

U. S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management

National Wild Horse & Burro Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

Sheraton Oklahoma City Downtown Hotel
1 North Broadway Avenue
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

September 2 – 3, 2015



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Executive Summary

The Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board (Board) advises the Secretary of the Interior, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Director, the Secretary of Agriculture, and the Chief of the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) on matters pertaining to the management and protection of wild, free-roaming horses and burros on the Nation's public lands. The Advisory Board's Charter will expire in July 2016.

During its September 2-3, 2015, meeting held in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, the Board received updates from the BLM on a number of areas pertaining to the management of wild horses and burros, including an update from the Oklahoma Field Office and New Mexico's Wild Horse and Burro Program office.

The BLM also provided an update on Advisory Board Charter, Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), Program Update, and a Budget Update which examined Fiscal Year 2015 and 2016 funding. In addition, the Board received updates from the Off-Range and On-Range Branch Chiefs.

Mr. Barry Imler, Forest Service Rangeland Program Manager, provided an update on the USFS wild horse and burro management. He described changes and challenges to wild horse and burro management within the USFS as well as USFS's decision matrix planning tool.

BLM Research Coordinator for the Wild Horse and Burro Program, Dr. Paul Griffin provided a presentation entitled "Summary of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) Thermal Profile Assessment and the UC Davis Shade Preference Study," which discussed projects commissioned by BLM concerning the need for more scientific information on the horses use of shade and their thermal needs. He also provided an update and status on research being initiated, underway, and planned by the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) and BLM.

Mr. Scott Fluer, BLM Wild Horse Specialist from the Lander, Wyoming Field Office provided a presentation on a New Method for Monitoring Animal Use in Riparian Habitats, which included information from a study his team performed that used digital cameras with motion sensors to record animals in riparian habitats.

Wednesday, April 22, 2015

Welcome and Introductions

Mr. Fred Woehl, Chair, Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board

Mr. Woehl called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. He welcomed the meeting attendees, both in Oklahoma and via the Internet through live streaming. Mr. Woehl asked the veterans in the room to stand and be recognized. He led those in attendance in the pledge of allegiance. This was followed by a round of self-introductions by the Board members and BLM representatives Mike Tupper (Acting Designated Federal Officer, Deputy Assistant Director, Resources and Planning, BLM) and Dean Bolstad (Acting Division Chief, Wild Horse and Burro Program, BLM).

National Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board Member List

Board Member	Representing
Mr. Fred T. Woehl, Jr. (Chair)	Public Interest
Dr. Sue M. McDonnell, Ph. D. (Vice Chair)	Wild Horse and Burro Research
Ms. June Sewing	Wild Horse and Burro Advocacy
Mr. Timothy J. Harvey	Humane Advocacy
Dr. Robert E. Cope, DVM	Natural Resources Management
Dr. Julie Weikel, DVM	Veterinary Medicine
Ms. Jennifer Sall	Public Interest
Mr. John Falen	Livestock Management
Mr. Rick E. Danvir	Wildlife Management

Agenda Review

Kathie Libby, Facilitator, BLM

Ms. Libby welcomed those in attendance, both in Oklahoma and via the Internet through live streaming. She reviewed the meeting Agenda for the day and a half meeting. She noted that the Public Comments would be made tomorrow from 10:30 a.m. until noon. She asked those who planned to make a comment to sign up by 10:15 a.m. tomorrow.

Opening Remarks

Mike Tupper, Acting Designated Federal Officer, Deputy Assistant Director, Resources & Planning, BLM

Mr. Tupper introduced himself. He welcomed the attendees to the meeting. He provided an overview of several items that are of public interest.

- Tom Davis – The Office of the Inspector General (OIG) of the U.S. Department of Interior has an ongoing investigation into what became of horses sold to Mr. Davis. BLM is waiting for a decision from the OIG. As of now, there is no further information; however, Mr. Tupper felt a decision is fairly imminent.
- Scott City, Kansas Horse Deaths – In March 2014, an open-pasture contractor in Kansas informed the BLM that he would not renew his existing five-year contract, which required BLM to remove about 1,900 animals (1,500 mares and 400 geldings) by June 1, 2014. Due to concerns about the age of

many of the horses and the stress associated with being moved, BLM quickly worked to find an appropriate facility as close as possible to the open pasture. BLM found a facility in Scott City began moving about 1,500 mares to the corral. BLM was forced to move the animals over the course of a month. As of June, 160 of the horses have passed away. On August 12, a team of BLM personnel and a veterinarian from the USDA APHIS arrived on site to investigate the situation; determine the causes of death; evaluate the facility, including the corral feed and feeding practices; and take actions to support the short- and long-term needs of the horses. Veterinarian checks will be ongoing. Preliminary findings indicate that the animals died as a result of their age combined with stress from the recent relocation, the shift from a pasture to a corral environment, and the change from pasture feed to processed hay feed. There is no indication of infectious or contagious diseases being the cause.

- Donated Shade Structures – BLM was offered shade structures as a donation to the agency. Mr. Tupper noted that BLM appreciates any help that they receive. Unfortunately, BLM doesn't always respond quickly due to the size of the organization; therefore, the person who planned to donate the structures backed out due to the length of time it took to respond to their offer.
- Gathers – BLM gathers animals for adoptions, vaccinations, and to maintain the ecological health of the rangelands. BLM determines where to gather wild horses and burros using a variety of factors, including the Greater Sage-Grouse. BLM has committed to gather horses down to low Appropriate Management Level (AML) in the Sage Grouse Focal Areas, over the next five years.
- Things that go wrong – The Soda Fire burned 285,000 acres of land in southwestern Idaho, including the entire the Sands Basin and Hardtrigger Herd Management Areas (HMAs) and a third of the Black Mountain HMA. BLM has begun emergency gathers in the Sands Basin and Hardtrigger HMAs. The gathered horses are being taken to the Boise Wild Horse Corrals. In addition, there is another gathering at an HMA in Southern Nevada (Cold Springs). Cold Springs is being gathered because the horses are in very poor body conditions. BLM is moving them gently and the town folks have come out and to help. There was another area in Central California where BLM had planned to have a gather; however, at the time BLM planned to begin the gather, the area received three days of rain which caused BLM to leave the horses in place. Mr. Tupper added that BLM is serious about wild horses and burros, but can't be everywhere at the same time. He asked for the public's help in monitoring the horses.
- Outreach – Mr. Tupper explained that he has been on the job for three months and felt BLM has begun a good dialogue with the public dialogue. The public has provided some good suggestions and one particular idea holds promise. Mr. Tupper said that if the public has a suggestion, they should provide it to BLM. In addition, Mr. Tupper and Mr. Bolstad have been conducting outreach with Congressional members of the House and Senate and with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) in Washington, DC in an effort to discuss how the Wild Horse and Burro (WH&B) program runs. Mr. Tupper added that due to the positive actions of Mr. Bolstad's staff, the public is beginning to get better information about the WH&B program.

Welcome/Introduction to Oklahoma

Steve Tryon, Field Manager, Oklahoma Field Office, BLM

Mr. Tyron welcomed the attendees to Oklahoma. He thanked the Board members for meeting with him yesterday at Pauls Valley. He added that he would provide an introduction both to his part of the country and the multiple use mandate that his office is carrying out in the three states covered by the field office—Texas, Oklahoma, and Kansas. He noted that the Board would also hear from Pat Williams

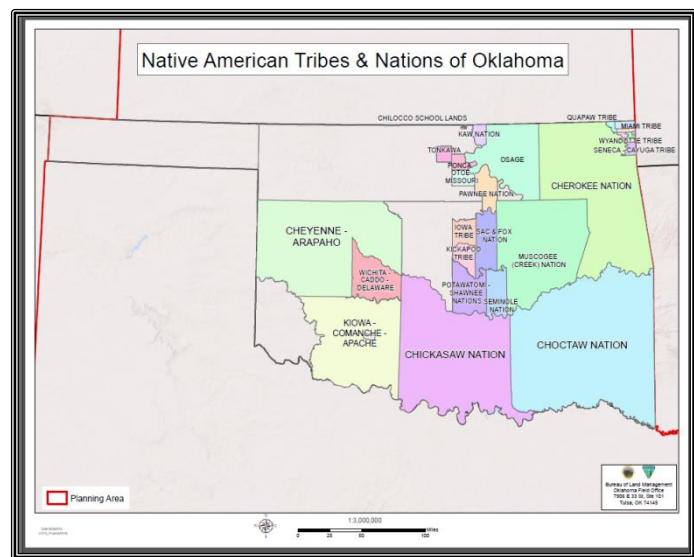
(BLM State Lead, New Mexico) when he was finished with his presentation. Mr. Tyron also recognized Crystal Calen, Meredith Keite, Pat Hoffman, Gary Hughes, and others who work in the field office. Mr. Tyron provided an overview of his program. The field office is managed much like the Eastern States office. They manage about 100,000 acres of surface land in the public domain in addition to about one-half million acres of American Indian properties, which are allotted lands. For the most part, the American Indian land is not reservation land. The lands were allotted to American Indian family owners when they enrolled in the Dawes Act. BLM works in what seems like a private land situation; however, the lands are held in trust. BLM also manages the minerals for tens of thousands of American Indians in this part of the country.

In addition to the WH&B program, BLM manages an active oil and gas program, for federal properties and American Indian property, as well as federal coal and sand and gravel operations. Many of the river beds are owned by Indian tribes. These areas are developed for sand, gravel, and aggregate.

The Oklahoma Field Office also manages other programs, such as a realty program, under the Recreation and Public Purposes Act. Most recently the office issued a color of title patent to a Texas landowner, who had originally filed his request back in the 1980s. It was hampered by litigation for many years. BLM found the active request for the color of title and just three weeks ago, issued the patent. This was a success story for the office. The field office also manages of grazing allotments and recreation.

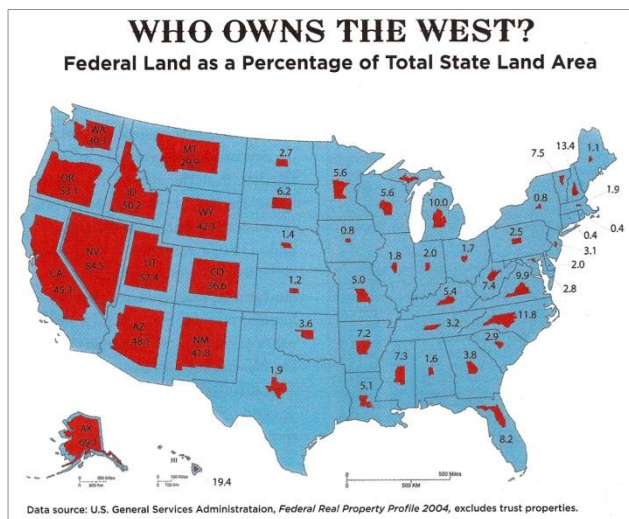
Oklahoma is home to the most American Indians in the U.S. This is reflected by place names, street names, town names, ancient and historic references, and the state license plate. *Okla* and *homa* mean red people. Each of the 42 federally recognized tribes has its own governance and issues their own license plates.

Most of Oklahoma is included in some type of reservation boundary. For the most part, those are jurisdictional boundaries. There are four tribes in the northeast part of Kansas, which included land in Nebraska and the Alabama-Coushatta and the eastern part of Texas. BLM acts as the fiduciary responsible for all of those tribes.



With less than a population of less than four million people, most Oklahomans live in Oklahoma City and Tulsa. The state's median income is less than the national average at \$44,287 (the national average is \$52,762). The state's unemployment rate is well below the national average at 4.5 (national unemployment rate is 5.3). Oklahoma's economy is based on energy (oil and gas, wind, and coal). Texas, California, and Oklahoma are the top three wind states in the country.

Mr. Tyron discussed cultural icons from Oklahoma—the Oklahoma State Cowboys, the Oklahoma City Thunder (a National Basketball Association team), the Oklahoma University Sooners, Oklahoma governor Mary Fallin, Elizabeth Warren (Massachusetts U.S. senator, who is originally from Oklahoma), Will Rogers (American cowboy, vaudeville performer, humorist, newspaper columnist, social commentator and stage and motion picture actor), athletes Troy Aikman and Jim Thorpe, and musicians Woody Guthrie, Carrie Underwood, Toby Keith, and Blake Shelton.



Mr. Tyron showed a map illustrating federal land ownership in the U.S. He noted that map showed that to do any work successfully BLM has to work cooperatively. He added that BLM has good working relationships between the state governments, the private sector, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

BLM employees are located in El Dorado, Kansas; Oklahoma City and Tulsa, Oklahoma; and Decatur, Texas. The employees are in the process of transitioning into the Tulsa and Oklahoma City offices; however, at some point BLM will close the Tulsa office.

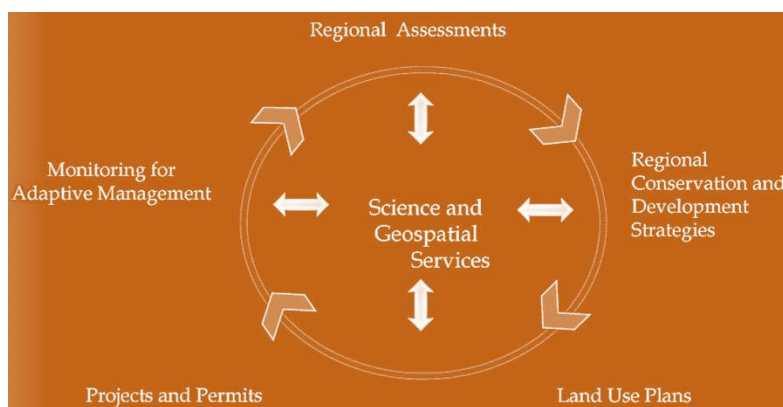
BLM Trends: Emphasis on Landscape-Level Planning and Decision-Making

Mr. Tyron said BLM is changing rapidly which is due to sustainability in terms of how the BLM will move forward into the 21st century. In the 20th century, BLM was decentralized and focused primarily on authorizing private parties to use the public lands for commercial purposes, such as the following:

- Energy and Mineral Development
- Utility and Transportation Rights-of-Way
- Domestic Livestock Grazing
- Timber and Wood Products

Most of the organizational power was with field managers or district managers who made decisions at the site level, or at the field office level.

In the 21th Century, BLM is moving toward a landscape level analysis. BLM's land use planning process is moving to a process called eco-regional assessments into the land use planning process. Their projects and permits can be a larger scale and there is a cycle of monitoring and adaptive management.



In addition, BLM's land management process includes partnerships through regional-level planning. For example: Western Solar Energy Plan (which made the siting of multiple solar farms possible); the Greater Sage Grouse plan revisions and amendments; the California Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan; and Western Oregon Plan Revisions.

Permitting Avoidance and Mitigation includes projects to enhance climate resiliency, compensatory mitigation projects, and Native Plant Materials (Seed Banks). The landscape level is where BLM is moving.

The eco-regional assessments support regional level planning by helping with project siting (e.g., transmission lines, well pads), preparing land use plans and cumulative impacts analyses, developing off-site mitigation strategies, identifying policy and program development needs, and facilitating interagency discussions about critical ecosystem processes and thresholds about research and data needs.

The Endangered Species Act considerations in Texas, Oklahoma, and Kansas include the American Burying Beetle, which is still listed as an endangered species, and the lesser prairie chicken, which is also protected. Mr. Tyron learned as he was coming into today's meeting that U.S. Judge Robert Junell, of Texas, threw out the lesser prairie chicken listing yesterday.

How does the movement toward Landscape-Level Planning and Project Execution affect the WH&B Program?

Mr. Tyron explained that interesting part of Judge Junell's decision (noted above) is that it may eventually affect the wild horses. He added that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) said there has not been enough consideration given to all of the pending conservation actions promised by the \$46 million in conservation and mitigation fees which have not been collected. This could affect any pending actions such as wild horse and burro gathers.

Mr. Tyron added that the intersection with the wild horse and burro was more of a seed for thought for the Advisory Board. As BLM begins more landscape-level planning and execution, the field office will continue permitting, but they are trying to think of science at the different levels including:

- Regional management of species (e.g., Greater Sage Grouse)?
- Changes in availability of vegetation and water?
- Resource availability for Herd Management Areas (HMAs) will be calculated in the context of best available, landscape-level science
- Modeling Specifically for the WH&B Program

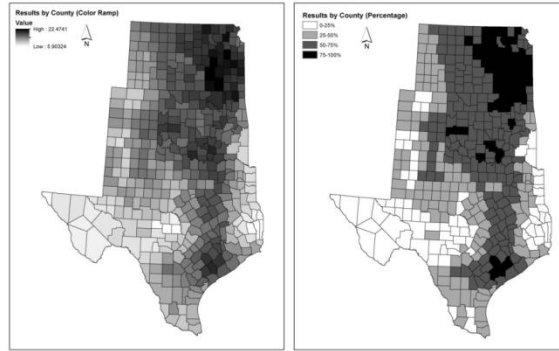
Mr. Tyron noted that some of the questions are asked during meetings of some the boards he sits on. He felt the questions should be asked in relation to horses.

Habitat Suitability Project, Creating a Regional Model

BLM planned to support the long-term pasture contracting process. The Oklahoma team came up with criteria that could best predict habitat suitability for wild horse and burro populations when considered cumulatively

- Soil Productivity
- Precipitation
- Aquifer Presence
- Land Cover Possible Affected Species

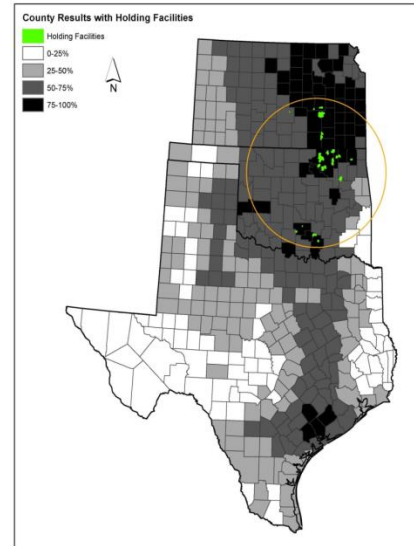
The values were weighted within the model. Mr. Tyron showed graphics (below) of the results.



The slide on the right, with the darkest counties, shows that after accounting for all of the variables, these are the area where BLM should have opportunities for long-term pasture contracts.

On the graphic to the left, the darker areas show the most promise for Suitable Habitat. All of the current and historical WH&B facilities are within the orange circle. This shows that almost exclusively holding facilities have been placed in the top 25 percent most suitable habitat.

In addition there was possibly another spot in southeast Texas where BLM doesn't have any existing long-term pasture or short-term contracts. BLM will check into this location. In this part of Texas, there are a number of conservation-type properties around it. These properties may be held in public ownership or private ownership for conservation purposes. This area is possibly an untapped resource in that part of the field office's three-state area. BLM may be able to put horses in an eco-sanctuary or long-term pasture there.



WH&B Program

Mr. Tyron explained that National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) compliance is used in making all decisions. BLM does not make any decision that involves possible surface disturbance without NEPA compliance.

Mr. Tyron showed a map of WH&B adoption locations in the four states, over a three-year cycle. He explained the adoption trends noting that the number of adoptions has declined since 2002 when there were 1,190 adoptions. So far, there have only been about 300 adoptions in 2015. Mr. Tyron felt the decline has to do with economic factors and possibly the saturation of the adoption market. He added that the compliance trends follow the adoption trends. Most of the adoptions are in Texas.

For long-term pastures, the bulk of them are located in Oklahoma and Texas. There are about 30,000 head in long-term pastures. Mr. Tyron felt there would be more long-term pastures, if there was more money in the entire program. The Oklahoma office also manages 30,506 head currently in Oklahoma and Kansas in the On-Range Program, which puts them near capacity.

Mr. Tyron's management challenges moving forward include

- Constraints on hiring, staff travel, overtime, and awards.
- Uncertainty caused by sequestration and continuing resolutions, which affects hiring and seasonal labor and can limit contracting.
- Endangered Species Act considerations.

Mr. Tyron ended his presentation by welcoming the Board members and thanking them for visiting Oklahoma. Mr. Woehl asked for any questions and thanked Mr. Tyron for his presentation.

New Mexico Wild Horse and Burro (WH&B) Program

Pat Williams, State Lead, New Mexico, BLM

Mr. Williams also welcomed the Board to Oklahoma. He thanked the Board for visiting Pauls Valley and the Davis Offerings Pasture. He stated that he would provide an overview of the WH&B Program in Oklahoma. Mr. Williams said the New Mexico WH&B region consists of Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas, and New Mexico. In addition to Mr. Williams, there are six full-time WH&B employees – two are located at the Oklahoma Office, two are at Pauls Valley, and two are in Decatur, Texas.

Most of the work done by Mr. Williams' office is related to Off-Range issues. There are two HMAs in New Mexico. The Bordo Atravesado HMA includes 16,486 total acres and has a current population of 75 horses, although the AML is 60. The last removal at Bordo was in 2012 when they removed horses by baiting. The Carracas Mesa, Jicarilla Joint Management Area (JMA) includes the USFS Jicarilla Wild Horse Territory (WHT) with 75,000 acres and the BLM Carracas Mesa HMA with 8,019 acres for a total of 83,019 total acres. The current population is 420 horses, although the AML is 128. Since 2013, USFS and BLM have removed 166 horses off of the JMA by bait trapping. BLM conducted an aerial census on the Jicarilla JMA last April.

New Mexico's Target Numbers for Fiscal Year (FY) 2015

Mr. Williams said the following numbers represent a summary of the program elements expected to be completed by the end of the FY.

- Adoption – 350 head. BLM is currently at 291 and have two adoption events scheduled in September.
- Compliance – 550. The reason this number is higher than the adoption target number is that BLM is trying to close out files for animals that were adopted two to four years ago and were never titled.
- Animal Feed Days (AFD) – 337,625 for maintaining a total of 925 animals in Hutchison and Pauls Valley.
- Census – conducted in April 2015.

