

Wild Horses & Feral Animals

What is Feral?

- A feral animal is _____

- Any offspring born in the wild are immediately feral.

Examples of feral animals in the US include feral _____, feral _____, and feral _____.

Wild Horse Foraging

- Wild horses eat ____% to ____% of their body weight daily.
- Weigh from 700 to 1,000 pounds
- Mouth Structure:
 - Cows with _____
 - Horses with _____

Over Population:

- Unchecked herds double in size ever ____ years
- Rapid population growth rates
- ≈ 89,000 wild horses and burros
- BLM estimates healthy population numbers should be ≈ 27,000
- _____ is the state that has more wild horses and burrows than any other state.

Habitat Degradation – Healthy Horses Healthy Rangelands (<https://youtu.be/zZqsIC4hgrM>)

Exclusion at Water Sources

- High water demand. Horses drink ____ to ____ gallons of water once/twice daily

BLM Wild Horse and Burrow Program

- Wild Free-Roaming Horses & Burros Act (1971)
- Requires _____

- HMA's (Horse Management Areas)
 - _____ acres of public land
- AML (Appropriate Management Level)
 - Set at _____ animals

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Solutions for management of wild horse and burrows?

- **Slaughter? NO** Why not?
- **Adoption?**
 - In last 5 years, the BLM has only been able to secure adoption for 2,000-4,000 wild horses & burros a years
 - BLM currently spends \$3,250 per adopted horse to promote adoptions
 - Adoption is cost effective because it costs ~\$46,000 per horse in off range holding over the course of their lifetime.
- **Fertility Control?**
 - PZP-22 vaccine which blocks fertilization
 - Requires a booster every year. After 4 years treatment becomes permanent
 - 2012 and 2018, the BLM treated fewer than 4,400 (4% of the population)
- **Round up – Put in Holding Facilities**
 - In 2016, BLM spent \$49 million to support wild horses & burros kept in short-term and long-term holding facilities.
 - More wild horses in _____ than exist on the _____
- **A Pathway Forward for Management** proposed by a collaborative group
 - 1) Relocate removed wild horses & burros to more cost-effective pasture facilities.
 - 2) Contract with private parties to secure lower-cost leasing of land for long-term humane care of removed horses & burros.
 - 3) Apply proven, safe and humane population control strategies to every herd that can be reached utilizing trained volunteers, Agency staff, and animal health professionals, as individual HMAs dictate to prevent repeated gathers.
 - 4) Promote adoptions to reduce captive populations and costs.