



# United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Nevada State Office  
850 Harvard Way  
P.O. Box 12000  
Reno, Nevada 89520-0006



IN REPLY REFER TO:  
4700 (NV-960)

Ms. Dawn Lappin  
Wild Horse Organized Assistance  
P.O. Box 555  
Reno, Nevada 89504

AUG 26 1992

Dear Ms. Lappin:

Thank you for taking the time to provide us with your comments and concerns regarding our Draft Strategic Plan For Management of Wild Horses and Burro on Public Lands. Please find enclosed the Final Strategic Plan signed by Director Jamison on June 4, 1992. Our intention was to develop a comprehensive management strategy for the wild horse and burro program which addresses both the management of wild horses and burros on our public lands and balancing that management within a multiple use framework. It is through the involvement of concerned individuals like you that the success of this endeavor will be ensured.

In your letter you raised several questions concerning the draft plan. I would like to take the time to address some of those concerns.

The start date identified in the Draft Strategic Plan represents our estimates based on that point in time. The actual date of achieving a state-wide AML will be dependent on several factors including advancements in immuno-contraception research, the availability of funding, establishment of appropriate management levels (AMLs) and the development of procedures and guidelines relative to selective removals and fertility management.

We will evaluate the current capture season for the various reasons you identify. Our current capture season has been primarily dependent on avoiding the foaling season and the hot period of the summer to avoid undue stress on the animals. The capture season may be adjusted to meet the specific needs of each herd management area (HMA) and as such would not be applicable for discussion in the Strategic Plan which is intended to be of broad scope.

The use of various capture methods has been and will continue to be available based on the conditions encountered in a specific HMA. Although bait trapping is desirable due to low cost and reduced animal stress, environmental conditions limit its effectiveness where water is available and the animals can simply move to alternate areas to avoid capture. As new technologies become available for capturing animals, we will continue to evaluate them based on their being humane and cost effective.

A main part of the strategic plan involves public affairs. This will emphasize the various aspects of the wild horse and burro program and make aware the value of public participation. The public has access to participate and comment on the land use planning and monitoring evaluation processes. This participation will continue to be encouraged and welcomed.

The Bureau has habitat data for each HMA. The fact of monitoring natural resources is that no matter how much data you have available, it would always be better to have more. However, we can not delay our mandate to manage the resources pending collection of additional monitoring information. We must, and will, proceed in implementing flexible management along with continuing our monitoring program and make adjustments as new information becomes available.

The Bureau will continue to work with interested members of the public and increase our public affairs activities in an effort to educate those publics on the need for change and our rationale for proposed improvements.

The numbers used in the Strategic Plan represent the best information we had available at the time. The estimated AML appearing the Strategic Plan was used for discussing potential management actions and estimated budgets. The exact AML will be determined through the monitoring evaluation process.

Our proposed action plan identifies that there will be increased monitoring especially in animal distribution and differentiating use areas for each class of animal. We are already increasing our monitoring effort in these areas and will utilize this information as it becomes available.

We identify a large number of animals for removal due to our mandate in the Wild Horse and Burro Act which requires the removal of animals determined to be in excess. Our objective through the Strategic Plan is to ultimately reduce the number of excess animals which would require removal. Until we are able to reduce reproductive rates through fertility management, we will be required by law to remove excess animals.

Your continued commitment to the management of wild horses and burros on public lands is appreciated. As we progress in the implementation of this long-range management strategy and development of supporting procedures, I hope that we may continue to enjoy your candid evaluation so as to ensure their quality and lasting success.

If you have any additional questions or concerns regarding the Strategic Plan or any other aspect of the wild horse and burro program, please do not hesitate to call Bruce Dawson, Acting Chief National Wild Horse and Burro Program at (702) 785-6583.

