

“Good afternoon,

Thank you for scheduling the emergency meeting to address the recent EIA situation and testing requirements for the upcoming Prineville race meet. I appreciate the Commission’s efforts to respond quickly and protect the health of Oregon’s horses.

I am concerned, however, about the timing. With horses set to leave Grants Pass Downs and ship to Prineville beginning Monday, July 13, the July 8 meeting leaves very little time for horsemen to arrange Coggins testing, receive results, and adjust shipping plans if needed.

If the goal is to protect horses and keep Oregon racing moving forward, the most effective approach is to prevent an EIA-positive horse from ever reaching the grounds. That requires confirming a negative Coggins **before arrival**, not after horses have already been commingled at the facility. Once on-site, a single positive case could trigger quarantine protocols affecting nearby horses—or potentially the entire grounds—and place the entire meet at risk.

From a practical and biosecurity standpoint, testing horses while they are still together at Grants Pass Downs, prior to shipment, would be a more controlled and effective process. It allows results to be confirmed before any movement to Prineville and avoids introducing risk to the Crooked River Roundup meet.

If there is consideration of requiring recent negative Coggins tests prior to entry, I respectfully urge that direction be issued as soon as possible. Horse owners, trainers, and veterinarians need adequate time to schedule testing and receive results before horses begin shipping.

I understand these decisions involve complex regulatory and animal health considerations, and I appreciate the work that has gone into the response. My concern is simply that the current timeline may not allow enough time to achieve the shared goal of keeping EIA off the grounds and ensuring the meet proceeds safely and without interruption.

Thank you for your consideration and for your continued commitment to Oregon racing and equine health.

Respectfully,
Andrea Ring”

Public comment received via email at 12:41 PM on July 1, 2026

Dear Dr. Ross and Executive Director Winn,

I am writing to you as an HPBA Executive Member, a horse owner with interests in the Prineville meet, and the Practice Manager of Oakhurst Equine Veterinary Services, one of the largest private practices in Oregon. I hold great respect for the work being done to maintain racing in Oregon, but I must express serious concerns regarding the recent order for mandatory EIA testing at Prineville.

My primary concerns and questions are as follows:

- **Jurisdiction and Transparency:** There appears to be conflicting information regarding the origin of this mandate. While the **ODA has indicated this is an ORC requirement**, the ORC suggests it falls under ODA jurisdiction, with ORC strictly facilitating. I would appreciate clarification on which agency requires this initiative.

- **Stakeholder Communication:** I believe the HPBA should have been consulted before this order was issued. Given our working relationship, the lack of prior communication is disappointing.

- **Regulatory Consistency:** Oregon currently maintains a 12-month EIA testing requirement. Implementing a 41-day requirement specifically for racing seems disproportionate, especially considering that other equine disciplines with higher frequency of movement face fewer restrictions. Our race horses move a handful of times a year, rodeo horses move a handful of times a week. "Show" horses move weekly or monthly. I issued five Health Certificates to Canada two weeks ago, and they only require six months EIA. Why is Oregon Racing aiming for some of the strictest requirements in the country and on the continent and why does it appear racing is being singled out?

- **Logistics and Timing:** If there is a recognized risk to the horse population, I question why testing is being conducted after arrival at the grounds rather than at the current locations (such as Grants Pass or Emerald Downs). Furthermore, what is the timeline for testing and results? Will owners be able to transport their "in close contact" horses home, and is it possible they will be required to keep them at the Fairgrounds for a significant amount of time (ie: who will care for them)?

- **Equine Welfare:** Racehorses are highly sensitive to routine. Testing on race day can cause significant stress and physical complications. They may believe they are racing, reduce water consumption, colic, tie up, or "run their race" in the stall - as it is reasonable to suspect testing may occur 12 hours before the race. At a minimum, I request that horses scheduled to run on Friday be tested on Saturday instead.

I appreciate your commitment to the safety of the sport, but the timing and execution of this order are concerning to the horsemen I represent.

Respectfully,

Ben Root

OHPBA Sec/Treasurer

Thoroughbred Horse Owner

OTOBA Member

Practice Manager, Oakhurst Equine Veterinary Services

503-810-2095

Public comment was received via email at 10:08 AM on July 2, 2026