



Public Off-Range Pastures

Fact Sheet—Wild Horse and Burro Program, WO

1. How does one apply for a Public ORP contract?

- ✓ Applicants who have **never** conducted business with the government must first obtain a Duns and Bradstreet number at www.dnb.com before registering at www.sam.gov/. There is no fee involved. (Note: If you already have a Duns and Bradstreet number and have registered through sam.gov, you can proceed to fedconnect.net.)
- ✓ Applicants may access the requirements on what to submit and where to submit a proposal at www.fedconnect.net; clicking on “Search Public Opportunities”; and entering “Reference Number 140L0118R0009” in the Search Criteria.
- ✓ For assistance, contact Kemi Ismael at (202)912-7098 or kismael@blm.gov Ms. Ismael can assist with technical questions and/or coordinate a meeting for you with a local BLM small business specialist. A list of Frequently Asked Questions are provided at <https://on.doi.gov/2JSatfX>

2. What is a Public Off-Range Pasture contract?

As of May, 2018 nearly 46,000 animals were cared for in Off-Range Corrals (ORCs), Off-Range Pastures (ORPs) and Eco-sanctuaries. To provide a more cost-effective and efficient tool to manage costs, the BLM moving forward will convert all current Eco-Sanctuaries to Public Off-Range Pasture (ORP) contracts. **The new public ORP contract requires the contractor to:**

- ✓ provide a private pasture (grassland) setting for a minimum of 100, up to a maximum of 500, wild horses;
- ✓ allow public visitation on a regularly scheduled basis (a minimum of 5 days/week) from April through October and a limited basis from November through March;
- ✓ allow BLM to hold a minimum of two events that are open to the public, during the calendar year; and
- ✓ provide corral space for up to 25 trained animals per year that will be made available for viewing and placement into private care.

3. Can the land be located in any state and qualify for the Public ORP contract?

No. Proposals will only be accepted if the land is located in one of the following states: Colorado, Kansas, Montana, Oklahoma and Wyoming. These states all have preferable forage, soils, water availability and are in close proximity to large tourist areas or main travel corridors for tourists.

4. Are their external resources to assist applicants with their proposal?

Yes. Contact your local Natural Resources Conservation Center at www.nrcs.usda.gov for assistance with determining your pasture stocking rate and your soil and water type.

Contact a Procurement Technical Assistance Center in your state to assist you with preparing your proposal. You may reach them by visiting <http://www.aptac-us.org/>

Many of their services are free.

5. What are the requirements for a Public ORP contract?

Refer to Section C – Description/Specifications/Work Statement for the COMPLETE LIST of the contract requirements. *Applicant must provide supporting documentation that:*

- ✓ describes all necessary land, food, salt, minerals, water, facilities, personnel and supplies necessary to maintain a minimum of 100, maximum of 500, wild horses based on the land's carrying capacity;
- ✓ demonstrates the land is capable of producing sufficient standing forage for a period of at least 8 months or longer and will maintain the animals' body condition at a 4 or better on the Henneke Body Condition Score Chart. Supplemental feeding usually occurs for a period up to 4 months to maintain the required body condition (i.e. during periods of drought, deep snow, ice storms, fire, during times when the forage is depleted of protein content or when other circumstances warrant);
- ✓ illustrates how the proposed land can carry the number of animals requested in the proposal in a free-roaming environment and provide sufficient natural rock and/or soil type to maintain natural hoof trimming. (NRCS specialists can be of assistance with the documentation.) **The BLM will NOT provide a minimum requirement for the number of acres needed per animal as carrying capacities vary by location and land condition.**
- ✓ describes how the land is either privately owned by the applicant or controlled by the applicant through a lease agreement during the term of the contract. Land cannot include unfenced public lands (e.g. National Forest or BLM lands). If any unfenced public lands are located within the privately owned or controlled lands, the public lands must be fenced out;
- ✓ illustrates how the land is contiguous and will provide shelter from the natural elements by the topography or natural features such as trees, or manmade structures. The land **CANNOT** have a tree canopy cover that prevents desirable forage species from growing or a canopy cover which prevents the applicant and the BLM from obtaining accurate monthly inventory of horses at the facility;
- ✓ describes a weekly monitoring plan of how they will assess their health and determine death loss;
- ✓ describes how humane care will be provided for a one-year period, with a renewal option under BLM contract for a four-year or nine-year period. *(EX) Proposal will ask you to request a five-year or 10-year term contract;*
- ✓ provides perimeter and division fences that completely enclose the land and are a minimum of four strands of barbed wire and a minimum of 48" in height;