Sincerely,



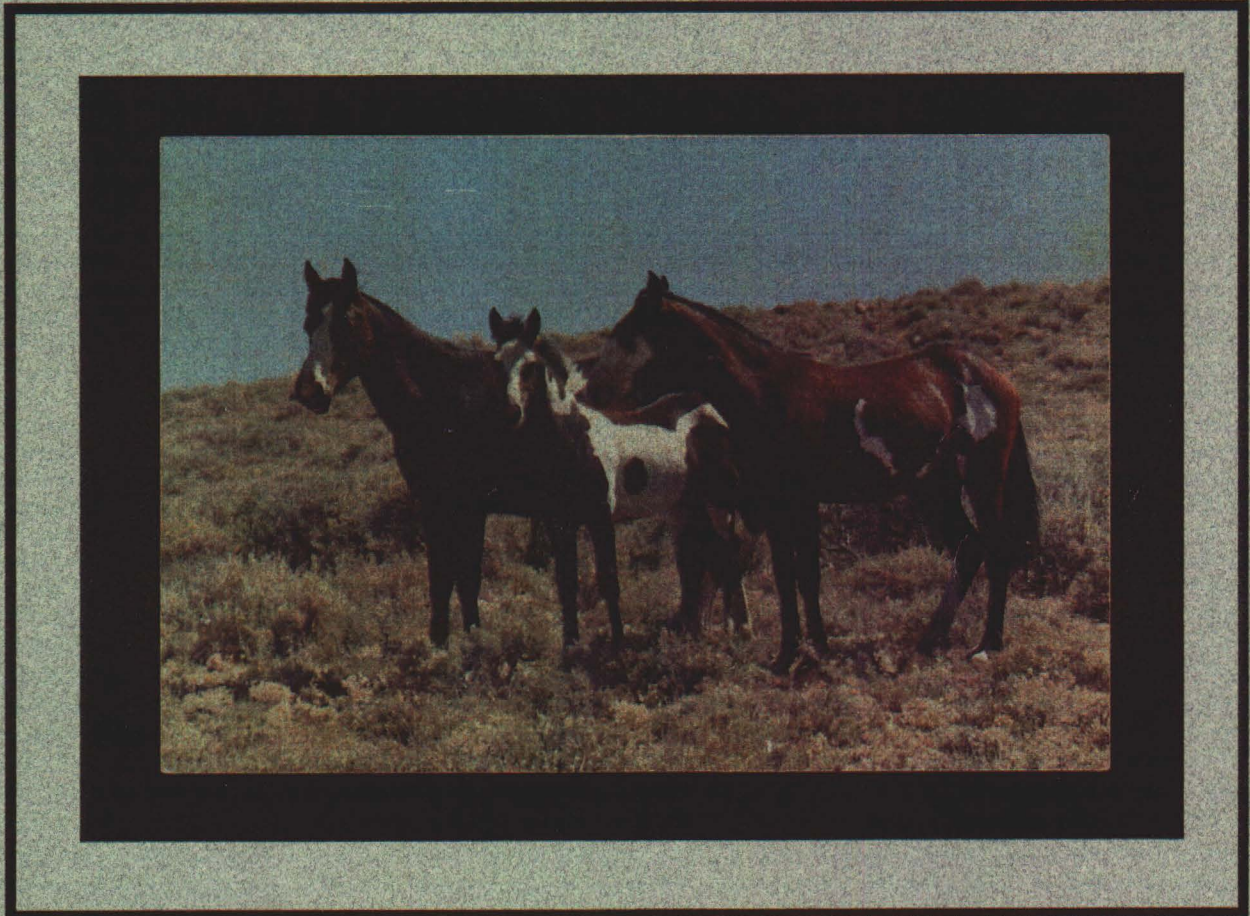
Billy R. Templeton  
State Director, Nevada

1 Enclosure

1. Strategic Plan for Management of Wild Horses and Burros on Public Lands (13pp)

6/1992

# STRATEGIC PLAN FOR MANAGEMENT OF WILD HORSES AND BURROS ON PUBLIC LANDS



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT June 1992

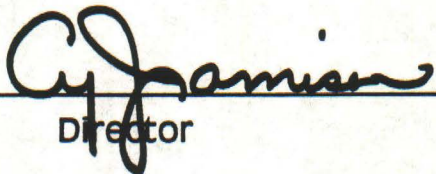



## STATEMENT FROM THE DIRECTOR

It is my sincere pleasure to present to you the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) Strategic Plan for the Management of Wild Horses and Burros on Public Lands.

