Questions and Answers for the
2026 Antelope Complex Wild Horse Gather

Q. What is the official name for this gather?
A. 2026 Antelope Complex Wild Horse Gather

Q. Where and how will we know when to go and where to meet each day?
A. All media and/or visitors wanting to go to the gather site will need RSVP by calling 775-753-0299 by 5 PM the day before they want to observe gather operations. You will receive a call back by 9 PM for daily meeting time and location which is subject to change.

Q. Will there be any designated public observers at the gather site locations?
A. Yes.

Public observation opportunities will be offered in accordance with the BLM's gather observation/visitation protocol and any gather-specific ground rules. Members of the public are welcome to view the gather operations on scheduled observation days, provided that doing so does not jeopardize the safety of the animals, staff and observers, or disrupt gather operations. The BLM will escort the public to gather observation sites located on public lands. Once gather operations have begun, those wanting to view gather operations must RSVP to 775-753-0299 by 5PM prior to the day of observation day and they will receive specific instructions on each day's meeting location and time by 9PM. Other than those public observation opportunities, the gather area will be temporarily closed to members of the public in accordance with 43 C.F.R. § 8364.1. To view the BLM's decision and gather documents, go to the BLM National NEPA Registry.

Q. What Contractor will be used for this Gather?
A. CD Warner Livestock LLC

Q. How much will this gather cost?
A. The costs for the gather will be calculated at the end of the gather.

Q. Why is this gather necessary?
A. To restore a thriving natural ecological balance and multiple-use relationship on public lands, consistent with the provisions of Section 1333(b) of the 1971 Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act. The BLM strives to be a good neighbor in the communities we serve; ensuring public safety within and outside of the HMAs is not at risk due to the overpopulation of wild horses and providing opportunities for other wildlife to have a thriving ecosystem.

The Antelope Complex is over-populated and animal conditions are declining due to range degradation and lack of sustainable water resources. Regular monitoring has occurred in the complex to observe wild horse body condition and range and water conditions. Dependent on the location within the complex animal body conditions have been observed in the range of 2-5.

Q. How many horses will be gathered and how many will be removed from the range?
A. The BLM will gather and remove up to 1,400 excess wild horses.

Q. Will the BLM implement any population suppression techniques? If so, what method or fertility control drug will be used and how many animals will be treated and released?
A. N/A

Q. What will the remaining herd population of this herd management area be?
A. Approximately 2,962 wild horses.

Q. How far, in relation to the trap site, are the animals and foals being herded?
A. Approximately eight miles.

Q. Why is the BLM removing animals that appear to be or are in good condition?
A. The BLM gathers animals with different body conditions, including some that appear to be or are in good condition. The agency proactively gathers excess animals from overpopulated herds on a three-to-five-year cycle to prevent worst-case scenarios.

Q. Does the BLM use whips to move the animals through the pens and chute?
A. The BLM may use flags or noise-making paddles to move animals through the pens and chutes. The flags are usually made by attaching a plastic grocery bag to the end of a sorting stick or buggy whip. The flag prevents the stick or whip from hitting the animal with any sort of impact or sting to it. Seeing and hearing the plastic flag motivates the animal to move away from the source of the stimulus. This technique is similar to those used for domestic animals being trained using resistance-free methods.

Q. Why is the BLM removing animals when, as of 2026, there are already over 58,000 animals in holding?
A. The BLM must remove thousands of wild horses from the range each year to protect public lands from the environmental impacts of herd overpopulation – such as soil erosion, sedimentation of streams, and damage to wildlife habitat.

In the case of the Antelope Complex, excess animals exist outside the complex and the gather is needed not only to ensure public safety, balance on the range and reversal of downward trends, but to also conform to the directives within the Antelope Valley and Triple B Complexes Herd Management Area Plan.

Although the BLM tries to place as many removed animals as possible into private care through adoption or sales, the public's demand for adoptable wild horses has declined sharply over the last 10 plus years, leaving the federal agency in the unsustainable position of gathering excess horses while its holding costs spiral upward.

Q. Where do the removed animals go?
A. Excess wild horses removed will be shipped to the Palomino Valley Off-Range Wild Horse and Burro Corrals, located in Reno, NV, where they will be prepared for the BLM's adoption and sales programs or long-term holding facilities located in Midwestern pastures.

