

Questions and Answers about the Wyoming Wild Horse Herd Gathers

Where is BLM gathering horses?

BLM is gathering wild horses in the Red Desert Complex which includes the Antelope Hills, Crooks Mountain, Green Mountain Stewart Creek and Lost Creek Herd Management Areas (HMA), the McCollough Peaks HMA and the Fifteen Mile HMA starting in mid October.

Why is the BLM gathering?

Wild horse numbers have exceeded the appropriate management levels (AML) in the Red Desert Complex, McCollough Peaks and Fifteen Miles HMAs. BLM gathers wild horses to control population numbers to maintain herd and rangeland health within the HMAs.

BLM is also in non-compliance with the court-ordered Consent Decree.

How do you gather the horses?

We will use a helicopter and wranglers on horseback to drive the horses to traps (corrals or pens).

What will happen to the horses once you gather them?

BLM will implement fertility treatments on some of the mares. They will then be released back to the range.

The horses that are not returned to the Red Desert Complex, McCollough Peaks and Fifteen Mile HMAs will be taken to the Rock Springs corrals and offered for adoption. Two contract facilities, the Wyoming Honor Farm and the Mantle Ranch, will also take some of the horses where they will be gentled, trained and then offered for adoption.

Why don't you just add more land to the range so it can support more horses?

Wild horses can only be managed on areas of public lands where they were known to exist in 1971, at the time of the passage of the Act.

How many wild horses are in Wyoming?

Wyoming BLM has 16 HMAs statewide and an AML range of 2,490 to 3,725 wild horses. Wyoming BLM has an estimated wild horse population of 4,100 to 4,300 wild horses not including the 2009 foal crop.

What is the Consent Decree?

In August, 2003 a consent decree was signed by the Attorney General for the State of Wyoming, and the Assistant Attorney General, Environmental & Natural Resources Division, United States Department of Justice regarding reducing wild horse populations in Wyoming to the AML. This out-of-court settlement was executed through the U.S. District Court. Terms of Agreement to be completed to maintain compliance with Wyoming Consent Decree include:

- If BLM determines through its inventory and projected reproduction rates that the wild horse population are likely to exceed AML in the following Fiscal Year, the BLM shall request funds to reduce the population to AML by December 15 the next budget cycle year.

If the BLM fails to reduce the number of wild horses to AML by the required date, the State may petition the court to compel the BLM to do so.