

CARING FOR YOUR NEW

# Devil's Garden Wild Horse



USDA Forest Service  
Modoc National Forest  
Wild Horse Program

Congratulations on adopting or  
purchasing a Devil's Garden Wild  
Horse!

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Double Devil Wild Horse Corrals (DDC) has created this guide as a resource for people who have adopted Devil's Garden Horses . For any questions, contact the Modoc NF.

For information on how Devil's Garden Horses are cared for, consult your veterinarian, libraries, and bookstores. You can also access information through the cooperative extension office, university extension web sites, and the DDC.

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# Adopter

## RESPONSIBILITIES

The following are the terms of adoption also stated in the paperwork received at the time of adoption:

- Maintenance means caring for and protecting animals under humane conditions. Animals may not be sold, transferred, or reassigned without written permission from an authorized Forest Service officer; however, if assignee wishes to terminate this agreement, she/he is responsible for finding a new home for the animals.
- Adopter assumes responsibility for animals included in agreement and damages they may cause to persons, animals, or property.
- Domestication of animals including riding, packing and other recognized uses of domesticated horses can occur. Stallions may be gelded. Foals born are the private property of the agreement holder and are not subject to this agreement.
- Adopter shall not brand or otherwise permanently mark animals included in this agreement.
- Notice of death or serious health problems; i.e. accidental injury or contagious disease of animal(s) within seven days.
- Adopter agrees to allow authorized personnel or their representative to inspect the animals at any time or place after assignment.

This agreement shall remain in force until one of the following events occurs: 1) the animal dies, 2) this agreement is terminated by an Authorized Forest Service Officer following written notice because of assignee's default or violation of any of the terms or provisions of this agreement, or 3) upon request of the assignee and acceptance of the request by the Forest Service.

# Animal

## TITLING REQUIREMENTS

Grant title to wild free-roaming horses and burros applicant when::

1. Applicant has provided the animal maintenance and care under humane conditions for at least 1 year.
  2. Unless waived in writing, the application for title includes a written statement by a licensed veterinarian attesting to the present condition and treatment of the animal.
  3. Applicant is of legal age in the State in which the applicant resides.
- Grant title to no more than four animals per year to any individual, organization, or government agency unless they have an agreement, which covers more than four animals.
  - The maintenance and care agreement may include the application for title. The title can then be issued when 1 year of humane maintenance and care has been provided.
  - Adopter shall submit the following information to, Modoc Wild Horse Program Specialist, 225 West Eighth Street, Alturas CA 96101.a. Notice of address change within 30 days.
  - Notice of death or serious health problems; i.e. accidental injury or contagious disease of animal(s) within seven days.
  - Failure to comply with provisions of this agreement will be considered a violation of 36 CFR 261.23.

Please refer to your adoption paperwork for more details on adopters' responsibilities and prohibited acts.

## NOTE

Warning: Any person who willfully violates any regulation under 36 CFR 222.60 and 261.23 which provides for the protection of wild free-roaming horses may be subject to a fine of not more than \$2,000 or imprisonment for not more than one year or both.

## LOADING & UNLOADING

# *Your Animal*

Make sure your corral is secure and enclosed before you unload your animal(s). Unload slowly and patiently. Avoid excessive noise. Many animals unload immediately when the trailer door is opened, while others wait for a while. Don't rush them, let them unload at their own pace.

Please do not immediately attempt to remove the halter or lead rope if the adopter has requested it. When an animal steps on the lead rope as it walks around the corral, it should wear the halter and lead rope to help teach the animal to yield to the pressure.

## GETTING TO KNOW

# *Your Animal*

It can be stressful to provide only healthy animals for adoption and sale, but DDG works hard to provide those services. When stress and large groups of horses are combined, illness is more likely. During the first few days, keep the corral and shelter area quiet. Your wild horses will need time to adjust to their new surroundings and routines, like receiving hay and water from you.

They are social animals. Other horses or burros nearby may help them settle down or find comfort. The two pens should not be mixed too soon in the same or adjacent ones.

During the first few weeks at home, your wild horse must be observed closely for signs of illness such as coughing, cloudy discharge from eyes or nose, swollen lymph nodes under the jaw or throat latch, depression, diarrhea, and not wanting to eat or drink. In the event you observe these signs, contact your veterinarian immediately for an examination and treatment. Please notify the DDG if you are concerned about the health of your animal. The animals can be moved to your property, if they look healthy and happy, within a few weeks.