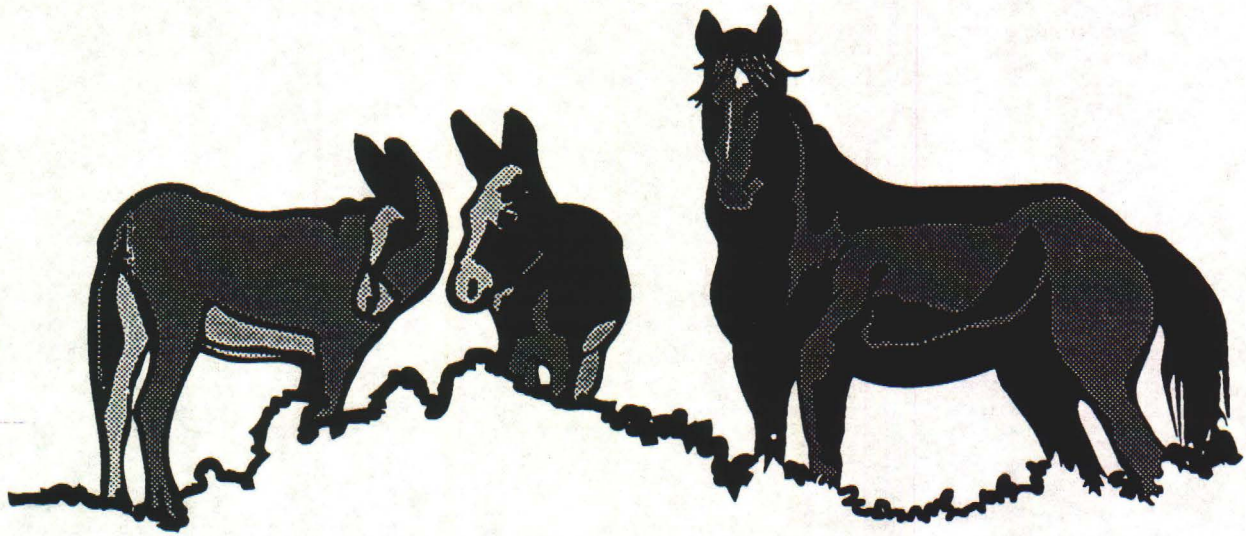
As BLM's Director for three years now, I have been proud to help chart the course of the BLM into the 1990's. The "new" BLM is continuing to have a more balanced multiple-use program of natural resource use and conservation, taking into account the long-term needs of future generations. We are diligently working to meet the rapidly changing public land needs of the American people.

An integral part of the "new" BLM is to develop and implement a long range strategy for the management of America's Wild Horses and Burros -- our living symbols of the historic and pioneer spirit of the West. It was our goal to develop a plan which addresses wild free-roaming horses and burros as important and perpetual components of the rangeland ecosystem. I believe we have achieved that goal.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Director

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

# STRATEGIC PLAN FOR MANAGEMENT OF WILD HORSES AND BURROS ON PUBLIC LANDS



## MISSION STATEMENT

To affirm wild free-roaming horses and burros are a living legacy of our American heritage, ensuring that they are recognized and maintained as a part of the natural ecosystem, and are valued for their biological, social and cultural attributes.

## GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

### Goal 1:

Perpetuate and protect viable wild horse and burro (WH&B) populations and their habitat in accordance with the principles of multiple-use management.

### Objectives:

- A. Increase program emphasis towards management of WH&Bs on the land.
  - (1) habitat
  - (2) census
  - (3) monitoring
  - (4) herd management plans
- B. Establish initial Appropriate Management Levels (AMLs) for all herd areas by 1995
- C. Adjust population levels to reach AMLs within six years.
- D. Eliminate illegal activities on the range that cause losses in WH & B numbers.

## **Goal 2:**

**Ensure humane care and treatment of excess WH&Bs, including a national adoption program.**

### **Objectives:**

- A. Implement actions necessary to reduce stress to WH&Bs during gathering, handling, processing, shipping and adoption.**
- B. Respond to 100 percent of mistreatment complaints with inspections of all affected WH&Bs.**
- C. By end of fiscal year 1993, provide educational materials on humane care of WH&Bs for all adopters during screening.**
- D. Inspect a minimum of 5 percent of untitled WH&Bs following adoption through MOUs (Memorandums of Understanding) with appropriate organizations and with BLM personnel.**
- E. Correct all deficiencies identified through program evaluations or through other sources within 30 days of discovery.**
- F. Increase cooperative efforts with humane and other interest groups to conduct compliance checks.**

