

4730 – DESTRUCTION OF WILD HORSES AND BURROS
AND DISPOSAL OF REMAINS (PUBLIC)

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.01 Purpose. This Manual Section describes the authorities, objectives and policies that guide the destruction of wild horses and burros and the disposal of their remains.

.02 Objectives. The BLM's objectives in this Manual Section are:

A. To destroy old, sick or lame wild horses and burros humanely.

B. To dispose of remains of wild horses and burros in accordance with Federal, State, or local laws.

.03 Authority. See BLM Manual Section 4700.

.04 Responsibility. See BLM Manual Section 4700.

.05 References. See BLM Manual Section 4700.

.06 Policy. See BLM Manual Section 4700.

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.1 Destruction. Final decisions regarding the euthanasia of a wild horse or burro rest solely with the authorized officer (43 CFR 4730). Whenever it is necessary to humanely destroy a wild horse or burro, the destruction shall be accomplished using methods identified as acceptable by the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA). (Refer to AVMA Guidelines on Euthanasia, June 2007).

.11 Old, Sick, and Lame Animals.

A. When necessary, the euthanasia of captured wild horses and burros shall be carried out by veterinarians or other trained individuals approved by the authorized officer, using methods acceptable to the AVMA.

B. Free-roaming wild horses or burros on the public lands that are found to be old, sick or lame may be destroyed as an act of mercy by firearm by the authorized officer or by an individual approved by the authorized officer.

.12 Public View. In 1986, an AVMA Panel on Euthanasia stated: “The distress experienced by people when observing euthanasia or death in any form is an emotional response dependent on the background of the observer ... this distress may be minimized by perfection of the technique of euthanasia.” Individuals involved in destruction of wild horses and burros must be trained in acceptable euthanasia techniques and should, in consideration of observers’ sensibilities, destroy animals away from public view, whenever possible.

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.2 Documentation. The death record should document that euthanasia was performed and provide the reasons for the euthanasia. This information shall be entered in the Wild Horse and Burro Program System (WHBPS).

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.3 Disposal of Remains. The remains of captured wild horses or burros shall be disposed of in accordance with State or local sanitation laws. In the absence of sanitation laws, the remains shall be disposed of in the manner customarily used by that locality.

.31 Prohibition on Sale of Remains. The remains of wild horses and burros shall not be sold or transferred for any type of consideration.

.32 Transporting Remains. The remains of wild horses and burros shall be transported in trucks or trailers constructed in a manner that prevents a view of the dead animals.