



## Off-Range Highlights for

### Wild Horse and Burro (WHB) Advisory Board Meeting, June 30 - July 1, 2021

**FY 2021 Private Placement Results** – The WHB Program has placed more than 4,125 animals into private care so far this fiscal year. The BLM credits the Adoption Incentive Program with reinvigorating interest in the adoptions, increasing placement figures dramatically, and thereby supporting on-range management efforts by reducing BLM’s reliance on off-range holding facilities. There are thousands of adoption success stories between a wild horse or burro and an adopter, ranging from beloved backyard companions to champion performance partnerships. Since its launch in 2019, more than 7,500 wild horses and burros have been adopted through the incentive program. By increasing adoptions, the BLM is better able to reduce widespread overpopulation of wild horse and burro herds, which has reached historic levels and continues to threaten the health and well-being of the animals, other wildlife and the land on which they all depend.

**Off-Range Pasture Tour** – The WHB Program is proposing to conduct a virtual tour of a wild horse off-range pasture in September 2021. The purpose of the tour will be to offer members of the public the opportunity to learn more about BLM’s WHB management mission, including the agency’s responsibility for providing humane care for thousands of animals held in off-range facilities. The precise location of the tour is yet to be determined, but the Program is considering one of the newest off-range pastures in Maxwell, NE. The virtual format was chosen as a way to reach more public than via in-person tour. BLM staff specialists along with the ranch owners will walk the public through the pasture on camera to see the horses and discuss details about how and why the agency manages this resource. Virtual attendees will be able to ask questions.

**WHB Educational Activity Book** – The Wild Horse and Burro Program was pleased to unveil a new educational activity book for all ages interested in the history of wild horses and burros and why the BLM manages herds on public lands. Printed copies of the activity books are available at BLM facilities and events around the country and can also be accessed via our website at: [www.blm.gov/whb/education](http://www.blm.gov/whb/education).

**50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Commemoration of the Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act** – The Wild Horse and Burro Program unveiled a new logo for 2021 to mark the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act of 1971. The logo and accompanying tag line – *A Milestone for America’s Living Legends* – support a year-long messaging campaign aimed at highlighting the goals of the Act and promoting the value of wild horses and burros. The logo and tagline will appear on various informational/educational products and marketing/promotional items for the program throughout the year. The campaign is supported by a dedicated [website](#) with many contemporary and historical resources to advance the educational objectives, including a 24-month calendar with images, information and trivia about the Act and BLM’s mission to manage wild horses and burros.



**UPDATE Compliance Handbook** – The newly published [WHB Compliance Handbook](#) was released the week of June 4. The handbook made modifications by removing/updating outdated material and includes guidance related to virtual compliance.



**UPDATE Off-Range Corral Acquisition** – The WHB Program posted a Request for Proposals for off-range corral holding in Idaho, Nevada, and Utah that can accommodate 500—10,000 wild horses and burros in safe, humane conditions in accordance with the Comprehensive Animals Welfare Program (RFP 140L0120R0008) which closed November 30, 2020. A competitive range of proposals were received and were evaluated by the contracting staff in May 2021. A Technical Proposal Evaluation Committee (TPEC) made up of subject matter experts was appointed and is currently evaluating the proposals. It is expected that the TPEC evaluation process will be completed within 60 days. Once the evaluation process is complete, successful proposals will begin going through the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process before final contract award.

**Off-Range Pasture solicitation** – As part of its mission to sustainably manage wild horses and burros on public lands, the BLM announced on May 18 that it is seeking proposals for off-range pastures to provide a free-roaming environment and quality care for excess wild horses removed from Western public rangelands. The solicitation is open to proposals for facilities in Colorado, Idaho, Kansas, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Washington and Wyoming. The BLM may award multiple contracts that can accommodate 200 – 10,000 wild horses, with a four-year or nine-year renewal option. The solicitation will close on July 19.

**UPDATE Online Corral** – The WHB Program continues to expand its use of the Online Corral platform to present more animals for placement and to reach a broader market. FY21-to-date, a total of four OLC events have been held with 943 animals being offered. Of these, 651 were adopted or sold, representing nearly a 70 percent placement rate. The average online bid for animals online has risen to approximately \$455, yielding just over \$394,000 in all. Nearly 2,000 applications have been submitted by individuals interested in adopting or purchasing a wild horse or burro.

**Mustang Heritage Foundation** - The Mustang Heritage Foundation (MHF) partnership continues to support the Program through its many successful efforts to place animals into private care. In March the Program was pleased to announce an additional \$1,204,000 in funding for Fiscal Year 2021 to support the MHF and allow it to remain on track to exceed its private placement goals for the year. By the end of May, MHF had placed 1,776 animals, representing 43% of BLM's overall placements.