## **Goal 3:**

**Establish and maintain partnerships and cooperative relationships to benefit WH&Bs.**

### **Objectives:**

- A. Enter into agreements with appropriate groups and individuals to:
  - (1) inspect facilities**
  - (2) conduct compliance on adopted animals**
  - (3) promote or host adoptions**
  - (4) develop multi-media public information.**
  - (5) Participate in WH&B habitat improvement projects and monitoring.**
  - (6) Gather and care for animals****
- B. Interagency Cooperation**  
**Develop Memorandum of Understanding with state and other federal agencies including the US Forest Service and National Park Service to coordinate and define responsibilities for specific herd areas and associated activities to properly manage wild horses and burros.**

## **Goal 4:**

**Increase and maintain WH&B professional capability, leadership and service ethic within the Bureau of Land Management, and credibility with the public.**

### **Objectives:**

- A. Increase program and budget emphasis on habitat and animal management.**
- B. Develop a technical and professional job series for WH&B personnel to present to the Office of Personnel Management by the end of fiscal year 1993.**

- C. Develop appropriate training courses for WH&B personnel by the end of fiscal year 1993.
- D. Increase management participation and support in WH&B activities.

**Goal 5:**

Integrate and incorporate research, science, and technical development into the overall WH&B program.

**Objectives:**

- A. Determine research needs. Begin by initiating research in the following areas:
  - (1) habitat requirements
  - (2) census methods
  - (3) physiology and health including stress thresholds
  - (4) adopter profiles/market
  - (5) effects of fertility control
  - (6) population dynamics
- B. Facilitate practical application of research results.
- C. Establish a WH&B research coordination center.

## **ASSUMPTIONS**

- A. No change will be made in the WH&B Act.
- B. Regulations and policies can be changed.
- C. Adoption will be the primary placement tool of excess animals removed from public lands.
- D. There will be no destruction of healthy animals.
- E. Only adoptable animals will be removed from public lands.
- F. The prison system/sanctuaries are not long-term solutions.
- G. Fertility control will be an available management tool beginning in FY94.
- H. Nationwide, WH&B population is estimated at 55,000. About 37,000 are in Nevada. (Appendix 1)

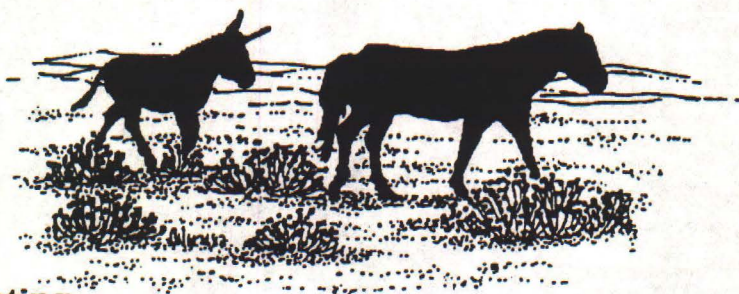
## **PROPOSED ACTION PLAN**

- A. Increase emphasis on habitat management
  - 1. Establish requirements for habitat analysis and monitoring considering the natural behavior and biological needs for WH&Bs. Consider relationships with other components of the ecosystem. Include the following:
    - a. Ecosystem inventories to identify potential and establish a baseline for monitoring.
    - b. Vegetative monitoring techniques, to determine condition and trend, utilization levels, dietary overlaps with other animals and seasonal use areas. The monitoring program should be complementary to moni-



toring programs for wildlife and livestock. Duplication between programs will be eliminated.

- c. Herd census techniques that are specific to each herd management area, capable of determining population numbers, reproductive rates, area of use and seasonal distribution patterns.
  2. Determine through the resource management planning process what the appropriate mix of competing forage consumers will be.
    - a. Develop criteria to establish initial AMLs through the land use plan process. Consider existing inventory and monitoring data and resource conflicts in the development of reasonable alternatives to be analyzed and proposed in the RMP. One or more of the alternatives must have the objective of arriving at a natural thriving ecological balance.
    - b. Review existing manuals, policy and regulations to determine if changes are required to maintain herd integrity and stability while assessing long-term impacts to the rangeland ecosystem.
  3. Develop consistent standards for preparation of herd management plans, capture plans and associated environmental analysis.
  4. Establish procedures for periodic evaluation of monitoring data to validate or adjust the initial AML established through the land use plan. Coordinate evaluations with other competing resource values.
- B. Establish a National Wild Horse and Burro Center which will include the following:
1. Research and Development
    - a. Establish a focal point for research coordination for enhancement of WH&B management.
    - b. Provide facilities for on-the-site research at the center.
    - c. Maintain a research library dedicated to WH&Bs.
    - d. Obtain field input into identification of research needs.
    - e. Research should be conducted on the following:
      - (1) habitat requirements
      - (2) census methods
      - (3) physiology and health including stress- related effects
      - (4) adopter profiles/market
      - (5) effects of fertility control
      - (6) population dynamics
      - (7) other
  2. Interpretive Center for Visitors
    - a. Develop information and displays covering all aspects of the WH&B program.
    - b. Develop video program for selecting,



