

**NATIONAL WILD HORSE & BURRO PROGRAM
MISSION STATEMENT**

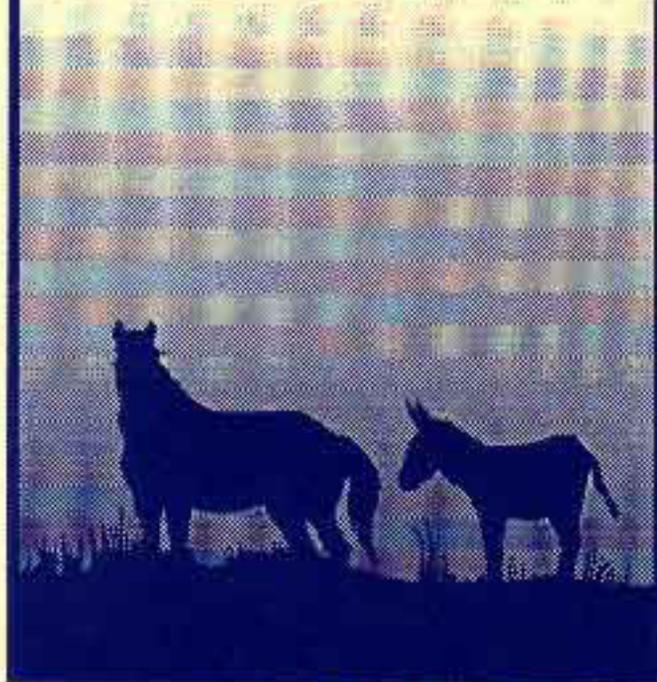
To affirm wild free-roaming
horses and burros
are a living legacy
of our American heritage,
ensuring that they are recognized
and maintained as
a part of the natural ecosystem
and are valued
for their biological, social,
and cultural attributes.



BLM MISSION STATEMENT

The BLM is responsible for the stewardship of our public lands. It is committed to manage, protect, and improve these lands in a manner to serve the needs of the American people for all times. Management is based on the principles of multiple use and sustained yield of our Nation's resources within a framework of environmental responsibility and scientific technology. These resources include recreation; rangelands; timber; minerals; watersheds; fish and wildlife; wilderness; air; and scenic, scientific and cultural values.

**SO
YOU'D
LIKE
TO
ADOPT**



**AMERICA'S WILD HORSES & BURROS
ADOPT A LIVING LEGEND**

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT**

Photography by George McDonald; Denver, Colorado.



"... Congress finds and declares that wild free roaming horses and burros are living symbols of the historic & pioneer spirit of the West; that they contribute to the diversity of lifeforms within the nation and enrich the lives of the American people."

Wild Free-Roaming
Horse and Burro Act of 1971

Providing a home for a wild horse or burro is a challenging and rewarding responsibility. For qualified individuals, this is a unique opportunity to care for, then own, a symbol of American history, — a "Living Legend" — a wild horse or burro.

This publication answers the most frequently asked questions about adopting a wild horse or burro. Additional information will be provided to adopters at the adoption site.

1. Why does the federal government offer wild horses and burros for adoption?

The Bureau of Land Management (Department of the Interior) and the U.S. Forest Service (Department of Agriculture) are responsible for the management and protection of wild horses and burros on public lands. Federal protection and a scarcity of natural predators results in thriving herds that increase in population each year.

The number of animals using the range must be controlled to protect the resources from improper foraging and to maintain healthy thriving herds.

Livestock are controlled through permits and leases which limit the time and number of domestic animals on the land. Wildlife populations are managed by state wildlife agencies. The health and welfare of wild horse and burro herds are maintained by balancing the number of animals with the other resources.

Excess wild horses and burros are removed from the range to protect and maintain healthy herds and habitat of wild free-roaming horses and burros for future generations to enjoy. These excess animals are offered for adoption to qualified people through the Adopt-A-Horse-or-Burro Program. Since 1973, BLM has used this popular program to place over 130,000 wild horses and burros in private care. Adopters receive a living symbol of the "historic and pioneer spirit of the West."

2. What is a wild horse or burro?

A wild horse or burro is an unbranded, unclaimed, free-roaming horse or burro found on BLM or U.S. Forest Service administered land in the western United States. Wild horses and burros are descendants of animals released by or escaped from Spanish explorers, ranchers, miners, soldiers, or Native Americans.

All wild horses and burros are protected by the Wild Free Roaming Horse and Burro Act of 1971. Even though a wild horse or burro is removed from the public lands it remains a federally protected wild animal until it is adopted and the federal government has transferred title to the adopter.