Adoption Schedule 2015

Mr. Williams provided the schedule, along with a map of where the adoptions will be held. The majority will be held in Texas. BLM holds monthly adoptions in Pauls Valley. He discussed the logistics involved in an adoption event.

Mr. Williams explained that once BLM identifies an area, they focus on finding a site to have the adoption, they often run into a lot of constraints in terms of what the facilities will allow or not allow them to do. Some of those barriers include: not being allowed to feed on the arena floor; housing the animals on the arena floor for two or three days; and the arena price (many of the venues are simply too expensive). BLM tries to find an indoor or covered arena to mitigate the effects of any adverse weather conditions. Once they find a facility that will accommodate the adoption, BLM publicizes and advertises the event.

Most of the animals that BLM takes to adoption events are from the Pauls Valley or the Hutchinson Correctional Facility. BLM makes sure that the animals have current vaccinations and Coggins tests, and the animals' feet are in good shape. In addition, they coordinate with any state veterinarians to make sure that there are no animal transportation restrictions. In addition, BLM ensures their interstate transportation documents are in order and if they are going to a brand state, they coordinate it with state brand inspectors. BLM takes about 40 head to the adoption events.

BLM contracts a truck to haul most of the animals; however, they usually take an office trailer, a 36-foot stock trailer for additional adoption animals, and 32-foot flatbed for fences from the BLM facility. Hay is either hauled or purchased locally.

Adoptions – Marketing

Mr. Williams said that marketing is arguably the most important phase in planning an adoption event, because, poor marketing is sure to debilitate it. His office has an outstanding Public Affairs Officer (PAO). Some of their print ads or paid advertising includes advertising in various periodicals and radio spots. In addition the PAO and WH&B staff sends out fliers and press releases, and conduct TV, radio, and newspaper interviews both by phone and in person. In addition, they take advantage of the Internet advertising using Twitter and Facebook as well as mass e-blasts. In addition, BLM mails out flyers and puts up signs at the adoption venue. They also advertise when participating at various trade shows and expos throughout the year.

Off-Range Pasture

The ultimate responsibility for animals on off-range pastures is with BLM's Off-Range office in Washington, D.C.; however, Mr. Williams' staff also provides support by monitoring range conditions, conducting inventory and animal health assessments along with APHIS field veterinarians, providing NEPA analysis on all new bids and as well as rebids, supporting public affairs, and assisting with any removals that might happen at the off range pastures.

Coalgate Eco-sanctuary

In 2014, BLM entered into an assistance agreement with the Mowdy Ranch, which is located north of Coalgate, Oklahoma. The ranch is comprised of 4,000 acres of wooded hills and open acres and 1,300 of those acres are dedicated to 155 wild horses. Mowdy Ranch has two guest lodges that can accommodate up to 35 people. They also have dining and kitchen facilities that can accommodate large groups and special events.

Earlier this summer, as part of the Celebrate America's Mustang campaign, the ranch held a full marathon, a half marathon, a 5k run, and a 10k run. They attracted more than 250 contestants from all over the U.S. and as far away as Scotland.

Pauls Valley Facility

BLM is proud of the Pauls Valley facility. It is unique, in that, it's situated in a pasture environment. Pauls Valley has 12 improved Bermuda grass pastures spanning over 400 acres. It averages 550 to 600 head, and serves as a rest facility for horses coming from the West and going to adoption locations in the Central and Eastern U.S.

Pauls Valley offers tours and also serves as a return location for wild horse and burros when, the adopter decides they are no longer able to care them, or simply don't want them and can't find another person to reassign the animals to. It also serves as a pickup location as well for Internet adoptions and has monthly adoptions.

Hutchison Correction Facility (HCF)

Mr. Williams reported that HCF averages 350 head and has the capacity to hold up to 500 head. They have two full-time Kansas correctional employees, one serves as the program manager and the other serves as the training manager. The facility employs six to eight inmate trainers. Another six to seven inmates are responsible for the feeding and the maintenance. The facility also puts up the majority of their own hay.

HCF trainers take their horses from the pool of horses that are held there at the facility. Once the horses enter training, they are scored on a point system through all phases of the training. The horses must meet minimum criteria before they are considered trained. Besides the Department of Corrections property, the trainers also have access to a nearby state park in addition to several miles of trails, sand dunes, water crossings. There are often cattle at the facility and the horses are trained to sort, track, rope, and watch a cow. There is also a border collie on the facility. The trainers help the horses become accustomed to being around dogs, which is especially important for the Border Patrol Horses.

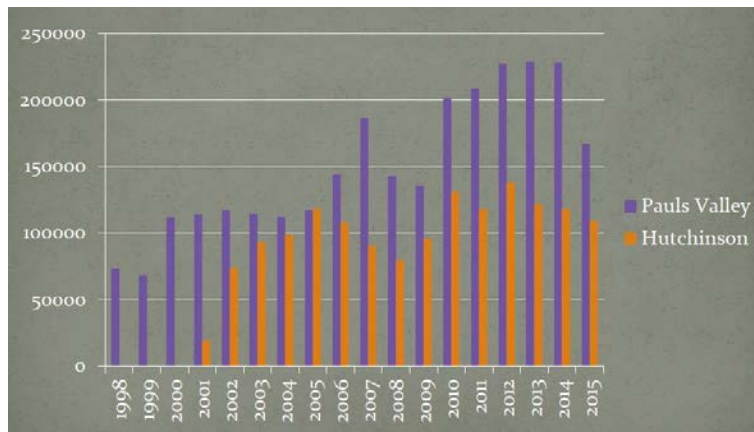
Training Horses for the U.S. Border Patrol

Since 2011, the U.S. Border Patrol has adopted 63 from HCF, which is about one-quarter of all Border Patrol horses adopted. Their horses take precedence over all other horses in the HCF training program. When they need more horses, the Border Patrol contacts HCF. HCF trainers pull horses either from the current training program or from the herd to start from scratch. HCF has also provided horses to Border Patrol centers in Texas and far away as Southern California.

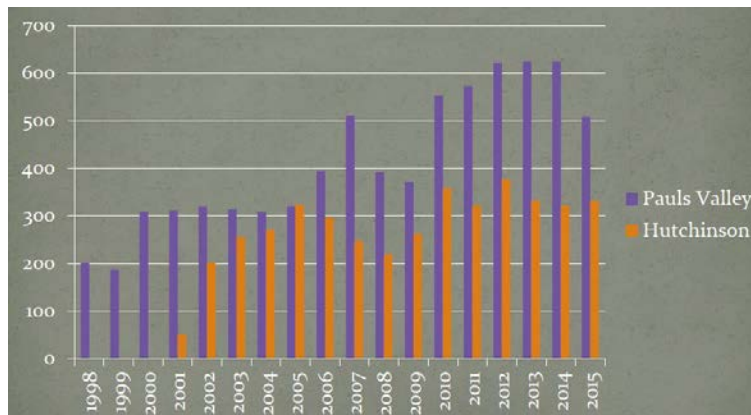


Total AFD at Pauls Valley and HCF

Mr. Williams showed a graphic depicting the trend for AFDs at both the HCF and the Pauls Valley facilities.



Another graph showed the number of horses housed at the facilities. From 2006 to 2009, there was an influx of foals weaned off of on-range pasture and a spike in 2010, represented facility expansion.



Mustang Heritage Foundation (MHF)

The Oklahoma field office has a substantial involvement with the MHF. MHF helps to broaden exposure to wild horses and burros competitive events. They present competitive events nation-wide, help to increase the desire to adopt trained mustangs through the Trainer Incentive Program (TIP), and promote recognition through social media and national publications.

In addition to the information presented before, the Pauls Valley Facility serves as a pickup location for animals involved in MHF events, holding six events in 2015. It is also a pick up location for animals in the trainer incentive program.

Moore field office staff approves all applications for each event and TIP adoption. In addition, they attend all events within their jurisdiction and handle all adoption/compliance-related issues. The Moore office also supports marketing of MHF events marketing and provides support to two TIP store fronts.

Outreach

New Mexico WH&B office staff attends various equine-related expos, fairs, and trade shows. They also host an annual wild horse and burro show and support local volunteer groups. Their partnerships include MHF, the U.S. Border Patrol, HCF, and the USGS. In addition, the office works with APHIS. Mr. Williams noted that Dr. Al Kane has been a key resource for offering guidance for animal health-related issues.

Youth

The New Mexico office offers a variety of education opportunities for youth. They visit schools, camps, and events with one of the saddle horses to conduct interactive presentations. In addition, the office organizes tours and adoption events at their satellite adoption locations, specifically at the Pauls Valley facility. They also work with Moore High School (a local high school) where special needs students prepare adoption literature and packets for the office. In addition the office joins forces with local 4H, the Future Farmers of America (FFA), and college students through volunteering, showing, adopting, and making presentations. Another youth program is the Mustang Heritage Camp Wildfire where office staff provides an opportunity for youth to learn more about wild horse and burros and land stewardship.

Youth Trail Challenge

Meredith Kueck, one of BLM's WH&B specialists is spearheading the Youth Trail Challenge. This program is for youth 18 and younger. The youths select a yearling, take it home for 90 days, and train it.

At the end of the 90 days, they compete in an in-hand trail challenge. When the challenge is complete, the horses are adopted by way of competitive bid. The youth are allowed to keep any proceeds over \$25. BLM also reimburses the youth for the feed days.

Volunteer Groups

Established in 1993, the Mid-West Mustang and Burro Saddle Club provide support to the BLM, by promoting a positive image of the WH&B program; helping facilitate the adoption process for new adopters in their area; conducting gentling demonstrations, workshops, and clinics; riding their adopted animals in parades and carrying wild horse and burro banners; attending expos and competing with their adopted animals; supporting media coverage and outreach; fostering horses; and finding new adopters.

Mr. Woehl asked Mr. Williams to explain storefronts. Mr. Williams explained that the storefronts are provided through the Mustang TIP. The storefronts must have ten head on hand at all times and be open year-round for adoptions. The storefronts provide the horses with basic training and have certain criteria to follow. The horses must be trained enough so that adopters can pick up the horses' feet, load the horses, and other things. BLM doesn't necessarily take the horses to the storefronts, but if BLM is in an area for an adoption event and has horses left over, those from the storefronts can pick the horses up.

Mr. Williams showed a short video with photos from his program.

Mr. Woehl thanked Mr. Williams for his presentation and the efforts of his program.

Rules of the Room

Kathie Libby, Facilitator, BLM

Ms. Libby reviewed the rules of the room. She emphasized that the meeting is designed as a working meeting of the Board. She also explained that those who wanted to speak during the Public Comment Period should sign up by 10:15 a.m. tomorrow and those who had handouts should provide them to the table in the back of the room, not directly to the Board. She added that during the Public Comment Period, the Board would not respond to those making comments, unless there some are inaccuracies presented.

Approval of the Minutes from the April 22-23, 2015 Meeting

Fred Woehl, Board Chair

Mr. Woehl asked the Board members if they had any discussion, questions, or comments on the minutes from the April 22-23, 2015 meeting. Dr. Weikel stated that on page 11, at the top of the page, it said in the minutes that in her report about the Sheldon spay project that the foaling rate decreased to 28 percent. She noted that the number is incorrect in the meeting minutes and the correct report is that it decreased the foaling rate from 18 percent in 2008, to six percent in 2013. The meeting minutes were approved with the additions and corrections.

Advisory Board Charter/SOPs

Sarah Bohl, Program Specialist, Wild Horse and Burro Program, BLM (via phone)

Ms. Bohl said she has added language to the Charter defining a quorum, as discussed during the last Board meeting. For the purposes of the WH&B Board, a quorum is defined as six of the nine Board members, which represents two-thirds of the nine categories of interest that comprise the Board. Ms. Bohl noted that BLM informed her that there are a lot of other charters in line ahead of the WH&B Board's charter, so the change will be made, but since the charter does not expire until July 2016, it will be processed behind some other charters.

Ms. Bohl's second item was the SOPs. She added a brief explanation on the role of the vice chair to the SOPs. Ms. Bohl also made some minor edits to make the language consistent with the title of chair and so forth. She reported that all of the changes are in track changes in the Board's binder. She asked the Board to review the changes and let her know if the changes are acceptable.

BLM Response to Advisory Board Recommendations

Dean Bolstad, Acting Division Chief, Wild Horse and Burro Program, BLM

Mr. Bolstad introduced the Washington BLM staff members who were attending the meeting. He also introduced the team who was assisting with the broadcast. In addition, he introduced Barry Imler and Allen Rolle from the USFS.

Mr. Woehl noted that the Board members may have comments during BLM's responses to the recommendations.

Recommendation 1

BLM should consider having the WH&B Division Chief position have an optional location in the West based on the preference of the selectee and the Program needs.

BLM Response

The BLM does not accept this recommendation. The 2014 reorganization of the Wild Horse and Burro Program created an On-Range Branch Chief based in Nevada and an Off-Range Branch Chief based in Oklahoma. These positions provide a leadership presence in the West and a close connection with the field. An important aspect of the Division Chief's role is to work with BLM leadership in Washington (and also with Congress) on key decisions that rest with senior leadership while maintaining close connections with the field.

Recommendation 2

BLM should assess horses to predict adoption potential (by qualified horse trainers who may be volunteers) with the aim of moving horses expeditiously to long-term situations.

BLM Response

The BLM accepts the recommendation to assess horses to predict adoption potential. Implementation may entail additional training for BLM staff who currently select horses for adoptions. It may also entail determining what assistance the Board could provide to help develop a third party resource.

Mr. Bolstad added that we all agree that the best horses should be put up for adoption. He disagreed with the Board's assessment that BLM's specialists do not have the experience to pick the horses. Mr. Bolstad felt BLM's specialists are capable horsemen who are qualified to pick the horses. In the past, it was

BLM's practice to send the horses through the system. He did not feel it is the inability of the staff to choose the horses but the issue concerns the process that is followed for how BLM advances the horses to adoptions. Mr. Bolstad said that although, this is not what BLM wrote in the response, he would like the Board to reconsider this recommendation.

Mr. Woehl agreed. Mr. Harvey said the problem is high recidivism rates. He agreed with BLM's horsemanship skills. He felt the system for adoption should be improved. He suggested that desirable horses could be ear-marked as good adoption prospects based on their temperament and their willingness to be interested in human activity. These horses could be streamlined to get them through the adoption process. Mr. Harvey added that the recommendation was not meant to denigrate the horsemanship skills of BLM specialists. He said the recommendation was due to some of the limited manpower in BLM. It was a way to get help for the BLM specialists, it wasn't meant to imply that BLM needed somebody with more expertise.

Mr. Bolstad thanked Mr. Harvey for the clarification and agreed that from a historical perspective, some changes need to be made.

Mr. Harvey added that the earlier the determination can be made that a horse is either a good adoption prospect or not.

Mr. Bolstad said BLM used to only ship six year olds and older horses to long-term holding. All of the younger horses were considered adoptable. Mr. Harvey noted that BLM doesn't need the current three-strike rule, or whatever that process, for a horse to move to long-term holding. He felt that if there can be a good professional determination made as to whether a horse is or is not going to a safe as possible partner or potential partner. Mr. Bolstad agreed and felt he had clarification on this recommendation. With these additional entries into the minutes, he thought there was a path forward for this recommendation.

Recommendation 3

BLM should continue to develop and implement programs like America's Mustang campaign which provide factual education and information to the American public.

BLM Response

The BLM accepts this recommendation and thanks the Board for recognizing the value of campaigns like America's Mustang.

Mr. Danvir mentioned that he participated with Ms. Hooks, Debbie Collins, and Kali Sublet with interacting and presenting the public with some information about the program during an event in St. Louis, Missouri. He told the Board that, based on comments, feedback, and questions from the public, the Celebrating America's Mustang campaign is a very good program. He felt it is a great opportunity to share knowledge and see what's going on in the Western HMAs. He added that the BLM staff and the MHF did a great job. The program is definitely worth continuing. Mr. Bolstad explained that Ms. Hooks would provide program details during her Off-Range presentation.

Recommendation 4

BLM should increase dedicated funding for developing new methods of population growth suppression, and for methods currently available. All forms of population control should be considered for utilization.

BLM Response

The BLM accepts this recommendation. The BLM is investing in eight university-led research projects that will receive up to \$4 million in total funding to develop new tools and improve current methods to humanely control the population growth of wild horse and burro herds, including permanent contraception and more effective temporary contraceptive vaccines. Additionally, through its partnership with the USGS, the BLM has initiated four studies and is soliciting proposals for nine new projects that will deliver better methods and tools for managing wild horse and burro herds. Eight of these studies are aimed at evaluating temporary and permanent contraception. These projects will receive up to \$7 million in funding.

Dr. Weikel said the Board had some discussion among themselves about the adequacy of the funding. She asked where she could find the \$4 and \$7 million reflected in the budget. Mr. Tupper said the BLM Director, Neil Kornze, obtained the money from other programs. Mr. Bolstad added that Ms. Hooks would provide the answer during her presentation on the budget. He stated that \$5 million of the \$11 million was allocated in 2014, in an interagency agreement with USGS which means there is only about \$1 to \$2 million coming out of the Fiscal Year FY 2015 budget.

Dr. Weikel clarified another point on this recommendation, stating that in the recommendation the Board was asking BLM to move ahead with some of the contraceptive methods currently available. Mr. Bolstad said part of his update for the Board would address the importance of moving forward as quickly as they can as BLM's planning and land use plans allow.

Recommendation 5

BLM is encouraged to proceed with the current WH&B programmatic EIS.

BLM Response

The BLM is considering a Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS) and appreciates the Board's support.

Mr. Woehl stated that this recommendation is very important to the Board. Dr. Weikel agreed and added that the Board continues to support the Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Although the Board appreciated BLM's explanation of the political process, if it is at all helpful, this Board is unanimous in its support for the Programmatic EIS (PEIS).

Recommendation 6

BLM should encourage state, county and local governments and agencies to participate as cooperating agencies in all NEPA processes.

BLM Response

The BLM accepts this recommendation. This is current BLM policy and is consistent with the BLM 2012 Desk Guide for Cooperating Agency Relationships. The BLM may make additional efforts for enhanced coordination for all NEPA processes related to the WH&B program to gain the benefit of on-the-ground jurisdictional knowledge and special expertise from state wildlife agencies and municipal governments that are cooperating agencies. Further, the PEIS would include extensive outreach and consultation with all interested publics, including with cooperating agencies.

Dr. Cope said that as a former county commissioner. He has heard from many county officials that BLM's policy may not filter down to the field office level and some offices are not enthusiastic about working with county governments. He has explained to these officials that the NEPA process not only allows but requires local government to be admitted as cooperating agencies in the NEPA process. He

said the Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) do not necessarily require involvement from the county. He thought the MOUs can be written in a manner that it allows the resources that the county has available. He added that he is working with Cynthia Moses-Nedd to produce a government guide for the NEPA planning process. He felt all of BLM should be aware of how important it is that the local government be involved in that process.

Mr. Bolstad replied that the WH&B Program is very much aware of the interest from county government in the management of wild horse and burros and thanked Dr. Cope for his input.

Recommendation 7

BLM should develop a training module/ program to allow all qualified volunteers to be an asset to the BLM WH&B program. For example, BLM should consider training volunteers to assist in range monitoring through site-specific photography—(aka citizen science).

BLM Response

The BLM does not accept the recommendation to develop one specific training module for volunteers. Given the variation in duties undertaken by volunteers, a single training module would not meet our needs. Training will however continue to be provided by the office or staff supervising the volunteers. The BLM will continue to encourage the field to make maximum use of volunteers, including citizen science opportunities. Volunteers are a valued resource and contributed 114,988 hours of service to the Program in FY 2013.

Mr. Bolstad felt BLM may have misunderstood this recommendation. BLM thought it was one training course for all and that would not work. After talking with the Board members, Mr. Bolstad realized that BLM may need to rethink their response to this recommendation. Dr. Cope said he serves on the USFS committee and implementation of the 2012 planning rule, in which adaptive management is the keystone of the plan and its implementation. He added that this recommendation has to do with adaptive management. Adaptive management is defining the desired conditions and then placing the plan in place, in order to achieve the desired outcome. The key is to monitor the conditions and establish the trends to determine if you or are not reaching those desired conditions, and if not, how do you can get there. Monitoring is important, but is limited by budget.

Dr. Cope felt that as BLM tries to work toward adaptive management, they will see that they are hamstrung by not having the budget and the manpower to do the monitoring. Dr. Cope added there are several land grant universities working toward establishing programs to train permittees and other interested parties. The photographic effort of having volunteers help to document what is on the ground is one type of assistance that volunteers can give, but Dr. Cope felt BLM needs to have the ability to train those people. At the same time, BLM can do things that are similar things to what the universities are working on for the volunteers with the adoptions. With the public relations effort, volunteers can help with disseminating information. The Board was not looking at one training module; they were looking for ways to help fill the manpower gaps.

Mr. Tupper asked for a redo and asked for a chance to work out this recommendation. Mr. Cope said the Board will rewrite the recommendation during this meeting.

Recommendation 8

BLM, in conjunction with other federal agencies, should explore the possibility of establishing collaborative groups regarding the management of specific HMAs.

BLM Response

The BLM accepts this recommendation. This type of collaboration can be beneficial to the BLM and involves interested publics in wild horse management. Currently Idaho, Colorado, Montana, and Oregon are involved with collaborative partners to assist with Herd Management Area (HMA) management. The Wild Horse and Burro Program will continue to encourage collaboration with interested groups by offering support to State and District Offices with opportunities for collaborative management of HMAs.

Mr. Bolstad said that under Mr. Tupper's leadership, he has been involved with working with several NGOs. The NGOs are offering to assist BLM. This will be a low-cost solution. Mr. Woehl said this recommendation is important to the Board. It is beneficial to everyone.

Dr. Cope wanted to make sure BLM wasn't working with individual NGOs or taking anything away from research. He would like BLM to follow the USFS model and work along the Clearwater Basin collaborative or the Hawaiian Basin, where there is no single governmental agency consulting with a group but instead where BLM is one of the people at the table, not necessarily the lead. He felt that if BLM gets to the table and finds the common ground, they may realize where they are moving forward and can do it, not necessarily as a government-run organization. It's the federal, state, and local agencies, in addition to local conservation groups and other groups all together rather than with a limited participation. Dr. Cope felt that model will be much more effective if it is expanded on. He added that there are a lot of examples that can be used.

