



U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management

News Release

BLM Colorado White River Field Office

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October 27, 2020

BLM issues decision to remove wild horses from private land in Rio Blanco County

MEEKER, Colo. – The Bureau of Land Management (BLM), White River Field Office signed a decision today authorizing the gather and removal of approximately 75 excess wild horses from private lands in the Piceance-East Douglas Herd Management Area. This action is needed to address concerns of wild horses impacting private property within the Piceance-East Douglas Herd Management Area.

The BLM has received requests from a private landowner to remove the horses. The BLM's wild horse management responsibilities under the 1971 Wild Free Roaming Horses and Burros Act include removing wild horses from private land when requested in writing by private landowners.

“We are committed to maintaining a healthy population of wild horses in the Piceance-East Douglas Herd Management Area as well as being a good neighbor to the communities we serve. We are currently supporting more than 1,200 wild horses in areas where the appropriate management level allows for up to 235,” **said BLM White River Field Manager Kent Walter.** “The removal of these wild horses will reduce impacts to private property and promote healthy rangelands.”

Wild horses will be gathered using a bait trapping technique located within the Greasewood Allotment at either Thompson Spring, East Fork Spring, or Berry Bros. Windmill. Once captured, the wild horses will be taken to a BLM facility in either Wyoming or Colorado for adoption or sale. Some of these wild horses would potentially be used for the annual Meeker Mustang Makeover event held in Meeker, Colorado; the event's mission statement includes the use and promotion of local wild horses.

The wild horse population is estimated at 838 wild horses in the PEDHMA and 438 wild horses outside the HMA. The appropriate management level for these areas is 135-235 wild horses in the PEDHMA and zero wild horses outside the HMA, approximately six times more than the rangelands are expected to support.

The categorical exclusion and decision document can be found on ePlanning at <https://eplanning.blm.gov/eplanning-ui/project/2000200/510>. Appeals must be submitted within 30 days to the White River Field Manager at the White River Field Office, 220 East Market Street, Meeker, Colorado 81641.

For information about the BLM's Wild Horse and Burro Program, visit <https://www.blm.gov/programs/wild-horse-and-burro>.

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The BLM manages more than 245 million acres of public land located primarily in the 11 Western states and Alaska. The BLM also administers 700 million acres of sub-surface mineral estate throughout the nation. In fiscal year 2018, the diverse activities authorized on BLM-managed lands generated \$105 billion in economic output across the country. This economic activity supported 471,000 jobs and contributed substantial revenue to the U.S. Treasury and state governments, mostly through royalties on minerals.