3. What kinds of wild horses and burros are available for adoption?

Wild horses are of no particular breed, but some exhibit characteristics associated with specific breeds. A typical wild horse stands about 14 to 15 hands (56-60") and weighs about 900 to 1,100 pounds. Horses are generally solid in color and predominantly sorrels, bays, or browns, although all colors occur. Horses offered for adoption range from several months to nine years of age. Most horses are five years or younger. Mares with unweaned foals, when available, are adopted together. Geldings are available at special locations, such as the prison training program facilities discussed in question 4, and occasionally at satellite adoptions.



Riger Cougar was gathered in eastern Oregon and now lives in California.

Burros average about 11 hands (44") and weigh about 500 pounds. They are usually gray in color, although brown and black animals may be available on occasion. Jacks and jennies of all ages are made available for adoption. As with horses, unweaned foals are adopted together with their mother.



4. How wild is a wild horse or burro?

When a wild horse or burro is offered for adoption it probably hasn't been more than 90 days since it was running in the wild. Therefore, they are not accustomed to people. With kindness and patience, they can be gentled and trained for many uses. Wild horses have become champions in dressage, barrel racing, jumping, endurance racing, and pleasure riding. They are best known for their sure-footedness, strength, and endurance. Young animals gentle more quickly than older ones. Wild burros gentle quickly regardless of age.

The BLM cooperates with State prison systems in the West and Midwest to halter and saddle train wild horses. Horses are available for adoption from these prison training facilities throughout the year. Most of these programs charge additional fees to cover their training costs. See pages 12 and 13 for locations.

5. How many wild horses and burros are available for adoption?

Between 6,000 and 8,000 horses and 500 to 1,000 burros are offered for adoption each year. The number of burros offered for adoption is much lower because the population and habitat of the wild burro is smaller.

6. What does it cost to adopt a wild horse or burro?

Under the competitive bidding process, the minimum adoption fee charged for each wild horse or burro is \$125. Mares with unweaned foals are adopted for \$125 each. The majority of the adoptions held at temporary adoption sites are conducted using the competitive bidding process. However, appointment-made facility adoptions are administered using the first-come first-served method. The adoption fee helps to defray the cost of gathers, medical treatment, transportation, and adoption. There is often an additional fee for animals trained through prison training programs. This fee helps to reimburse the State for any costs incurred. Adopters are responsible for all costs following the adoption of a wild horse or burro, including any expenses associated with the recapture of escaped animals. Adoption fees are nonrefundable.

7. What does it cost to care for a wild horse or burro?

The annual cost of caring for a wild horse or burro can range from \$300 to \$1,000 or more depending on local costs and conditions. The adoption fee will be the smallest expense. Consider the following types of costs when figuring a "wild horse/burro budget":

Stall/Corral rental	Feed	Medicine
Veterinarian	Tack	Training
Vaccinations	Shoeing	Salt/Supplements
Insecticides	Worming	Grooming Supplies

8. Where can I learn more about horses or burros?

There is a wealth of reading and viewing material on wild horses and burros. Libraries, book stores, video stores, tack stores, and feed stores have books, pamphlets, and videos for sale, rent, or free for the asking. The local county extension office may be an excellent source of help. Popular books on horses include *The Wild Horse: An Adopters Manual* by Barbara Eustis-Cross and Nancy Bowker (1992. McMillan Publishing Company); *Horses: A Practical Approach* by Melvin Bradley (1981. McGraw-Hill Book Company); and *Horses and Horsemanship* by M.E. Ensminger (1977. The Interstate Printers and Publishers Inc.).



Mustang Lady is an endurance horse with an Olympic size heart. She lives near Boise, Idaho

9. Where can I adopt a wild horse or burro?

Adoptions take place at locations across the United States. Some BLM locations, prison training program facilities, and BLM contract facilities have horses available year round. Adoptions also occur at satellite (temporary) adoption centers throughout the nation. Exact times and dates are available from the offices listed on pages 12 and 13.

10. Have the animals received medical care?

Every wild horse and burro offered for adoption is examined by a veterinarian. Each animal receives all necessary medical treatment, is tested for disease, immunized, and wormed. A record of the animal's medical history is given to each adopter.

Before you decide to adopt a wild animal, you should talk to local specialists and extension agents about horse care and training. Horse trainers can advise you about training needs and other considerations. A veterinarian will be able to provide you excellent advice on vaccinations, worming programs, diet, care of teeth and the other costs of caring for a horse or burro. A farrier can explain the cost of and requirements for foot care.