Mr. Bolstad clarified that Dr. Cope was not talking about one little aim of some collaborative effort, such as Porcine Zona Pellucida (PZP) treatments, Dr. Cope was talking about having a diverse group sit down and talk about how to manage the HMA. Dr. Cope said those are the places where BLM can develop collaborative conditions and methods of adaptive management that result in agreements instead of litigation. Mr. Bolstad said he would like to talk with Dr. Cope further about the USFS model. He was open to also talking with BLM's USFS partners, but felt Dr. Cope has seen the model deployed from a different perspective. Mr. Tupper agreed to work with Dr. Cope and added that BLM has some good partnerships already and is willing to get more partners.

Recommendation 9

BLM should explore more modern behavior modification and least-stress methods, such as:

- a. Enticement and positive reinforcement methods of gathering;
- b. Refinement and increased use of water and bait trapping methods where they can be effective.

BLM Response

The BLM accepts recommendation and is examining options for developing and trialing such methods.

Mr. Bolstad said he has had some conference calls with Sarah Lowe who is one of Dr. McDonnell's students. BLM is interested in talking more about this topic. Dr. McDonnell was happy that BLM is open to this suggestion and added that she meant to include handling the horses, not only during the gather, but also after the gather in any of the off-range area and when returning them to the range, in the recommendation. Dr. McDonnell said that part of the impetus for this recommendation was for moving forward with population growth suppression (PGS) methods that require multiple gathers. She felt it would be very valuable to handle the animals in the least confrontational way, with the least fear methods for moving them, so that when they are gathered again, that they will be more amenable to human contact. All BLM would have to do is add *and handling* to the end of the phrase a. She asked if BLM considered handling when they accepted the recommendation. Mr. Bolstad thought that the intent from the Board was to look at different ways to gather the animals or capture them for potential treatments and release them back. He wasn't sure if they thought about handling, but because it stated

kind and gentle and least pressure, BLM felt that is an effective method for conducting the gathers. It is the intent of BLM's Comprehensive Animal Welfare Plan (CAWP) standards for gathers.

Recommendation 10

BLM should pilot reintroducing a non-reproductive herd into a zeroed-out HMA. BLM should explore partnering with National Mustang Association or other recognized group for this.

BLM Response

The BLM does not accept this recommendation. The change from Herd Area (HA) to HMA for the reintroduction of wild horses and/or burros requires a land use plan decision and cannot be conducted as a pilot. The reintroduction of horses and/or burros into HAs and zeroed-out HMAs is considered as part of land use plan updates. It should be noted that there are very few opportunities where it would be appropriate to reintroduce animals into a HA. An added complication is the recent emphasis on sage grouse habitat conservation *and drought*.

Mr. Bolstad said that partnering with the National Mustang Association (NMA) can't be done as a pilot. He learned about an area in Utah that did not have water. NMA recommended putting the horses back if there was water and BLM said they could move the horses back if there was water.

Ms. Sewing said that the way this recommendation was written was not her intent. She never thought of it as a pilot program. She meant it in the same way Mr. Bolstad discussed. If an area has been zeroed out, it would be good to examine the reasons and see if there have been any changes in the area, or if changes can be made to the area. She added that sometimes the area is zeroed out due to a lack of forage, but if the area has not been used for ten years, the forage may be there again. She suggested that if the horses are better managed, the area may not get into that condition again. There was some discussion about land use planning. Mr. Bolstad said land use plans are typically only good for about ten years. He felt the local offices may be willing to consider doing an environmental assessment to make a land use plan amendment, if it's a narrow focus kind of thing and there is some interest.

Mr. Harvey added that a similar idea several years ago was accepted by BLM. He felt the intent was to review some areas where the horses can be reintroduced. He said moving the horses, especially out of short-term holding would be a good thing, instead of paying somebody to feed the horses. He added that it could also be an opportunity for BLM to work with organizations like Ms. Sewing's and participate in the process to make the area suitable for the horses. He also felt it was an opportunity for advocacy groups and other interested groups to get involved with becoming volunteers for monitoring or whatever is needed.

Recommendation 11

BLM should provide updates to the Advisory Board on progress of USGS research activities for WH&B prior to each meeting.

BLM Response

The BLM accepts this recommendation.

Mr. Bolstad agreed and added that BLM will provide information about its research in addition to USGS before each meeting. Mr. Woehl said the word prior refers to a longer period than the day before a meeting. Mr. Bolstad agreed that future the information will be timely.

Recommendation 12

BLM should provide funding to allow Board members to attend, assist in, and obtain first-hand knowledge of the various components of the WH&B program.

BLM Response

The BLM accepts this recommendation. To enable the BLM to seek input from the Board on specific matters, and to provide the Board with first-hand information on these matters, the BLM may periodically fund Board travel to BLM offices, field locations, or events. Such travel will be approved by the Division Chief in cases where benefits of the travel justify the expenditure. Travel approval is contingent on availability of travel funds within the Washington Office's travel ceiling and the operating budget for the Advisory Board and will take into account other travel needs for the remainder of the fiscal year. The BLM may suggest travel to the Board Chair for a Member(s) based on the desired area of expertise. The Board Chair, in consultation with the Board, may also suggest travel to the BLM. Requests can be made by the Board or the BLM as a need is identified or as a package of requests, preferably at the beginning of the fiscal year.

Mr. Bolstad said the Board should identify where they would like to travel. BLM will add their knowledge of what may be coming up that BLM feels could be of benefit to the Board. This information will allow BLM to be more responsive.

Recommendation 13

BLM should provide a detailed report at the next Advisory Board meeting on HMA population levels, their effects on Greater Sage Grouse (GSG), and the WH&B-related strategies being used to address these effects. BLM should prioritize HMAs in GSG priority habitat that are over AML for gathers.

BLM Response

The BLM accepts this recommendation. This report will be included in the agenda for the next Board meeting.

Mr. Bolstad added that this topic will be included in Mr. Fuell's On-Range presentation at the next meeting.

Recommendation 14

The Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board should meet a minimum of 3 times annually: April, August and December, if possible.

BLM Response

The BLM does not accept this recommendation. The designated federal official (DFO) will hold two meetings per year and hold any additional meetings as needed in cases where the needs of the agency would be served by holding an additional meeting. The BLM is happy to adjust the timing of the two annual meetings, for example so they are held six months apart.

Mr. Bolstad said BLM feels two meetings are adequate and is willing to expand them to two, three-day meetings. Mr. Woehl said the Board is comfortable with two meetings per year as long as BLM realizes that the Board members are available to help and will work cohesively. The Board members want to be utilized to the best extent possible. Mr. Bolstad clarified that the monthly calls are to inform and update the Board. The calls are intended to keep the Board members informed so that when the Board meetings are held the members will maximize their production.

Recommendation 15

BLM should arrange for regular Board meetings of three days, the first of which will be dedicated to allowing working groups an opportunity for face-to-face interaction.

BLM Response

The BLM agrees to hold regular Board meetings of up to three days to allow time for Board working groups to meet. Length will be determined by how much time the working groups request for their meetings and by the agenda items identified for the formal Board meeting. This way, meeting length will be determined by specific needs and can be flexible.

Mr. Woehl said this meeting was the first time the Board has had a three-day meeting and he felt it worked well to have the Working Group meetings before the Board meetings. Dr. Cope and Mr. Harvey agreed that the last day and a half were of incredible value. Mr. Harvey felt it will make the Board members more helpful to BLM. He also thought the feedback on recommendations was helpful.

Mr. Tupper added that when BLM and the WH&B Board members leave and go their separate ways, it's easy to go back to the same habits, but when they are together with the group and realize how hard everyone is working to reach similar goals, it helps to break the walls down and eases the communication.

WH&B Program Update

Dean Bolstad, Acting Division Chief

Mr. Bolstad reported that he would cover BLM's issues and challenges followed by BLM's priorities and accomplishments.

Population Growth Suppression (PGS)

In March 2015, BLM reported a population of 58,000 animals, which was an increase over the 2014 level of 49,000 and is an 18 percent increase. With the foals born in the spring, there are probably 68,000 horses on the range, compared to the AML load of 26,000. This is two and a half times over the management target and two and a half times over the AML. It's a big issue considering the drought and other emerging and developing situations for BLM. Large-scale removals are not possible and any removals need to be limited to those that put the animals in private care.

The second issue and challenge is to substantially reduce holding costs. BLM's team and its partners have done a great job in the adoption program, but the numbers are still nominal. They are down to about 2,500 and with a few more sales, it may be 2,750 placed in good homes in fiscal year 2016.

Mr. Bolstad discussed BLM's priorities and accomplishments. He said Dr. Griffin will provide an update on university and USGS studies and research, but one significant development over the last few months is that BLM has reinstated the Research Advisory Team. There is not just a research coordinator overseeing the research, BLM now has an advisory team and the Advisory Board representative is Dr. Sue McDonnell. This is the first priority for BLM's Wild Horse and Burro Program—to continue the research and get it done.

The second priority is the implementation of PGS methods. Initially BLM intended to implement PGS through research trials and pilot programs and later through a broader scale application when methods are proven and BLM has NEPA and the planning decisions in place to support it. The PEIS will likely be a part of the NEPA analysis. BLM's best outcome would be long-acting vaccines. In the absence of technology and vaccines, surgical spay and neuter are the only options currently available.

Number three is collaboration and work with partners to advance things such as fertility control programs. Both the Cloud Foundation and the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) have asked for herd management areas where they can assist to launch PZP treatment programs.

BLM is currently collaborating with HSUS to finalize a pilot project and feasibility study for burro PZP treatments in the field in Arizona. The aim is to perform a combination of darting and bait water trapping. BLM has not undertaken this type of thing for burros before and is looking at whether or not it is feasible. Some say that burros are a lot smarter than horses and if they get a darted once, it won't happen ever again. HSUS and BLM are hopeful that it will be successful.

The fourth priority is the WH&B Sage Grouse habitat. It's important to achieve AML in Sage Brush Focal areas and Mr. Bolstad explained that Brian Fuell will expand on this topic.

The fifth priority is BLM's desire to strengthen existing partnerships, provide more trained animals, and assist in moving as many animals as possible to good homes in private care. It's not only providing trained animals, because they are in the most demand, it's also to create a better network for distributing the animals with more storefronts, especially in the eastern states region.

Number six is to continue to secure less expensive pasture space and reduce the numbers in the corrals; thus, reducing holding costs.

Number seven is to continue the development and implementation BLM's CAWP. BLM has CAWP requirements in its new helicopter contracts and has also included the requirements in the new gathering contracts. Included are stipulations about handling and the use of handling aids, as well as on gathering practices. So far, BLM has issued the new standards in three helicopter contracts, which gives BLM greater flexibility and a contingency in the event that one company is unable to continue doing business with BLM.

In addition, BLM has an online training component for BLM staff who oversee gathers as well as for contractors. The Board members will soon see BLM's SOPs for operating Off-Range Corrals. BLM has been working with the University of California, Davis animal welfare experts to develop the SOPs.

The Population Surveys also continue to be a priority for BLM. Next year, BLM will have completed surveys with the new methods in every HMA. A finding of the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) report was that BLM has been under counting. They recommended the use of USGS-developed methods and BLM has begun to do so.

Mr. Woehl was glad to see BLM use NGOs, like HSUS and the Cloud Foundation, to help with PGS.

Mr. Harvey asked if the CAWP requirements will be included in the new gather contracts. Mr. Bolstad said that BLM has already included them in the three new helicopter contracts. Two contracts are with previous contractors and one is with a new contractor. Mr. Harvey asked if there will be a dedicated compliance officer at the gathers. Mr. Bolstad replied that the requirements are in the contracts and the Contracting Officer's Representative for the gather will be responsible to ensure the standards are met.

Summary of the USDA APHIS Thermal Profile Assessment and UC Davis Shade Preference Study

Dr. Paul Griffin, Research Coordinator, Wild Horse and Burro Program, BLM

Dr. Griffin introduced himself and clarified that he would be presenting on behalf of himself and Dr. Al Kane. He discussed the relationship between BLM and AHPIS. He explained his background. Dr. Griffin acknowledged the importance of the partnership to BLM. APHIS provides veterinary expertise On-Range and at gathers both for the facilities, for adoptions, and for sales events. In addition, APHIS provides advice when formulating research and priorities.

Dr. Griffin discussed the two shade-related research projects. The projects were commissioned by BLM in August 2013 when BLM recognized the need to have a more scientific research related to horses' use of shade and their thermal needs. In addition, the projects were intended to assist BLM with making management decisions.

Characteristics of Shade Use by Captive Wild Horses (UC Davis)

This study was led by UC Davis, School of Veterinary Medicine (Kathryn Holcomb, PhD and Carolyn Stull, PhD). The objective of this study was to characterize the use of shade by captive wild horses in a BLM holding facility, examine the time spent in the shade when offered the opportunity to choose shade or full sun, and compare use of shade with random distribution in pens. The study was conducted at the Palomino Valley Center (PVC) in Nevada. In addition, the researchers measured ultraviolet (UV) radiation.

Two groups of four mares were held in two small pens, each containing a 16-foot by 30-foot overhead shade structure that cut off 99 percent of solar radiation. The mares were held in one pen for five days and were then moved to another identical pen. There were four trials with a total of 32 horses.

The researchers measured the length of time the horses spent in the shade to determine the total amount of time spent in there and the preference for shade compared to chance. Using time-lapse photography, the researchers took a picture every ten seconds and then reviewed the photographs to determine whether each horse in the study was in the sunshine or in the shade. They also used those photographs to characterize how much of the pen was in the sun and how much was in the shade, because that changed over the course of the day. Their measure for shade preference for a given hour of the day was the average percent of the time that each horse used the shade in that hour, minus the percent of the corral that was shaded in that hour.

These horses were fed once a day at 7:30 a.m. The feed was provided in a sunny corner of the pen and water was provided in a different sunny area of the pen.

The results showed that the horses used the shade for 25.6 percent of the time, which is a preference of 11 percent greater than the fraction of the pens that was shady. Each horse averaged 108 minutes in the shade, not counting the night-time hours. The average amount of time for each use of the shade was six minutes. Each horse used the shade 17 times a day, but there was a wide range—less than one minute to 90 minutes.

The researchers put small UV dosimeters on the halters. Over the period of the study, on average the horses were exposed to a UV index of 1.5. In the unshaded area there was a 3.4 index. Dr. Griffin said the horses were using the shade if it's available in those corrals.

The authors of the study concluded that the horses prefer access to shade in hot sunny environments and the horses use shade frequently, for short periods of time. The horses did not camp out in the shade all day. The authors suggested that compromised horses may use shade more than healthy horses, although that was not studied.

Dr. McDonnell asked how the researchers accounted for the water and feed in the sun. Dr. Griffin answered that the water and feed were put in the sun, because the researchers didn't want to attract the horses to the shade. Dr. McDonnell suggested that horses may spend more time in the feeding area in anticipation of the feeding time. She was concerned that this would underestimate the amount of time the horses spent in the shade. Dr. Griffin noted that the preferred time for the shade was the morning and that may be due to the feeding. Dr. McDonnell felt the horses may be in the shade after eating because they were full. She added that she was just speculating, but she didn't think there can be a conclusion for something that wasn't accounted for and wasn't sure if these numbers would represent reality.

Dr. Griffin agreed and added that there was no specific conclusion that horses' use of shade will always be greater in the morning.

Evaluation of WH&B Thermal Environment at PVC

This study was led by the USDA APHIS program (Vaughan Langman, PhD; Nora Wineland, DVM, MS). The objective of the study was to assess the thermal balance (heat gain and heat loss) of wild horses and burros housed at PVC during a summer month. The study was conducted in July. The researchers tried to answer the question – Do wild horses and burros experience thermal stress in the summer if they are not provided with access to shaded areas?

Horses compensate for heat increases by sweating. The researchers had a goal of quantifying how many gallons of sweat would be required to offset the heat gain from these various sources. The researcher who led the study is doing this kind of work for USDA in zoos. He helps to ensure the facilities also aren't causing a heat stress to the animals in those captive situations.

Researchers measured direct, reflected, and diffused solar radiation and ground, structures, and air temperatures. They also measured the temperature of the animals, estimated the amount of metabolic heat produced, measured the percent heat absorbed and reflectance of the animal's coat (including different colors – black, bay, and lighter colored horses, which can affect heat absorbance), calculated solar heat gain, calculated longwave radiation heat gain from surroundings (radiating up to the animal) heat loss from the animal's surface, and measured radiation in the surrounding areas and on the animals (dark colored animals versus light colored animals) themselves.

They cited literature which suggested that a horse's lower critical outside temperature is 41 degrees Fahrenheit, and that a horse's upper critical outside temperature is 77 degrees Fahrenheit. Outside of this range, horses compensate for heat loss or gain. Horses primarily lose heat through sweating. The researchers cited a reference indicating that the rate of sweating may be up to three gallons per hour. In the study area, July is the month of highest temperatures and lowest humidity – averaging a high of 95 degrees Fahrenheit and an average low of about 58 degrees Fahrenheit. The typical daytime relative humidity is less than 20 percent.

The results were that there was little variation in the heat balance measurements of solar radiation and longwave heat gain radiation from the sky and ground. There was a lot of potential heat gain to the animals coming from the sunshine and there was also reflective heat off the surfaces of the ground near the animals. The researchers calculated the sweat rates for solar absorbance of coat colors and heat gain above neutral; the calculated necessary sweating rate was less than half of the maximum rates possible.

The authors concluded that horses and burros compensate for daily excursions above their upper critical temperature of 77 degrees Fahrenheit by sweating efficiently in the very dry environment. They did not experience thermal stress, even without shade. The animals were observed to be receiving ample amounts of water, food, and trace minerals. Those factors could influence the sweating rate. In addition, the animals did not appear to require shade in this environment to cope with high temperatures and solar radiation typical for this area.

Dr. Griffin reviewed the Take Home Messages.

1. Small groups of wild horse mares held in small pens will use shade if it is provided to them.
2. Shade use may not necessarily be most common during the hottest part of the day.
3. UC Davis authors suggested that compromised animals may use and benefit from shade more than fit, healthy animals, although that was not studied.
4. Even without shade, animals did not experience thermal stress in the very hot, sunny facilities at PVC, as defined by a heat gain beyond the capacity to cool themselves via sweating.
5. Wild horses and burros may have a preference for shade during some times of day, but it is not required for their well-being.

Dr. Griffin added that Dr. Kane asked him to point out that in Dr. Kane's experience, across the BLM facilities, there is no pattern of horses overheating and experiencing intolerable levels of stress, as long as they are provided with adequate food, water, and trace minerals, and as long as they are at rest.

Dr. Cope noted that the 41 degrees temperature could be important to range management. He asked if Dr. Griffin had a graph or an estimate for what happens to the horse at each degree Fahrenheit that drops below 41 degrees Fahrenheit. He asked how the range managers can maintain the numbers for energy and body heat. Dr. Griffin responded that the temperature numbers (41 and 77 degrees Fahrenheit) were from the APHIS report. The range managers will provide some extra grass if it is cold, but Dr. Griffin was not sure if there are guidelines for that in the holding facilities.

Off-Range Update

Hollé Hooks, Off-Range Branch Chief

Shade/Shelter at Off-Range Corrals (ORC) Interim Guidance

Ms. Hooks followed up on Dr. Griffin's presentation on the Shade Study. Her office has issued interim guidance to the field offices that states the minimum requirement for shade and shelter at ORCs would consist of providing it for animals in sick pens or for compromised animals (injured or weak animals). The facility managers and authorized personnel have the authority to make additional shade or shelter available as needed for their particular region or function of the facility. BLM is looking at whether a maintenance facility versus a preparation facility and whether that would make a difference. The guidance is still be discussed and issued through the CAWP instructional memorandum that is being developed for ORCs.

Shade/Shelter for Adopters

Ms. Hooks reported that in addition to requirements for providing shade and shelter at ORCs, BLM has been discussing the issue regarding shade or shelter for adopters of animals placed into private care. At this time, BLM's minimum requirements are a structure with two sides and a roof. In looking at that versus what is provided for more animals at ORC, it depends on the region where the adopter lives. It may not be a one size fits all, which was the previous policy.

Currently, BLM follows the structure from the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), 43 C.F.R. § 4750.3-2(a) Qualification Standards for Private Maintenance, which states "Shelter shall be available to mitigate

the effects of inclement weather and temperature extremes. The authorized officer may require that the shelter be a structure, which shall be well drained and adequately ventilated.” BLM is reviewing this and will provide an update at the next meeting on this. The guidance will be in a manual or handbook revision, as well as issuing official policy in an Instruction Memorandum (IM).

Off-Range Space Update

Awards

Ms. Hooks stated that BLM awarded four awards from the 24 ORC proposals that were submitted. The four facilities will provide a total of 3,100 additional ORC spaces. In addition, BLM made three awards made from four Off-Range Pasture (ORP) proposals, which will provide 1,200 new spaces. The spaces will be in Oklahoma, Utah, and Wyoming.

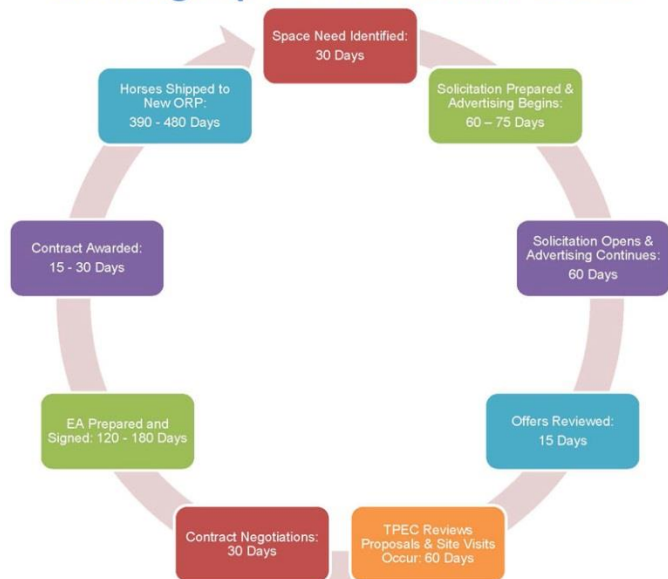
Ms. Hooks added that the Utah and Wyoming Environmental Assessments (EAs) are almost complete.

