ticket. Second to the motion by Britt. Motion carried. Laura will contact Julie to make sure MQHA is in Federal compliance with laws regarding firearms.

Laura reported the AQHA Affiliate funding request was denied due to the request asking for funds to purchase drone equipment and pay for mileage. Suggestions to amend the request to include "leasing" equipment as opposed to purchasing equipment.

Discussion regarding the 4-H State Horse Show request for sponsorship. Britt made a motion to approve \$100 sponsorship for the State 4-H Horse Show. Second to the motion by Josh. Motion carried.

Discussion regarding sponsoring the AQHA Region 2 Show. Josh made a motion for MQHA to sponsor 2 classes at the Region 2 Show @\$150/class. Second to the motion by Rita. Motion carried. Rita will request sponsorship of Amateur L1 Horsemanship and L1 Youth Ranch Riding.

Committee Reports:

Show Committee: Tyrell reported the Show Committee had a meeting to discuss hiring judges for the 2026 Show. Laura suggested finding NCHA judges per a request from the contestants at the 2025 Show. Laura will send emails to any AQHA judge with NCHA certification.

NILE: Marilyn reported sponsorships have committed. Laura will be invoicing the sponsors in August..

Membership Services: Rita Church reported that to date there are 121 new or renewed members, several new MQHA members came from the Sparks Some Fun Show and the Big Sky Classic, 40 lifetime members-1 new lifetime member; 23 MQHYA members, new members from the SSF.

Marketing: No report.

Recreational Riding: No report.

Amateur: Cathy reported Sparks Some Fun was a success and well received by contestants. Josh also suggested MQHA reach out to youth participants encouraging MQHYA membership.

Youth: Michele S. reported the Youth have not had a meeting. Michele will work with Laura cleaning up the Youth portion of the website to include updating forms.

Breeders/Ranch: No report.

By-Laws: No report.

Legislative: Britt reported she will email Laura with the extension of the current legislation affecting MQHA and the agricultural industry.

Region 2: No report.

2025 Convention: No new report on the Convention.

Hall of Fame: Laura reported Ruth has a list of possible inductees and will report at the August meeting.

New Business

Correspondence: : Laura reported she received a thank you from Judge Sharon Well. Charisse Simonian from Casting Ranch regarding reaching out to Montana ranches. Board approved sharing any/all email contact information to Ms. Simonian.

All agenda items have been satisfied. Josh made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Second to the motion by Tracy T. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Laura Bakker
2025 Secretary/Treasurer

Next meeting – August 27, 2025 – ZOOM Meeting; 7:30pm

LEGISLATIVE REPORT ADDENDUM:

AQHA/MQHA RULES/CHANGES

AQHA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE APPROVES SIX NEW ANIMAL WELFARE RULES

June 11, 2025: The American Quarter Horse Association Executive Committee has approved six new animal welfare rules across all sanctioned events and beyond.

Overview of the New Rules

1. Year-Round Performance Alteration Testing:

AQHA will form a task force to develop a plan that expands performance alteration testing beyond major events to additional shows held throughout the year.

2. Continued Testing at AQHA Championship Shows:

Performance alteration testing will continue at all AQHA Championship shows to uphold integrity and welfare standards.

3. **Microchipping and Permanent Identification:**

Beginning in 2026, horses may voluntarily use ISO-compliant (15-digit) microchips or another form of permanent identification at AQHA Championship shows. By 2027, these measures will be mandatory to enhance biosecurity and traceability.

4. **Biosecurity Planning:**

The World Show Vaccination/Biosecurity/Identification Task Force will remain active to finalize and implement robust biosecurity protocols for AQHA events.

5. **Regulation of Extracorporeal Shockwave Therapy (ESWT):**

Effective January 1, 2026:

- ESWT is prohibited within 24 hours of competition, except for specific back and pelvis treatments no closer than 12 hours before showing.
- Must be administered by or prescribed by a licensed veterinarian with a valid VCPR (Veterinary Client Patient Relationship).
- AQHA Medication Report Form must be submitted within one hour of administration.
- Logbooks must document each treatment including shocks per region and horse identification details.

