



Bureau of Land Management
Wild Horse and Burro Program

NEWS RELEASE



For Release Immediately

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Emergency Gathers Underway to Save Wild Horses and Burros BLM Sets WH&B Adoptions in Southeast

Severe drought conditions and recent wildfires throughout the western United States have destroyed thousands of acres of habitat for America's wild horses and burros (WH&B), and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is conducting emergency gathers to save as many of these animals as possible.

"We could be facing emergency gathers of more than 4,000 animals," said Lee Delaney, Group Manager for the BLM's Wild Horse and Burro program. "Some of the animals are in bad shape and we need to rescue them as soon as possible."

BLM has scheduled five adoptions in the southeast over next few months to find good homes for some of these animals. Adoptions are scheduled for Knoxville, Tennessee on September 23-24; Murray, Kentucky on October 7-8; Cross Plains, Tennessee on October 14-15; Waycross, Georgia on October 28-29, and Conyers, Georgia on November 4-5. Interested horse lovers can call toll free: 1-888-274-2133, for information on how to adopt a wild horse or burro.

Beyond the emergency gathers, BLM routinely monitors the herds and removes animals when they begin to over populate their herd area. These removals ensure the rangelands will remain healthy for the remaining wild horses and burros, native wildlife, and permitted livestock.

"BLM needs to find good homes for the 4,000 wild horses and burros we have in our corral facilities through the Bureau's Adopt-A-Horse or Burro Program," added Delaney. "We need to find as many good adopters as possible to make room for the animals that we will be gathering from the emergency."

To qualify to adopt a wild mustang or burro, individuals must be at least 18 years old and have no convictions for inhumane treatment of animals. Adopters also must have adequate facilities, the financial means to care for the animal(s), and should have some experience training or raising a horse or burro. A stock trailer will be required to transport the animal(s). Qualified adopters can adopt up to four animals.

Mustangs make excellent riding stock, and properly trained some adopted mustangs have become national champions in dressage, snaffle bit competitions, trail, endurance, and jumping. The animals available for adoption have been wormed and vaccinated and are in good health.

The process is called an "adoption" because BLM retains title to the animal for one year after the adoption. During the year, a BLM or designated representative could visit each adopter to ensure the animal is being cared for and has a good home. During this time, adopters cannot sell their adopted animal.

After the first year, adopters may apply for title. BLM will pass title of the animal if all the stipulations of the adoption agreement have been met. The animal becomes the private property of the adopter only after BLM transfers title, which completes the adoption process. More than 175,000 animals have been placed in private homes since the Adopt-A-Horse or Burro Program began in 1973.

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