- training and handling of WH&Bs.
  - c. Provide information on the adoption program.
  - d. Provide for tours through the facility.
  - e. Provide viewing area for WH&Bs in their natural habitat.
  - f. Involve volunteers for visitor management.
3. Science and Technology Transfer
    - a. Develop an information and training center to increase knowledge of WH&B specialists.
    - b. Establish a centralized location which provides a forum for national conferences, workshops, meetings and symposiums on WH&Bs.
    - c. Provide program orientation and management training for selected employees.
    - d. Involve specific interest groups, universities and other agencies in technical transfer of new knowledge and techniques.
  4. Senior technical staff for national support.
    - a. Establish at the national WH&B center a senior technical staff for development of procedures, and to facilitate national coordination for the WH&B program.
    - b. Develop and establish a technical and professional job series for all WH&B personnel.
  5. WH&B adoption processing and holding facility.
    - a. Provide state-of-the-art facilities to ensure humane care and treatment of excess WH&Bs removed from public lands.
    - b. Develop new techniques for handling, processing and care of captured animals and provide this information to the other states.
  6. National adoption program.
    - a. Provide coordination for all Bureau adoption efforts.
    - b. Develop promotional material for a national adoption program.
    - c. Establish a centralized dispatch program that gives priority to safe, humane and efficient distribution of WH&Bs throughout the United States.

(Specific action items for adoption are discussed under Population Control and Removals.)

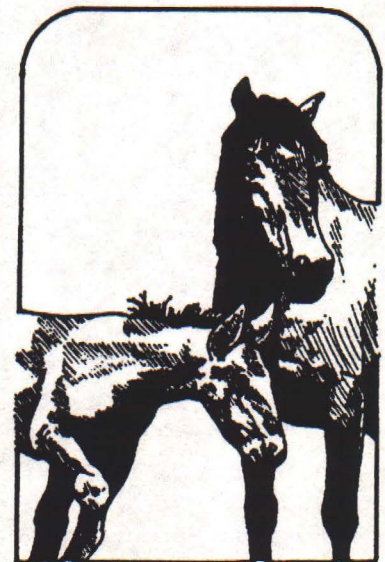
### **C. Population Management, Removals and Adoptions**

1. Provide for management of WH&B populations through a variety of techniques that may be used singly or in combination to ensure habitat is maintained and animals living on the land are in concert with the natural ecosystem and other users of the land. Recommended techniques are:
  - a. Selective gathers
    - (1) target specific age groups
    - (2) target specific sex for removal

- b. Fertility control
  - c. Establish HMAs with non-reproductive herds where unadoptable horses can be placed, or return unadoptable horses to other herd areas where populations are below appropriate management levels.
2. Develop policy that allows, with few exceptions, for removal of only adoptable animals.
  3. Each BLM state office should identify at least one area where unadoptable animals can be returned to the land.
  4. In the long-term, balance the rate of population increase with the animal adoption demand (5,000 to 6,000 annually). In the short term, increase adoption demand through increased public affairs efforts to meet the placement needs to reach AMLs.
  5. Implement a strategy for removal and placement of excess animals to reduce the current population to AML. Reach AML within the six-year timeframe as stated in the objectives. The current population is estimated to be 55,000 and the AML approximately 31,000 animals.
    - a. States that are at or near AML have the option of continuing present management. Each of those states, however, will be required to:
      - (1) Implement actions to reduce rate of increase for horses.
      - (2) Remove only adoptable animals.
      - (3) Establish an area or otherwise provide for unadoptables that may be gathered.
      - (4) Increase adoptions within the state to place all horses gathered during the next three years.
    - b. Nevada and Wyoming will use a selective removal strategy with fertility control that will assure that AMLs are reached within a six-year timeframe.

