88070450

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

PROGRAM EVALUATION REPORT

NO.	OFFICE	INITIALS	DATE
1	S. D.		
	PLANNING		
	PUB. AFF.		
	I & O		
	RESOURCES		
	TECH. SERV.		
	MG. SERV.		
	COMM.		
	RECORDS		
	C. F.		
ACTION:

Title of Evaluation Adopt-A-Horse Review

Conducted by _____ Washington Office

Dates July 17 - Sept. 15, 1978

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1978UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Date

September 29, 1978

EVALUATION REPORT TITLE PAGE

Title/Subject

Adopt-A-Horse Review

Type of evaluation

Dates conducted from July 17, 1978 to September 17, 1978

Conducted by (office)
Washington Office

Individuals Participating in the Development of this Review

Robert Alexander	Colorado State Office
Tom DeRocco	Eastern States Office
Jan Homant	Washington Office (120)
John Kenny	Washington Office (120)
Richard Miller	Washington Office (120)
John Moeller	Washington Office (540)
Robert Sellers	New Mexico State Office
Leonard Sims	Nevada State Office
Lavern Young	Bakersfield District Office

Submitted for Review and Approval of the Director:

Roger L. Hildebeidel

Chief, Office of Program
EvaluationRoger L. Hildebeidel
10-10-78

Approved by (name and title)

Signature

Date

Acting Associate Director

Arnold E. Little

OCT 10 1978

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

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SECTION 16

SECTION 16

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

PROGRAM EVALUATION REPORT

Page	1	of	7
Report title	Adopt-A-Horse Review		
	CHAPTER		
NUMBER	TITLE		

Summary Report

Review of the Adopt-A-Horse Program

I. Introduction

From July 17 to September 15, 1978, a review was conducted of selected adopters of larger numbers of animals. Four teams comprised of a wild horse specialist and evaluation specialists visited adopters located in the following states: California, Oregon, Colorado, Minnesota, Missouri and Oklahoma. This review is not geographically nor statistically representative, but does provide valuable information for use in assessing the status and results of the Adopt-A-Horse program. This report deals only with findings relating to the condition, care, and treatment of animals, and the adopters' perception of the program. In addition to on-site visits, information was obtained from review of several existing reports of law enforcement personnel who had investigated allegations relating to larger adoptions in Tennessee and South Carolina. The review touches on some issues related to internal program management, but does not address the Adopt-A-Horse program in terms of its utility as a long term resource-management tool.

II. Findings

A. Condition of Animals

In general, the animals that were located and inspected appeared to be in good condition. No indications of mistreatment or inhumane care were observed. Not many of the animals under the care of larger

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

PROGRAM EVALUATION REPORT

Page	2	of	7
Report title	Adopt- A-Horse Review		
	CHAPTER		
NUMBER	TITLE		

adopters were saddle broken or envisioned for use as pets. However, animals were generally receiving more than satisfactory care and were approaching an appearance and condition equal to that of the adopters' domestic animals. Several of the adopted animals had died after being obtained by the adopter. The causes of death generally appeared to be related to age, general health before adoption, and lack of ability to adapt to changing conditions. In three instances, a team was unable to locate some animals, or the adopters. Law enforcement personnel are aware of these cases.

B. Attitude of Adopters

In general, the adopters interviewed had a favorable attitude toward the program. The adopters were using or planning to use the animals for a number of purposes ranging from breeding for rodeo stock or sale, or for use as saddle horses and pets. All were aware that until the law is changed to allow for title transfer, they could not use the animals for commercial purposes. They felt that the conditions of use were well explained to them by Bureau personnel before they received the animals.

There was a split among adopters visited as to transfer of title. Some wanted to receive title and were hoping that legislation would allow transfer. Others were indifferent to obtaining ownership and were content with conditions as they are. The individuals wanting title transfer were from around Burns, Oregon, or Tulsa, Oklahoma, and in one

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

PROGRAM EVALUATION REPORT

Page	3	of	7
Report title	Adopt-A-Horse Review		
	CHAPTER		
NUMBER	TITLE		

way or another are involved in the breeding and selling of rodeo stock. Four of the individuals who had adopted 90 horses or more, made it known that they were counting on acquiring title to the animals with the intention of eventually selling them for rodeo purposes.

C. Other

Those adopters interviewed were generally impressed with the BLM personnel with whom they dealt. This was the first contact with BLM for a number of the adopters in Minnesota, Missouri and Oklahoma and they were left with a positive impression. The facilities from which they received animals--Rock Springs, Burns, Phoenix and Reno,-- were reported by most adopters to be well run, efficient, and humane. There were however, mixed reports concerning the degree of professionalism and public contact skills of some personnel at some facilities.