## EXERCISE, TURNOUT &

# Gentling

Keeping your wild horse healthy and in good condition requires regular exercise. Animals that are accustomed to the fences and can be reliably caught and haltered on your property will do better if they are turned out into pastures or dry lots rather than kept in small stalls or pens.

As soon as possible, begin to work with your animal on the gentling process. You will be able to provide routine care more easily if you begin training as soon as possible. If something unfortunate happens and your animal requires medical treatment, your efforts to help your veterinarian will also be appreciated. You should not expect the veterinarian to train your wild horse for you.



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**Daily exercise** facilitates bone strength and development, improves the functioning of the heart, increases tendon and ligament strength and aids motility of the digestive tract, as well as increasing secretions in the lungs.

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# Nutrition

Wild horses have different nutritional needs depending on their size, age, physical condition, where they originally came from, and how much exercise they get in captivity. Pregnant mares and jennies, as well as growing animals, require special diets. Several animals may do well on a particular ration, while others may become too thin or too fat. These animals often become obese as they are kept in captivity. A horse's diet should include good quality hay or pasture. Good hay should be dry, green, free of dust, mold, and weeds.

Having enough space for all animals to eat at the same time is important when animals are fed in groups, plus extra room for even the most timid animals to eat without being chased away. Grain or pelleted concentrates can be added to a pregnant, growing or thin animal's diet, but hay should make up at least 11% but preferably 34% of the ration. You should consult your veterinarian for a feeding program. Do not feed livestock bulk, mixed feeds.

It is not recommended to feed livestock grains, pellets, or supplements to horses. Neither lawn clippings nor silage should be fed to horses since they are too rich and prone to spoilage. The following general guidelines apply to horse diets. Make adjustments if weight gain or loss is desired.



Most of the feed for horses should be roughage (hay or pasture) and about 2–212% of their ideal body weight should be given each day. It would require about 20–25 pounds of hay per day for a typical 1,000-pound horse. The crude protein in horses' ration needs to be 10-12 percent. Alfalfa hay contains 15 to 20 percent protein. Adult horses in light work don't need as much protein as young, pregnant, lactating, or thin horses. A good choice for adult horses in light work is grass hay, which has about 6–12 percent protein. Providing alfalfa hay as a source of excess protein rarely causes harm to a healthy adult horse.

While it may lead to increased water intake, urination and obesity more easily than grass hay, it does not harm otherwise healthy animals. There is usually alfalfa hay available at the best price in most BLM corrals, so horses move between facilities with more consistency in diet. Alfalfa hay feeds the nutritional requirements of growing horses and lactating mares best, as grass hay will rarely meet their needs. Grass hay is more suitable for older horses.

The best choice of hay is orchard, brome, timothy, and Bermuda. Even if they are less expensive, grass hays such as rye, barley and sudan can cause problems when fed to horses. Hay mixtures with alfalfa, brome grass hay, orchard grass hay are excellent choices for most horses. If your horse is very active, lactating or growing, or in the winter, you can add oatmeal, barley, corn or a commercial concentrate pellet or sweet feed to provide extra energy. A prepared horse feed or rolled oats are easiest to use.





## **WATER**

Your horse or burro needs fresh, clean water at all times. In the summer, you should increase the water supply because the weather will affect how much water the animals drink. Increase water for mares nursing foals. Water your wild horse from a trough or another container larger than 5 gallons for a day's supply of clean water. Wild horses prefer not to put their heads in buckets

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## **HORSES CAN EASILY CONSUME 12 TO 15 GALLONS OF WATER PER DAY**

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During winter, it is important to ensure that your animal's water does not freeze. In winter, snow is not a replacement for water. For proper nutrition, you should provide salt and trace minerals. These can be found at a feed or tack store.

