

October 3, 2003

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WILD KIGER MUSTANGS SET FOR ADOPTION IN BURNS

The U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM) will be offering approximately 150 wild Kiger Mustangs for adoption at the Harney County Fairgrounds in Burns during the 2003 Kiger Mustang-A-Fair on October 23-25. The 3 day community event will feature a variety of wild horse related activities including the competitive bid adoption which will take place on Saturday, October 25, wild horse training and care demonstrations, vendor booths, food concessions, viewing trained Kiger Mustangs, and more. Cooperating in the Kiger Mustang-A-Fair are the Harney County Chamber of Commerce, Kiger Mustang Association, Pacific Wild Horse Club, Central Oregon Mustang Owners, and the BLM.

The Kiger Mustangs were recently gathered from their herd areas near Diamond, Oregon and are being offered for adoption for the first time. The popular "Kigers" are internationally known for their markings which resemble the horses first brought to the Western Hemisphere over 400 years ago. The animals vary in age class from foals to mature animals up to 15 years and contain individuals representing the complete range of colors typical of the animals having the dun factor, including the dun, red dun, grulla, and clay bank. Among the other attributes of the Kiger Mustang reflective of the early Spanish horses are barring on the legs and hocks, dark dorsal stripe, bi-colored mane and tail, face masks and cobwebbing on the face, shoulder and chest barring, the top one-third of the ears are distinctly darker than the animals' body color. Not all of the animals exhibit all of the listed markings.

NOTE: Any unweaned foal will be offered as part of a mare/foal pair with minimum bids of \$250.

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Tom Seley, BLM Burns District Wild Horse Specialist says, “Adopters should be pleased with this bunch of horses which have good size and conformation and many are young and will be more easily gentled.”

The Burns adoption will use a competitive bid procedure with a minimum bid of \$125.

Viewing at the Burns Wild Horse Corrals will be from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Thursday through Friday and from 7:00 to 9:30 a.m. on Saturday. Registration at the Harney County fairgrounds will be from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. on Friday, and 7:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. on Saturday.

Note: All prospective adopters **MUST** register at the adoption site (Harney County Fairgrounds) by 9:30 a.m. Saturday morning.

Animal selection and competitive bidding will begin at 10:00 a.m. on Saturday at the fairground arena grandstands. Loading will begin at approximately 1:00 p.m. until dark on Saturday and continue Sunday beginning at 7:30 a.m.

Although applications will be accepted at the adoption site, people who are applying for the first time are encouraged to mail their applications to **BLM Wild Horse Program, 28910 Highway 20 West, Hines, OR 97738** as soon as possible (telefax applications will not be accepted) to allow for corrections and/or clarification of application information in time for the adoption.

“The Adopt-A-Horse or Burro program provides homes for wild horses that have to be removed from the public rangelands to maintain an appropriate management level consistent with maintaining a balance between wild horses or burros, native wildlife, domestic grazing, and healthy ecosystems,” says BLM’s Burns District Manager Tom Dyer. “To help maintain that balance, BLM gathers the excess animals and offers them for adoption,” he says.

Seley says, “Adopters can provide good, safe homes for the animals gathered in Oregon and contribute a lot to the National effort.” He encourages people to come out to the adoption to

view the horses, take in the activities, and talk with past adopters who are always glad to share their experiences with newcomers to the program. Given proper training, wild horses make excellent equestrian partners. They are known for their stamina, sturdiness, and intelligence.

For details on adoption requirements, bidding procedures, and application forms, wild horse training demonstrations, and other events scheduled, call the Burns District Office at (541) 573-4400. The following website has current information on the Burns adoption: www.or.blm.gov/burns. For information on BLM's National Wild Horse and Burro adoption program, check www.wildhorseandburro.blm.gov.