11. How many animals can I adopt?

A qualified person can adopt up to four wild horses or burros within a twelve month period. The BLM can approve the adoption of more than four animals if the adopter can prove they have the facilities and the financial ability to humanely care for all animals. However, an adopter may not receive title to more than four animals within a twelve month period.



12. How can I qualify to adopt a wild horse or burro?

You must be at least 18 years old, be a resident of the United States, and have no convictions for inhumane treatment of animals. You must also have, or have arranged for, adequate facilities and the financial means to provide for the number of animals adopted. An individual who has expressed an intent to commercially exploit the wild nature of a wild horse or burro may not adopt a wild horse or burro.

Parents or guardians may adopt, then allow younger family members to care for the animal. Many young people have cared for and trained wild horses or burros as projects for 4-H, Future Farmers of America, county fairs, and scouts.



The freeze brand is clearly visible on the neck of J.B. Andrew, a champion dressage horse gathered in Nevada and now living in Colorado.

13. What facilities are required for a wild horse or burro?

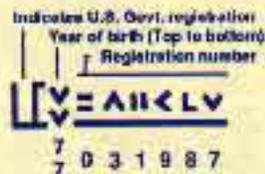
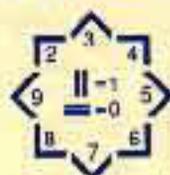
Newly adopted wild horses or burros must be kept in an enclosed corral with a minimum area of 400 square feet (20' by 20' or larger) per animal. This amount of space allows an animal to exercise. Gentled animals must be exercised daily and should have a box stall of at least 144 square feet (12 by 12' or larger) that is well ventilated, drained, and frequently cleaned.

Fences must be at least 4½ feet high for burros and 6 feet high for ungentled horses. Horses under 18 months of age may be kept in corrals with fences 5 feet high. Fences should be of pole, pipe, or plank construction and must not have dangerous protrusions. Barbed wire is not allowed in stalls or corrals.

An animal is considered gentled when it can be approached, handled, haltered, and led without the animal attempting escape. Ungentled animals should not be released into any large open area (pasture).

Adopted wild horses and burros must be provided shelter where severe weather (heat, cold, rain, snow, or wind) occurs. Burros are much more susceptible to cold than horses.

ALPHA ANGLE CODE FOR FREEZE MARK INTERPRETATION



The alpha angle code for the wild horse and burro freeze mark. The Arabian registry uses a similar freeze mark.

14. How can I adopt an animal?

Complete the enclosed application and mail it to the BLM office serving your area. If you wish to adopt at a different location, send your application, and a note explaining why, to the office serving that location. You will be contacted during the application review process. If your application is approved, you will be notified of upcoming adoptions. At the adoption you may have the opportunity to adopt at least one animal. If and when you adopt you will be required to sign a contract, agreeing to provide humane care and treatment for each animal you adopt.



15. Will the animal belong to me or the Federal Government?

A wild horse or burro belongs to the government until the BLM issues a title to an adopter. When the adopter signs an adoption contract he/she automatically applies for title to an animal. After one year, BLM will send the adopter a 'Title Eligibility Letter'. The adopter must obtain a statement from a qualified person (such as a veterinarian, county extension agent, or humane society representative) verifying that the adopter has provided humane care and treatment. The adopter must return the Title Eligibility Letter and the humane treatment statement to BLM. BLM will then mail the title to the adopter. There are no additional fees involved in the title process.

Within the year after the adoption, the BLM or an agent of the BLM, may visit an adopter to inspect the animal(s), to ensure the conditions of the adoption agreement are met, and to answer any questions the adopter may have.



Iran, trained for performance drills, is owned by the Westernaires of Golden, Colorado.

16. What restrictions are there on using my adopted animal?

In general there are no federal restrictions on how you use your adopted wild horse or burro, other than a wild horse or burro cannot be exploited for commercial purposes that take advantage of the wildness of the animal. After leaving the range all wild animals are protected by state livestock and humane treatment laws.



Wolf and Bear pull the BLM chuckwagon in Rock Springs, Wyoming.

17. What should I bring to the adoption?

- A. Cash, money order or certified check is required for payment of the adoption fees. Some adoption centers may accept VISA or Mastercard. Please check with the office conducting the adoption. Checks should be payable to: USDI-BLM.
- B. A halter and lead rope for each animal. A double stitched nylon webbing halter is recommended. The lead rope should be about 8-20 feet long, made of cotton or nylon, and of sufficient strength to hold a 1,000 pound animal. The halter buckle should be of similar strength.
- C. A trailer that meets the requirements as discussed in question 18.