BLM is delivering animals to new eco-sanctuaries in Oklahoma and Wyoming. The Oklahoma facility has begun receiving animals and Wyoming will soon begin to receive them. There will be about 250 animals in new eco-sanctuaries.

Proposal Process

As Ms. Hooks reported at the April Board Meeting, the ORP solicitation closed on June 2. BLM received 12 proposals with a potential new capacity of about 4,200 head. The proposals are still under review by the Technical Proposal Evaluation Committee (TPEC). Site visits will be conducted in September and October. Ms. Hooks added that BLM is looking forward to gaining some additional spaces, especially to account for the potential ORP loss of about 3,750 that may occur from Oklahoma (2,750) and South Dakota (1,000). A loss would impact the budget, because if BLM loses ORP and cannot acquire additional ORP space, the animals may be moved to ORCs which could create a larger budget impact. Ms. Hooks also mentioned that there is an ORP fact sheet available.

Off-Range Space Solicitation Process



Ms. Hooks showed a slide that depicted the solicitation process. She added that the process is similar for any type of Request for Proposals (RFP) and is also similar to the process for Requests for Applications (RFA). It takes about a year to complete the process.

Celebrate American’s Mustang Campaign

Ms. Hooks reported that the Celebrate American’s Mustang campaign focused on your land, your horse. It was conducted in partnership with the MHF. The original concept was to create a way of educating the public. It was extremely successful. She felt the outreach was amazing. The information was provided, not only through the events, but also through other activities. In one workshop (in St. Louis, Missouri), BLM staff presented information, on both On-Range and Off-Range topics, and were available for conversation. Ms. Hooks noted that those attending the workshop included Gus Ward, who is the Utah

state lead, and WH&B Board member Rick Danvir. Ms. Hooks felt that Mr. Ward and Mr. Danvir did a fantastic job of explaining the challenges that BLM has with range lands.

The Celebrate American's Mustang campaign began in FY 2015. BLM began the program to inform the public that it is also their responsibility to help maintain and manage the rangeland and that the Mustangs were also Americans and are everyone's responsibility.

There are 8,664 Mustangs. The national information call center received several calls from people from the east who had heard about the Mustang campaign and wanted to be a part of any of the events that were taking place.

Ms. Hooks felt the campaign was a great outreach effort. The campaign focused on the impacts on the ecosystem, as well as land uses. Although many people thought the campaign was an adoption campaign, Ms. Hooks thought that once people went to the website, attended the events, and read the literature, they realized that it was not just an adoption campaign; it was an education effort. She provided the highlights:

- October, 2014 – April, 2015: Campaign Development
- May, 2015: Campaign Launches
- May 30 – August 1, 2015: 18 Events/11 States
- 226,000 plus webpage views
- Press Release posted to 220 websites with a 20.5 million audience reach
- Click Through Rate (CTR) was nearly 18 percent
- Facebook (FB) had 775 likes and 88 national online media hits

Ms. Hooks showed some photos from campaign event. The first one was located at Mowdy Ranch, an eco-sanctuary. It was their first Mustang Run and included a marathon, 10K and 5K runs. 250 runners participated in the event. There was also a public tour of one of BLM's ORPs, which was attended by 156 people. BLM chartered buses and had additional public affairs staff available to answer questions and talk about a variety of topics, from when the animals are on the range to when they are off range, how the animals arrived on the pasture, and why it is necessary to move the animals at all. An adopter made a presentation at a campaign in the Idaho parade. There was also a trail ride in Utah on the Sulfur HMA, in coordination with one of the groups in Utah.



Placement of Animals into Private Care

Ms. Hooks reported that as of August 28, BLM has placed about 2,500 animals into private care. This is more than the 783 animals that were placed at time last year. She noted that 2,500 is a good number, but it really doesn't hit the mark. It's not as many as needed. BLM will continue to reach out to new and existing partners. Some of BLM's existing partners agree that the goal should be 3,500 animals. BLM also has training programs with about 400 animals. In addition, HSUS and their partners have assisted BLM with placing more than 250 animals through an MOU.

Because there is an increase in the number of trained animals placed over the number of untrained animal placed, BLM is reviewing additional opportunities to provide more trained animals for private care.

In addition, BLM has published an RFA for burro training assistance. Ms. Hooks added that organizations interested in providing trained burros to their outreach audience, this is a great opportunity. The RFA closes on September 8.

Dr. Cope asked how many of the animals is BLM paying to feed in private care. Ms. Hooks answered that all of the animals were adopted when they went into private care.

Off-Range FY 2016 Goals

Eco-sanctuaries

Ms. Hooks reviewed the eco-sanctuaries' goals. BLM has three eco-sanctuary agreements, as mentioned previously, and is also preparing another RFA to acquire additional eco-sanctuaries that will include an adoption component, an education component, eco-tourism, and public outreach.

Socio-Economic Study: Demand Analysis for WH&B

Ms. Hooks stated a part of the NAS implementation was a request to determine whether or not there is an actual demand for animals to be adopted and what are the demand factors such as the following:

- Is it the animal characteristics?
- Is it the process that you all have this is the paperwork too long?
- Does it take too long to get title?
- Is the geographic locations, are the animals being offered in places where people want to go?
- Is it an external economic condition?
- Is it the full rate that's gotten too high?
- Is it the hay rate?
- What is the problem?
- Or what are the challenges that BLM is facing and how can they change the pattern and offer animals where people want them?

BLM is currently conducting a review of the socioeconomic demand study. Debbie Collins is a part of the Off-Range staff who is conducting the review along with a contractor. They hope to have results sometime next fiscal year in order to implement and execute the results into the program.

Ms. Hooks showed an example of marketing advertisement layout. She noted that Pat Williams spoke earlier about BLM's marketing efforts. She added that if BLM doesn't market then people will not attend adoption events. She added that marketing does not guarantee placing animals into private care, but it does provide a start for reaching people through different avenues than the news. She felt the press releases, newspaper ads, and radio interviews help. Ms. Collins has been working with the marketing group that was involved in the Celebrate America's Mustang campaign to find new ways to

Image courtesy of Bob Haines, USFWS/BLM/BLM.gov

BRING HOME A PIECE OF AMERICA.

ADOPT A LEGEND
Adopt a wild horse or burro and live your American dream.

October 2
Ewing, IL

October 16-17
Liberty, KY

October 17
Carson City, NV

October 23-24
Exter, TX

November 8
Davis, CA

November 19-20
Wichita Falls, TX

December 11-12
Verona, MS

For more information and off-range adoption locations visit
BLM.gov or call 866.468.7826

market the program. The new ad for 2016 is called “Bring Home a Piece of America.”

Mr. Woehl thanked Ms. Hooks for her presentation. He also remarked that he went to a Celebrate American’s Mustang event in Benton, Arkansas and was impressed with it and the work that went into it.

New Method for Monitoring Animal Use in Riparian Habitats

Scott Fluor, Wild Horse Specialist, Wyoming, BLM

Mr. Fluor stated that last year the Board spent a day in central Wyoming looking at a lot of rangeland issues. At that time, he was asked by some of the Board members if he would present BLM’s findings on a pilot project or innovative approach to monitoring using trail cameras.

Mr. Fluor said that for years, he and his staff have collected data on utilization data, stubble height, condition, and trends. They also have cooperative monitoring with their permittees and thought that the new photography technology could be used in a new, innovative way of collecting information on what is happening on the range, especially in the riparian areas. He noted that in areas where the riparian areas cover less than one percent of the surface acres. They are highly sought after, because the areas produce high-quality forage, high-quality water. A lot of animals use the areas; however, what BLM doesn’t know is how often the animals are there.

Mr. Fluor stated that his office is located in Central Wyoming. Currently, he is on detail with the Washington office and is working on ORPs. His detail ends in October. He is a wild horse specialist for West Central Wyoming.

He showed a map with the location where the field office initiated the pilot project to look at the results of riparian areas. He led the team from the Lander, Wyoming Field Office on the pilot project. The team included Mr. Fluor and two seasonal employees.

The purpose of the project was to evaluate animal species use of various riparian areas. The focus was on determining which species were using the area, when they were there, and what they were doing. The data was collected using six trail cameras at different locations. Five Bushnell cameras (numbered 1 through 5) were set to capture two photographs simultaneously every fifteen minutes from 4:00 a.m. until 10:00 p.m. Simultaneous photographs were also triggered off of a motion sensor which was set on normal sensitivity.

The memory cards were changed weekly, or as close to as possible, and the pictures were stored on two external hard-drives to prevent data loss. Each picture was logged individually in an Excel document. The information collected included: date of image, time captured, species (cattle or cow, horse, wildlife, or unknown), number present, and activity (grazing, traveling, loafing, other, or unknown). There was also a hyperlink to the image. A total of 32,010 pictures were captured on cameras 1 to 5.

Mr. Fluor provided definitions for each activity:

- *Grazing:* Animal standing in an upright position with head down or raised and chewing.
- *Traveling:* Animal appears to be moving with the intent of entering or leaving the area.
- *Loafing:* Animal is exhibiting lateral or sternal recumbency, or is standing upright resting.
- *Other:* If an animal is displaying anything other than above such as drinking, fighting, rolling, bucking, nursing, etc.
- *Unknown:* Animal is mostly out of frame or too indistinct to determine activity.

The team broke the time periods into four categories, based on the typical standard of when the temperature rises and falls:

- *Morning* (Cool) from 4:00 a.m. until 10:00 a.m.
- *Mid-day* (Hot) from 10:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m.
- *Evening* (Cooling) from 5:00 p.m. until 10:00 p.m.
- *Night* (Total Darkness) from 10:00 p.m. until 4:00 a.m.

Mr. Fluer said the riparian areas are transitional zones between water and land masses and are important for maintaining the quality of water by preventing erosion of stream banks. These zones are fragile and easily damaged. By understanding the use riparian areas undergo, BLM can better decide how to effectively protect and preserve these vital areas.

The animals documented within the study included:

- Wild Horses
- Cows
- Antelope
- Coyotes
- Rabbits
- Sage Grouse
- Birds
- Ducks
- Elk
- Prairie Dogs/Ground Squirrels

Mr. Fluer showed the results of two cameras which were set on public land. He showed a view from the camera located at Long Creek in the Muskrat Basin HMA. The camera was attached to a fence post using a strap and duct tape. The photographs were taken from June 11 through July 31, 2013. Difficulties were caused from vegetation moving due to wind which triggered the motion sensor.



View from camera 1 at Long Creek

In addition, the duct tape malfunctioned toward the end of the final collection period and the tape slipped over the camera lens and obscured the view. Long Creek is a small watering area, photographed during the months of June and July. He showed the location on a map. The photograph showed a depression area where water accumulates and becomes the riparian area. It was a small meandering stream. Mr. Fluer said the vegetation is Nebraska Sedge Brush and Baltic Sage.

Mr. Fluer explained that overall the percentage of cows, horses, and unknown decreased from June to July, while the percentage of no animals and wildlife increased.

- Total June Pictures: 3,778
- Total July Pictures: 5,000
- No Animals Pictured June: 373
- No Animals Pictured July: 1,912

In June, 55 percent of the animals were cows, while 31 percent were horses. The percentages included 1,172 horse pictures, while in July 658 pictures were taken. The horses were grazing 82 percent of the time and seven percent of the time, they were loafing. Cow activity was similar to horses, except there was more loafing. The percentage of wildlife grazing and traveling decreased from June to July, while the percentage of loafing, other, and unknown increased. The percentage of unknown animals loafing and grazing decreased from June to July, while the percentage of unknown activity increased. This indicates that the wildlife tended to use these riparian areas as traveling corridors. They tended to move through and not spend a lot of time there. Mr. Fluer reviewed the time of day data. The highest amount of activity was in the mid-day.

The team also measured stubble height in the areas. They measured the Nebraska Sedge, *Carex nebraskensis* (Cane), and Baltic Rush, *Juncus balticus* (Juba). The average stubble height of Cane was 1.5 inches and average stubble height of Juba was 2.6 inches. All of the plants measured at this site had been grazed.

Mr. Fluer provided an analysis of the data collected. The majority of animals spent their time in this location between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. The primary activity of horses, cows, and wildlife was grazing. Cows spent a large portion of their day grazing and loafing without leaving, while horses rarely stayed longer than a couple hours. Wildlife rarely stayed longer than 15 to 30 minutes. Although horses could be seen grazing or loafing among the cattle or antelope, they generally remained segregated. He showed a group of four photographs to illustrate his analysis. One photograph taken at 9:30 p.m. showed horses grazing. Mr. Fluer noted that he had always thought that the horses bedded down at night like cattle, elk, and other animals, but the photograph clearly showed that the horses were up, moving, and grazing this area at 9:30 p.m.

Next, Mr. Fluer provided an analysis of Happy Springs Reservoir at the Crooks Mountain HMA. It is located directly east central of Sweetwater Station, Wyoming and is 6,000 to 7,000 feet high in elevation. The reservoir is fed by a spring. There is a complex mix of riparian, as well as some adjacent vegetation that is induced a little bit by the reservoir.

The camera was held against sagebrush and attached by a strap to two pieces of angle iron with duct tape around the case and locked. The photographs were taken from June 19 until July 30, 2013. There were some difficulties due to vegetation moving in the wind, which triggered the camera's motion sensor. The camera was knocked over and the duct tape didn't hold. Mr. Fluer showed the location on the map.

The percentage of cows and wildlife documented increased from June to July, while the percentage of no animals decreased and the percentage of horses remained the same.

- Total June Pictures: 2,212
- Total July Pictures: 4,352
- No Animals Pictured June: 1,209
- No Animals Pictured July: 2,192



There were 120 photographs of horses taken in June and roughly 75 percent of the photographs showed them grazing; 12 percent showed the horses loafing, and seven percent showed them traveling through the area. There 300 photographs taken of cattle and for the most part, they were loafing. They spent a little more time traveling through or resting. In July, wildlife traveled through the area and also loafed in the area. Unknown activity was fairly high in June. There were 581 photographs of wildlife that we determined or wildlife related. Mr. Fluer reviewed the time of day data. The highest amount of activity was in the mid-day. The number of horses was higher in the evening. By night, the horses are there and everything else is left.

The team again collected stubble heights at this location, using a stubble light collective monitoring form to work with the permittees on for our data. Vegetation measured included Nebraska Sedge, *Carex nebraskensis* (Cane), and Baltic Rush, *Juncus balticus* (Juba). The average stubble height of Cane was 3.4 inches and average stubble height of Juba was 4.6 inches. One-third of Juba and two-thirds of Cane measured had been grazed.

This location saw animal activity only about half of the time. The area was used primarily for loafing and drinking water. Horses were typically seen traveling or grazing, while cows primarily used the area for loafing. Wildlife was seen in the area for water and occasionally grazing. This camera was placed close to a ground squirrel's hole and the squirrel was often seen in the morning and evening. Ducks frequented the area in June, but as cattle utilization increased the ducks seemed to have left the region. Mr. Fluer showed three slides with four photographs on each. The photographs showed a squirrel grazing, two horse studs fighting, a calf bedded down, an antelope, horses grazing, three bull elk, sage grouse, a song bird, and cattle loafing.

Mr. Fluer reviewed the overall obstacles encountered during the project.

- Inability to determine if animal left area or simply out of frame
- Topography influencing view of animals
- Difficulty judging animal activity
- Animals blending into environment/difficulty identifying animal
- Animal blocking view
- Difficulty in accurately counting animals in groups
- Not always able to place camera in best location (State/Private land)
- Amount of time required to log pictures and collect memory cards
- Writing formulas within Excel to gather data for graphs

He also made three recommendations: 1) include temperature in log; 2) place cameras within same week if possible as well as earlier in the summer; and 3) find a new way to secure camera – not with duct tape. Mr. Fluer discussed his final conclusions from the project. He said that the team observed that cattle frequented riparian areas most. They grazed and loafed within the area for extended periods of time. Horses would also graze and loaf in the area; however, this was for a shorter period of time. Wildlife spent very little time within the area and appeared to have the least impact.

Dr. Weikel asked about the information on camera 4. With the fact that the horses exhibited quite a bit of evening activity, she wanted to know if Mr. Fluer thought BLM should take this type of activity into account when taking population surveys. Mr. Fluer answered that the riparian zone was the attractant. He felt it would be interesting to see what is going on there in terms of frequency and night time use.

Mr. Harvey said his horses spend a lot of time grazing at night. He felt the lingering time for the cows was enlightening and he found the data interesting. He suggested using infrared cameras to eliminate the

flash. He added that he would like to see what goes on during other times of the year and suggested using zip-ties to secure the camera.

Dr. McDonnell said she has seen a little bit of literature on what horses do 24 hours a day and Mr. Fluer's findings are consistent with the findings of researchers, who stayed out all night in various parts of the world. She agreed that his thoughts about looking into this method during other seasons were important, because it seems like there is a regular 24-hour rhythm that is dependent on the seasons. She added that in the winter, when it is cold, the animals may be doing more quiet activities such as staying more sheltered at night, while being more active in the better weather. Dr. McDonnell added that there are factors including the shelter and the wind direction and the temperature, and she had a group of hard to find old references on her website. Much of the work was done in the 1970s. She said she will get Mr. Fluer the links to the information. Mr. Fluer added that he planned to talk with a student at the University of Idaho, Moscow. He noted that the student is doing a similar study.

Mr. Danvir added that there is another published report out of Utah on Department of Defense land that was done by Dr. Larson at Brigham Young University. The difference in this report is that there were no cattle studied. It was just horses and wildlife and it done was primarily at a point source of water sources. He thought if Mr. Fluer started to put this information together, it could define what is going on with the horses.

Mr. Woehl thanked Mr. Fluer for his presentation.

Adjourn

Mr. Woehl thanked all of the day's presenters and on behalf of the board.

The meeting adjourned at 5:01 p.m.

Thursday, September 3, 2015

Welcome

Fred Woehl, Chair

Mr. Woehl welcomed attendees to the meeting.

Ms. Libby reviewed the agenda noting there was a change – the Budget Update, which was not presented yesterday as scheduled, will be presented today after lunch, before the Working Group reports. She reminded those who wanted to participate in the Public Comment period to sign up by 10:15 a.m. She reviewed the rules of the room.

Mr. Cope moved to amend the agenda to combine the items at 1:15 and 2:45 to run concurrently. This motion was approved.

Mr. Woehl welcomed and introduced Mr. Imler who represents the USFS.

U. S. Forest Service Update

Barry Imler, Rangeland Program Manager, USFS

Mr. Imler explained that he is a national program manager within the Rangeland Management and Vegetation Ecology Director's area of the USFS Washington D.C. office. His responsibilities include management of the wild horse and burro program.

Mr. Imler identified recent personnel changes related to the program. Allen Rowley is the new director for Rangeland Management and Vegetation Ecology and attending this meeting. Tom Frolli is now a regional program manager, dealing with the entire range program, including horses for the USFS Pacific Southwest Region, which is primarily the state of California. Previously, Mr. Frolli provided technical support to help implement national policy and worked closely with those charged with managing the program so that USFS could maintain and guarantee consistency in operations across the country. The USFS is looking to fill a similar position in the near future.

Mr. Imler reminded the Board that at the national level, the USFS stopped placing horses and burros in BLM holding facilities in October, 2013. The USFS plans to continue reimbursing BLM for costs associated with animals previously placed in those facilities. As an agency, USFS doesn't believe it would be appropriate, or in compliance with applicable laws, for it to expect BLM to fund the USFS program or its' operations.

As part of an all lands approach, USFS is interested in discussing multiple agency participation in research activities regarding wild horse and burro management. There are some other agencies and Tribal entities that have horses and burros which are managed as wild animals. Mr. Imler expressed a belief that there are common interests among these groups. The USFS believes the groups can work together on some of issues.

The USFS recognizes that it needs to work with BLM and other entities on joint management issues. There have been discussions at multiple levels of the agencies regarding collaborative NEPA efforts. Some local USFS offices have been in discussion with Tribal, State, and local agencies where there are wild horse and burro issues that affect either neighboring or overlapping jurisdictions. At least one forest,

the Ochoco in Oregon, has recently entered into a collaborative agreement to address planning and management of a wild horse territory.

The USFS recognizes that without help it is not going to be successful at finding homes for all the animals that probably need to come off National Forest System lands.

The USFS also recognizes that it probably does not have the staffing or funding to do all the things that need to happen on the range. The Agency knows there are people out there who are interested in working with the animals. The Agency would like to expand the number and types of opportunities to cooperate with interested groups and individuals. The USFS has been in discussions with BLM regarding recent proposals from The Cloud Foundation and HSUS and the possibility of working with either or both groups in jointly managed areas.

