



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
**BUREAU OF LAND
MANAGEMENT**

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GELDING OF WILD HORSES AND BURROS

IM 2015-153

Instruction Memorandum

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240-0036

<http://www.blm.gov>

September 23, 2015

In Reply Refer To:

4750 (260) P

EMS TRANSMISSION 09/30/2015

Instruction Memorandum No. 2015-153

Expires: 09/30/2018

To: All Field Office Officials (except Alaska)

From: Assistant Director, Resources and Planning

Subject: Gelding of Wild Horses and Burros

Program Area: Wild Horse and Burro (WH&B) Program

Purpose: The purpose of this Instruction Memorandum (IM) is to re-establish policy for the gelding of wild horse stallions and wild burro jacks and to provide guidance for the consistent use of gelding vouchers.

Policy/Action:

1. Gelding Policy for Wild Horse Stallions and Wild Burro Jacks

- Geld all male horses and burros that are either removed from the range or are born in BLM off-range facilities once the animal is a weanling or older. Exceptions are permitted if there is a preference by an adopter for the stallion or jack to remain intact due to extraordinary confirmation, color, or belonging to a highly popular Herd Management Area (HMA). Authorized officers will determine which animals are exempt from gelding.
- All horses sent to long-term holding (LTH) facilities will be gelded prior to arrival at the LTH facilities.
- Stallions and jacks affected by cryptorchidism can remain partially fertile and cause serious problems when unknowingly adopted or sold to the public. Special care should be taken with these individuals so as not to allow them to move between facilities, be adopted by or sold to the public or placed in long-term holding. If the animal is a single cryptorchid, the descended testicle will not be removed unless the retained testicle is removed at the same time. If the animal cannot be fully castrated at the facility where it is prepped for adoption or LTH, it will be regarded as having a serious physical defect and will be euthanized in accordance with the Animal Health, Maintenance, Evaluation, and Response policy. This should be done before the animal has recovered from anesthesia or as soon as possible thereafter.

2. Gelding Vouchers

- If a stallion or jack is not gelded prior to adoption, the adopter will be given the option to have the facility veterinarian geld the animal and the adopter can pick it up at a later date or receive a voucher (see Attachment 1) to have the procedure done by the veterinarian of their choosing and have a portion of the cost reimbursed by the BLM.
- Adopters who wish to utilize the voucher option must provide the original voucher along with a receipt from a practicing veterinarian to the closest BLM office or facility in order to be reimbursed for up to \$100 towards the cost of the procedure. The voucher will expire six months from the date of adoption on the Private Maintenance and Care Agreement (PMACA).

3. Gelding Method

- Gelding will be performed with general anesthesia and by a veterinarian. The combination of pharmaceutical compounds used for anesthesia, chemical restraint, method of physical restraint and the specific surgical technique used will be at the discretion of the attending veterinarian with the approval of the authorized officer.

Timeframe: All portions of this policy are effective immediately.

Budget Impact: No major budgetary impact is expected from adopting this policy. However, there will be slight increase in expenditures for the vouchers that are submitted for reimbursement.

Background: This is an update to Instruction Memorandum No. 2009-063. In 2005, the National Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board recommended that the BLM review its policy and lower the gelding age of stallions from 6-years of age and older to 1-year of age; the review was issued in June 2005 (Gelding Policy Issue Paper, June 2005). The BLM revised its policy in 2006, lowering the mandatory gelding age to 4-years and older. In 2009, the BLM adopted policy to geld all stallions weanling age and older (with exceptions provided for adopter preference), provide consistency in gelding at all preparation centers, apply a common-practice gelding standard and address stallions affected by cryptorchidism.

Manual/Handbook Sections Affected: This policy supplements guidance contained in Handbook 4750-1.

Coordination: This policy has been coordinated with the Wild Horse & Burro (WH&B) personnel involved with facility operations and the adoption program.

Contact: Any questions regarding this IM can be directed to Holle Hooks, Off-Range Branch Chief, Wild Horse and Burro Program, at 405-234-5932.

Signed by:

Michael H. Tupper

Acting, Assistant Director

Resources and Planning

Authenticated by:

Robert M. Williams

Division of IRM Governance,WO-860

1 Attachment

[1 - Gelding Voucher \(1.p\)](#)

FISCAL YEAR

2015