Q. What veterinary treatment will the removed animals receive?

A. Once the animals arrive at the Palomino Valley Off-Range Corrals, the crew will allow them to acclimate to domestic feed and monitor them for a period of time. Following, the animals will be aged (based on the condition of their teeth), de-wormed, vaccinated, blood-tested (for Equine Infectious Anemia), freeze-marked (marked with a cold brand) and stallions will be gelded.

Q. What happens to animals that are not adopted?
A. Un-adopted animals are fed and cared for in either short-term corrals or long-term mid-western pastures. Animals usually over 10 years old and those passed over for adoption at least three times become eligible for sale, a transaction in which the title of ownership to the animals passes immediately from the Federal government to the buyer. (In the adoption process, the title of ownership passes from the Federal government to the adopter after the individual provides one year of humane care.)

Q. Will any of the animals be sent to slaughter?
A. No. While a December 2004 law granting the BLM sale authority authorizes the agency to sell sale-eligible animals "without limitation," the Bureau has **not been and is not selling any wild horses or burros to slaughterhouses or to "killer buyers." All animals in holding retain their status as "wild" animals and remain under the BLM's protection.**

Q. Is there any livestock grazing in this area?
A. Yes, The Antelope Complex encompasses portions of several livestock grazing allotments: Antelope Valley, Badlands, Becky Creek, Becky Springs, Boone Springs, Chase Springs, Cherry Creek, Chin Creek, Currie, Deep Creek, East Big Springs, Ferber Flat, Goshute Mountain, Lead Hills, Leppy Hills, Lovell Peak, McDermid Creek, North Steptoe, North Steptoe Trail, Sampson Creek, Schellbourne, Spruce, Sugarloaf, Tippett, Tippett Pass, Utah/Nevada North, Utah/Nevada South, Valley Mountain, West Big Springs, White Horse, and West White Horse.

Livestock grazing permittees have voluntarily reduced their use based on drought, limited forage, wild horse numbers in excess of Appropriate Management Level (AML) and horse impacts to existing limited water sources. Livestock use complies with the grazing system outlined in the final multiple use decisions, agreements and term permit conditions that provide for periodic rest and deferment of key range sites.

Q. Is the BLM removing horses to make room for more cattle grazing?
A. No. The BLM carries out removal of wild horses from public rangelands to ensure rangeland health and in accordance with land-use plans that were developed in an open, public process. These land-use plans are the means by which the BLM carries out its core mission, which is to manage the land for multiple uses while protecting the land's resources. Authorized livestock grazing on BLM-administered lands has declined by nearly 50 percent since the 1940s; actual (as distinguished from authorized) livestock grazing on public rangelands has declined by 30 percent since 1971.

Q. Does the wild horse over-population impact wildlife and plants?
A. Common wildlife species within the Antelope Complex include antelope, elk, mule deer, blue grouse, sage grouse, coyotes, mountain lions, and bobcats. Currently, the overabundant

population of wild horses is adversely affecting valuable habitat needed to support both native wildlife and wild horses.

Wild horses often graze the same area repeatedly throughout the year. Forage plants in those areas receive little rest from grazing pressure. Continuous grazing by wild horses does not allow plants sufficient time to recover from grazing impacts. Such overgrazing results in reduced plant health, vigor, reproduction, and ultimately to a loss of native forage species from natural plant communities. Over time, this greatly diminishes habitat quality as abundance and long-term production of desired plant communities is compromised. If wild horse populations are not controlled in this area, forage utilization will exceed the capacity of the range.

Q. What are some of the effects of wild horse overpopulation on Threatened and Endangered Species?

A. Maintaining the existing wild horse overpopulation, which would increase with each successive foal crop, would result in continued and increasing impacts to threatened and endangered species populations and habitats. Wild horse populations would increase about 15-25 percent each year that a gather is postponed. Valley bottom habitats would continue to see locally heavy levels of utilization associated with wild horse use and areas of heavy use would continue to expand as wild horse populations continue to grow.

Q. Where may I learn more about the Wild Horse and Burro Program?

A. Please visit the BLM's Wild Horse and Burro Program website at https://www.blm.gov/whb.