



Wild Horse and Burro Program Fact Sheet

August 2023

- BLM Colorado is committed to managing for healthy horses on healthy lands through appropriate management levels of the population.
- Wild horses share public lands with other authorized uses, like grazing, wildlife habitat, and managing for a healthy environment.
- Wild horses have no natural predators and populations increase by approximately 20% annually when left unmanaged.
- The BLM and the State of Colorado have partnered together to manage wild horses at facilities like the Canon City holding facility, where Dept. Of Corrections inmates help to care for excess horses.

BLM Colorado Herd Management Areas

- BLM Colorado manages three Herd Management Areas (HMA) - Sand Wash Basin, Piceance-East Douglas, Spring Creek Basin, and one Wild Horse Range - Little Book Cliffs.
 - Sand Wash Basin HMA is about 158,000 acres and includes 2,000 acres of private land and 840 acres of state land. The appropriate management level is 163 – 363 animals.
 - The Piceance-East Douglas HMA is about 190,000 acres, making it the largest HMA in Colorado. The appropriate management level is 135-235 animals.
 - Spring Creek Basin HMA is about 22,000 acres of rolling salt-desert shrub and pinon-juniper hills in southwest Colorado. The appropriate management level is 50-80 animals.
 - Little Book Cliffs Wild Horse Range is about 36,000 acres characterized by four major canyon systems. The appropriate management level is 90 -150 animals.
- As of 2023, The high Appropriate Management Level across Colorado's HMAs is just over 800 animals and the current estimated population across the HMAs is just under 1,150

animals. BLM Colorado manages approximately 404,000 acres of public lands as wild horse herd management areas or designated wild horse range.

- Wild horses share resources with grazing livestock, wildlife, and general ecological processes. Grazing allotments estimates as of 2023:

HMA	Cattle/Sheep	Horses	Wildlife/Ecological Processes
Spring Creek Basin	0%	35%	65%
Little Book Cliffs	0%	50%	50%
Piceance-East Douglas	14%	80%	6%
Sand Wash Basin	25%	75%*	

**Sand Wash Basin horse & wildlife/ecological processes have not been studied separately and are grouped into one category.*

Sand Wash Basin investment plans

- The BLM plans to invest \$625,000 in the Sand Wash Basin Herd Management Area to create bait-traps to gather a small number of horses over a two-year period and apply fertility control to mares on the range.
- The Sand Wash Basin is estimated to be over Appropriate Management Levels and investments in bait-trap gathers and fertility treatment will lessen the need of large-scale gathers in the future.