



BLM NEWS RELEASE

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BLM Seeks Bids for New Type of Contracts for Wild Horse and Burro Management

As part of its responsibility to manage and protect wild horses and burros, the Bureau of Land Management, in collaboration with the USDA Forest Service (FS), is soliciting bids for several contracts that will help manage wild horses and burros located across the western United States. The contracts are for a new bait trapping method that is intended to relieve areas of excess wild horses and burros where helicopter drive trapping is not an effective method. The bids are the first of their kind, in that they involve six zones across the West, with a potential for multiple contractors simultaneously bait trapping animals over an extended period of time.

Bait trapping is not a new method of gathering animals for the BLM; it has been implemented in areas where timeliness is not an issue, as bait trapping usually occurs over several weeks or months, and in locations where BLM personnel can easily monitor the progress from their duty locations. Many times it occurs in areas where water is already scarce and the animals are lured by the water provided, or in areas where a helicopter cannot easily move the animals out of densely wooded areas. Bait trapping involves capturing wild horses and burros by setting up panels and using food, water, salt or sexual attraction (a mare in heat) to lure animals into a trap. Allowing contractors to execute the bait trapping over lengthy amounts of time in a variety of locations simultaneously, however, is a new strategy for the BLM's Wild Horse and Burro Program.

“The BLM is committed to continuously improving its management of wild horses and burros,” said BLM Wild Horse and Burro Division Chief Joan Guilfoyle. “Deploying this new method of bait trapping enhances our ability to gather animals more effectively in certain areas of the West, while minimizing the impact to the animals.”

The concept of the contract is not to capture large numbers of wild horses and burros in a short period of time, but rather to capture smaller numbers over a long period of time. A benefit is that it reduces the impact to the BLM's holding facilities—instead of large horse gathers with hundreds or thousands of animals entering the facilities at one time, this type of management involves very small amounts of animals trickling into facilities over a longer period of time. Each contract is from July 1, 2012 through June 30, 2013, with an option for four additional one-year periods.

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The work consists of the capture, care and transportation of wild horses and /or burros from Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah and Wyoming. It requires work to be accomplished in a safe and humane manner during all phases of the operation, including capture, handling and transport. The contract is not set up for holding wild horses and burros for any length of time, but to have the wild horses and burros shipped to BLM facilities as soon as possible. The contracts involve setting up a trap, capturing wild horses and burros and shipping them to the BLM preparation facilities. The capture, care and handling must be completed by those who are knowledgeable and experienced about the behavior and trapping of equines.

The zones are determined by the location of FS territories, BLM herd management areas and proximity to BLM preparation facilities. The goal is to employ contractors who live around the area where the wild horses and burros are located, so that they have short travel times from one trap area to another or to the BLM facility. There can be more than one contract per zone and one contractor can bid on more than one zone.

The BLM's bidding requirements are posted in solicitation L12PS00229, the details of which are available at <http://www.fedconnect.net>. To obtain the solicitation: (1) click on "Search Public Opportunities"; (2) under Search Criteria, select "Reference Number"; (3) put in the solicitation number (L12PS00229); and (4) click "Search" and the solicitation information will appear. The solicitation form describes what to submit and where to send it. Applicants must be registered at <http://www.ccr.gov> to be considered for a contract award.

The BLM and FS manage wild horses and burros as part of their overall multiple-use missions. Under the authority of the 1971 Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act, the BLM and FS manage and protect these living symbols of the Western spirit while ensuring that population levels are in balance with other public rangeland resources and uses.

To make sure that healthy herds thrive on healthy rangelands, the BLM must remove thousands of animals from the range each year to control the size of herds, which have virtually no predators and can double in population every four years. The current free-roaming population of BLM-managed wild horses and burros is 38,500, which exceeds by nearly 12,000 the number determined by the BLM to be the appropriate management level. Off the range, there are more than 47,000 wild horses and burros cared for in either short-term corrals or long-term pastures. All these animals, whether on or off the range, are protected by the BLM under the 1971 law.

The BLM manages more than 245 million acres of public land – the most of any Federal agency. This land, known as the National System of Public Lands, is primarily located in 12 Western states, including Alaska. The BLM also administers 700 million acres of sub-surface mineral estate throughout the nation. In Fiscal Year (FY) 2011, recreational and other activities on BLM-managed land contributed more than \$130 billion to the U.S. economy and supported more than 600,000 American jobs. The Bureau is also one of a handful of agencies that collects more revenue than it spends. In FY 2012, nearly \$5.7 billion will be generated on lands managed by the BLM, which operates on a \$1.1 billion budget. The BLM's multiple-use mission is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations. The Bureau accomplishes this by managing such activities as outdoor recreation, livestock grazing, mineral development, and energy production, and by conserving natural, historical, cultural, and other resources on public lands.