The alternative recommended for Nevada is to remove all one-to-three year olds on a three-year rotational schedule. One-third of all herd units will be gathered each year. In addition, fertility control should be exercised on 50% of all females age four through nine.

This alternative will result in the removal and placement of maximum of 8500 three-year olds during the 3rd year (1996) and with the removal of 2800 at the end of the 7th year.



**Advantages of this recommendation include:**

- \*The basic gene pool of each herd will remain intact.**
- \*Younger more adoptable animals for private placement.**
- \*Displacement of older animals minimized.**
- \*Capability for selection and upgrading herd through sterilization of animals with undesirable qualities, or physical debilitation.**
- \*Opportunity to reverse or continue contraception.**
- \*Reduced rates of population growth.**

**6. Increase the numbers of horses and burros placed through adoption across the United States. The Eastern States Office adoption program will provide for placement of most horses and burros. However, efforts in the Western States must be increased as well.**

**a. Nationwide - Implement actions to adopt the following number of horses per year for a three-year period:**

ESO	4,000
NM, TX, OK	1,000
WY, NE	300
MT, ND, SD	300
ID	150
OR, WA	300
CO	400
AZ	300
UT	300
NV	500
CA	1,000
Mid-states facility	300
Subtotal	<u>8,850</u>
Three reduced-fee adoptions @ 400-500 head:	
Subtotal	<u>1,500</u>
Total	<u>10,350 WH adoptions</u>

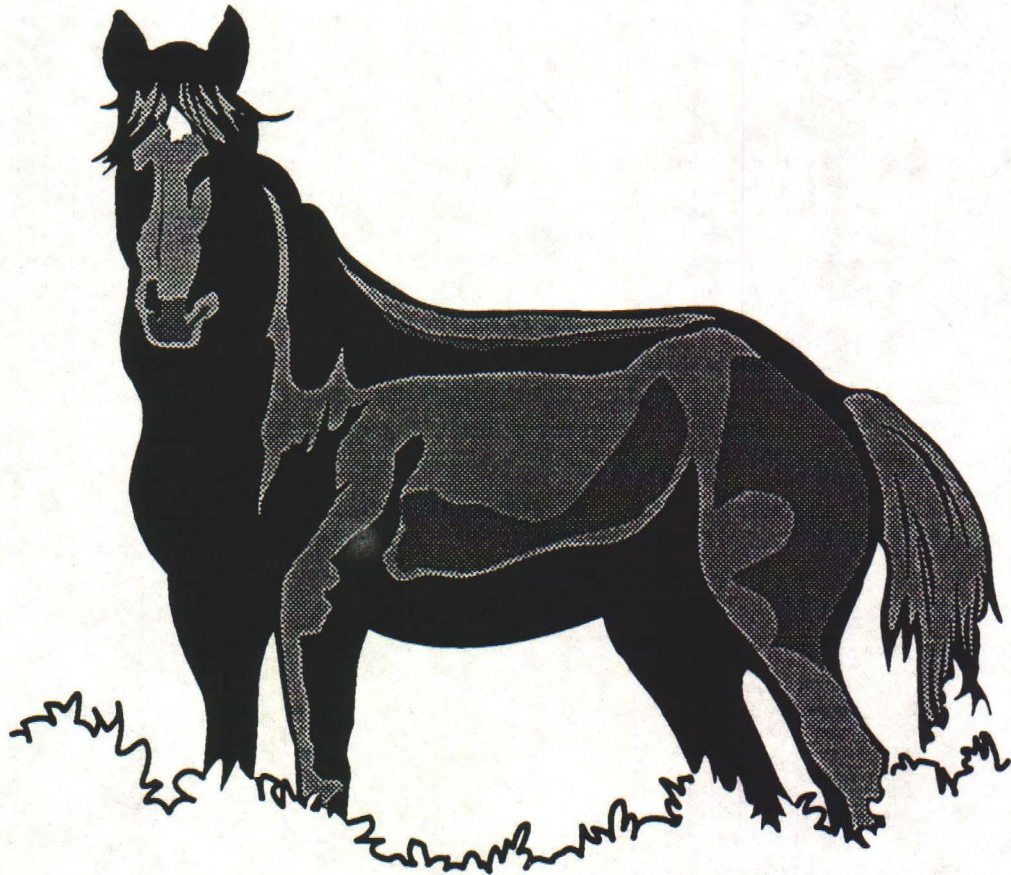
- b. Actions specific for improving the adoption program in the Eastern States include the following:**
- (1) Establish one permanent adoption center contract for holding 170 animals (500 adoptions through each permanent center).**
  - (2) Maintain a BLM employee at each permanent adoption center.**
  - (3) Establish one contract for satellites only (49 satellites average 120 animals per satellite).**
  - (4) Conduct in two district offices and the state office, at least 17 satellites each.**
- c. New Mexico will continue to develop an aggressive adoption program. Satellite adoptions will be expanded in Oklahoma, Kansas, Texas and other areas of the Midwest.**