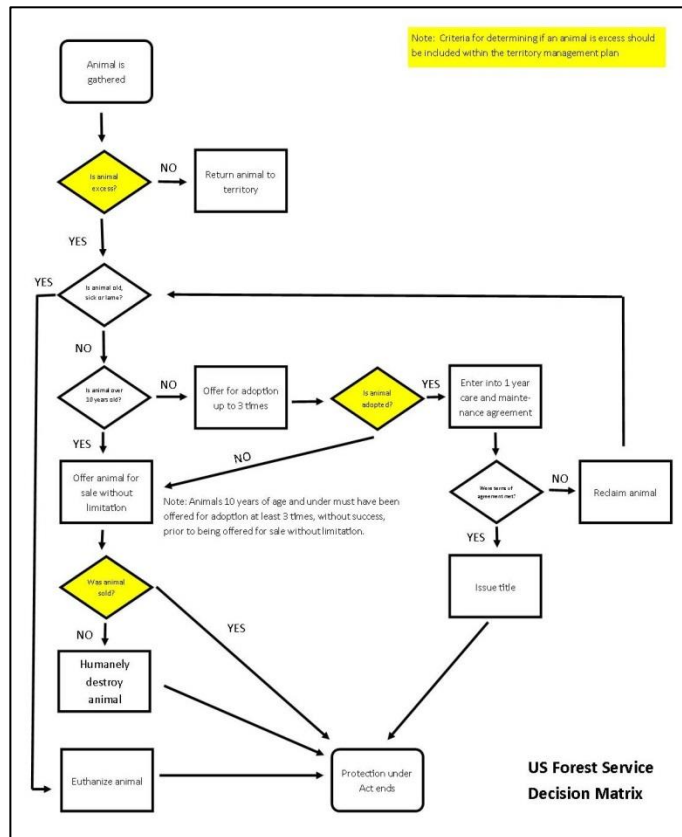
Mr. Imler mentioned that at Mr. Harvey's request, he provided a list of all of the local USFS Ranger District offices that manage wild horse and burros. Mr. Harvey has offered to provide that information to people who express an interest in assisting with horse and burro management.

The USFS is primarily looking for assistance at the local level where animals are managed, both on- and off-range. It is seeking assistance, especially from local communities, in addressing questions regarding contraception (PZP or some other treatment), on-range management, removals and other management issues during Territory Management Plan development. This is in addition to volunteer assistance with program management and finding homes for excess animals.

Unlike BLM, which has the ability to respond quickly to developing emergency situations, USFS options for rapid response are limited. The USFS needs to determine possible responses to potential emergency situations as part of the adaptive management strategy during development of Territory Management Plans. If the USFS analyzes possible responses through the NEPA process during plan development, then it can respond to those situations (drought, fire, etc.) as they develop.

The off-range components of Territory Management Plans are being revisited by the USFS. If a Territory Management Plan includes management actions other than removal of excess animals, such as fertility control, then criteria for determining which animals are excess must be included in that plan. Mr. Imler added that the USFS needs to determine how to handle excess animals and what process they will use to help the animals find a home. While there is some overlap, the USFS operates under a different set of laws and regulations than the BLM. Currently, long-term holding is not an option for the USFS. The USFS recognizes that because of funding and staff limitations there may be a need for assistance when it begins implementing Territory Management Plans. In addition to assistance with management actions, there will likely be opportunities for citizen science associated with monitoring. The area where USFS will likely require the greatest assistance is placement of excess animals. The USFS estimates the wild horse and burro population on National Forest System lands to be approximately three times current capacity. The agency recognizes that treatments, such as PZP and other population treatment control methods will not address the existing overpopulation situation. There will need to be removals of excess animals and there will be a need for help with finding homes for those animals.

Mr. Imler shared a flow chart that was developed to display the decision matrix the USFS is required by law and regulation to follow when considering the disposition of excess wild horses and burros. The chart was specifically developed for excess wild horses and burros. It does not address abandoned, stray or unauthorized animals not covered by the Wild Horse and Burro Act that are found on National forest System lands. The diamond areas are decision points. The rectangular boxes indicate processes. The highlighted areas are where USFS needs help with finding homes for the animals. Mr. Imler explained the chart in detail.



Mr. Imler explained that USFS fully understands that it will never recover all of the costs associated with gathering, providing required care and finding homes for excess animals. He stated that while there is a set fee for adoption, there is no minimum fee for animals sold without limitation. Therefore, the agency is hoping that advocates or others who may have an interest in finding homes for horses that must be sold will not be afraid to assist because of unwarranted concerns regarding high costs. Even if the advocacy groups cannot directly adopt or purchase excess animals, the USFS would like them to help find others who are willing to accept and care for those animals. Prices are negotiable.

Mr. Woehl stated that the Advisory Board serves the entire WH&B program and that members are appointed by both the Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of Interior. He also stated that most of the recommendations the Advisory Board makes are addressed to the BLM. He asked why there isn't more of a collaborative partnership between USFS and BLM. Mr. Imler responded that the Advisory Board chooses to primarily address the BLM in its' recommendations. He could only recall a few recommendations that had been addressed to both agencies within the past ten years and only one that had been addressed solely to the USFS. He also stated that regardless of which agency is addressed in the recommendation, the USFS reads the recommendation to determine if it can be incorporated into USFS program management.

Ms. Sall asked Mr. Imler how many horses he was talking about when he said USFS is three times over capacity. He responded that USFS believes that nationwide, the total AML number is somewhere around 2,200 or 2,400 head. The last estimate he saw on populations had them somewhere in the neighborhood of 7,000. Mr. Imler said those were raw numbers. A great many of the USFS territories have not had the AMLs analyzed or adjusted in many years, possibly since the territories were first designated. He also noted that he believes that because of their age, most of the territory AML numbers do not include consideration of changes in resource conditions or issues that have emerged such as Greater Sage Grouse management. He added that he will get more accurate numbers and provide them to her.

Mr. Woehl asked if USFS still has a preemptive NEPA process. Mr. Imler said USFS has moved from a post-decision appeal process to a pre-decision objection process. The expectation is that issues and

concerns expressed by the public can be addressed prior to issuance of a decision. Thus reducing or eliminating delays in implementing decisions.

Mr. Woehl said BLM used to be able to plan for disaster using a preemptive NEPA process. He suggested that Mr. Imler check with BLM regarding NEPA processes used by that agency. Mr. Imler responded that the USFS is looking at ways to address potential emergency situations through adaptive management as part of the Territory Management Plan development process.

Mr. Danvir added that he liked the flow chart. He believes it was a well thought out approach dealing with a difficult problem. The real solutions are on it.

Mr. Woehl said the number of horses managed by USFS pales to the number BLM manages. He believes this is an opportunity for interested groups to step up and help. He believes BLM may be able to adopt some of USFS ideas on a broader scale.

Mr. Harvey asked if USFS was evaluating the AML in their NEPA process. Mr. Imler responded that AML is analyzed as part of the NEPA process supporting Territory Management Plan development.

Mr. Harvey expressed his opinion the AML is not meant to be a static number. Mr. Imler responded that by including AML in the Territory Management Plan, instead of the forest land management plan, the agency will have more flexibility to adjust the numbers as resource conditions change.

Mr. Woehl asked what happens to the AML after a fire. Mr. Imler responded that there may be a short-term adjustment, depending on impacts to resource conditions. Dr. Cope suggested that the AML would not change in the case of a fire, unless there is a change in the vegetation and carrying capacity. He believes that it would depend on the long-term effects of a fire. Mr. Woehl suggested there could be an area with no grass and 1,000 horses. Dr. Cope agreed and thought this had happened before – the AML is still there, because the vegetation will grow back. Mr. Danvir added that the presence or absence of large grazing animals affects which vegetation species return. Mr. Woehl noted that the AML is not a number that reacts quickly. Mr. Danvir agreed, saying the AML is a long-term, moving target. Mr. Woehl expressed his opinion that AML is not a good scale. Mr. Bolstad stated that after an area has burned, BLM will let it rest for approximately two years to allow for recovery before returning horses to it. He added that the AML will remain unchanged. He states that BLM views AML as a target that the land can support over a long-term period.

Mr. Woehl challenged wild horse and burro advocates to become more involved in management of wild horses and burros, both on and off the range.

Research Update

Dr. Paul Griffin, Research Coordinator, Wild Horse and Burro Program, BLM

Dr. Griffin reported that the Board had received a synopsis of the research projects. The projects are mixed up in his presentation. He noted that a question came up yesterday on what the budget is related to research. He said the budgetary obligation in this fiscal year for the RFA proposals and research was \$3,355,000 and another \$1.5 million is going to be obligated to the USGS research.

Dr. Griffin reiterated what Mr. Bolstad mentioned yesterday, that the Research Advisory Team has been reconstituted. Dr. Griffin is acting as the chair and Bryan Fuell is the co-chair. The other members of the team are Alan Shepherd, and Dr. Al Kane from APHIS, with WH&B Board member Dr. McDonnell

acting as a WH&B Board liaison. Dr. Griffin mentioned that in addition to reviewing research proposals—those ones solicited by BLM and others that are unsolicited from other groups, the Research Advisory Team’s goal is to collaborate with field staff and communicate with them about new science that the advisory team learns about. When reviewing proposals, the Research Advisory Team will communicate with the applicant and make a recommendation to the division chief. Any decision about whether or not BLM should move forward with the NEPA process on any of these proposals will be made by the Division Chief. The current research directions that the Research Advisory Team is trying to follow include PGS methods.

The Research Advisory Team would like also to improve our understanding of the horse and burro ecology, including movement within an HMA in terms of seasonal and forage use, but also between HMAs and the connections between HMAs and the larger scale population connections. Dr. Griffin feels the team needs to understand what the spatial distribution of horse meta-populations is, how the populations are connected, and how much movement there is between sub-populations. Many decisions made down the road about removals or how many animals are in different HMAs are going to hinge on that research; however, currently there are no specific projects being reviewed. The Research Advisory Team is also interested in habitat use effects, similar to what Scott Fleur discussed yesterday. In addition, the Research Advisory Team would like to continue improving the inventory methods. He felt there are some good methods for horses, but the methods for inventorying burros could be improved. In addition, the Research Advisory Team would like to improve their understanding of adoption demands and the perceptions of the public at large about the program and about wild horses and burros.

Dr. Griffin said he would discuss the following studies, labeled A through H in the research summary materials provided to the board, that came from the 2014 RFA about contraception and sterilization. He noted that he would review them in no particular order. NAS has reviewed 22 proposals and, of those, eight of the ones they recommended for moving forward are under funding consideration. All of the proposals are university-led projects and of those studies, four of them have been finalized. Dr. Griffin discussed the four funded studies.

Funded Studies

Louisiana State University project, listed as project H

This is an \$850,000 project, lasting several years, with a goal of developing membrane-disrupting peptides (or peptoids), which would be conjugated with Lutenizing hormone releasing hormone (LHRH). The peptides will be developed as a longer lasting contraceptive, which would be a gel that would release over a long period of time.

Colorado State University, listed as project E

This is a project that costs \$159,700. It will be conducted at Teddy Roosevelt National Park. The researchers have injected a number of horses with GonaCon, which may be used as a contraceptive. One injection does not have a high rate of contraception, but the researchers have found that giving two shots of GonaCon, provides a high contraceptive rate. This study is aimed at identifying the ideal timing of the second shot of GonaCon to achieve the high contraceptive effects. The horses at Teddy Roosevelt National Park are very similar to wild horses on the range, except that they have more manageable pastures for observation and handling, making the area an ideal place to conduct this type of study.

Colorado State University

This project is for the development of a vaccine sterlant for mares. The rationale behind the development of this vaccine is that by giving a shot of a vaccine, it will cause the mares to essentially release all of their eggs at once and stimulate them to becoming to be sterile for the rest of their lives.

This is a longer term project. This type of vaccine does not exist yet. The cost of the study is almost \$800,000.

University of Kentucky

This is a \$391,000 study, which will assess a surgical technique, tubal ligation, via colpotomy. It will involve an incision through the vagina to test the use of cable ties to achieve tubal ligation.

Unfunded Studies

Next, Dr. Griffin discussed the studies that have not been funded. BLM has encouraged the applicants to resubmit their proposals. Because the applicants are not funded, Dr. Griffin did not share who made the applications or other conditions of the applications. The projects include surgical techniques—minimally invasive tubal ligation and minimally invasive laser ablation of the oviduct; ovariectomy, via colpotomy; and a study to deliver PZP using a different, time-release method. One of the limitations of current PZP delivery formulations is that the effects are not long lasting.

BLM Studies

Dr. Griffin discussed the studies that are being led by BLM. There are two socioeconomic studies.

The first study is referred to as *The Knowledge, Values and Preferences Study*. Ms. Bohl provided an extensive presentation on this study at the Board meeting in April 2015. Dr. Griffin stated that the literature review is complete. BLM is seeking approval from the OMB to collect information. He noted that any time a government agency seeks to collect information from the public they have to obtain approval. After receiving the approval, the researchers will hold various focus groups to obtain in-depth information about the public's attitudes on wild horse and burro management and wild horse and burros. Based on the results of the focus groups, a contractor will help to design a questionnaire and that will be sent to a randomly selected number of people from the general public. The conclusions about the public's perceptions of wild horse and burros will be based on that wider scale randomized study.

The second study is also related to socioeconomics and is led by BLM staff member Debbie Allen. It is the Demand Study. It is designed to help BLM better understand what affects the demand for horses and burros.

USGS Studies

Dr. Griffin discussed the USGS Studies noting he had been asked to represent them for Kate Schoenecker and Sarah King, who the Board met at Pauls Valley. BLM suggested that USGS propose how they would do these studies and in some cases they have already begun. In other cases, the studies have been approved by BLM to move forward to the stages of the NEPA process that would be required for them to happen. In other cases, the studies are under development by USGS.

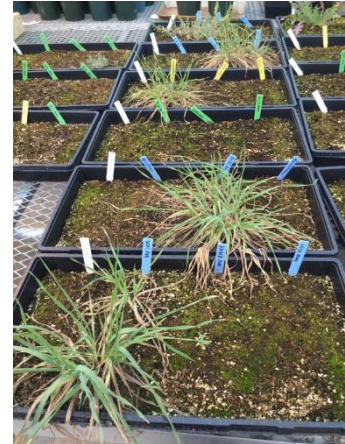
Estimating Wild Horse Population Size with Fecal DNA, Study J

This study is being performed at Little Book Cliffs HMA, Colorado.

Status:

1. The field work is complete. Researchers conducted three, ten-day sampling periods with five volunteers. They collected about 600 samples per sampling period.
2. The samples have been analyzed by the USGS genetics lab. This was completed on August 30, 2015.

3. In September 2015, researchers will initiate population estimations and analysis of the genetic structure (DNA) of the population. From this information researchers will determine the probability that a given horse that was out there and detected, or that some other horse would have been there but not detected.
4. The dung aging study was conducted monthly from May until November 2014. Dr. King has photographed each sample, each month.
5. Researchers are germinating wild horse fecal samples to assess spread of non-native plants. Dr. King will also take a photo of the dung, sample it, and send it off for DNA analysis.



Dr. King is developing basically a calendar for people in the field so they can take examples from pictures to determine if a pile of dung appears to be too old to amplify the DNA. Another aspect of this study is to determine which seeds can germinate from wild horse fecal samples.

Developing a Suitable Radio Collar, Study I

Status:

1. Collars and tags were deployed at the Pauls Valley, Oklahoma adoption facility in February 2015 on 12 mares, 12 stallions, and four jennies. Researchers monitored the animals weekly for three months and now monitor them monthly until February 2016.
2. The mares and jennies had no significant rubbing or sores. Both collars will be included in the field testing study. The U.S. Department of Interior (DOI) Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) has approved the collars.
3. Stallions had some issues with collars, and although rubbing and small sores were not severe enough to warrant removing collars, compared to the mares their effects were more apparent. There were two incidences of a collar going over the ears of stallions; thus, males will not be included in the radio collar field test. USGS will conclude that the tail tags are more reliable than collars.
4. Researchers also recorded and analyzed animal behavior.

USGS will soon be making their report on the effect of radio collar on behavior. The preliminary results show for mares there is no significant change. Radio-collared burros or stallions may or may not exhibit a slight change in feeding and standing compared to controls; USGS is not sure if any such difference will prove to be statistically significant.

Carrying Capacity Modeling for Adaptation to Climate Change, Study K

Status:

- The proposal has been approved.
- USGS is currently gathering remote data and will begin model building in the fall 2015.

Researchers in this study will not be working directly with the horses. They will be building a statistical model.

SpayVac Experiment I

Group 1

- 30 mares were treated with SpayVac in oil formulation, 200 µg PZP + MFA*
- The mares were dropped from the experiment after second foaling season, when fertility rate was greater than 75 percent

Group 2

- 30 mares were treated with SpayVac in aqueous emulsion, 200 µg PZP + MFA*
- 15 mares have been infertile for four years
- Those 15 mares plus five control mares were exposed to stallions in 2015 for a final breeding season

Fertility was determined by various combinations of hormone assay, rectal palpation, and direct observation of foals. If any one of these measures was positive, the mare was considered fertile for that year.

The second group in this experiment was promising.

SpayVac Experiment 2

Because of the success of Group 2 in SpayVac 1, USGS initiated this experiment with that same higher dose, as well as a more powerful adjuvant for one treatment group.

Group 1

- 30 mares were treated with SpayVac in aqueous emulsion, 400 µg PZP + Freund's Complete Adjuvant (FCA)
- The mares were dropped from the experiment after first foaling season when serum antibody titers showed no definitive peak and fertility rate was about 50 percent

Group 2

- 30 mares were treated with SpayVac in aqueous emulsion, 400 µg PZP + MFA
- The mares were dropped from the experiment after first foaling season when serum antibody titers showed no definitive peak and fertility rate was about 70 percent

This study has stopped.

Future Potential of SpayVac

- The results to date in horses have been variable. It is unclear as to whether this is due to variation in the drug, in individual mare response, or both.
- Mark Fraker and Dr. Ursula Bechert have established a cooperative relationship with Dr. Bettina Wagner, a specialist in equine immunology at Cornell University. USGS provided Dr. Wagner with serum samples from the first experiment. She will look for potential differences in antibody isotypes and antigen specificity that might help explain why some mares were infertile and some were not.
- Immunovaccine Inc. is the company that produced the vaccine for the experiments. They have indicated that they are not interested in pursuing further development of this drug.
- Mr. Fraker and Dr. Bechert are exploring arrangements under which they might take over the vaccine production; thus, perhaps paving the way for future experiments. For the time being, SpayVac is unavailable.

The co-authors have completed a draft manuscript on the first three years of the USGS experiments for submission to the *Wildlife Society Bulletin*. It is in review by the co-authors. Dr. Griffin noted that because the results of the second trial were disappointing, he felt there are a lot of questions that BLM would want to have answered about SpayVac before initiating another big expensive trial.

Developing Burro Population Estimation Techniques, Study O

Status:

1. The proposal was completed and approved by BLM.
2. The study will move forward to the required NEPA process; this is a study that involves handling animals.
3. It is being initiated in September 2015.
4. Field sites include Lake Pleasant, Arizona and Sinbad, Utah.

The goal of this study is to determine whether having radio collars on burros will help to improve burro population estimates. Some burro groups are missed during inventory flights. USGS has the double observer method where there are front seat and back seat observers. If burro groups have radio collars, there is a known quantity to compare against the detection records from the front and back seat observers. It is easier to find the burros with the radio collars, as long as the transmitters are working.



Sentinel Demography of Burros, Study S

This study will dove-tail with the *Burro Population Estimation Techniques Study*. USGS has proposed to conduct a study that looks at detailed demographic rates in burros. It will also draw on radio collars. The proposal is under review, by the Research Advisory Team. Radio-collars confer a big benefit in being able to find the animals and, therefore, to follow the fate of individuals.

Intrauterine Device (IUD) Study, Study M

The proposal is being prepared in collaboration with a university. It will build on a previous study where an IUD made of a silicon-based polymer was inserted in mares and had promising results, but often slipped. USGS researcher Steve Germaine is leading the study and will be designing IUDs that are specific to mares. It could be a very promising application for contraception.

Evaluating Behavior of Spayed Free-Roaming Mares, Study Q

USGS is reviewing this proposal. It is in response to recommendations by the WH&B Board to study contraception. This is an application study in which the USGS (if the study is approved and goes through the NEPA process) will monitor the behavior of spayed animals. The focus will be on the behavior of spayed versus non-spayed animals.

Behavior and Ecology of Geldings among a Breeding Herd, Study N

This proposal has been completed and approved by BLM. BLM is initiating the NEPA process. The researchers plan to begin the study in September 2015. It study will involve gelding a portion of the males in Conger HMA. The timing of any gathers may affect the study.

Sentinel Demography of Free Roaming Wild Horses, Study R

USGS is reviewing this proposal.

WinEquus II: Developing a Revised and Expanded Population Model for Wild Horses, Study T

USGS is developing a proposal with the USGS Information Technology (IT) team, Dr. Steve Jenkins (who created the original WinEquus model), and a BLM Economist.

Testing Efficacy of Contraceptives for Female Burros, Study U

USGS is developing and discussing proposal ideas for this topic with equine reproductive specialists at Colorado State University (CSU).

Aerial Survey Technical Assistance

USGS has an agreement with BLM to provide technical assistance for aerial surveys. Dr. Griffin fulfilled that role at USGS for about a year and a half and is continuing to fill that role as a BLM employee until USGS hires someone to replace him in that role. USGS expects this will be done by November. Dr. Griffin will help to train that person.



To date in FY 2015, 48 HMAs have been surveyed. There are plans to survey 25 more HMAs, but the drought and the fire season have delayed the completion of the surveys. It is likely that some of the surveys will be delayed until the early part of the next fiscal year.

Also during this fiscal year, nine wild horse territories on USFS lands have been surveyed, either as part of a complex or on their own. Overall, ten data sets have been analyzed. Dr. Griffin, through his work at USGS, planned all the flight paths for ten out of 13 of the survey sets. The other ones were planned by local staff. In all of these cases, the surveys are following predetermined flight lines so they are repeatable. Dr. Bruce Lubow performs the analyses on the surveys. On average this fiscal year it took 80 days to obtain his analysis, after receipt of the data from the field.

Dr. Griffin feels it is important to obtain accurate aerial surveys to provide BLM with a measure of how many horses or burros are there. The surveys are also a good starting point for decision making. They are also essential to adaptive management and for monitoring the effects of management.

Dr. Griffin said that if the Board took into account all of the HMAs BLM manages and all the territories USFS manages, a very large number of the HMAs have been surveyed with aerial survey methods that are modern and repeatable and reliable, or at least quantifiable. The goal is to go back and survey each area every three years.

