

WFRHBA 50th Anniversary Commemoration Concept Paper

The year 2021 marks the 50th anniversary of the Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act (WFRHBA). Few pieces of legislation throughout American history have enjoyed such broad support among the American people. The Act was passed unanimously by both houses of Congress and signed into law by President Richard M. Nixon on December 18, 1971. Since that time, Americans across the spectrum have continued to passionately support the aims of the Act. National Program Office coordinating a year-long, nationwide commemoration of the Act in concert with BLM State and Field Offices.

Objectives/Key Messages of the 50th Anniversary Commemoration:

- Take the lead in publicly establishing a positive narrative associated with the 50th Anniversary of the Act;
- Highlight the value of WHB as enduring symbols of our national heritage, as articulated in the preamble to the Act;
- Educate the public about the history of WHB on public lands and their management;
- Promote awareness of the beauty, versatility and desirability of WHB;
- Establish a clear connection between Americans' support for (and participation in) the WHB adopt/sale program and the agency's mission under the Act to preserve and protect WHB as part of a thriving ecological system on public rangelands;
- Spotlight opportunities for Americans to adopt or purchase WHB at specially branded "50th Anniversary" events around the country.

Concept: : *"A Milestone for America's Living Legends: Bred Wild ~ Built to Survive ~ Incredibly Versatile."*

WO260 will coordinate with the States a series of events across the country aimed at achieving the objectives and promoting the messages of the 50th Anniversary commemoration as outlined above. Many/most of these will be private placement or other outreach events which local jurisdictions might already plan to conduct or attend. Targeted events will be specially "branded" to connect them with the 50th Anniversary commemoration (including a 50th Anniversary logo and tag line) to draw attention to the commemoration and its objectives/messages. Offices conducting the events will also be provided with tools and materials (flyer templates, fact sheets, banners, etc.) to support the branding and messaging effort.

Examples of Events to be Included on the 50th Anniversary:

- Satellite Adoption/Sale Events
- Mustang Heritage Foundation Events (e.g. Extreme Mustang Makeover)
- Inmate Training Program Open House/Adoption
- Public Off-Range Pasture Adoption/Sale Event
- Off-Range Pasture Tour
- Off-Range Corral Tour/Open House/Adoption/Sale Event
- 4-H or Other Youth Engagement Events
- Outreach Events at Fairs, Expos, Rodeos, etc.
- Mustang Heritage Foundation TIP and Storefront Adoption/Sale Opportunities
- Trail rides, tours and other events within HMAs

- Daily Operations “Taking America to the Field” (or...to the Range”), e.g. Facebook Live

Precedent: This concept mirrors a similar successful campaign launched by WO260 in cooperation with BLM State and Field Offices in FY15. The *America’s Mustang* campaign featured a similar branding effort and a series of adoption and field events held over the summer to raise awareness of WHB adoption opportunities and their condition on public rangelands. The events were considered highly successful, bringing in 16,500 people to learn about BLM and the WHB Program. Additionally, a dedicated media, social media and web effort resulted in reaching more than 50 million people with the campaign’s positive message.

Budget Impact: Moderate. Most of the events will be funded through the annual state allocation.

Next Steps/Timeline:

- February 2020 – Brief leadership and field on the concept and solicit support
- March – May 2020 – Flesh out messages/talking points and branding scheme
- June – September 2020 – Develop a joint National-State level team. Work with external marketing contractors (ABI and Vet4U), the NOC and other vendors to develop and acquire branded informational and promotional products in support of the campaign
- October – December – Work with State/Field Offices to finalize the schedule of events to be branded as part of the 50th Anniversary commemoration; Develop and execute a national public affairs/public relations strategy to promote the campaign, including press release, traditional media outreach (interviews, appearances, etc.), social media postings, etc.; Work with external marketing firm (ABI) to schedule and develop digital ad campaigns in support of upcoming 50th Anniversary events.
- January – December 2021 – Execute planned digital ad campaigns; Continue execution of public affairs/public relations strategy; Provide national-level messaging and other related support to State/Field Offices as they execute planned events. Capstone event o/a December 18, 2021 (TBD; *Possibly America’s Mustang Trailer at BLM Headquarters in Grand Junction, CO*).