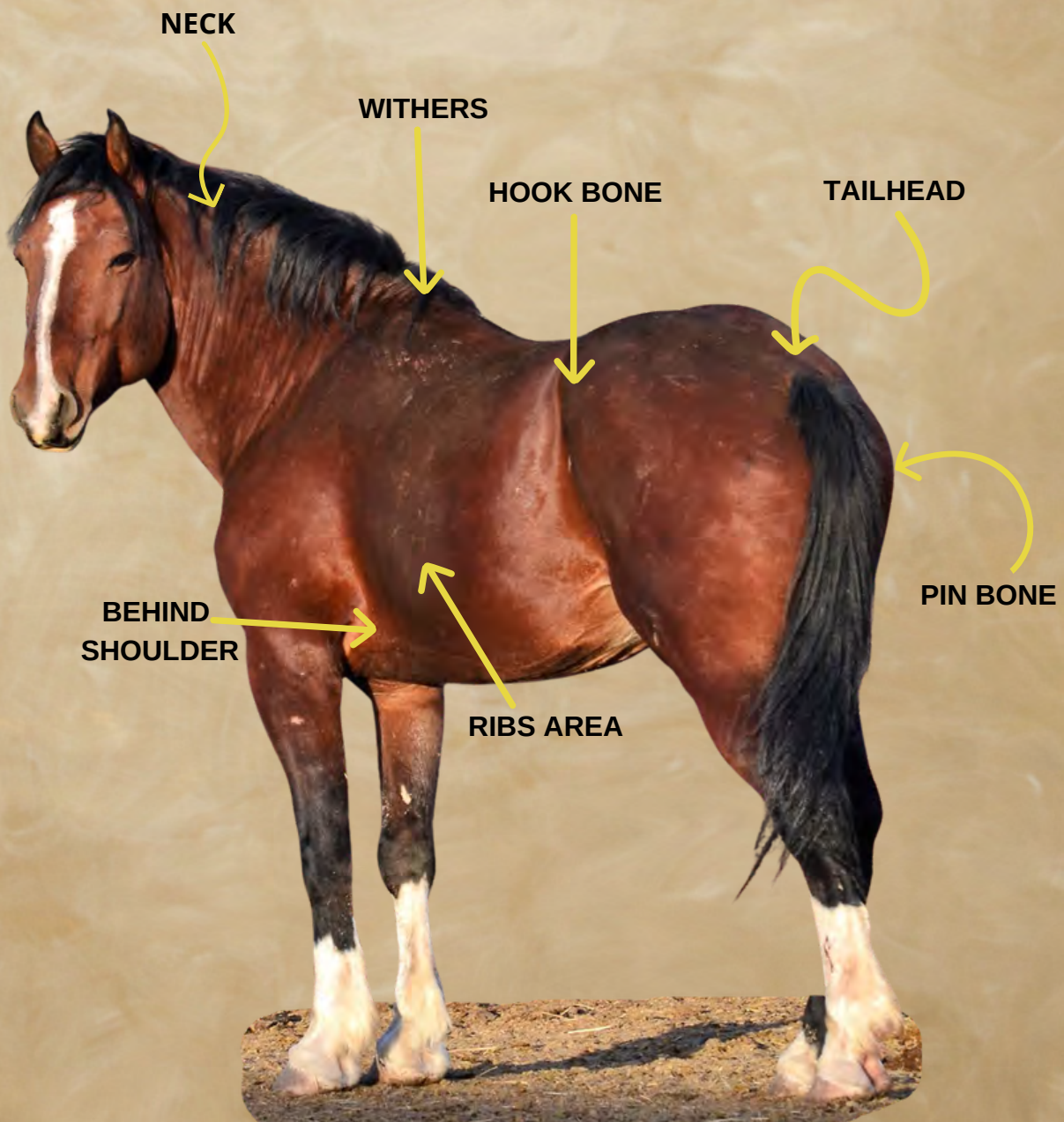


## BODY CONDITION & FEEDING THIN

# Animals

Depending on their age and level of exercise, healthy adult horses should be in moderate body condition. There should be no visible ribs. Shoulders, withers and tailhead should have rounded not angular appearances. Ideally, these areas should blend seamlessly into the body and contain no obvious fat deposits. It's common for young, growing, nursing or animals that have come off the range to be too thin. It may be too thin if you can clearly see its ribs. Ask your vet if this is the case. It should be fed until its body condition is acceptable. Feeding a thin horse should begin with free choice, good quality hay.

Separate thin animals from groups of larger, fleshier animals that may be keeping thin animals away from feed. It should be switched to alfalfa grass mix or alfalfa hay if the animal has not improved after a few weeks of free choice grass hay. Putting weight on a thin horse is the easiest, cheapest, most effective and healthiest way. After providing free choice, access to good quality alfalfa hay, grain or grain concentrate feeds can be introduced to increase energy intake if an animal is still thin. Check with your veterinarian to make sure your animal is healthy. Depending on your animal's specific needs and location, your veterinarian can design and implement a program for you. Wild horses that are properly fed will have a glossy coat, bright eyes, and lots of energy.



