

Big Bear Wild Burro Territory

The Big Bear Wild Burro Territory (WBT) is administered by the Big Bear Ranger District, San Bernardino National Forest.

Location/Habitat

The Big Bear WBT is located in California approximately 10 miles east of Big Bear Lake in southwestern San Bernardino County. The territory consists of 35,000 acres.

Climate is semi-arid with an average annual precipitation of 10-15 inches. Summers are hot and dry, and winters are cool. Most of the precipitation occurs during the winter. The majority of the territory is within the Arrastre Creek drainage basin. Arrastre Creek is a perennial stream that bisects the territory from north to south, occasionally flowing underground and resurfacing.

The majority of the Wild Burro Territory is located in pinyon-juniper woodlands with small inclusions of sagebrush scrub and Joshua tree woodlands. Jeffrey pine forests are dominant on a small portion in the southwest portion of the territory. Sensitive vegetation types located within the territory include riparian habitat, wet and dry meadows, and pebble plains habitat. Pebble plains habitat is found in the northwest portion of the territory and supports at least seven threatened, endangered, sensitive, or protected plant species.

Wildlife on the territory include deer and migrating and nesting birds.

History

Burros were introduced to the Big Bear area between 1900 and 1940. During this period, burros escaped from miners, movie sets, fox farms, and ranches. The present population most likely became solidly established as a result of burros that escaped or were released from annual burro races in and around Big Bear City beginning in 1955.

Herd Description

The Big Bear WBT is managed for a population of 60 burros. These burros are primarily gray and adults weigh about 500 pounds.

Viewing Tips

Burros can be found east of Big Bear Valley. Popular hangouts for the burros include Broom Flats, Arrastre Creek, Round Valley, and the Rose Mine area. These areas can be

reached via Forest Road 2N01 and 2N02. Occasionally burros are seen in Lone Valley on Forest Road 3N03. Burros are more visible in the early morning and early evening.

For More Information

Contact the Big Bear Ranger District at 909-866-3437.