- ✓ provide gates, not cattle guards, at all road crossings or fence openings to keep horses in pastures;
- ✓ describes how they will be open to the public on a regular basis (a minimum of 5 days/week) from April through October and open on a BLM approved schedule from November through March.
- ✓ provides opportunities to view and learn about wild horses, their history and their potential to integrate into a domestic equine discipline;
- ✓ describes how they will present and maintain BLM informational material in a designated area accessible to the public; and
- ✓ describes how they will present approved BLM signs on the property.

6. How many Public ORP contracts will be awarded?

Multiple contracts are expected to be awarded; however, the total number will depend on the number of acceptable proposals received and the capacity each proposal can accommodate to meet the BLM's total needs. The final decision is based on available budget.

7. What does the BLM pay contractors?

The applicant must submit a business plan that supports the dollar amount needed per head, per day to conduct business with the government. The bid should include the percentage of profit the contractor is seeking. The BLM cannot provide a suggested rate or profit margin.

8. Will the BLM visit my property before making a decision?

Yes. If a proposal meets the BLM's needs, several BLM technical experts will complete an on-site visit before making a final recommendation to award a contract.

9. Why does the BLM have off-range pasture contracts?

The free-roaming population of BLM-managed wild horses and burros is estimated to be nearly 82,000, as of March, 2018, which is more than 50,000 animals the BLM has determined to be the appropriate management level. Despite the BLM's best efforts to use current population growth-suppression (PGS) measures, it is not enough to prevent the population from doubling every four years. In addition, adoption and sale rates of excess animals are not sufficient for the number of animals removed each year, leaving more animals under the care of the BLM. PORPs are another component of the program to control feed and care costs.

10. If awarded a contract, when would BLM begin shipping horses?

The BLM ships animals after a contract has been awarded and required analysis under NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act) has been completed. Horses are typically shipped 34-36 animals at a time in a straight-deck semi-truck and trailer and offloaded using a chute suitable for semi-trucks.

11. Are genders mixed?

Each contract will receive all mares or all geldings. The BLM does not mix genders to reduce the opportunity for additional animals born in captivity. Prior to shipment, all males are gelded. If mares are pregnant upon arrival, they will foal at the public off-range pasture and weaned foals will ship to off-range corrals for placement into private care.

12. Do animals receive health care prior to shipping?

Yes. When wild horses are first removed from the range, they are shipped to an off-range corral and receive an overall health inspection by a veterinarian and then vaccinated, dewormed, freeze marked, tested for Coggins and aged. Animals continue to receive boosters and hoof trimming until shipped. A health and gather history is created for each animal and shared with the contractor.

13. Are animals marked for tracking?

Yes. A four-digit number, corresponding with the last four-digits of their eight-digit freeze mark, is freeze marked on their left hip prior to shipping to assist in visual tracking by the BLM compliance inspectors and contractors.

14. Does the contractor provide health care to the animals?

If a wild horse is observed to have a health issue, unless it is impacting the quality of life, the BLM expects the contractor to leave the horse alone to heal naturally as it does in the wild. In the case of a health issue that impacts the animal's quality of life, the animal will be evaluated consistent with BLM policy.

15. What is their life expectancy?

Wild horses may live up to 30 years of age or longer in an off-range pasture setting.

16. When is the contractor paid?

First payment is made after animals are received at the location and have resided there for one month. Contractor is responsible for maintaining an accurate monthly animal inventory for invoicing. BLM and contractor will conduct an annual joint animal inventory, at a minimum.

17. How can I learn about future pasture contracts?

The BLM posts all contract opportunities on www.fedconnect.net. Once an opportunity is posted, a press release/announcement is posted at www.blm.gov/whb and through media outlets. Advertising is procured based on budget availability.

For additional information about the Wild Horse and Burro Program, please call 866-468-7826, email wildhorse@blm.gov or visit www.BLM.GOV/WHB