There is still work to be done on aerial surveys, such as finalizing some SOPs and designing a relational database to hold all of the data. In addition, it is important to determine if the analyses can be automated to make them repeatable and cheaper.

Dr. Griffin ended his presentation with a reminder that there are other research projects under review or ongoing. These include the University of Idaho study using camera traps like the ones that Mr. Fleur mentioned yesterday, to quantify horse use in riparian areas. There are other proposals under review or revision, which are treated as confidential until they have been approved.

Mr. Harvey asked about the reapplication of the GonaCon. He asked if GonaCon causes permanent sterility. Dr. Griffin was unsure, but will check. He thought the study at Teddy Roosevelt was the only study where it had been used in horses.

Mr. Harvey was pleased to see a focus on IUDs and asked if USGS had any information on the coil method. Dr. Griffin was unsure about that method. Mr. Harvey it's called E-sure. Dr. Griffin said that the USGS researchers have used a silicone elastomer IUD because the material has a record of being completely inert.

Mr. Harvey asked about the evaluation of manure samples. He asked if USGS is recording all of the desirable species that grow in the manure and Dr. Griffin answered yes, they are recording all species that germinate.

Mr. Bolstad confirmed that the GonaCon study has a secondary vaccination and did not think there has been any previous data that has come out indicating GonaCon is a sterilant upon a second vaccination.

Mr. Bolstad added that as far as the silicone IUD ring study, the reason BLM is following it up is that UC Davis data indicated that a particular IUD was not expelled. He noted that Mr. Harvey had suggested looking into some other mechanisms, but in the Carson City study, all of those IUDs fell out. The IUD being studied is the only one documented to not be expelled.

Dr. Weikel asked about study K, which is climate modeling. Dr. Griffin mentioned that he did not know the site for that study. She asked if Mr. Bolstad knew where it is and Mr. Bolstad answered that it is the Black Rock Desert in the Winnemucca District.

Dr. McDonnell wanted to clarify that Dr. Griffin reported in the University of Kentucky cable ties study, that they would interrupt passage of the egg, but would not interfere with the ovary. Dr. Griffin clarified that the ovary would remain. Dr. McDonnell noted that it is essentially a noninvasive ovariectomy, which is a good tool if it works.

Dr. Cope stated that with public lands, the involvement of the community is important and the best way to benefit the public lands is to work collaboratively with the residents of the communities. One of the best ways to alienate the public is to hit them in the pocketbook. He asked if anyone goes out and evaluates, not the potential, but the actual positive effects on a community for any eco-tourism that may happen and likewise the harmful effects that may happen from resource degradation and from over population. Dr. Griffin mentioned that BLM economist Rebecca Moore will be on the project. Mr. Bolstad thought the bigger, broader picture in answer to Dr. Cope's question was if BLM were to undertake the programmatic analysis of various management approaches, there will be a robust economic evaluation of how they manage horses and burros and their numbers on the range and the various alternatives, not so in the various studies we are undertaking now, but in this broader analysis. This analysis could come out in an environmental impact study. Dr. Cope felt this would be a good approach.

On-Range Update

Bryan Fuell, On-Range Branch Chief, Wild Horse and Burro Program BLM

Mr. Fuell provided an overview of his discussion.

- FY15 Population Estimates
- Gather, Removals and Fertility Control
- Comprehensive Animal Welfare Program
- Sage Grouse
- Litigation
- GIS Mapping Project (Jason Lutterman)

FY15 Population Estimates

Mr. Fuell provided the wild horse and burro On-Range Population Estimates as of March 1, 2015. He noted that 26,715 is the national AML for wild horses; however, 58,150 is the estimated population and the estimated increase is 8,941. Mr. Fuell added that the increase is probably up to 10,000 at this point.

Gather, Removals and Fertility Control

In FY14, 1,857 animals were removed from the range. BLM plans to remove 3,289 animals in FY15. BLM treated 384 horses with fertility control vaccines in FY14 and has planned to treat 466 by the end of FY15.

Summer FY15 Gathers

Mr. Fuell pointed out that BLM had a gather in Wyoming that went over the fiscal year, so the numbers reflected in FY15 are actually part related to a FY14 gather. He added that the target is to gather 2,500 animals each FY.



BLM has planned gathers in Kiger HMA (Oregon), Riddle HMA (Oregon), and West Douglas HA (Colorado).

Emergency gathers arose on private land in Wood Hills (which is outside of the HMA in Nevada), Seamon Range HA (Ely District in Nevada), Miller Flat HA (Caliente, Nevada), Wheeler Pass HMA (near Las Vegas, Nevada), and Hard Trigger and Sand Basin (Idaho), where 100 percent of the HMA was covered in the perimeter of the fire, although there were unburned islands inside the fire perimeter, and the Black Mountain, where one-third of the HMA has been burned.

BLM has ongoing water bait trapping for dealing with burros in a public safety and private lands issue. About 600 burros were approved to be removed this summer and fall from California, Arizona, and Nevada.

Planned FY16 Gathers

Within a limited budget and off-range holding space, the proposed/planned FY16 gathers for Fall/Winter in Beatys Butte, Oregon Sage Brush Focal Area (SFA); Conger, Utah; Frisco, Utah; and Sinbad, Utah. Mr. Fuell stated that BLM will be conducting a gather and NEPA process for those areas and they may be done in January and February.

There are still some unknowns for FY16. BLM doesn't have a schedule, but the needs will be based off of research, health and land, and public safety, in addition to court ordered type gathers.

Comprehensive Animal Welfare Program (CAWP)

Although BLM has always had animal welfare standards, the new program strengthens and redefines the requirements. Mr. Fuell noted that there is a copy of the new CAWP standards in the Board members' notebooks. The new standards are for the safe and humane handling of wild horses and burros during gathers have been integrated into gather contracts. Contractors and BLM staff must complete required training and obtain certification. A new Assessment Tool will be trialed in FY16 as the process for evaluating the operations. BLM will evaluate everything from gathering to handling, transportation and to make sure that those standards are being met.

Greater Sage Grouse

The FWS is expected to announce a decision in September as to whether or not they are going to list the greater sage grouse. BLM's conservation effort included 98 BLM and Forest Service land use plan amendments and revisions through 13 environmental impact statements. The Record of Decision (ROD) has not been signed, but is expected to be signed this month. It identifies the Sage Grouse into four base categories – Sagebrush Focal Area (SFA), Priority Habitat Management Areas (PHMA), General Habitat Management Areas (GHMA), and non-habitat. There are 106 HMAs that contain one or more of the categories. Mr. Fuell showed a map of the Sage Grouse planning areas. He added that there are approximately 21 million acres of public land and 15 million of that is sage grouse habitat. The preferred alternative is that those HMAs in the focal area will be the highest priority and then priority habitat. There are 22 habitats that have an SFA. He showed a Greater Sage Grouse table.

Type	# HMAs	Acres of Habitat	Estimated WHB population	Total removals to reach AML
SFA	22	2 million	7,364	4,563
PHMA	66	6.5 million	26,408	18,561
GHMA	18	6.5 million	3,836	2,117
TOTAL	106	15 million	37,608	25,241

With current level of funding BLM could reach AML for SFA by 2020

The preferred alternative, which outlines HMA management, is that those HMA in the focal areas will have the highest priority and then next priority is habitat. There are 22 habitats that have SFA and Wyoming is a large part of it. In addition, parts of Idaho, Nevada, and California are in some of the SFA. BLM is looking to prioritize the gather schedules as they can, based on other priorities that come up, including public safety, fire, drought, public safety issues. They will try to address the HMAs in those focal areas as high priorities in the next five years. Mr. Fuell mentioned Beatys Butte is in an SFA. This area will be the first HMA that BLM will try to obtain AML in sage grouse habitat. He pointed out that the plans are being put in place to improve sage brush habitats and what is good for the sage grouse is good for all flora and fauna.

Bi-State (Nevada and California) Sage Grouse

In April 2015, FWS announced their decision not to list bi-state sage grouse under the Endangered Species Act. This decision was based on the success of voluntary conservation efforts to recover this species and its habitat by state, local, and private land owners.

Mr. Fuell stated that there are eight HMAs that are within the planning area for Bi-State, but only five of those HMAs actually have habitat. The five HMAs are BLM managed HMAs with 890,000 acres of land. Of that, 63,000 acres are Crucial Habitat. Distinct Population Segments (DPS) with habitat for Bi-State. Currently, it is estimated that the wild horse and burro population in the area is 922, which is 640 over the AML.

Litigation

BLM has litigated more than 18 cases. One case was for someone who was not eligible to purchase wild horses or burros. One case was for the use of prescribed fire in a herd management area; two were for the use of fertility control vaccines to control population growth; more than eight cases were for alleged violations of the Wild Free Roaming Horses and Burros Act or the National Environmental Policy Act; and eight were for failure to remove excess wild horses or burros.

Ms. Sewing asked if the 9,000 excess or more horses than were discussed earlier included any improvement in the count. Mr. Fuell said yes, it's based on the number reported by the state. Ms. Sewing wanted to know how many were from the improved counting method. Dr. Griffin answered that in all cases where there has been a new survey, that value was used in the state's estimation for that population. Ms. Sewing asked if there was any separation of the numbers. Dr. Griffin said BLM could parse out which HMAs had populations. Mr. Woehl added that he was also interested in this information. Dr. Griffin answered that the states always took the expected or the projected amount of birth rates into account when conducting the surveys.

Mr. Tupper noted that the Board was listening to a lot of government bureaucratic speak in government-ease when BLM discusses things they familiar with. He felt that one of the points Mr. Fuell brought up was that for the Bi-State population of grouse, the FWS determined that it will not be listed. There is no ROD on that Bi-State population. That is because the federal agency, the state, private industry, and private citizens did not what this to happen. Mr. Tupper said they should work together. Although this is a smaller area, it is also something that they should be paying attention to.

Dr. Cope was not convinced that it was a political decision rather than a scientific decision. He felt they needed to keep in mind that for the sage grouse, it was not up to FWS. It is up to Judge Joslyn Winmill to determine if BLM has an adequate mechanism to protect the bird. On the Chalice HMA he would like to know how there can be a six-inch stubble height when there is not six inches at any time. He added that what happened in Idaho, for some reason the draft EIS had two preferred alternatives and both were rejected.

Mr. Harvey said he looked at the FWS website and it showed open hunting season on sage grouse. The states are touting the fact that the populations are up. He thought Utah said that for the past 15 years they have had a higher count. He felt that if the birds are in danger, they shouldn't be hunting them. Mr. Woehl said the Board was only concerned about the impact on the horses. Mr. Harvey realized that, but thought it was interesting. Mr. Woehl discussed the week that he and Mr. Harvey spent, with their own money, going through a lot of HMAs to educate ourselves a little better.

Dr. Weikel shared that the Oregon Department of Wildlife's answer to why there is sage grouse hunting in Oregon. There are two SFAs in Oregon. The Oregon Department of Wildlife says they need the data from hunter-collected wings to understand hatch success and the age of the birds.

GIS Presentation – Jason Lutterman, Public Affairs Specialist

Mr. Lutterman reported that BLM has an exciting project that they have been working on for the past couple of months—an interactive map that will be live on the BLM website. It will be like a one-stop shop for all the information needed for an HMA, an HA, or adoption locations. BLM will also pull in outside information that will overlay on top of the HMA information and create an interesting map that can be used to see the relationships between different types of data that within the program. It can be used similar to Google maps or Map Quest. Mr. Lutterman offered to do a live demo at a later date.

The map is still under development. When it is complete, users will be able to zoom in and zoom out on the map and pan side-to-side. Mr. Lutterman showed the Board a series of screen-shots. He showed a map of the western states with the wild horse and burro centers on the map, facility information, and a search function that uses zip codes. The map also shows horse HMAs and populations in relation to AMLs. The information is also provided for burros. HA information includes the estimated populations for horses and burros. In addition, users can get individual HMA information. Other relevant environmental data includes wildfires (their cause and data for the past five years) and drought

information that can be overlaid with the HMA data. Mr. Lutterman added the BLM hopes to have map finished in the next couple of months.

Mr. Woehl thanked Mr. Lutterman. Mr. Harvey noted he liked having the information. It helps with transparency.

Public Comment Period

A public comment period was conducted from 10:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. allowing all 21 speakers the opportunity to address the Board members. Each speaker was asked to limit their presentation to three minutes to ensure all speakers had an opportunity to speak. Speakers were encouraged to submit their comments in a written format; therefore, no minutes were recorded during this portion of the meeting.

Budget Update

Holle' Hooks, Off-Range Branch Chief, Wild Horse and Burro Program, BLM

Ms. Hooks provided an overview of her presentation. She showed the breakdown of the FY 2015 expenditures. As of August 23, expenditures have totaled \$64,756,594. Long-term and short-term off-range holdings accounted for the largest expenditures, approximately 65 to 70 percent of the budget. The FY ends on September 30. Other places where BLM has spent money include, placement into private care, portions of the American's Mustang campaign discussed yesterday, partnership agreements with the Mustang Heritage Foundation, as well as our training programs. The expenditures also include monitoring and population inventories that have also been conducted, research, and program support and overhead, which are uncontrollables. BLM has additional obligations and expenditures that will be taking place for program operations and will also be completing the research rewards.

Mr. Woehl asked how the budget compared with last year's budget. Ms. Hooks answered that it is on target. She added that BLM is spending a little more for off-range pastures. It increased about 20 cents per horse per day. In addition to those costs, BLM awarded new contracts. So there was an increase.



Dr. Cope asked what BLM does when they run out of money. Ms. Hooks answered that it's a challenge, especially when they have management operations that need to take place on the ground and have to spend so much funds on holding the animals that are currently in the off-range pastures and off-range corrals. BLM requested an additional \$2.9 million in next year's budget that would increase their \$77 million enacted appropriations to \$80 million. She added that the increase will not solve the problem for the current animals. Dr. Cope noted that it reminded him of USFS spending money on fire suppression and fire control which leaves nothing for fire prevention. He thought it is a continuing cycle and thought BLM is in the same boat here. Ms. Hooks agreed and added that it is a slow process. BLM is looking at new and innovative ways to place the animals into private care.

Ms. Hooks showed BLM’s accomplishments for FY 15. A few more than 2,500 animals were placed into private care.

Program Element	FY15 Units Accomplished as of 08/23/2015	FY15 Expenditures as of 08/23/2015
Plan for Herd Management	2	\$204,658
Monitor Herd Management Areas	121	\$1,647,259
Compliance Inspections	1,883	\$471,701
Off-Range Corral Holding	Avg. 14,100	\$27,182,083
Off-Range Pasture Holding	Avg. 26,565	\$16,648,380
Gather/Remove	1,725	\$941,152
Population Growth Suppression Efforts	379	\$104,425
Placement into Private Care	2,020	\$5,515,390
Conduct Census of WH&B Areas	56	\$901,988
Construct/Maintain Shrub & Grass Projects	6	\$214,253
Program Support / Overhead / Uncontrollables	-	\$10,925,305

Ms. Hooks stated that she didn’t add the targets in to the table, because so many things change. BLM’s program priorities change throughout the entire year. What they plan often changes from the time they execute the budget. BLM has placed a little over 2,500 animals into private care.

Mr. Falen said it is frustrating that, for example, a year ago BLM came to the Board said they were not going to gather any more horses, unless it is done under a court order. This budget shows about 80 percent of the money will be spent for off range holding. He felt BLM needs to get the horses off of public lands, which is the most expensive place to keep them. He did not think BLM could keep using the budget for holding.

Ms. Hooks shared that in five years the budget has doubled and most of it is for off-range holding. She agreed that more money is probably not the answer. BLM has been directed to look at reducing holding costs and has presented a couple of different plans, but in the interim, they continue to have the challenge of holding the animals that are currently in the facilities. Mr. Falen felt that with Ms. Hooks’ line of thinking, the only option is to adopt out more horses one way or another, and that is on the table. He added that BLM can’t continue in this way of using up all of the budget money on the off-range holding. He suggested approaching the funders and having it ear-marked for adoptions, gatherings for administering PGS.

Mr. Woehl added that in 2016, the budget shows \$231,000 for maintaining grass, shrubs, and water projects. Mr. Harvey noted that everyone agrees that PGS is the priority, but more effort should be used with the tools that BLM currently has. Ms. Hooks added that the PGS on the chart is the on-the-ground number for treating 300 to 400 animals. Dr. Cope felt that even with zero growth, there are still 40,000

horses out there. BLM needs help from the American public. He thought it's a time bomb ticking with a very short fuse. Mr. Falen agreed. He didn't know how bad it will have to get before someone steps up to the plate and does something.

Mr. Harvey said part of it is the fact that so much of the budget is being taken up by warehousing horses, in some ways, because of directives handed down is somewhat of an unfunded mandate. He asked if BLM could get a realistic operating budget so that they can get a lot more proactive in that the holding costs.

Mr. Tupper said there are a lot of fixed costs. With a fixed budget and fixed costs, there is limited operating room. Mr. Harvey added that even though the law says BLM can euthanize horses, which is what everybody is talking about, but BLM has said they're not going to do that. When horses are gathered, BLM has feed them and take care of them. There's an unfunded aspect that is kind of through the back door and BLM has to carry costs that keep going up every year, preventing BLM from freeing up their operating system to take care of the problem. He asked if, from a budgetary standpoint, there is a process that BLM can go through to separate the budget items to get a more realistic operating budget that will provide money for the other things they to address on the range. Mr. Tupper answered that the budget process is long. He is working on the FY 17 budget now. BLM can't demand what we want, but they can put in requests. He has worked at length on different options that they feel will be a better way of doing things. BLM can't control the amount of money they get back. Mr. Falen asked how much backup data is needed to prove they need extra money to maintain the horses and burros. Mr. Tupper answered that BLM has the data, but the Board's support is always valuable.

Ms. Hooks noted that the Board had already reviewed the 2016 President's Budget Request. BLM will most likely be under a continuing resolution at the beginning of the next FY for a few months. They will be looking at shifting funds to research. She agreed with Mr. Tupper's explanation of the budget, adding it's a balancing act to determine what will be needed two years from now. Emergency removals can take the place of other things. It will assist with the numbers for that particular fiscal year, removing from the range, but it will not the following year when we have another foal crop.

Mr. Woehl thanked Ms. Hooks for her presentation.

Recognition of Board Members Whose Terms are Ending

Mr. Tupper reported that Mr. Harvey's, Mr. Danvir's, and Mr. Falen's term on the Board end on March 11, 2016 and this was their last Board meeting. He recognized them for their service and presented a plaque to each one.

Other Business

Mr. Woehl asked Ms. Libby to show photos of some emaciated horses at Cold Springs. Mr. Woehl said the Board has to try to work hard to keep this from happening. He noted that the Board members saw horses in long-term care at Pauls Valley and they didn't look like this. It is bad. Mr. Danvir said nobody wants to see this. The Board keeps hearing that if BLM took the cows off of the pasture, it would reduce the animals that are competing with the horses for food and this wouldn't happen. He added that if the only tool that available is natural regulation, that is how it works. He said it is not pretty, but if the Board went back and read the NAS report, the west is a place that is characterized by extremes. He said to look at how much bare dirt is in the photo, there is no food. He added that this is not management.

Mr. Woehl asked Dr. Cope what he would have to do to rehabilitate the horse. Dr. Cope said it would take a long time, a lot of care. The horses are obviously susceptible to disease. Their whole immune system runs on protein. He added that the horses are not the only critters out there. They didn't have pictures of the pronghorn and the white tails and the mule deer and everything else that's there. He felt that if the horses look like that, so do the wildlife. Mr. Falen added that he would characterize it as last man standing. He said there are no cattle competing with the horses in this area.

Mr. Harvey said the discussion was bringing him to tears, because of the unnecessary suffering. That is the main reason that he took this job. He added that when he hears people say to let nature takes its course, what they don't understand is today nature's course isn't a pure course because man has interfered with the natural systems that control the environment. He feels the Board has a humane obligation to do whatever we have to do so this doesn't happen, because what takes its course isn't a natural course, because the horses can't migrate to where they want to go and neither can the wildlife. He said this is the end result and there's no excuse for it. He thought the Board has to do everything in their power to maintain the resource out there so that what horses and other wildlife are on the range don't look like this.

Dr. Weikel submitted that feeding a horse isn't that simple. A horse that is this far down will be killed if you just throw some alfalfa down. The horse's gut has become compromised and the microorganisms that do some of the digesting processes that are absolutely essential have also been compromised. In fact, they're dead. Getting the horses to where you can actually put feedstuffs in front of them and expect them to take it in and utilize it to rebuild themselves, is actually a very, very tough that it's a difficult project. There are also lifetime health consequences for a foal that is developed under these nutritional circumstances. There can also be lifetime consequences to that foal's offspring. Dr. Weikel added that the decisions about letting this get so mismanaged that the Board gets caught up in the politics of having no place to go with these horses, they can't gather the horses, and all that kind of thing. She added that all of it is inhumane at so many levels. Dr. Cope agreed and said the reality is that the horses shouldn't be out there. He quoted Dr. Robert Miller who said years ago on the animal rights issue "animals have no rights, humans have responsibilities."

Mr. Woehl wrapped up the discussing by saying he wanted the Board to see that this is the responsibility they are charged with. Dr. McDonnell reminded the Board members that under a natural system an animal wouldn't get this way if it had natural predators and that is part of how humans have interfered. She added that in a truly natural balanced system, the horse would be humanely euthanized by its predators before it got to this point. Concerning all of the sequels down the road for the foal and the next generation, she said the animals had not evolved to get this way, and that is why those mistakes are still there. I doesn't think they will ever evolve to be able to deal with it otherwise.

Working Group Reports/Advisory Board Recommendations to the BLM

Dr. McDonnell led the discussion. She explained the format for the discussion. The Board will hear from our various Working Groups that have been working on specific questions and issues and discussions over the last couple of days. Each Working Groups will report to the entire Board. The reports will be followed by comments and discussion among the Board members. If there are any recommendations the Board members will deal with them at that moment and then move to the next Working Group.

