



The BLM Wild Horse and Burro Program

Congress directed the Bureau of Land Management and U.S. Forest Service in 1971 to manage and protect America's wild horses and burros as part of a **thriving natural ecological balance** on public lands.



The Challenge

Since receiving federal protection, the wild horse and burro population on the public lands has soared, affecting the ecological balance.

25,000



wild horses and burros lived on public lands in 1971

27,000



wild horses and burros can live in balance with wildlife and livestock on healthy public lands

82,000

wild horses and burros live on public lands in 2018



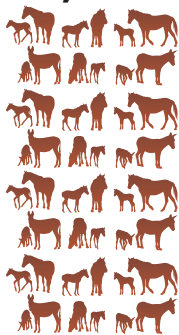
Adoption and Sales Program

245,000



wild horses and burros placed into good homes since 1971

9,700



1995

5,700



2005

4,099



2017

Adoption and sales of excess wild horses and burros to good homes have not kept up with population growth on the range.

Adoptions and sales

Wild horse and burro population

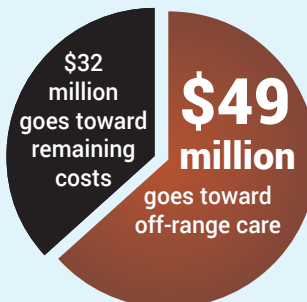
4 years

Unchecked herds **DOUBLE** in size every 4 years

Cost of Care

46,000

Wild horses and burros in off-range facilities



The BLM spends nearly 2/3 of the wild horse and burro program's annual budget to care for unadopted and unsold animals, leaving few funds for on-range management and care.



Overpopulation Has Consequences

Too many horses and burros in one area can lead to overgrazing, as well as:

starvation and thirst for horses, burros, and other wildlife



less native vegetation and more invasive weeds, such as cheatgrass



more wild horses and burros on highways and private property in search of food and water



Solving the Challenge

No one action or tool can adequately address this urgent situation. The BLM continues to seek a variety of new management tools and effective partners who can help put the wild horse and burro program back on a sustainable track.

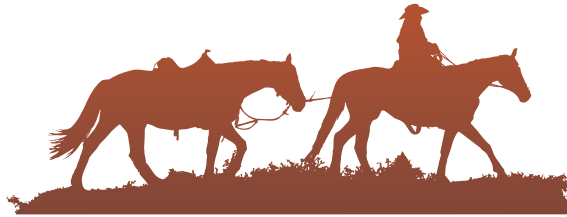
21

ongoing research projects to develop better fertility control methods and other management tools



1,800

trained animals found homes in 2017 thanks in part to the work of BLM partners and volunteers



35

off-range pastures provide open space for unadopted and unsold wild horses at lower costs than corrals



The BLM is committed to working with Congress, state and local governments, partner organizations, and the public to find commonsense solutions for putting the wild horse and burro program back on a sustainable and fiscally responsible track.

[BLM.gov/WHB](https://www.blm.gov/WHB) | wildhorse@blm.gov | 866-468-7826

Based on data as of May 22, 2018