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Colorado Horse Development Authority (chda.org)

Event photographs by Bert Entwistle attached

Governor Ritter Boosts Horsepower on Colorado Vehicles

May 14, 2008 was a great day for *equus Coloradus*—the horses in Colorado—when Governor Bill Ritter signed Senate Bill 178 into a law creating a special license plate honoring the contributions the horse industry makes to the culture and economy of Colorado. The bill was sponsored by Senator Jim Isgar and Representative Marsha Looper, both strong proponents of the state’s agricultural interests. The special plates bear the image of a horse and the words, “Support the Horse.” Proceeds from the sale of the plates will benefit the Colorado Horse Development Authority which promotes education and other programs of value to the horse industry in the state.

The signing ceremony was festive. In addition to Governor Ritter, Senator Isgar and Representative Looper, the signing was witnessed by Colorado Agriculture Commissioner John Stulp, CHDA past president Jerry Martinez, Colorado Horse Council president Kathie Riley and CHC past president Christopher D. Whitney, Miss Rodeo Colorado Megan Grieve, Dr. David Denniston of the CSU Equine Sciences program, Colorado Horse executive director Brian G. Kitchen and other supporters of the state’s \$1.6 billion horse industry. (Current CHDA president Dr. Jim Heird, who initiated the “Support the Horse” plates program in early 2006, was unable to attend.)

Outside after the ceremony, ten gleaming, groomed and saddled horses (from Colorado, of course) awaited at the foot of the state capitol steps, and in the spirit of the occasion, Governor Ritter checked his cinch and mounted up, earning applause and cheers from the gathered crowd. The horses were provided by CHDA’s Jerry Martinez and Working Ranch Cowboys Association board member Mark Bukowski and his son, Garrett, and Scott and Beau Hall, WRCA members.

Plates will be available starting January 1, 2009, but purchase certificates can be reserved now. Sign up by contacting the CHDA at chda@chda.org or (303) 292-4981. Reservations will also be taken at the upcoming Vail/Eagle Valley Rocky Mountain Horse Expo, May 30-June 1 at the Eagle River Center in Eagle, CO—for more information, visit rockymountainhorseexpo.com or call (303) 292-4981.