



# BLM NEWS RELEASE

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**Bureau of Land Management**  
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## **BLM Strengthens Wild Horse and Burro Policies to Ensure Humane Treatment of Animals, Greater Transparency**

The Bureau of Land Management today announced internal policy changes to its national Wild Horse and Burro Program that continue to strengthen the humane treatment of animals and increase public transparency.

“These changes are part of our ongoing commitment to ensure the humane treatment of animals that are gathered from our public rangelands,” Acting BLM Director Mike Pool said. “In addition, increasing public transparency is a cornerstone of this Administration’s approach to our work. These new policies represent significant and substantial improvements, and we anticipate additional steps in the future to continue to strengthen this program.”

The new policies, informed by input from stakeholders, will guide wild-horse-and-burro gathers and related activities. These gathers are conducted on federally managed Western rangelands where herd management areas are overpopulated.

Specifically, the policies announced today will:

- Help ensure the humane treatment of animals during gathers;
- Establish protocols for the management of gathers that strengthen communications and teamwork;
- Provide for safe and transparent access for the public and media; and
- Increase timely and accurate internal and external communications during gathers.

The new policies build upon a [policy](#) announced earlier this month aimed at preventing wild horses and burros from being sold or sent to slaughter. This policy sets new conditions and restrictions on wild horse and burro sales, including that no more than four wild horses and/or wild burros may be bought by an individual or group within a six-month period without prior approval of the BLM’s Assistant Director for Renewable Resources and Planning, who oversees the program.

All of these policies are part of a broader review that the BLM is undertaking of its Wild Horse and Burro program. Ongoing actions include expanding a variety of tools aimed at reducing herd growth, which will ultimately reduce the need to gather animals from the range. The agency also consults closely with the Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board, a group made up of members of the public from diverse backgrounds.

“At the end of the day, we need to find better ways to manage for healthier animals and healthier rangelands so that we can keep these symbols of the American West on our nation’s public lands,” Pool said.

The new policies can be accessed at <http://on.doi.gov/2013BLMPolicy>

The BLM encourages anyone who has observed inhumane treatment or the sale to a slaughterhouse of a federally protected wild horse or burro, or who has factual information about such an incident, should contact the Bureau at [wildhorse@blm.gov](mailto:wildhorse@blm.gov) or 866-4MUSTANGS (866-468-7826) with your name, contact information, and specific information about what you saw or know about.

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 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.

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