



-ARIZONA-

Big Sandy Herd Management Area

LOCATION

The Big Sandy Herd Management Area (HMA) is located in west central Arizona, 55 miles southeast of Kingman on either side of US Highway 93. The HMA includes the areas of the Big Sandy River Valley, south of Wikieup to Alamo Lake, Burro Creek to the confluence of Boulder Creek, and west through the southern foothills of the Hualapai Mountains.

SIZE

The 244,000 acre HMA consists of a diverse range of vegetation types, including plants typical to Arizona Interior Chaparral, Central Arizona Desert Grass and Lower Sonoran Desert Shrub vegetation communities.

HABITAT

The Big Sandy River flows in a valley between the Hualapai Mountains on the west and the Aquarius Mountains on the east. The HMA is characterized by narrow river beds in broad valley troughs, deep gorges and sheer cliffs. The uplands are comprised of sloping alluvial fans dissected by sandy washes. The climate is generally warm, windy and dry with highs exceeding 120 degrees and lows approaching 30 degrees. Precipitation ranges from seven to 14 inches per year, coming as high intensity thunderstorms in late summer and gentle, windspread rain in the winter.

HISTORY

Burros were introduced to the Big Sandy area in the 1860s, when mining began to flourish around the confluence of the Big Sandy and Santa Maria rivers, now the site of the Alamo Reservoir. By the 1870s, mining and farming occurred throughout the Big Sandy Valley. Burros were used by miners for hauling ore and rubble from the mines, and farmers kept burros for breeding mules as work animals. Escaped or released burros, returned to the wild, rapidly increasing their numbers throughout the Big Sandy River Valley.

POPULATION

Wild burros found in the Big Sandy HMA today are typically grey in color, with some brown, pink and black burros. These animals weigh between 450 and 500 pounds and average 44 inches high at the shoulder when fully grown. Most burro use occurs in the lower areas and river bottom.

MANAGEMENT

The wild burros of the Big Sandy HMA are managed to maintain a thriving ecological balance within their habitat. The current population of around 200 burros, share the habitat with livestock, mule deer, javelina, desert tortoise, and a wide variety of other desert wildlife. When the burro population increases to a level where the health of the habitat may be impacted, some burros will be relocated. These animals will be available to the public through BLM's wild horse and burro adoption program.

OFFICE CONTACT

For more information on the Big Sandy Herd Management Area, contact the Kingman Field Office at 2755 Mission Boulevard, Kingman, AZ 86401-3629 or call (928) 718-3700.