D. Data

Field conditions create a situation which makes precise identification of animals difficult. Large adoptions--those where forty animals or more are placed--tended to occur at the outset of the program before freeze branding and other identification systems were in place. Hence, positive identification of animals was in some cases, not possible. Large scale adopters frequently had enormous pastures--upwards of 13,000 wooded acres-- which prevented location and inspection of all animals listed in cooperative agreement.

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

PROGRAM EVALUATION REPORT

Page 4 of 7

Report title Adopt-A-Horse Review

CHAPTER

NUMBER

TITLE

In other instances horses were reported to have died in transit and this information had not been forwarded to BLM. In the data under 4, below, only those animals which were actually seen by a team were recorded. Where horses were listed in a cooperative agreement, but not actually seen, they were not counted. This discrepancy does not mean that the animals were missing--density of cover and the scattered, remote pastures prevented precise counting.

1. Locations Visited

- a. Reno, Nevada; Susanville, Bakersfield, Riverside, California.
- b. Little Falls, Brainard, Leader, and Stables, Minnesota.
- c. Florence, Hartsell, Canon City and Buena Vista, Colorado.
- d. Burns, Albany, and Eugene, Oregon.
- e. Springfield, Missouri, Guthrie, Foss, Muldrow, Roland, Webber Falls, and Vian, Oklahoma.

2. Total number of adopters interviewed: 36
3. Total number of animals listed as being assigned: 896
4. Total number of animals inspected: 731
5. Animals not personally seen, dead, or missing: 165

The review while not geographically nor statistically representative, does cover 9% of the total number of animals assigned through the Adopt-A-Horse program.

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

PROGRAM EVALUATION REPORT

Page	5	of	7
Report title	Adopt-A-Horse Review		
CHAPTER			
NUMBER	TITLE		

III. Conclusions

In general, the results of this review support the conclusion that, in the main, animals assigned through the Adopt-A-Horse Program are adequately and humanely cared for. To be certain, there are and will continue to be occasional abuses of the animals and of the program. The large number of assignees, their geographic dispersion, and the number of animals to be placed will not permit 100% successful placement. Reports from law enforcement personnel, and the inability to locate some adopters and or animals during the visits also point up problems with the follow-up effort that are likely to persist to some degree, despite more elaborate screening procedures. The passage of time, the imperfectability of information, and human error will prevent optimal follow-up. Though perhaps less mobile than the U.S. population as a whole, typical adopters are a nomadic lot and are likely to forget to notify BLM of their changes of address.

As in any program with a substantial social content, the cost of achieving perfectability is high, and the point of diminishing returns is reached quickly. Given present resources, and the current and anticipated restraints regarding title to the animals, the cost of totally effective program of screening or follow-up is prohibitive. Revision of screening procedures and additional follow-up efforts can reduce, but should not be expected to eliminate, all abuses of the animals.

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

PROGRAM EVALUATION REPORT

Page	6	of	7
Report title	Adopt-A-Horse Review		
CHAPTER			
NUMBER	TITLE		

At the present time, it appears that the bulk of the animals being placed are being assigned to individuals who are able and willing to care for the animals and who are enthusiastic about the program.

While the focus of this review was upon the external aspects of the AAH program, interviews and research indicated that there are problems associated with the internal operation of the program which merit the attention of management. Lack of adequate staff, and a low level of management attention has made operation of the program difficult in some states. The Wild Horse/Adopt-A-Horse program is sometimes regarded as a nuisance by BLM personnel; with expediency, rather than successful placement driving the adoption effort. Non-supportive attitudes of managers quickly percolated down to operating employees, and predictions of program failure became self fulfilling prophecies. Managers must, in the future, underscore the many positive aspects of this highly visible program, if BLM personnel are to be motivated to manage the AAH effort in such a way that it will reach its full potential.

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

PROGRAM EVALUATION REPORT

Page	7	of	7
Report title	Adopt-A-Horse Review		
CHAPTER			
NUMBER	TITLE		

The basic intent of this review was to provide information to top management about the condition of adopted animals. As a consequence, no specific recommendations for actions flow directly from the findings in this report. However, as a result of management decisions taken pursuant to the report, a number of action items have been developed and undertaken which are aimed at strengthening the management and procedures associated with the Adopt-A-Horse program. The major actions are included as appendices to this report.

