

# Horsing Around

When you think about wild animals of the West, you probably think of bears, mountain lions, elk, and deer. But did you know that nearly 40,000 wild horses and burros also make their homes on public lands? These animals are descended from horses and burros that escaped from or were set

free by early explorers and settlers in the region. (Animals that were once domesticated, or tame, and are now wild are called “feral” animals.)

BLM protects wild horses and burros as living symbols of our country’s history. It’s against the law to harm them. But because they have few natural enemies, there’s a danger that their numbers will grow to the point where the land can’t support them. After all, not only do the horses and burros need food and water, but so do the wildlife and grazing cattle that also live on the rangelands.



BLM has chosen several different ways to keep the size of the herds under control. Sometimes the animals are gathered and moved to another area, either for a short time or for longer, to what are called “holding facilities.” BLM has also set up the Adopt-a-Horse-or-Burro program in which these animals are made available for qualified people to adopt.

## To Find Out More:

Check out the website of the Wild Horse and Burro Program: [www.wildhorseandburro.blm.gov](http://www.wildhorseandburro.blm.gov)