Resources Working Group – Robert Cope, Julie Weikel, Jennifer Sall, Rick Danvir

Mr. Danvir said that what the Board is finding themselves talking about is that the ranges are not healthy. He felt the number one solution is getting back to AML, but there isn't enough time to do this if they rely only on PGS. BLM needs to remove animals now. It's the Board's big challenge. He strongly urged BLM

to develop a range-wide programmatic EIS for the wild horse and burro program for the Board's review. He noted that he liked Mr. Imler's adaptive management flow chart. He thought it helped a lot. The Working Group developed the following recommendations:

1. BLM is encouraged to proceed with a programmatic EIS to evaluate on-range alternatives and ensure that an extensive outreach and consultation effort is instituted to expand and intensify relationships with all cooperating agencies. (Dr. Cope)
2. Encourage BLM to proceed with utilizing pasture rotations for horses wherever feasible with respect to HMA—intended purpose of these rotations is to maintain thriving ecological balance. (Dr. Weikel)
3. Apply best management practices through restoration of rested pastures. (Ms. Sewing)
4. Consider wild horse and burro management and monitoring activities at appropriate and multiple scales. (Mr. Danvir and Ms. Sall)
5. Develop a proposal to the NAB at large scale that combines population growth suppression and the concept of reproducing and non-reproducing herds. (Mr. Danvir and Ms. Sall)

There was some discussion between Mr. Danvir and Mr. Harvey about this topic. Mr. Harvey wanted to have language that was general, but not ambiguous for BLM. Dr. Weikel agreed that they should put it in BLM's lap to look at everything. Mr. Danvir wanted to wait and see what BLM's proposal is.

6. Deadline of 2020 to achieve appropriate AML in 22 HMAs in SFA's is too far out- Board asks BLM to expedite reaching AML in SG SFAs as quickly as possible utilizing all effective tools. (Dr. Weikel)
7. Continue and expand efforts to embrace and implement Cohesive Strategy to make HMA landscapes fire resistant. (Dr. Cope)
8. Present to Board 3-4 draft alternatives (including a timeline and one alternative that includes AML without "rider") to achieve AML in all HMAs. (Mr. Danvir and Ms. Sall)
9. BLM should structure AML so that the low extreme can sustain herds despite climatic change. (Dr. Weikel)

Volunteer Resources Working Group – Mr. Woehl, Ms. Sewing, Dr. Cope

10. Develop strategy to train and use more qualified volunteers to support WH&B activities, off-range and on-range. (Mr. Woehl)

There was a long discussion about the roles of volunteers. As a part of that discussion, Mr. Woehl asked Pat Williams to come forward to provide input on how volunteers can be used at BLM field office.

11. Develop strategy to publicize needs so financial donors are aware of opportunities to support the WH&B program by purchasing materials and supplies. (Ms. Sewing)

12. BLM, in conjunction with other Federal agencies, should explore the possibility of establishing collaborative groups regarding the management of specific HMAs. BLM should be an active participant in these groups which should include NGOs, local government, and State and Federal resource management agencies. (Dr. Cope)

Eco-tourism Working Group – Fred Woehl, Rick Danvir

13. Consider using well-visited HMAs as an opportunity to educate visitors about challenges and adoption opportunities using interpretive signs, kiosks, cell technology, etc. Consider including in recreation plans for these areas. (Mr. Danvir and Mr. Woehl)
14. Eco-sanctuary operators should be provided training and materials to adequately represent the challenges and opportunities associated with the WH&B program. (Mr. Danvir and Mr. Woehl)

Mr. Woehl thought BLM has a good handle on this topic. It's more of a partnership. They adapt and adjust as needed.

Public Comment Working Group – Tim Harvey, Jennifer Sall, June Sewing

Mr. Harvey felt there has been a positive change in the tone of many of the public comments. He thought this was reflected in some of the things that the Board saw during the meeting with the Cloud Foundation, working with the BLM, and other things. He noted that there wasn't a lot of difference in the bulk of the commentary that we received in the last meeting. He discouraged people from sending form letters to the Board. Most of those letters are critical in nature and prosecutorial in some respects. Mr. Harvey thought the letters that are of real value, are those with commentary, positive suggestions, and/or solutions, rather than just pointing out problems. He added that the Board knows there are problems, but the biggest help they get from public comment has instigated very vibrant conversation that resulted recommendations. Mr. Harvey added that a couple of the people brought to his attention, the restoring land. It was a suggestion that came from one of the comments. He thought the public should know that the Board listens and tries to implement what they're saying, as long as they're positive and helpful.

Ms. Sall stated that it stood out to her how every individual comment is read and considered. There are specific fact-based comments and ideas that are forward-moving and generating discussion in committee meetings.

The Public Comment Working Group made no recommendations.

Population Growth Suppression Working Group – Julie Weikel, Sue McDonnell, Robert Cope, Tim Harvey

Dr. Weikel thanked the presenters for providing the data they needed before the meeting.

15. Express support for continued commitment to long-term research –encourage BLM to keep its eye on goal of supporting horses on the range with minimal interference. (Dr. McDonnell)
16. Prioritize use of currently available tools in the field to reduce population growth **right now** and implement promising new tools as quickly as they become available. (Dr. McDonnell)

17. Given that our goal is fewest possible handlings -and we can only achieve that by slowing reproduction rate - encourage BLM to use the best available technology for monitoring individual animals (e.g. use of long-range chips). (Dr. McDonnell)
18. As population growth suppression decreases herd numbers, program \$\$ currently used in long-term care should be devoted to rangeland health improvement within HMAs-with goal of healthy horses. (Dr. Weikel)

Increasing Adoptions and Sales Working Group – Jennifer Sall, Fred Woehl, John Fallon, June Sewing

Ms. Sall discussed Mantle Ranch in Wyoming where horses are sold and adopted. Word-of-mouth is that the program is successful. Ms. Sall asked about the creation of more holistic approaches to adoption. Mr. Woehl said the eastern states have some storefront adoptions, along with that they have short-term holding. They have also discussed financial benefit for those who adopt the horses. In addition, they discussed a simple test that the adopters could do (load/unload with a trailer, pick up all four feet) in order to get the ownership papers. This simple test also serves as the compliance check.

Mr. Harvey applauded the Mustang Makeover Program. The incentive is in getting to take the horses home. Dr. McDonnell added that this adds emphasis to gentle handling. Mr. Harvey thought the process of dropping off the horses could have a clinic component. The quality of the initial handling affects the horse for the rest of its life. Mr. Woehl asked if it would be possible to set up a BLM group to flesh out this idea. Mr. Bolstad agreed and added that it would create more buy-in and adds the component of a training standard. Mr. Harvey said it is also an opportunity to provide assistance to people who want help with training.

Ms. Sewing said BLM has a group on this topic. Ms. Collins confirmed that BLM has already formed a group. Mr. Woehl was aware of this, but thought the new group would be specific to this endeavor. Ms. Sall asked how the training is contracted. Ms. Collins said this is in the plans with the foundation for 2016. Mr. Harvey thought many of the trainers associated with this can't get horses. The idea is for all of those who aren't professional trainers. It could be done in conjunction with TIP trainers. Mr. Falen added that it could tie in with what is already there. There was more discussion about how the program would work in general, but the topic was too large to flesh out at this meeting. Mr. Falen noted that the bottom line is to adopt more houses.

19. Recommend BLM work with Board members to develop a comprehensive adoption program utilizing the following:
 - a. Incentivized adoptions
 - b. More pick-up places. e.g., store fronts in the East
 - c. Training facilities in the East similar to Mantle Ranch
20. Recommend the current BLM WG on Increasing Sales and Adoptions, plus Mr. Harvey. (Mr. Woehl)

Recommendation on where to have the next Board meeting – end of March/April 2016

The Board suggested Bend, Oregon and Jacksonville, Florida locations for the next meeting. The Board will discuss this on the January Conference Call.

Mr. Danvir recommended that BLM arrange periodically for a WH&B National Advisory Board delegation to meet with the Secretary of the Interior to discuss issues related to the program. Mr. Woehl will take the lead.

Adjourn

Mr. Woehl asked each Board member if they had anything else to say.

Dr. Cope was glad to see the Board is trying to keep things as real as possible. Because of a lot of the outside influence, and particularly the form letters the Board received as comments, have made him wonder where these people are. The ranges are simply overpopulated and all the options are needed, because it is a critical situation. Everyone needs to understand that something needs to be done soon.

Ms. Sewing was glad to see there has been some progress made in the four years that she has served on the Board. She has seen a lot more participation from Board members and Working Groups and felt encouraged. She added that the cooperation that the Board gets from the BLM is better too.

Ms. Sal learned a lot from listening to Mr. Bolstad and Mr. Tupper. She added that looking at this list made her excited about meeting again in April. She felt the potential for moving forward with some of these pieces, accounts for some pretty big umbrellas that could have a huge impact down the road on a local level.

Mr. Harvey felt there were a lot of energizing things are going on. The reflected in change in BLM leadership was a nice upswing. In the six years, he has been on the Board things have changed and are getting better. He liked to see folks find common elements to work on and noted it felt good to that.

Dr. McDonnell said she really didn't have anything to add to everything and agree with everything that had already been said.

Dr. Weikel said she feels hopeful sometimes more so in one conversation than collectively. She felt the Board is making progress

Mr. Falen said he would like to see what happens with the recommendation on the sale authority. It will affect a lot of folks who are trying to make a living on the land. He felt the sale authority is imperative and added that a lot of people have been involved with this for a long time. He urged BLM to pursue it with all the ammunition possible to get t sale authority on the table.

Mr. Danvir said everyone should focus on the ideas and move forward.

Mr. Bolstad felt they had a really good Board meeting; there is a lot of hard work to do. He wished the best of luck to Mr. Harvey, Mr. Danvir, and Mr. Falen and thanked the entire Board for their service.

Mr. Woehl said the Board has worked really hard. It was a blessing and honor to sit with them. There are a lot of smart people on the Board. On behalf of the Board, he welcomed Mr. Bolstad for at least two to three more years.

Mr. Tupper felt it's a privilege to be at the meeting. He said that although the Board sometimes has to discuss some really uncomfortable stuff in a public forum, nobody is shying away from it. He plans to work with the Board for a long time. He liked the fact that the public shows up for the meetings. A lot of them see the world through a different lens than he does, but at least they're passionate and they're not just sitting at home. He was also super pleased with the work of the Board, the work of the BLM, and is looking forward to getting some stuff done.

Mr. Woehl thanked Ms. Libby for keeping him in line and on time. He also thanked the sound people, Ms. Hooks and her crew, and those at Pauls Valley. He added that he plans to keep Mr. Falen, Mr. Danvir, and Mr. Harvey until the end of February

The meeting adjourned at 5:32 p.m.

Acronyms

Acronym	Meaning
AFD	Animal Feed Days
AML	Appropriate Management Levels
APHIS	Animal Plant Health Service
BLM	Bureau of Land Management
CAWP	Comprehensive Animal Welfare Program
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
DOI	Department of Interior
EA	Environmental Assessment
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
FFA	Future Farmers of America
FWS	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
FY	Fiscal Year
GHMA	General Herd Management Area
GSG	Greater Sage Grouse
HA	Herd Area
HCF	Hutchison Correction Facility
HMA	Herd Management Area
HSUS	Humane Society of the US
IM	Instruction Memorandum
IUD	Intrauterine Device
IPT	Integrated Planning Team
JMA	Joint Management Area
LHRH	Lutenizing hormone releasing hormone
LUP	Land Use Plan
MHF	Mustang Heritage Foundation
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NAS	National Academy of Sciences
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
NMA	National Mustang Association
OIG	Office of Inspector General
OMB	Office of Management and Budget
ORC	On-Range Corral
ORP	On-Range Pasture
PAO	Public Affairs Officer
PEIS	Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement
PGS	Population Growth Suppression
PHMA	Priority Herd Management Area
PVC	Palomino Valley Center
PZP	Porcine Zona Pellucida
RFA	Request for Applications
RFP	Request for Proposals
RFID	Radio-frequency Identification
RMP	Range Management Plan
ROD	Record of Decision
SFA	Sagebrush Focal Area
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure

SOW.....	Statement of Work
TIP	Trainer Incentive Program
TPEC.....	Technical Proposal Evaluation Committee
UC	University of California
USDA.....	U. S. Department of Agriculture
USDI.....	U. S. Department of the Interior
USFS	U. S. Forestry Service
USGS	U. S. Geological Survey
UV.....	Ultraviolet
WH&B.....	Wild Horse and Burro
WHT	Wild Horse Territory

National Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board Members

<p>Wild Horse and Burro Advocacy Ms. June Sewing Executive Director National Mustang Association P.O. Box 1367 Cedar City, Utah 84720 mustangs@infowest.com Term expires: 03/30/2018</p>	<p>Public Interest Ms. Jennifer Sall 1745 Hillcrest Dr. Lander, Wyoming 82520 jen_sall@nols.edu Term expires: 03/30/2018</p>
<p>Public Interest Mr. Fred T. Woehl, Jr. 2151 Watkins Road Harrison, Arkansas 72601 prtfred@gmail.com Term expires: 04/03/2017</p>	<p>Wild Horse and Burro Research Dr. Sue M. McDonnell, Ph. D. 1814 Lenape Unionville Road West Chester, Pennsylvania 19382 suemcd@vet.upenn.edu 04/03/2017</p>
<p>Humane Advocacy Mr. Timothy J. Harvey 56 Beebe River Road Campton, New Hampshire 03223 timotico@gmail.com Term expires: 03/11/2016</p>	<p>Livestock Management Mr. John Falen Whole Ranch Road P.O. Box 132 Orovada, Nevada 89425 jlfalen@gmail.com Term expires: 03/11/2016</p>
<p>Natural Resources Management Dr. Robert E. Cope, DVM 1606 Main Street Salmon, Idaho 83467 cowdoc75@hotmail.com Term expires: 04/03/2017</p>	<p>Wildlife Management Mr. Rick E. Danvir 4251 Donegal Casper, Wyoming 82609 basinwlc@gmail.com Term expires: 03/11/2016</p>
<p>Veterinary Medicine Dr. Julie Weikel, DVM 32994 S Harney Lake Ln. Princeton, Oregon 97721 jweikeldvm@yahoo.com Term expires: 03/30/2018</p>	

Meeting Photos



**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
AND
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FOREST SERVICE**

NATIONAL WILD HORSE AND BURRO ADVISORY BOARD

CHARTER

1. **COMMITTEE'S OFFICIAL DESIGNATION:** Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board (Board).
2. **AUTHORITY:** The Board is established pursuant to Section 7 (16 U.S.C. 1337) of the Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act (16 U.S.C. 1331-1340) (Act), and in accordance with the provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), as amended, 5 U.S.C. Appendix 2. In addition, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is subject to additional standards and procedures for the creation, operation, and termination of BLM advisory committees. Refer to the 1995 BLM regulations (43 C.F.R. Subsection 1784) for specific regulations regarding composition (1784.2-1); avoidance of conflict of interest (1784.2-2); calls for nominations (1784.4-1); notice of meetings (1784.4-2); open meetings (1784.4-3); records (1784.5-3); course of instruction for members (1784.6-1(f)); and quorum requirements (1784.6-1(h)).
3. **OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE OF ACTIVITIES:** The Board will assist and advise the Secretary of the Interior, through the Director of the BLM, and the Secretary of Agriculture, through the Chief of the Forest Service (FS), on wild horse and burro policy formulation and oversight of the Wild Horse and Burro Program administered under the provisions of the Act.
4. **DESCRIPTION OF DUTIES:** At the request of the Director of the BLM, and in an advisory capacity only, the Board will gather to analyze information and consider public comments in order to offer advice and develop recommendations for the Secretary of the Interior, the Director of the BLM, the Secretary of Agriculture, and the Chief of the FS on matters relating to their responsibilities under the Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act of 1971. Those responsibilities include the protection and management of wild free-roaming horses and burros as components of the public lands; designation and maintenance of specific ranges on public lands as sanctuaries for their protection and preservation (where appropriate); management at the minimal feasible level to protect natural ecological balance of all wildlife species which inhabit such lands, particularly endangered wildlife species, and to ensure forage allocations on any such lands take into consideration the needs of other wildlife species which inhabit such lands.

Specifically, the Board may be directed to:

- a. Review current and proposed management policies on the protection and management of wild horses and burros;
- b. Review the disposition and humane handling of wild horses and burros and recommend appropriate changes that will facilitate these actions;
- c. Review current program guidance and procedures and advise the BLM and FS as to whether they are effective for implementing program policy;
- d. Advise the BLM and FS on ways to stimulate public and private participation to facilitate adoptions and sales;
- e. Advise the BLM and FS on ways to foster cooperation and provide liaison among Federal, state, tribal, and local governments, private organizations and affected interests, humane groups, the scientific community, and others;
- f. Advise the BLM and FS in assessing the scientific basis for managing populations of wild horses and burros; and
- g. Compile a written report to the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture highlighting the results of its deliberations and make recommendations concerning major policy issues as requested by the Director of the BLM and the Chief of the FS.

5. **OFFICIAL TO WHOM THE BOARD REPORTS:** The Board reports to the Secretary of the Interior, through the Director of the BLM, and the Secretary of Agriculture, through the Chief of the FS.
6. **SUPPORT:** Administrative support for activities of the Board will be provided by the BLM.
7. **ESTIMATED ANNUAL OPERATING COSTS AND STAFF YEARS:** The annual operating costs associated with supporting the Board's activities are estimated to be \$155,000, including all direct and indirect expenses and .70 staff years.
8. **DESIGNATED FEDERAL OFFICER:** The Designated Federal Officer (DFO) is the BLM's Assistant Director for Resources and Planning who is a full-time Federal employee appointed in accordance with Agency procedures. The DFO will approve or call all of the Board and subcommittee meetings, prepare and approve all meeting agendas, attend all Board and subcommittee meetings, adjourn any meeting when the DFO determines adjournment to be in the public interest, and chair meetings when directed to do so by the Secretary.

9. **ESTIMATED NUMBER AND FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS:** The Board will meet approximately one to four times annually, and at such other times as designated by the DFO.
10. **DURATION:** Continuing.
11. **TERMINATION:** The Board will become inactive 2 years from the date the Charter is filed, unless, prior to that date, it is renewed in accordance with the provisions of Section 14 of the FACA. The Board will not meet or take any action without a valid current charter.
12. **MEMBERSHIP AND DESIGNATION:** Members will be appointed and serve at the pleasure of the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture. Members will be appointed as representatives or special Government employees from the following organizations or categories:
 - a. Wild horse and burro advocacy groups;
 - b. Wild horse and burro research institutions (especially genetics, population biology, and equine behavior);
 - c. Veterinary medicine (equine science);
 - d. Natural resources management organizations (especially rangeland science);
 - e. Humane advocacy groups;
 - f. Wildlife management organizations;
 - g. Livestock management organizations;
 - h. General public (with special knowledge about equine behavior); or
 - i. General public (with special knowledge about protection of wild horses and burros, management of wildlife, animal husbandry, or natural resource management).

The Board will have no more than nine members, and members may not be employees of the Federal or state governments.

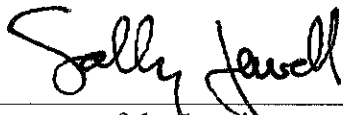
Members will be appointed to the Board to serve 3-year terms.

13. **ETHICS RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEMBERS:** No Board or subcommittee member will participate in any specific party matter including a lease, license, permit, contract, claim, agreement, grant, or related litigation with the Departments of the Interior or Agriculture in which the member has a direct financial interest. Members of the Board shall be required to disclose to the DFO their direct or indirect interest in leases, licenses, permits, contracts, claims, grants, or any specific party matter that involve lands or resources administered by the BLM or the Forest Service, or any litigation related to those matters.

For the purposes of this paragraph, indirect interests include holdings of a spouse, minor child, immediate family member, relatives, business partners, or employers that would benefit financially from the Board's recommendations. The DFO must report any required disclosures under this paragraph to the BLM Deputy Ethics Counselor who will coordinate with the Departments of the Interior or Agriculture Ethics Office as appropriate.

The Department of the Interior will provide materials to members appointed as special Government employees explaining their ethical obligations. Consistent with the ethics requirements, members will endeavor to avoid any actions that would cause the public to question the integrity of the Board's operations, activities, or advice. The provisions of this paragraph do not affect any other statutory or regulatory ethical obligations to which a member may be subject.

14. **SUBCOMMITTEES:** Subject to the DFO's approval, subcommittees can be formed for the purposes of compiling information or conducting research. However, such subcommittees must act only under the direction of the DFO and must report their recommendations to the full Board for consideration. Subcommittees must not provide advice or work products directly to the Agency. The Board Chair, with the approval of the DFO, will appoint subcommittee members. Subcommittees will meet as necessary to accomplish their assignments, subject to the approval of the DFO and the availability of resources.
15. **RECORDKEEPING:** The Records of the Board, and formal and informal subcommittees of the Board, shall be handled in accordance with General Record Schedule 26, Item 2, and other approved Agency records disposition schedule. These records shall be available for public inspection and copying, subject to the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. 552.



Secretary of the Interior

JUN 27 2014

Date Signed

JUL 23 2014

Date Filed



Secretary of Agriculture

7. 11. 14

Date Signed

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
AND
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FOREST SERVICE**

**NATIONAL WILD HORSE AND BURRO ADVISORY BOARD
2014-2016 BYLAWS AND STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES**

SECTION 1. PURPOSE:

The purpose of the Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board (Board) is to provide advice and recommendations on current issues facing the program.

SECTION 2. AUTHORITY:

The Board is established pursuant to Section 7 (16 U.S.C. 1337) of the Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act (16 U.S.C. 1331-1340) Act, and in accordance with the provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), as amended, 5 U.S.C., App.2.

SECTION 3. MEMBERSHIP SELECTION AND APPOINTMENT:

Members of the Board shall be selected from persons who are not employees of Federal or state government. As appropriate, certain members may be appointed as Special Government Employees.

