



## Fiscal Note

### Legislative Council Staff

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## HB 25-1283: WILD HORSE PROJECT MANAGEMENT

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**Prime Sponsors:**

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Sen. Marchman; Liston

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### Summary Information

**Overview.** The bill authorizes wild horse management duties in the Department of Agriculture and creates the Wild Horse Advisory Committee.

**Types of impacts.** The bill is projected to affect the following areas on an ongoing basis:

- State Expenditure

**Appropriations.** No appropriation is required as the Wild Horse Cash Fund is continuously appropriated to the Department of Agriculture.

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**Table 1**  
**State Fiscal Impacts**

<b>Type of Impact</b>	<b>Budget Year FY 2025-26</b>	<b>Out Year FY 2026-27</b>
State Revenue	\$0	\$0
State Expenditures	\$0	\$0
Transferred Funds	\$0	\$0
Change in TABOR Refunds	\$0	\$0
Change in State FTE	0.0 FTE	0.0 FTE

## Summary of Legislation

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Implementing recommendations from the Wild Horse Working Group, the bill repeals the state-owned, nonprofit Wild Horse Project in the Colorado Department of Agriculture (CDA), and authorizes wild horse management activities directed by the department.

### Wild Horse Management and Immunocontraception Program

The bill allows CDA to implement an immunocontraception program for wild horses. To operate the program, the department may provide staff and support for immunocontraception to keep wild horse populations in herd management areas at appropriate management levels. To do this, the department may:

- develop a system for sharing equipment and staff expertise;
- develop training programs for horse trainers;
- cooperate with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to develop training, holding, or adoption opportunities;
- cooperate with the Department of Corrections to create opportunities for correctional facility inmates to help CDA with implementation.

The bill allows the department to address federally and non-federally protected wild horses. In doing so, CDA may engage in the following:

- expand efforts to involve nonprofit organizations;
- engage individuals and businesses for funding, promotion, and education through horse sponsorships that use wild horse imagery; and
- develop a logo to emotionally and financially connect with potential supporters.

### Wild Horse Advisory Committee

Additionally, the bill creates the Wild Horse Advisory Committee to advise the Commissioner of Agriculture and CDA on issues concerning wild horses beginning July 2026. Members serve without compensation or reimbursement. The committee is repealed on September 1, 2030, following a sunset review.

### Wild Horse Cash Fund

The bill renames the Wild Horse Project Cash Fund as the Wild Horse Cash Fund.

## Background

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[Senate Bill 23-275](#) created the Wild Horse Management Project in CDA as a nonprofit, state-owned entity and gave CDA the authority to assist with wild horse populations using fertility control management methods and support on-range stewardship to ensure the sustainability of wild horses. The bill transferred \$1.5 million from the General Fund to the Wild

Horse Project Cash Fund, which was continuously appropriated to the department. Of this amount, approximately \$555,000 remains. Under current law, the Wild Horse Management Project and the management authority repeals on December 1, 2025.

## **State Expenditures**

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### **Department of Agriculture**

#### **Wild Horse Management and Immunocontraception Program**

Under current law, the Wild Horse Management Project and current management authority repeals on December 1, 2025. The bill extends CDA's management authority indefinitely, allowing CDA to continue to cooperate with BLM and other stakeholders to assist in the management of wild horse populations in Colorado. The CDA will utilize the remaining funds from the initial state transfer, estimated at \$555,000, to continue its current work to help manage Colorado's wild horse population and support the advisory committee. If the department implements the immunocontraception program, as permitted by the bill, it will require additional funding, which it will seek through the annual budget process in future years.

#### **Wild Horse Advisory Committee**

The bill requires the CDA to support the Wild Horse Advisory Committee, which will result in a minimal increase in workload and can be accomplished within existing resources.

### **Other State Agencies**

Workload in the Department of Corrections will increase to the extent that the CDA requests services from its Wild Horse Inmate Program when funding is available.

Workload will increase for agencies that are represented on the advisory committee. No change in appropriations is required.

## **Effective Date**

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The bill takes effect 90 days following adjournment of the General Assembly sine die, assuming no referendum petition is filed.

## **State and Local Government Contacts**

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Agriculture

Corrections