Timblewood, once roaming free in Nevada, now lives in Travelers Rest, South Carolina.

18. What kind of trailer is required to transport a wild horse or burro?

Adopters must provide transportation for their animal from the adoption site to the new home. Another person may transport the animal, but all trailers must meet these standards:

- Covered top, sturdy walls/floors, and a smooth interior, free from any sharp protrusions.
- Ample head room.
- Partitions or compartments to separate animals by size and sex if necessary.
- Floor covered with a non-skid material.
- Adequate ventilation.



Gathered in Oregon, Little Black is a combined training champion mesmerizing neighbors in Evans, Georgia.

Stock trailers are preferred, but other trailers that meet the standards may be used. **Drop ramp and two horse trailers are strongly discouraged; some adoption centers may refuse to load a horse into a trailer so equipped.** All trucks and trailers may be inspected by BLM before loading. If you have questions about the suitability of a trailer call the BLM office before adoption day.

19. What should I feed my animal?

Good quality grass hay is adequate for a wild horse or burro. Horses and burros are very sensitive to abrupt changes in when and what they're fed. Additional information about feeding your new friend will be available at the adoption. Your veterinarian can also provide information on proper care and feeding.

20. What are some tips I should know before the adoption?

- If you are not experienced in driving a vehicle towing a trailer, arrange for someone with experience to do it for you.
- Plan the travel route in advance. Avoid large cities, rush hours, and bumpy roads.
- Allow plenty of time to view the animals before the selection process begins. Most adoptions draw names to determine order of selection.
- Animals should not be transported longer than 24 hours without unloading for a food, water, and exercise break. Corrals used for rest breaks must meet the requirements discussed in question 13.
- If your journey crosses state lines, check with each state for requirements of brand inspection, health certificate, clearance documents, etc.



Meswick, Monticorns, Peking and Maranan are among former wild horses that comprise the Marine Corps Mounted Colorguard from Barstow, Calif.

For more adoption information, call or write the office serving the area where you wish to adopt.

ALASKA 907-217-5555

Alaska State Office
222 West 7th Avenue #13
Anchorage, Alaska 99513-7599

ARIZONA 602-580-5641

Phoenix Field Office
2015 West Deer Valley Road
Phoenix, Arizona 85027-2099

Kingman Field Office [#] 520-692-4400

CALIFORNIA 916-978-4400

California State Office
2800 Cottage Way, Federal Bldg. West 1834
Sacramento, California 95825

Bakersfield Field Office [#] 661-391-6049

Ridgecrest Field Office [#] 760-446-6064

Eagle Lake Field Office 530-257-0456

COLORADO 719-269-8500

Front Range Center [#]
3170 East Main Street
Canon City, Colorado 81212

IDAHO 208-384-3300

Boise Field Office
3948 Development Avenue
Boise, Idaho 83705-5389

**MONTANA, NORTH DAKOTA,
AND SOUTH DAKOTA 406-238-1540**

Billings Field Office
810 East Main Street
Billings, Montana 59105-3395

NEVADA 775-475-2222

National Wild Horse & Burro Center
Palomino Valley [#]
P.O. Box 3270
Sparks, Nevada 89432-3272

**NEW MEXICO, KANSAS,
OKLAHOMA & TEXAS 1-800-237-3642**

Moore Field Station [#]
221 North Service Road
Moore, Oklahoma 73160-4946

OREGON & WASHINGTON 541-573-4400

Burns District Office
HC 74-12533 Highway 20 West
Hines, Oregon 97738

UTAH 801-977-4300

Salt Lake Field Office [#]
2370 South 2300 West
Salt Lake City, Utah 84119

WYOMING & NEBRASKA 307-352-0302

Rock Springs District Office [#]
280 Highway 191 North
Rock Springs, Wyoming 82901

Elm Creek, Nebraska 308-856-4498

EASTERN STATES 703-440-1700

7450 Boston Boulevard
Springfield, Virginia 22153

**AL, AR, FL, GA, KY, LA,
MS, NC, SC, TN, & VA 888-274-2133**

Jackson District Office
411 Briarwood Drive, Suite 404
Jackson, Mississippi 39206

Cross Plains, Tennessee [#] 888-274-2133

**CT, DE, DC, IL, IN, IA, ME, MD,
MA, MI, MN, MO, NH, NJ, NY,
OH, PA, RI, VT, WV, & WI 1-800-293-1781**

Milwaukee District Office
310 West Wisconsin Avenue, Suite 450
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53203

[#] - Holding Facility

[#] - Prison Training Program