# HEMMELKE BODY CONDITION TABLE

Condition	Neck	Withers	Shoulder	Ribs	Back	Tailhead Area
<b>1</b> <b>Poor</b> <i>(extremely emaciated)</i>	Bone structure easily noticeable	Bone structure easily noticeable	Bone structure easily noticeable	Ribs projecting prominently	Spinous processes projecting prominently	Tailhead, pinbones, and hook bones projecting prominently
No fatty tissue can be felt						
<b>2</b> <b>Very Thin</b> <i>(emaciated)</i>	Bone structure faintly discernible	Bone structure faintly discernible	Bone structure faintly discernible	Ribs prominent	Slight fat covering over base of spinous processes. Transverse processes of lumbar vertebrae feel rounded. Spinous processes are prominent	Tailhead prominent Pin bones prominent Hook bones prominent
<b>3</b> <b>Thin</b>	Neck accentuated	Withers accentuated	Shoulder accentuated	Slight fat cover over ribs. Ribs easily discernible	Fat buildup halfway on spinous processes, but easily discernible. Transverse processes cannot be felt	Tailhead prominent but individual vertebrae cannot be visually identified. Hook bones appear rounded, but are still easily discernible. Pin bones not distinguishable
<b>4</b> <b>Moderately Thin</b>	Neck not obviously thin	Withers not obviously thin	Shoulder not obviously thin	Faint outline of ribs discernible	Negative crease (peaked appearance) along back	Prominence depends on conformation. Fat can be felt. Hook bones not discernible
<b>5</b> <b>Moderate</b>	Neck blends smoothly into body	Withers rounded over spinous processes	Shoulder blends smoothly into body	Ribs cannot be visually distinguished, but can be easily felt	Back is level	Fat around tailhead beginning to feel spongy
<b>6</b> <b>Moderately Fleshy</b>	Fat beginning to be deposited	Fat beginning to be deposited	Fat beginning to be deposited behind shoulder	Fat over ribs feels spongy	May have a slight positive crease (a groove) down back	Fat around tailhead feels soft
<b>7</b> <b>Fleshy</b>	Fat deposited along neck	Fat deposited along withers	Fat deposited behind shoulder	Individual ribs can be felt, but noticeable fat filling between ribs	May have a positive crease down the back	Fat around tailhead is soft
<b>8</b> <b>Fat</b>	Noticeable thickening of neck	Area along withers filled with fat	Area behind shoulder filled with fat	Difficult to feel ribs	Positive crease down the back	Fat around tailhead very soft
<b>9</b> <b>Extremely Fat</b>	Bulging fat	Bulging fat	Bulging fat	Patchy fat appearing over ribs	Obvious crease down the back Flank filled with fat	Bulging fat around tailhead



# ANIMAL *Care*

## HOOF CARE



The care of your wild horses' hooves is one of the most important things you can do to keep them healthy and happy. This process can be greatly aided by training your wild horse to accept being handled by its feet. Hooves grow quickly in captivity and do not wear like they did out on the range. Regular foot trimming is necessary.

In addition to hoof wear, soil conditions in the corral or pasture, as well as a farm's exercise program, determine how frequently hooves should be trimmed and/or shod. Generally, the hoof wall should be upright at a 50-55 degree angle, not sloping down at a 45 degree angle. It is recommended that they should be straight rather than flared, and they shouldn't be broken or split.

If you fail to properly care for your wild horses' hooves, they are susceptible to deformities, abscesses, and thrush just like domestic horses. Horses' anxiety is most often caused by poor hoof care. Make sure you establish a program of regular hoof care and maintenance with a veterinarian (if necessary) prior to your animal's feet growing too long.

## DENTAL CARE



Preventive care may also be needed for your wild horse's teeth over time. The teeth of horses grow and wear throughout their lifetime. A sharp edge or point develops as they wear unevenly, causing pain and inhibiting adequate chewing. These uneven spots can be filed off by your veterinarian (a procedure called floating) to protect the cheeks and tongue of the animal while promoting his or her ability to consume the feed. A dental checkup is recommended about once a year.

An example of a behavioral change caused by tooth decay is if a child changes their chewing habits, eats with their heads tilted to one side, slobbers, dribbles grain while eating, or packs balls of hay inside their cheeks. An unpleasant odor coming from the mouth or nose is also indicative of a dental issue.

# PREVENTATIVE *Care*

## VACCINATIONS

You adopted or purchased a wild horse or burro that was dewormed, vaccinated, and examined by a veterinarian.

**Your animals received the following vaccinations:**

- Eastern and Western
- Equine Encephalomyelitis (EEE/WEE)
- Influenza (FLU)
- Equine herpes
- Tetanus
- West Nile Virus (WNV)
- Rabies
- Strangles

All the vaccinations and deworming medications are listed on their health records. To meet the requirements for interstate shipping, they were also tested for equine infectious anemia (also called a Coggins test for EIA or swamp fever). You can use the health record to schedule annual booster vaccinations and other treatments.