- d. Adoption in the West will be intensified. Hold up to three reduced-fee adoptions with 400-500 head at strategic locations in the West as needed. WH&B specialists Bureauwide will assist. The logistics of such an adoption would be modeled on the Incident Command System to ensure efficiency.
- e. Because of the public affairs needs of the WH&B program and to foster a Bureauwide vision of the WH&B program, a specialized national public affairs team will be established. This team will be responsible for doing on- the-ground public affairs work for all reduced-fee adoptions and for satellite adoptions when requested by a state or district office. This team will also be responsible for coordinating with volunteers to help publicize the program and educate the public.
- f. Other actions to enhance adoption capability include:
  - (1) Establish a fully automated system for tracking and shipment of animals.
  - (2) Increase public affairs materials and on-the-ground support.
  - (3) Increase support for volunteer assistance.
  - (4) Open a mid-states facility to rest horses being shipped East.
- 7. Increase compliance checks to insure that adopted animals receive proper care.
  - a. Respond to 100% of all mistreatment complaints.
  - b. Inspect a minimum of 5% of all untitled animals each year.
  - c. Involve other interested parties in inspection of untitled animals.
- 8. Specific budget information for implementing the proposed action plan, is presented in Appendix 2.

#### **D. Cooperative Relations and Outreach**

- 1. Increase cooperation from all groups interested in the care and management of WH&Bs.
- 2. Develop volunteer programs to assist in the following activities:
  - a. Promote and host adoption events.
  - b. Inspect potential adopter facilities.
  - c. Provide post adoption services to adopters.
  - d. Ensure that a high standard of humane care is maintained.
  - e. Participate in WH&B habitat improvement projects and monitoring.
  - f. Other
- 3. Develop a public affairs plan by 1993 that will provide for development of outreach programs for the following year.
  - a. Improve post adoption protection of animals.
  - b. Inform potential adopters about the full spectrum of the WH & B program.

- c. Provide material for national, state and local events.
  - d. Protection of WH&Bs and enforcement of the Wild Horse and Burro Act.
  - e. Provide quality information about the WH&B program to all members of Congress whose constituents are directly affected by WH&B management activities.
4. Increase coordination and cooperation with other federal and state agencies engaged in wild horse and burro management.
  - a. Review existing management agreements and eliminate, revise, or develop agreements as applicable.
  - b. Conduct yearly coordination meetings with other agencies at both national and local levels.
  - c. Provide information exchanges about the WH & B program including, research, management initiatives, public affairs, etc.
  - d. Develop interagency training courses which emphasize an interdisciplinary approach to managing wild horses and burros.
5. To foster a "shared responsibility" attitude, BLM and Forest Service WH&B specialists will assist other states as needed to conduct gathers, adoptions and other activities.
6. Public consultation information is presented in Appendix 3.



**POPULATION SCENARIO FOR WILD HORSES & BURROS  
ON PUBLIC LANDS IN NEVADA WITHOUT IMPLEMENTATION  
OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN**

<b>Year</b>	<b>No Removals</b>	<b>Removing only 2,500/year</b>
	<b>Number</b>	<b>Number</b>
1991	35,000	35,000
1992	41,000	38,350
1993	48,932	42,303
1994	58,028	49,917
1995	68,943	58,902
1996	81,311	69,505
1997	96,405	82,016
1998	114,434	96,779
1999	135,286	114,199
2000	160,424	134,755
2001	200,000+	159,011