APPENDICES

- A. Action Items from Sept. 7, 1978 Meeting with the Director.
- B. Instruction Memo No. 78-543 - Policy on Excess Wild Free
Roaming Horses and Burros

APPENDIX A.

IN REPLY REFER TO:

(103)

United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240

September 8, 1978

Action Items from 9/7 Adopt-A-Horse Meeting

- * A. Title Conveyance: 330/210 should develop recommended changes in the language of the Roncalio bill which allows for title conveyance for large adoptors. This to be done soonest!
- B. Develop Manual Sections: Manual Sections should reflect the "Separateness" of the W. H. Program, the Gathering Activity and the Actual Adoption Process. Manual Section on Adoption should stress:
1) The PR Aspects of Adoption and 2) Screening Procedures. Manuals should be developed expeditiously. Action: 330
- C. Staffing: No action, but will monitor this in terms of the reorganization and the creation of a staffing structure for AAH in the proposed reorganization. - 120
- D. Cooperative Agreement Stipulation: 330! Also, add a follow-up letter to Adoptor after three (3) months.
- E. Follow-up Efforts: Yes, with the following modifications: Assume no additional Bureau staffing and that a cooperative agreement with a national humane society is the principal vehicle for follow-up. Participants 120, 330, 550, 130.
- F. Organizational Structure for Gathering: They should be centralized. Use the 11/13 Meeting to have S.O. people who have been doing it determine: 1) the best configuration for centralizing roundups
2) the best technology/procedures for gathering operations.
- G. Contracting for Adoption Centers: 330/540 and 550 should look at: (1) what should be in the agreement, i.e. Terms, and (2) what organizations/individuals should be considered as appropriate to run adoption centers.
- H. Program Evaluation:

Do one in a year. Continue informal cooperation 120/130/330 and others as appropriate to make Program changes as needed. The changes will be monitored for future evaluation.

cc: attendees

*Provisions of Senate passed version of bill exclude WH&B sections. Outcome of issue still uncertain.

APPENDIX B.

United States Department of the Interior

4740 (330)

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240

September 27, 1978

Instruction Memorandum No. 78-543

Expires 9/30/79

To: AFO's

From: Director

Subject: Policy on Excess Wild Free Roaming Horses and Burros

To improve the protection and management policies for wild horses and burros, and to insure uniformity in managing this highly visible and valuable national resource throughout the Bureau, the following policies and procedures are to be implemented immediately:

A. Management

The total number of wild horses or burros to be retained and managed as a viable herd in an area is determined in the Management Framework Plan.

Emphasis is to be placed on the preparation of herd area management plans (HAMP's). HAMP's should identify BLM's management responsibilities for particular herds of wild horses and burros under the 1971 Act. Sound management plans, providing for an optimum number of wild horses or burros in an area, will serve as a basis for decisions which fulfill our responsibilities under the 1971 Act.

In herd management areas, age and sex ratios can be established as a component of a management plan and can be accomplished by selective removal. This policy provides two distinct advantages:

1. It allows more animals of an adoptable age and sex to be made available.
2. It reduces the rate of increase in a herd, extending the time between removal of excess animals.

The number and sex of animals to be removed will be determined on a herd-by-herd basis. The ratios and ages of males and females to be left must insure the continued maintenance and viability of wild horse or burro herds in those areas where these animals are to be managed as an integral part of the natural system of the public lands.

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Population estimates for 1971 will not be used as a basis for management adjustments. Where (1) resource damage is occurring and (2) planning is delayed, populations may be reduced to an interim management level that considers the need of both wild horses and burros and other resources. Interim reductions will be aimed at keeping the number at as high a level as possible and still prevent vegetation degradation by an excessive number of horses or burros.

B. Protection

Wild horses or burros are not to be gathered just prior to, during, or immediately following the time that the majority of the foals are born. Foaling time will vary by area and perhaps by year. State Directors will establish gathering moratoriums for those areas under their jurisdiction inhabited by wild horses or burros when this major foaling time occurs. This gathering moratorium will not apply to individual animals causing damage to private property such as lawns, gardens, etc.

Firearms will be discharged from helicopters at wild horses and burros for the following purposes only:

1. Firing of "paint projectiles" during inventory flights in recording populations by the Lincoln Index Method.
2. Firing "tranquilizer" darts in research studies.

There will be no destruction of animals without the prior approval of the Secretary, except for sick and lame animals for humane reasons.