6. **Accountability for Off-Site Inhumane Treatment:**

AQHA may now penalize participants for confirmed inhumane treatment of American Quarter Horses even outside of AQHA-approved events, worldwide. False or malicious reporting will be treated as a serious disciplinary offense.

<https://stallioncompare.com/article/aqha-6-new-animal-welfare-rules>

UNDERSTANDING AQHA'S 2025 DRUG RULE & MEDICATION GUIDELINES: WHAT HORSE OWNERS NEED TO KNOW

July 19: The American Quarter Horse Association has released its updated 2025 Drug Rule & Medication Guidelines, offering crucial clarity for owners, trainers, and exhibitors about the responsible use of substances in competition horses. The below outlines permitted practices, medication thresholds, withdrawal times, and consequences for violations.

Key Highlights from the 2025 Guidelines

1. Therapeutic Medication Use Policy

The AQHA allows for the use of therapeutic medications that are prescribed and administered responsibly. However, these must comply with withdrawal times and dosage limits to avoid positive tests during competition.

- Only one nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug (NSAID) is permitted in a horse's system at the time of competition.
- Horses may not be treated with multiple NSAIDs unless the withdrawal times for the secondary NSAID are strictly followed.

2. Permitted Medications & Dosage Thresholds

The guide provides a comprehensive list of commonly used medications (e.g., phenylbutazone, flunixin, dexamethasone) along with permitted thresholds and recommended withdrawal times. *For example:*

- Phenylbutazone: Max of 2.0 micrograms/mL in plasma/serum; suggested withdrawal of 72 hours.
- Dexamethasone: Max of 0.005 micrograms/mL; withdrawal time varies based on dosage and route of administration.

Each listed medication includes specifics on administration method (oral, IV, IM), which can affect withdrawal time and testing results.

3. Prohibited Substances

Drugs not used for legitimate therapeutic purposes or with no established safe thresholds are strictly prohibited. These include stimulants, depressants, and substances with performance-enhancing or masking effects.

Examples:

- Anabolic steroids, tranquilizers, and psychoactive medications are banned.
- Detection of these substances in a horse's system will trigger penalties.

4. Stacking Rule (NSAIDs)

The AQHA prohibits the “stacking” of NSAIDs—administering more than one NSAID concurrently to extend or amplify therapeutic effect. The guide details appropriate waiting periods if a horse has received a second NSAID for any reason before competition.

5. Withdrawal Guidelines

A comprehensive table outlines withdrawal recommendations for a wide range of medications, allowing exhibitors to plan treatments in advance of competition. This helps avoid unintentional violations and ensures the horse's system is compliant at the time of testing.

6. Special Provisions: Corticosteroids, Tranquilizers, & Muscle Relaxants

The guide goes in depth on medications with sedative or tranquilizing effects, including acepromazine and detomidine. These substances, even if used therapeutically, must be fully cleared from the horse's system well before competition to avoid positive test results.

Corticosteroids such as triamcinolone and methylprednisolone have strict guidance due to their potential joint-enhancing effects and risk of masking injuries.

7. Penalties for Non-Compliance

Violation of the drug policy can result in:

- Disqualification of the horse
- Loss of titles or prizes
- Fines and potential suspension of the responsible party

Repeat offenses or administration of prohibited substances carry harsher consequences, reinforcing AQHA's zero-tolerance approach.

8. Emergency Use & Reporting

In the case of emergency veterinary treatment close to show time, AQHA encourages exhibitors to file a Medication Report Form before competition. This provides transparency and may offer leniency in specific circumstances, provided the medication is therapeutic and properly documented.

Why This Matters

As drug testing becomes more advanced and precise, it's essential for those in the industry to stay informed. Even accidental violations can carry severe penalties. The 2025 AQHA Drug Rule & Medication Guidelines empower horse owners and professionals to make responsible, informed decisions while preserving fairness in the show pen.