In regards to vaccinations, deworming, dental care, and hoof care, your veterinarian is the best resource. Contact your veterinarian if you have any questions, concerns, or issues regarding your animal. Have your animal regularly dewormed and vaccinated

## PARASITE CONTROL

Wild horses can be affected by internal parasites. Wild horses are dewormed at Double Devil Wild Horse Corrals at least once. The procedure may have been repeated several times, depending on how long the animal spent in the DDG facility. Plan your next deworming date based on the health records of your animal. Horses are easily re-infected by external parasites; either from the environment or from dormant, encysted parasites that survive in the animal. Infestation level and environment determine deworming frequency and schedule.

Fecal testing can indicate when you should deworm your animals. Foals, mares with nursing foals, pregnant mares, and young horses need special care. Parasite control requires more than deworming medications. Contact your veterinarian to find out how to control parasites and avoid related health problems.



# Equine DISEASES

The following are descriptions of the diseases wild horses and burros are vaccinated or tested for once removed from public lands.

## **EASTERN AND WESTERN ENCEPHALOMYELITIS (EEW/WEE)**

The diseases EEE and WEE are transmitted by mosquitoes and affect the brain and spinal cord. Symptoms of infected animals include incoordination, stumbling, and paralysis. Death is possible. There is an effective vaccine available.

## **EQUINE INFECTIOUS ANEMIA (EIA)**

Horses, burros, and other equids are affected by EIA, a viral disease spread naturally by biting flies. Animal health authorities throughout the world regulate the disease, which has no vaccine or treatment. Moving animals across state lines requires a negative test result. When you adopted the horse, you received a negative EIA or Coggins test report.

## **STRANGLES (STREP)**

Equine distemper (STREP, streptococcus equi, zooepidemicus) is an upper respiratory tract infection caused by bacteria. Typically, it is accompanied by a fever, cough, and thick discharge. Often, the lymph nodes under the jaw swell and abscess. The disease is highly contagious. Infected animals may get a mild case if vaccinated, but vaccination does not guarantee immunity. Strangles are more common in young animals, including weanlings and yearlings. When animals recover, it is necessary to isolate them and provide them with rest and good nutrition.

## **RABIES**

Infected animals, such as bats, raccoons, skunks, and foxes, bite to spread the virus that causes rabies. Rabbits, dogs, cats, livestock and people can all be infected with rabies. A significant number of animals suffer from severe depression and paralysis. Lameness or colic are the most common signs of horses. The rabies vaccine is very effective at preventing the disease.

## **EQUINE INFLUENZA AND HERPES (FLU AND RHINO)**

Upper respiratory infections caused by RHINO and flu are characterized by high fevers, a hacking cough, and watery nasal discharge. Symptoms such as incoordination, stabbing, and paralysis can also accompany the herpes virus in horses. All influenza and herpes vaccines are ineffective. The best way to prevent disease is to limit contact with sick animals and prevent indirect contact with the virus via dirty hands, clothing, or tack.

## **TETANUS**

The bacterium that causes tetanus (also referred to as lockjaw) affects the nervous system. A tetanus infection usually occurs through a small cut or puncture wound. A tetanus vaccination is an easy way to prevent this deadly disease, which causes rigidity and muscle paralysis.

## **WEST NILE VIRUS (WNV)**

Mosquitoes spread West Nile, a disease affecting the brain and spinal cord. Symptoms include incoordination, stumbling, and paralysis. Although it can be fatal, the vaccine is highly effective at preventing the disease.





# Pregnancy

**We do not conduct pregnancy checks on mares or jennies after they are removed from the range.** Young horses may become pregnant as early as 12 months old. A horse's gestation period is 11 months and 11 days. Premature births and late births are also possible in mares. You should consider adopting a mare or a jenny even if she doesn't look pregnant when you adopt her.

**DDG can tell you when she was gathered to determine if she is pregnant. In case your mare or jenny is pregnant, you should learn about the special needs of a foal and mare.**

## NOTE

Wild horses have no connection to foals born under a Private Maintenance and Care Agreement or a Bill of Sale. Those foals belong to their adopters. A new Private Maintenance and Care Agreement or Bill of Sale is not required, nor will the foal need to be freeze marked. Upon termination of the Private Maintenance and Care Agreement if prohibited acts have been committed, and animals repossessed, unweaned foals will also be removed.



**Contact the Modoc Nation Forest  
with any questions regarding Devil's Garden Wild Horse Program**

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**<https://go.usa.gov/xQ3r3> SM.FS.modoc\_info@usda.gov 530-233-8738**