C. Control

1. Unadoptable wild horses or burros removed from public lands can be returned to areas where they were captured. Unadoptable animals are those that are old, but not sick or lame, and which have characteristics or traits that make them undesirable to applicants.
2. Unadoptable animals removed from private lands will not be returned to the area where they were captured or to public lands. If any of these animals remain in the holding facilities after 45 days and cannot be placed through the Adopt-A-Horse program, permission to destroy them will be requested from the Director (330).

Central holding facilities will contain at any one time only the number of animals that can adequately be handled, fed, and maintained in a professional and humane manner. It should be understood that animals will not be gathered and held until it is certain that they can be moved

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into the adoption process quickly. This will require coordination within a State on planning roundups and delivering gathered animals to a central holding facility.

The authorized BLM representative may consider castrating some older animals, making them more desirable for adoption purposes as geldings. If castrating is to be a practice, a pasture should be available in order for the animals to exercise during the recovery period prior to adoption. The cost of castrating will be recovered from the cooperator, but no costs associated with Bureau maintenance of the animal during the recovery period.

Wild horses and burros will be released to an individual for distribution to other persons only if that individual operates a Government-contracted distribution center, or represents a group of persons who have jointly agreed to share the cost of transportation.

Under no circumstances will excess animals be transferred to individuals or organizations prior to the signing of a cooperative agreement. There will be no "walkup adoptions." Only applicants who are on the applicant list from DSC will be allowed to receive animals. The signing of a cooperative agreement prior to turning over the excess animals provides for protection of animals at all times in legal manner. Individuals who intend to use second parties as agents to choose and transport animals must sign a power of attorney authorizing the agent to sign the Cooperative Agreement for them. (See Enclosure 2 for an appropriate format.) In all cooperative agreements under stipulations the following wording will be inserted: "Commercial exploitation" is defined to include use of a wild, free-roaming horse or burro in rodeos and road shows, or for bucking, where such use is for financial gain.

BLM State Offices should aggressively seek to establish wild horse and burro distribution centers in accordance with Instruction Memorandum 78-46, dated January 31, 1978. Only desirable and adoptable animals will be transported to distribution centers.

Prior to the awarding of a contract by the State Director, BLM special agents will conduct an investigation into the background of individuals who will operate distribution centers. The results of the investigation must demonstrate that the contractor is reliable and able to responsibly and effectively meet any obligations, and can effectively represent the Bureau's interest. The Contracting Officer will review the investigative report in making his decision regarding the responsibility of the contractor in accordance with FPR 1-1.12.

Transportation costs assessed to all applicants from a single distribution center will be the same regardless of the origin of the animal.

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D. Screening of Applicants

Applicants will normally be allowed to have no more than a cumulative total of five (5) animals assigned to them. Screening procedures for applicants wishing five or fewer animals, or such numbers as would give them a cumulative total of no more than five (5) assigned animals, are outlined in section 1 below. Screening procedures for applicants wishing a number of animals which would give them a cumulative total of six (6) or more animals are outlined in section 2 below.

1. Screening Procedures for five (5) or less animals.

- a. Districts wishing to assign animals will first check the applicant's name and number of horses requested against the Denver Service Center Master List of Cooperative Agreements which may be received from DSC, Div. of Standards and Technology, Attention: Sara Cunningham.
- b. Having determined that the cumulative total will be five (5) or less animals, District Offices shall screen applicants over the telephone using the enclosed format (Enclosure 1). If all answers are determined to be satisfactory to District personnel, then the applicant will be notified to pick up the requested animals. At the time the cooperative agreement is signed, BLM personnel shall reconfirm the answers and information provided over the phone and have the applicant sign the form.

2. Screening Procedures for six (6) or more animals

- a. Screening procedures for applicants who have or wish a cumulative total of six (6) or more animals are necessarily more elaborate and will require active involvement from the District wishing to assign the animals. After having used the DSC Master List of Cooperative Agreements to verify that the assignment of animals would be more than five, Districts wishing to assign animals will be responsible for initiating and following through on screening efforts, which include but are not limited to: personal inspection of their facilities by BLM personnel closest to the applicant or by representatives from organizations such as humane societies assisting in the "Adopt-A-Horse" program, prior to assignment of animals; checking into the reasons for a large number of animals being requested; checking into the background of the applicant concerning any mistreatment of animals, i.e., consulting with local law enforcement officials and humane societies; checking maintenance to be provided; and checking into the general reliability of the applicant. Horses and burros shall not be placed with any applicant who does not satisfactorily qualify or who does not have appropriate facilities to care for the number of animals requested.