**STRATEGIC PLAN FOR MANAGEMENT OF WILD HORSES & BURROS ON PUBLIC LANDS**  
**BUDGET (\$000)**

FISCAL YEAR	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
POPULATION	56,600	52,600	51,400	48,900	43,100	41,500	37,900	31,700	30,800	28,900
TOTAL ANIMALS REMOVED	7,600	9,100	9,800	11,000	6,400	7,400	9,600	4,400	6,200	5,800
REMOVAL COST	\$3,400	\$3,500	\$3,700	\$4,100	\$2,400	\$2,800	\$3,600	\$1,700	\$2,300	\$2,200
TOTAL ANIMALS TREATED, FERTILITY CONTROL	1,500	1,600	1,700	1,900	1,300	1,500	1,700	1,100	1,200	1,000
TREATMENT COST	\$180	\$190	\$200	\$230	\$160	\$180	\$200	\$130	\$140	\$120
TOTAL ANIMALS ADOPTED	6,300	9,300	10,000	11,300	6,800	7,700	9,900	5,800	7,000	6,230
ADOPTION COST	\$4,000	\$7,200	\$7,600	\$8,500	\$5,700	\$6,300	\$7,700	\$4,800	\$5,500	\$4,900
FACILITY MAINTENANCE/ CONSTRUCTION	\$3,000	\$1,900	\$2,800	\$1,900	\$3,800	\$3,300	\$2,500	\$4,500	\$3,400	\$3,800
PROGRAM MANAGEMENT	\$2,900	\$2,900	\$3,200	\$2,900	\$3,200	\$3,200	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,100	\$3,100
HERD MANAGEMENT/ HABITAT MONITORING	\$2,400	\$2,400	\$2,400	\$2,200	\$4,700	\$4,200	\$2,900	\$5,800	\$5,800	\$5,600
<b>TOTAL PROGRAM COST (FIGURES ROUNDED)</b>	<b>\$16,000</b>	<b>\$18,000</b>	<b>\$20,000</b>	<b>\$20,000</b>	<b>\$20,000</b>	<b>\$20,000</b>	<b>\$20,000</b>	<b>\$20,000</b>	<b>\$20,000</b>	<b>\$20,000</b>



# STRATEGIC PLAN FOR MANAGEMENT OF WILD HORSES & BURROS ON PUBLIC LANDS

## PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Individuals and representatives of the following organizations were consulted and/or made comments during development of the Strategic Plan:

American Horse Protection Association	Mt. Sopris Hereford Ranch
American Mustang and Burro Association	Nadine Marshall
American Veterinary Institute	Nancy Bowker
Animal Protection Institute	National Cattlemen's Association
Animal Voice Magazine	National Public Lands Advisory Council
Bill Brennan	National Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board
Bio Blanco Oil Shale Co., Inc.	Nevada Cattlemen's Association
Bob Arambel	Nevada Congressional Delegation
BP Publishing, Inc.	Nevada Department of Wildlife
Cheryl Holy	Nevada Farm Bureau
Cheryl Matthews	Nevada Governor's Advisory Board on Natural Resources
Chris Jouflas	Nick Theos
Colorado Cattlemen's Association	Northwest Telco
Colorado Department of Corrections	Parker/Elizabeth Riding Club
Colorado Horse Rescue	Phoenix Horse Rescue
Colorado Horsemen's Council	Raymond Snyder
Colorado Public Lands Council	Rob Mahedy
Colorado State University	Rockmount Ranchwear Manufacturing CO.
Colorado Wool Growers Asso.	Ross Allen
Commission for the Preservation of Wild Horses	Roxanne Turnbull
Dale Albertson	Roy N. "Nate" Patton
Denver Post	Russell Hindmarsh
Denzel Goodwin	Scott Warren
E.B. Robinson, Jr.	Senate Energy Committee/Public Lands Subcommittee
Ed Howard	Sierra Club, Toiyabe Chapter
Ed Oliver	Society for Range Management
ENSR Consulting and Engineering	Spring Huston
Forst Melick	Stan Whinnery
Fred Burke	Steve Davis
Friends of the Mustangs	The Izaak Walton League of America
Gail Vermillion	Tom Latham
High County News	Tom Van Horn
Hubert Pepper	United States Forest Service
Humane Society of the United States	University of Nevada, Reno
International Society for the Protection of Mustangs and Burros	Vicki Smith
Jack E. Haworth	Western Livestock Journal
James Suckla	Whole Horse Institute
Jim Coleman	Wild Horse Organized Assistance
Jim Like	Wildlife Management Institute
John Raftopoulos	Wright Dickinson
Julie M. Brooks	Wyoming State Grazing Board
Kay F. Herndon	
Lynn Matheson	