<https://stallioncompare.com/article/2025-aqha-drug-and-medication>

CONCERNING HORSES

NEW WORLD SCREWORM THREAT SHUTS DOWN SOUTHERN BORDER EQUINE IMPORTS

July 10: On July 9, the USDA issued an immediate suspension of all livestock imports—including horses—from Mexican border ports following a confirmed detection of New World screwworm (NWS) in Ixhuatlán de Madero, Veracruz, approximately 370 miles south of the U.S. border and 160 miles north of Mexico's sterile fly buffer zone. NWS is a parasitic fly whose larvae infest live tissue in wounds—posing a severe threat to horses, cattle,

wildlife, pets, and even humans. Though eradicated in the U.S. by the 1960s, it has re-emerged. Domestic horse transport within the U.S. will see enhanced inspection and monitoring for screwworm larvae or intermediate fly species.

<https://www.usda.gov/about-usda/news/press-releases/2025/07/09/secretary-rollins-takes-decisive-action-and-shuts-down-us-southern-border-ports-livestock-trade-due>

THE HORSE PROTECTION ACT

Below is the last HPA update from APHIS:

“USDA will implement or continue the following practices for the 2025 show season:

- USDA will exercise its enforcement discretion with regard to violations of the scar rule (9 CFR § 11.3(b)) as it did for the 2017 to 2023 show seasons. We will only cite a scar rule non-compliance based on non-uniformly thickened epithelial tissue on the posterior surfaces of the pastern when hair loss is also present. As a reminder, the scar rule generally requires the pasterns to be free of evidence of inflammation, including areas of non-uniformly thickened tissue. I encourage you to read the full scar rule regulation here.
<https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-9/chapter-I/subchapter-A/part-11#11.3>
- When a horse is disqualified for non-compliance with the Horse Protection Regulations, horse industry organizations (HIOs) are reminded this disqualification is for the entire event.
- When a USDA Veterinary Medical Officer (VMO) inspects a horse and finds the horse unilaterally sore or finds an equipment non-compliance, the VMO may refer that horse to a Designated Qualified Person (DQP) for a second inspection. However, when a DQP inspects a horse and passes the horse as compliant, the VMO will not return the horse to a DQP for a re-inspection.
- USDA will alert HIOs to DQP performance concerns for follow-up. USDA also requires HIOs to enforce that only the horse, the rider, the groom, and the trainer are allowed in the warm-up area.
- As a reminder, all substances are prohibited on the extremities above the hoof of Tennessee Walking horses and racking horses except lubricants that are provided by event management and applied after the horse has been inspected. Fly spray, show sheen, and other similar substances may be applied to areas other than the extremities.
- USDA will continue using technologies such as on-site prohibited substance testing and digital radiography in addition to physical inspection procedures. We do not anticipate using ultrasound or thermography this season.
- We encourage all participants in HPA-covered events to review the prohibitions contained in the regulations here (9 CFR § 11.2).
<https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-9/chapter-I/subchapter-A/part-11#11.2>

“We appreciate you taking the time to read this update. We look forward to working together for a successful 2025 season. If you have general questions regarding the Horse Protection program, please visit our website at <https://www.aphis.usda.gov/hpa>. If you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact Dr. Emily Roberson at (405) 254-1804 or emily.a.roberson@usda.gov and Dr. Louis DiVincenti at (585) 549-0570 or louis.divincenti@usda.gov. “

<https://www.aphis.usda.gov/news/program-update/aphis-shares-update-2025-horse-show-season>

NO UPDATES - April 27: The Prevent All Soring Tactics (PAST) Act (HR1684) is the Congressional avenue to make permanent the key provisions of the Horse Protection Act New Rule, using a highly emotionally charged issue

(soring) and taking temporary, controversial USDA rules,—*rules the agency itself had to delay due to widespread opposition*—to cement the HPA new rules into federal law.