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E. Screening of Applicants Using Distribution Centers

Contracting Officers Authorized Representatives (COARS) who have responsibility for Contract Distribution Centers shall screen applicants who wish to receive animals from Contract Distribution Centers. Applicants who telephone in response to notification letters sent out from the Denver Service Center shall be verbally screened by COARS using the format set out in Enclosure 1. Upon a satisfactory verbal screening, the COAR shall refer the applicant to the Contract Distribution Center where arrangements for picking up the animal(s) will be made.

Prior to referring applicants to the Contract Distribution Center, COARS shall check the Denver Service Center's Master list of Cooperative Agreements to insure that applicants have a cumulative total of five (5) or less animals. In the event that applicants wish to receive a number of animals which would result in their having a total of more than (5) animals, COARS shall be responsible for initiating and following through on the screening procedures outlined in 2.a above.

J. Mark Gregg

2 Enclosures:

- Encl. 1 - Suggested Format for Verbal Agreement
- Encl. 2 - Suggested Format for Power of Attorney Agreement

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SUGGESTED FORMAT FOR VERBAL AGREEMENT

1. Are you aware of the costs of maintaining a wild horse or burro for its lifetime?
2. Are you prepared to feed high quality hay during periods of the year when adequate green forage may not be available? Grain may be required for maintenance in colder climates.
3. Do you have adequate watering facilities for the animal on a year-long basis?
4. Can you obtain and provide for the necessary veterinarian fees if the animal becomes sick or injured?
5. Are boarding facilities to be used in housing the animal?
6. What type of corrals? How high are the fences?* What is the size?
7. Is shelter available?
8. To what use will the horse be put?
Child's horse? Family members?
9. Do you understand the hauling requirements? Inter-state and Intra-state humane laws pertaining to animal transportation?
10. Are you clear on pick-up date?
11. Are you aware that should you no longer be able to care for the animal, you must notify the Bureau and provide the name of a person(s) to care for the animal prior to any reassignment?
12. Are you aware that you must notify the District in which you intend to adopt which health certificates or tests are required by your State for entry of the animal(s)?
13. Do you know it is unlawful to sell or use for commercial exploitation any wild horse or burro or their remains?
14. Have you ever been convicted of any inhumane treatment of animals of any kind?

*Barbed wire enclosures (fences) should not be used to confine the animals until they have become gentle.

SUGGESTED FORMAT FOR POWER OF ATTORNEY AGREEMENT

State of _____;
County of _____;

Know all men by these presents, that I, _____,
the undersigned, of _____, City of _____,
County of _____, State of _____, do hereby make,
constitute, and appoint _____ of _____,
City of _____, County of _____,
State of _____, my true and lawful attorney in fact
for me and in my name, place, and stead, and on my behalf, and for my use
and benefit:

1. To exercise or perform any act, power, duty, right, or
obligation whatsoever that I now have, or may hereafter acquire, arising
from, or relating to the adoption of a wild horse or burro under the
Adopt a Wild Horse program of the Bureau of Land Management under the Act
of December 15, 1971, 16 U.S.C. §1331, et seq., as amended;

2. To select, choose, pick, receive, and hold and possess a
wild horse or burro for me and in my stead, and deliver to me, on my
behalf, and in my name, a wild horse or burro so selected;

3. To conduct, engage in, and transact, any and all shipments
of said wild horse or burro, in my behalf, and in my name;

4. I grant every proper power necessary to carry out the
purposes for which this power is granted, including the signing of the
Cooperative Agreement between myself and the Bureau of Land Management,
with full power of substitution and revocation, hereby ratifying and
affirming that which _____ or his substitute shall
lawfully do or cause to be done to himself or his substitute lawfully
designated by virtue of the power herein conferred upon him.

5. This instrument is to be construed and interpreted as a
general power of attorney. The enumeration of specific items, rights,
acts, or powers herein is not intended to, nor does it, limit or
restrict, and is not to be construed or interpreted as limiting or
restricting, the general powers herein granted to said attorney in fact.

6. The rights, powers, and authority of said attorney in fact
herein granted shall commence and be in full force and effect on _____
_____, 19____, and such rights, powers, and authority shall
remain in full force and effect thereafter until _____.

Dated _____, 19____.

On this _____ day of _____, 19____, personally
appeared before me _____, to me known to be the
individual, or individuals, described in and who executed the within and
foregoing instrument, and acknowledged that _____ signed the
same as _____ free and voluntary act and deed, for the uses
and purposes therein mentioned.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my
official seal the day and year first above written.

Notary Public in and for the
State of _____
Residing at _____
My commission expires _____