The Bureau of Land Management celebrated 50 years of managing and protecting herds under the Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act in fiscal year (FY) 2021. The BLM’s Wild Horse and Burro Program hit several major milestones and set records on its path toward achieving sustainable populations of wild horses and burros on healthy public rangelands. Annual adoption and sale totals soared to new heights under the Adoption Incentive Program, reaching levels not seen in more than 20 years. At the same time, field offices continued to ramp up gathers and fertility control efforts as population estimates indicated some progress toward appropriate management levels. The need to reduce overpopulation remains imperative as the West continues to experience harsh drought conditions.

**Adoptions and Sales**

Incentives for adopting untrained animals and a spike in the number of animals trained through partner programs helped the BLM place more than 8,600 wild horses and burros into good homes in FY 2021.

Total placements reached the highest level since 1997.

Wild Horses and Burros Adopted and Sold Since 1997

- 1997: 2,899
- 2000: 8,637
- 2003: 8,637
- 2006: 8,637
- 2009: 8,637
- 2012: 8,637
- 2015: 8,637
- 2018: 8,637
- 2021: 8,692

**Other Adoption Stats**

- Adoption continues to be the primary way wild horses and burros are placed into private care. Of the animals that were placed into private care through adoptions and sales, 83% (5,698 animals) were adopted.
- Animals adopted through the Adoption Incentive Program accounted for more than half of all adoptions (3,742 animals).
- Almost a third of all animals adopted were trained or gentled (2,729 animals).

**Offsite Events**

In addition to being available for adoption at dozens of BLM facilities across the West, the BLM takes thousands of animals every year to offsite events (mostly east of the Mississippi River) to provide more people the opportunity to bring home a wild horse or burro.

- 7,129 Wild horses and burros offered for adoption or sale at offsite events
- 67 Offsite adoption and sale events hosted by the BLM
- 27 Facilities held adoption and sale events

**Compliance and Titling**

The BLM conducts mandatory compliance inspections of adopted, un titled animals living in private care. The BLM continues to increase its use of digital tools to complete compliance inspections.

The BLM requires all title applications to be signed by a veterinarian or other authorized officer to ensure the animal is in good health before ownership is transferred from the BLM to the adopter.
More animals were treated with fertility control this year than ever before as the BLM focuses on finding ways to slow population growth and reduce the need for removing animals from public lands.

The BLM primarily uses porcine zona pellucida, or PZP, for fertility control but is increasing its use of the GonaCon vaccine, which has the potential to last more than twice as long as PZP if followed up with boosters.

Some fertility control treatments can be delivered via dart to more approachable animals but other animals must be caught, treated, and then released. The BLM continues to support research to develop better, longer-lasting fertility control methods that require fewer treatments and can be effective in more herds.

To help reduce overpopulation and prevent starvation, thirst, and habitat degradation, the BLM gathered more animals in FY 2021 than in any year since 1985. More than 7,000 of these wild horses and burros were facing emergency conditions and imminent threats to their health and well-being due to severe drought and public safety concerns.

The BLM expanded its capacity to provide care for animals gathered from public lands. Off-range pastures provide large, free-roaming environments for long-term care of unadopted animals. Off-range corrals receive animals gathered from public lands, prepare them for domestic life, and make them available for adoption.

For more information, visit blm.gov/whb, call (866) 468-7826, or email wildhorse@blm.gov.