RE HORSE SLAUGHTER

NO UPDATES - May 28: There are no updates on S.775 (a bill to amend the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018 to prohibit the slaughter of equines for human consumption) or H.R.1661 (a bill to amend the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018 to prohibit the slaughter of equines for human consumption).

CONCERNING AGRICULTURE

HOW THE FEDERAL RECONCILIATION BILL AFFECTS FARMS AND FOOD POLICY

July 21: Congress has taken initial steps to answer the calls for a new farm bill with the passage of the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (PL 119-21) signed into law on July 4. Over the next 10 years, the law will spend about \$66 billion on American agriculture and help strengthen the farm safety net.

Commodities

The reconciliation bill increases statutory reference prices (“price floors”) for American commodity crops such as corn, wheat and soybeans. Additionally, the legislation creates price escalator calculations for statutory reference prices starting in 2031, allowing for a 0.5% increase per year up to 113% of the initial reference price.

Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage are continued and updated under the law, with an increase in the minimum ARC payment rate. An additional 30 million acres of farmland are also now eligible for subsidies, and producers can now receive up to \$155,000 per year in commodity subsidies.

Crop Insurance

The reconciliation bill increases coverage levels and premium subsidies. It also provides crop insurance benefits for beginning farmers by expanding the length of time those farmers can access highly subsidized insurance premiums. The legislation allows for dual enrollment in the ARC program and the supplemental coverage option. And producers can benefit from new insurance programs.

Conservation

The reconciliation bill consolidates conservation funding by redirecting unobligated Inflation Reduction Act conservation funds to high-demand farm bill agriculture programs such as the Environmental Quality Incentives Program and the Conservation Stewardship Program. The legislation also expands discretionary funding for certain programs, such as the Grassroots Source Water Protection Program, and mandates additional funding through 2031 for popular programs including the Agriculture Conservation Easement Program. However, despite the funding adjustments, total conservation spending is estimated the nonpartisan Taxpayers for Common Sense to decrease by over \$1 billion through 2034.

Other Agriculture Policies

The reconciliation bill also addresses narrower farm bill policies, subsidies, programs and agriculture loans. These include the following:

- the continuation of loan deficiency payments through 2031,
- additional funding for and expansion of agriculture trade promotion through the Market Access Program and the Foreign Market Development Program
- continued and enhanced subsidy payments and expanded eligibility through 2031 for other important programs such as the Livestock Indemnity Program, the Dairy Margin Coverage Program and the Tree Assistance Program.
- makes tax code changes that will impact certain agriculture producers.

- The clean fuel production tax credit (45Z) is now capped at \$1 per gallon, slightly lower than initially established under the IRA. However, the full transferability of the credit extends through 2029.
- The law also updates and extends the small agri-biodiesel producer tax credit and increases federal estate tax exemptions.

Nutrition Assistance

Previously, the federal government paid the full cost of SNAP benefits and evenly split administrative costs with states. Beginning in fiscal year 2028, states with a payment error rate, or PER, of 6% or higher will be required to pay from 5% to 15% of their benefit costs.

Beyond the benefit cost share, states will be responsible for 75% of SNAP's administrative costs beginning in FY 2027. The legislation also prohibits noninflationary increases to the Thrifty Food Plan, used to determine SNAP benefit amounts, and expands work requirements by increasing the age of people subject to the requirements from 54 to age 64 (with certain waiver options for Alaska and Hawaii). Adults with dependent children ages 14 and older are also now subject to the work requirements, as are veterans, homeless individuals and youth transitioning out of foster care.

<https://www.ncsl.org/state-legislatures-news/details/how-the-federal-reconciliation-bill-will-affect-farms-and-food-policy>

FROM SENATOR STEVE DAINES OFFICE

July 10: U.S. Senators Steve Daines and Tim Sheehy, along with Representatives Troy Downing (MT-02) and Ryan Zinke (MT-01) introduced a bicameral resolution *disapproving and removing* the BLM's 2024 Miles City Resource Management Plan Amendment (RMPA), which effectively ended future coal leasing within the Miles City Field Office planning area.

July 10: U.S. Senator Daines today spoke with U.S. Forest Service Chief Tom Schultz in a Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee hearing. They discussed Daines' provisions in the One Big Beautiful Bill Act to increase timber sales and improve forest management practices. Daines also stressed the urgent need to fix the 9th Circuit Cottonwood decision and *end burdensome litigation* that holds up important projects. The conversation focused on ensuring Montana's forests are healthy, resilient, and protected — all while promoting good-paying timber jobs and safeguarding communities across the state.

July 9: U.S. Senator Steve Daines spoke with David Eisner, nominee to be Assistant Secretary of Energy for International Affairs, and Lanny Erdos, nominee to be Director of the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement, in a Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee hearing. They discussed Montana's energy priorities, including support for mining and ending unfair trade practices related to the Stillwater Mine and the Montana-Alberta transmission Tie Line.

July 8: *"The Big Beautiful Bill is a win for Montana and ... The Big Beautiful Bill will benefit Montana for generations to come and ensure that we remain The Last Best Place. I'm thrilled we delivered the largest tax cut in American history and tax certainty for families and small businesses, as well as funding for the border and for our great military, and I cannot wait to see the President sign this bill into law,"*

FROM REPRESENTATIVE DOWNING'S OFFICE

July 3: House Republicans passed a bill that delivers tax relief, unleashes American energy, supports our farmers and ranchers, secures our borders, modernizes our military, strengthens critical programs, protects our public lands, and so much more. Some "wins" for Montana include the following:

- Reinstates the Bull Mountains mining plan modification.
- Removes language authorizing the sale of public lands.

- Prevents a tax hike on Montanans, saving the average Treasure State family of four \$1280.
- Makes the Death Tax exemption permanent.
- Delivers no tax on tips, no tax on overtime, and no tax on social security for 88% of our seniors.
- Institutes spending cuts putting America back on the path toward fiscal responsibility.
- Enacts mandatory timber sales that drive economic growth and promote responsible forest management.
- Makes a border security investment to finish the border wall and to send more resources and personnel to the front lines.
- Modernizes America's military to ensure the United States remains the world's premier fighting force, including \$25 million to fund the Golden Dome.
- Unleashes American energy production by rolling back Green New Deal regulations and streamlining permitting reform.
- Invests \$50 billion in rural health care and telehealth.
- Preserves the viability of services by requiring able-bodied adults to work if they receive benefits.
- Increases the child tax credit and strengthens paid family leave.

FROM REPRESENTATIVE RYAN ZINKE'S OFFICE

July 17 Zinke's \$20 Million to-do list for Western Montana: The Montana investments secured in this year's transportation appropriations bill includes projects Zinke has been working on with community leaders and county commissioners for months and/or years. Congressman Zinke's Community Project Funding Requests included in the bill are as follows:

- \$10,000,000 for the Seeley Lake Wastewater Treatment Plant
- \$2,500,000 for the Sanders County Noxon Bridge Replacement Project Phase 1
- \$2,500,000 for the Ravalli County Wastewater Treatment Plant
- \$454,000 for Rural Airport Reconstruction and Emergency Services Expansion
- \$1,150,000 for repaving Marten Creek Road
- \$1,000,000 for Flathead County North Fork Road guardrails
- \$1,000,000 for Groff Lane Bridge Replacement
- \$1,000,000 for Old Corvallis Road Repair

The bill is next headed to the House floor for a vote.

<https://zinke.house.gov/media/press-releases/zinkes-20-million-do-list-western-montana-water-roads-and-bridges-advances>

FROM GOVERNOR GIANFORTE'S OFFICE

July 10: "Montana farmers and ranchers work hard to feed the world," Gov. Gianforte said. "We'll continue to support their operations by cutting red tape and cutting taxes as they add value to their products and showcase our world-class Montana products." To support farmers and ranchers, the governor increased the business equipment tax exemption from \$100,000 in 2021 to \$1 million, eliminating the tax burden for 5,000 Montana businesses, farms, and ranches.