From among nominations submitted by individuals, national organizations, and associations involved with problems relating to protection, management, and control of wild horses and burros on the public lands, and after consultation with the Chief of the Forest Service, the Director of the BLM will submit to the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture a list of individuals recommended for membership on the Board. The Secretaries may appoint members of the Board from this list or, at their discretion, other sources.

Members will be selected based on specific needs of the Board in order to balance those viewpoints required to effectively address BLM policy issues under consideration. The Act directs that membership reflect special knowledge about protection of horses and burros, management of wildlife, animal husbandry or natural resource management.

Vacancies due to resignation, death, or Secretarial removal will be filled for the balance of the vacating member's term in the same manner as the original appointment.

The Secretaries may, after written notice, terminate the service of a member if in the judgment of the Secretaries or the Designated Federal Official (DFO), removal is in the public interest. Members may also be terminated if they no longer meet their appointment requirements, fail or are unable to participate regularly in Board work, or have violated Federal law or the regulations of the Secretaries.

Board members are appointed to serve 3-year terms, on a staggered term basis, subject to renewal of the Board's charter, with one-third of the Board subject to appointment each year. At the Secretaries' discretion, the Board members from past Boards may be appointed or reappointed for additional terms.

The Board chair or co-chairs will be appointed by the DFO.

SECTION 4. MEETINGS PROCEDURES:

The DFO required by the Federal Advisory Committee Act will be the Director of the BLM or a designee, who will call and attend all meetings of the Board

A. Agenda: The DFO will approve the agenda for all meetings. BLM will distribute the agenda to the members prior to each meeting and will publish an outline of the agenda with the notice of the meeting in the Federal Register. Items for the agenda may be submitted to the DFO and/or the Chairman by a member of the Board.

B. Minutes and Records: The Boards DFO will prepare minutes of each meeting and will distribute copies to each Board member. Minutes of meetings will be available to the public upon request. The minutes will include a record of the persons present (including the names of Board members, names of staff, and a complete and accurate description of the matters discussed and conclusions reached, and copies of all reports received issued or approved by the Board. All documents, reports, or other materials prepared by, or for the Board constitute official government records and must be maintained according to BLM policies and procedures. The accuracy of all minutes will be certified by the Board Chair. Copies of the approved minutes will be maintained in the Office of the Assistant Director for Renewable Resources and Planning, Bureau of Land Management, 1849 C Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20240, and will be available for public viewing on the BLM's National Wild Horse and Burro website at www.wildhorseandburro.blm.gov.

C. Federal Register Notice: Absent urgent circumstances, the BLM will publish a notice of each meeting of the Board in the Federal Register and distribute to the news media 30 days in advance of the meeting. If urgent circumstances prevent a 30-day notice, not less than a 15-day notice will suffice. The notice sets forth the purpose, time and place of the meeting.

D. Open Meetings: Unless otherwise determined in advance, all meetings of the Board will be open to the public. Once an open meeting has begun, it will not be closed for any reason. Members of the public may attend any meeting or portion of a meeting that is not closed to the public and may, at the determination of the Chairman, offer oral comment at such meeting. The Chairman may decide in advance to exclude oral public comment during a meeting, in which case the meeting announcement published in the Federal Register will note that oral comments from the public is excluded and will invite written comment as an alternative. Members of the public may submit written statements to the Board at any time.

SECTION 5: VOTING

When a decision or recommendation of the Board is required, the Chairman will request a motion for a vote. Any member, including the Chairman, may make a motion for a vote. No second after a proper motion will be required to bring any issue to vote. Alternatively, approval of recommendations can be made by discussion and consensus at the discretion of the Chair.

SECTION 6. ROLE OF BOARD OFFICIALS

Chairperson: The Chair person works with the DFO to establish priorities identify issues which must be addressed, determines the level and types of staff and financial support required, and serves as the focal point for the Board's membership. In addition, the Chairperson is responsible for certifying the accuracy of minutes developed by the Board to document its meetings.

Designated Federal Officer: The DFO serves as the government's agent for all matters related to the Board's activities. By Law, the DFO must: (1) approve or call the meeting of the Board; (2) approve agendas; (3) attend all meeting, (4) adjourn the meetings when such adjournment is in the public interest; and (5) Chair meetings of the Board, when so directed by the Secretary of Interior. The DFO can designate a representative as needed.

SECTION 7. EXPENSES AND REIMBURSEMENT

Expense related to the operation of the Board will be borne by the Bureau of Land Management. Expenditures of any kind must be approved in advance by the DFO. The government will pay travel and per diem for non-government members at a rate equivalent to that allowable for federal employees.

BLM Response to Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board Recommendations

From the September 2-3, 2015 Board Meeting

#	Recommendation	BLM Response
1	BLM is encouraged to proceed with a programmatic EIS to evaluate on-range alternatives and ensure that an extensive outreach and consultation effort is instituted to expand and intensify relationships with all cooperating agencies	The BLM appreciates the Board’s support for conducting a Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS). The PEIS is still being considered but a decision has not been made to move forward.
2	Encourage BLM to proceed with utilizing pasture rotations for horses wherever feasible with respect to HMA—intended purpose of these rotations is to maintain thriving ecological balance.	<p>The BLM accepts this recommendation. The BLM agrees with the intent of this recommendation to assist in attaining and maintaining healthy rangelands but must point out that this practice is not feasible in most HMAs. Where feasible, animals might be moved from one area to another to provide for vegetation management, vegetation recovery following a fire, vegetation reestablishment following rangeland rehabilitation treatments, managing greater sage-grouse habitat or movement into a new area when water declines.</p> <p>Animals would be herded at the minimum level necessary to achieve resource objectives. Herding would occur via horseback or motorized vehicle depending on the urgency of the desired movement. Current policy allows for the movement of horses from one area to another by enabling and disabling access to various water sources. However, this is rarely practical to implement or successful.</p>
3	Apply best management practices through restoration of rested pastures.	The BLM accepts the recommendation to restore rangelands to the extent that such efforts are supported by land use plans and funds are available. As a first priority, most restoration projects will be focused on greater sage-grouse habitat that may include some HMAs. Restoration projects normally require tightly controlled grazing or full rest to be successful.
4	Consider wild horse and burro management and monitoring activities at appropriate and multiple scales.	The BLM accepts this recommendation. The BLM understands the recommendation to mean that future management should take a landscape approach in which groups of HMAs are managed as complexes or in aggregate versus by individual HMA. Within this landscape approach, some HMAs could be managed as reproducing

#	Recommendation	BLM Response
		and others as non-reproducing, wholly or in part and still maintain genetic health and long term sustainability of the larger herd unit composed of a combination of HMAs.
5	Develop proposal to the NAB at large scale that combines population growth suppression and the concept of reproducing and non-reproducing herds.	<p>The BLM accepts this recommendation. Recommendation #8 requests the development of alternative management scenarios and the response includes scenarios that incorporate non-reproducing components. These management alternatives demonstrate how the principles and approaches of population growth suppression recommended by the Board could be applied. If the BLM were to pursue any of these options, analysis and public engagement would occur in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act.</p> <p>Factors to consider when selecting populations to manage as reproducing or non-reproducing, wholly or in part, include things such as but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • overall population management goals (attaining/maintaining AML, genetic diversity, habitat requirements, etc.) for the complex or group of HMAs being managed as one unit; • current habitat conditions (e.g. availability of natural water, prevalence of marginal habitat); • critical habitats for Threatened and Endangered or special status species; • greater sage-grouse habitat management goals; and • historic public/private land issues.
6	Deadline of 2020 to achieve appropriate AML in 22 HMAs in SFA's is too far out- Board asks BLM to expedite reaching AML in SG SFAs as quickly as possible utilizing all effective tools.	The BLM agrees that it is desirable to reach AML as soon as possible in the sagebrush focal areas (SFAs). A more rapid attainment of AML in SFAs will be dependent on additional funding to both conduct the removals and provide for lifetime care of removed animals. The amount and timing of funding will drive how quickly AML can be achieved.
7	Continue and expand efforts to embrace and implement Cohesive Strategy to make HMA landscapes fire resistant.	<p>The BLM accepts this recommendation and is committed to the National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy and implementation of the accompanying National Action Plan. The current emphasis is to target resources to address the biggest threats to the West's most productive sage-grouse habitat. HMAs that overlap sage-grouse habitats will benefit from these efforts. Key elements of the Federal Sage-Grouse Conservation Plans developed by BLM and USFS include improving habitat condition and reducing the threat of rangeland fires.</p> <p>The BLM's newly-established Fire and Invasives Assessment Tool (FIAT) program is identifying BLM projects on federal land that can address threats from wildfires, invasive annual grasses, and conifer</p>

#	Recommendation	BLM Response
		encroachment to sage-grouse and sagebrush steppe landscapes in the Great Basin region.
8	Present to Board 3-4 draft alternatives (including a timeline and one alternative that includes AML without ‘rider’) to achieve AML in all HMAs.	The BLM accepts this recommendation. The BLM will submit population management alternative analyses to the Board when they are completed.
9	BLM should structure AML so that the low extreme can sustain herds despite climatic change.	<p>The BLM accepts this recommendation and notes that current policy enables AML to be guided by changing environmental conditions (see handbook language below). Because most HMAs far exceed AML, the impacts on herd and range health that we are seeing, particularly in drought-stressed areas, reflect the impacts of over-population. For example, the recent emergency gather at Cold Creek, NV (Wheeler Pass HMA) involved a population estimated to be 238 horses in an area where the AML is set at 66 wild horses for both USFS and BLM lands combined. Thus, achieving and maintaining AML is our highest management priority. At AML, managers can then assess if the level is appropriate for the environmental conditions.</p> <p>Management Handbook, section 4.2.2.2: “In-depth AML evaluations should be completed when review of resource monitoring and population inventory data indicates the AML may no longer be appropriate. The following should be considered when evaluating AML: Changes in environmental conditions which may have occurred since the AML was established. Changing environmental conditions could include drought, wildfires, noxious weed infestations, effect of varying numbers of WH&B on forage utilization or range ecological condition/trend, an increase or decrease in the available forage, changes in livestock management, etc. “</p>
10	Develop strategy to train and use more qualified volunteers to support WH&B activities, off-range and on-range.	The BLM accepts this recommendation. The Washington Office will work to identify a strategy and process that will encourage and enable increased use of qualified volunteers. This will be closely coordinated with the field.
11	Develop strategy to publicize needs so financial donors are aware of opportunities to support the WH&B program by purchasing materials and supplies.	The BLM accepts this recommendation. National policy for all BLM programs for accepting donated materials and supplies has been drafted and is under review. This includes the steps that must be taken for the BLM to assume ownership and liability for donated items. The Washington Office will encourage the field to work with groups who are interested in contributing.

#	Recommendation	BLM Response
12	BLM, in conjunction with other Federal agencies, should explore the possibility of establishing collaborative groups regarding the management of specific HMAs. BLM should be an active participant in these groups which should include NGOs, local government, and State and Federal resource management agencies.	The BLM accepts the recommendation to actively participate in collaborative groups and notes that these groups are often more successful when established and driven by a coalition of stakeholders such as NGOs and local government. The BLM is willing to participate and is supportive of such efforts. The BLM recognizes the benefits of the involvement of NGOs, local governments and the public in land management decisions. Federal law and regulations determine where, when and how the BLM can participate. For example, the BLM must remain the decision-making body for management decisions on BLM-managed lands and cannot delegate this authority. The Wild Horse and Burro Program will continue to support existing collaborative efforts underway in various BLM State and Field Offices and welcomes further opportunities.
13	Consider using well-visited HMAs as an opportunity to educate visitors about challenges and adoption opportunities using interpretive signs, kiosks, cell technology, etc. Consider including in recreation plans for these areas.	The BLM accepts this recommendation. These types of educational opportunities have been used in several States to promote wild horses and burros through touring maps, trail guides and information kiosks in the HMAs. The Washington Office will work with the State Programs to create additional interpretive resources for a HMA as a pilot project. A suitable HMA will be accessible and have easily seen animals.
14	Eco-sanctuary operators should be provided training and materials to adequately represent the challenges and opportunities associated with the WH&B program.	The BLM accepts this recommendation. The BLM will work with the eco-sanctuary operators to modify their agreements as needed so all agreements are consistent and contain provisions for public education. The BLM will also provide standards, training, and other information to eco-sanctuary operators to address any gaps and provide consistent guidance and oversight.
15	Express support for continued commitment to long-term research – encourage BLM to keep its eye on goal of supporting horses on the range with minimal interference.	The BLM accepts this recommendation and is implementing research to be conducted over the next five to six years, with some projects delivering nearer-term results within 1-2 years. The BLM will complete the research it has launched with universities and USGS on new tools to manage population growth, and on tools needed for population monitoring and management, an investment of about \$11 million. The goal is to provide tools to manage horse populations at a minimum feasible level to accomplish herd and rangeland management objectives.
16	Prioritize use of currently available tools in the field to reduce population growth right now and implement promising new	The BLM accepts this recommendation. The BLM’s current policy is to treat all released mares with PZP where population growth suppression is desired. There are now six HMAs with PZP darting programs and BLM is seeking to establish more. The BLM is also working to establish pilot projects to:

#	Recommendation	BLM Response
	tools as quickly as they become available.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • administer PZP vaccines to burros in the Black Mountain HMA in AZ; • administer GonaCon in the Water Canyon area near Ely, District Office in Nevada; • enter into agreements with community groups for population growth suppression programs; and • Introduce non-reproductive animals in one or more HMAs using spay and neuter techniques. <p>The BLM is preparing to adopt new surgical and non-surgical techniques to manage population growth as soon as initial research project results become available.</p>
17	Given that our goal is fewest possible handlings - and we can only achieve that by slowing reproduction rate - encourage BLM to use the best available technology for monitoring individual animals (e.g. use of long-range chips).	<p>The BLM accepts this recommendation. The BLM sees the greatest utility in pursuing microchips or other devices that can be scanned with a reader at gathers when sorting animals to minimize animal handling. In future, the BLM is also interested in adopting this technology for off-range animals as part of a larger record-keeping system.</p> <p>The Program will consult with industry, USGS and the Board to gather more information on the best available technology for our needs. The BLM invites the Board to share useful contacts such as ranchers using this technology for livestock, particularly the longer-range RFID tags.</p> <p>In addition, the radio collar study being conducted by USGS is nearly complete and the results will enable using radio collars and tags to enhance field studies that will evaluate fertility control methods. Radio tracking will be useful in many other ways including but not limited to population survey and animal movement monitoring.</p>
18	As population growth suppression decreases herd numbers, program \$\$ currently used in long-term care should be devoted to rangeland health improvement within HMAs-with goal of healthy horses.	<p>The BLM accepts this recommendation and sees it as a long-term goal. The BLM is investing substantially in sage-grouse habitat improvement, including attaining and maintaining AML in those priority areas. As better methods for on-range population control are implemented and horses in long-term care complete their life-spans, more funding can be directed to on-range priorities.</p>
19	Recommend BLM work with Board members to develop a comprehensive adoption program utilizing the following:	<p>The BLM accepts this recommendation. The Washington Office has been working with Eastern States to expand availability of animals for sale and adoption in the East and innovate to expand training capacity and effectiveness. The BLM looks forward to engaging the Board in these efforts and tapping into their ideas, particularly on</p>

#	Recommendation	BLM Response
	Incentivized adoptions More pick-up places. e.g., store fronts in the East Training facilities in the East similar to Mantle Ranch.	incentives and approaches to increase the number of trained animals available to the public.
20	BLM arrange for a WHB National Advisory Board delegation to meet with the Secretary of the Interior to discuss issues related to the program.	The BLM is working on this recommendation and will provide more information at the April 2016 Board meeting.



U.S. Forest Service Pacific Southwest Region Briefing Paper

Date: March 23, 2016

Issue

The Modoc National Forest is focusing on the appropriate management of wild horses as part of sage-steppe ecosystem restoration.

Background and Current Situation

The 232,520-acre Devil's Garden Plateau Wild Horse Territory (WHT) was established by the 1971 Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burro Act (WFRHBA). It is the largest WHT managed by the Forest Service in terms of size and population. A new Wild Horse Territory Management Plan was approved in August 2013, which established an Appropriate Management Level (AML) of between 206 and 402 adult wild horses. The plan was recently upheld in U.S. District Court.

The Modoc National Forest is focusing on the role of wild horses as part of sage-steppe ecosystem restoration and will be looking at options to meet legal and ecosystem needs. It is estimated there are approximately 3,000 wild horses on or near the WHT. More than 200 wild horses are located on private and Tribal lands. The WFRHBA requires federal agencies to remove wild horses that have strayed outside the territory. Monitoring shows wild horses having economic and ecologic impacts to the sage-steppe ecosystem.

- The Devil's Garden Wild Horse Territory population is estimated to be 5-10 times greater than AML.
- The high population of wild horses is having a significant negative impact on ecosystem health, including degraded riparian areas and conversion to annual grasses and invasive species.
- Wild horses from the WHT currently residing on private and tribal land are causing damage and using forage and water landowners rely on for their livelihoods. The Forest Service wants to be good neighbors, so removing wild horses from private and Tribal land is top priority and mandated by law.
- During the 2014 and 2015 grazing seasons, total livestock use was reduced by greater than 50% from what was authorized. Livestock allotments within and outside the WHT have been affected.
- The BLM can no longer provide the same level of support as in the past, and program costs will increase without the benefit of BLM's expertise and infrastructure.
- The current management plan supports gather operations, but finding good homes for excess wild horses will be a challenge.

Collaborative Solutions

- Coordination and communication will be vital as the Modoc National Forest's actions may set a precedent for future Forest Service management of wild horses.
- An internal Forest Service group has been convened to ensure a unified agency approach for the management of excess wild horses. This group is comprised of Forest, Regional and Washington Office personnel.
- A focus group of affected and interested parties has been formed to identify immediate solutions to resolve issues related to wild horses outside the WHT. The group is drafting options for implementation in 2016.
- Long-term management strategies will require a collaborative effort that includes federal/state/local agencies, permittees, horse advocacy organizations and other external stakeholders to effectively implement the Devil's Garden Wild Horse Territory Management Plan.



fs.usda.gov/modoc

**U.S. Forest Service
Modoc National Forest
225 West 8th Street
Alturas, CA 96101**

News Release

Contact: modoc_info@fs.fed.us



April 4, 2016

Wild Horse survey complete, private and Tribal lands gather necessary

ALTURAS, Calif. – Modoc National Forest personnel have completed a “Double Count” aerial survey of the wild horse population in and around the Devil’s Garden Plateau Wild Horse Territory. The results of the survey show the wild horse population is greater than the Appropriate Management Level (AML) of 206-402 adult wild horses.

Data collected is compared using statistical modeling to estimate sighting rates for observers during the survey. “Using this method, we estimate the current wild horse population is 2,246 adult horses,” said Forest Rangeland Management Specialist and survey coordinator, Jenny Jayo. “This means wild horse population size has nearly doubled since February 2013 when the last inventory was completed. Wild horses now occupy an area more than twice the size of the territory designated for their use by the Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act of 1971.”

Many horses have moved off of the Territory and Forest onto private and tribal land. The Modoc National Forest is currently planning to remove wild horses from private land where requested. This is a top priority under the 2013 Devil’s Garden Plateau Wild Horse Territory Management Plan (<http://1.usa.gov/1PxhnVA>).

Removal of these wild horses will allow recovery of range and riparian ecological conditions on the private or tribal lands, as well as reduce damage to privately owned fences and competition among wild horses and other uses.

Once gathered, these wild horses will be transported to short-term holding where they will be fed, watered and humanely cared for until they are adopted or otherwise placed in private care with qualified individuals or groups who will provide the animals with good homes.

The Modoc National Forest is seeking additional partners in forming a collaborative group to help ensure the health of gathered horses, find good homes for the animals that cannot remain on the territory and contribute to a sustainable situation for this great American resource.

For information on how to apply to be part of the collaborative group or how to otherwise contribute to this effort, please contact Forest Range Program Manager, Jim Wright at jimmywright@fs.fed.us.

###

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Adoption Age by Species for FY 2011 to FY 2015 & Ages of Animals in Corrals on April 5, 2016

Horses

Adoption Age	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016 in Corrals
0	79	77	48	11	58	0
1	705	656	564	305	381	727
2	326	279	330	348	307	635
3	430	402	382	361	405	827
4	408	326	520	364	391	1,523
5	283	327	281	202	399	1,885
6	100	52	52	97	239	2,513
7	34	20	18	30	52	1,838
8	14	12	9	18	24	1,251
9	4	8	6	6	27	430
10	3	5	5	6	11	364
11	0	3	0	0	4	234
12	0	4	0	3	3	218
13	0	1	0	1	1	134
14	0	0	1	1	1	105
15	1	1	1	0	1	113
16	0	1	0	0	0	95
17	0	0	1	0	1	35
18	0	1	0	0	0	38
19	0	0	0	0	0	29
20	0	1	0	0	0	26
21+	0	0	0	0	0	75
Total	2,387	2,176	2,218	1,753	2,305	13,095

Burros

Adoption Age	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016 in Corrals
0	20	18	17	14	9	0
1	83	76	112	56	47	86
2	42	59	41	56	46	86
3	44	33	38	84	63	91
4	59	38	23	64	44	123
5	36	40	14	42	37	97
6	22	26	7	9	13	120
7	26	23	14	7	14	123
8	13	15	13	4	8	123
9	6	10	11	6	9	98
10	8	6	2	0	5	76

11	3	6	4	0	1	44
12	0	0	1	1	1	29
13	0	0	2	1	0	12
14	0	0	0	0	0	8
15	0	0	0	0	0	6
16+	0	0	0	0	0	8
Total	362	350	299	344	297	1,130

Adoptions by State for FY 2016

as of April 8, 2016

Pmaca Admin State Code	Freezemark Tempid	Returned
AZ	0	0
CA	168	4
CO	25	0
ES	397	15
ID	47	3
NM	196	2
NV	39	0
OR	161	10
UT	44	1
WO	81	5
WY	26	0
Total	1,184	40

Sales by State for FY 2016

as of April 1, 2016

Sale Admin State Code	Freezemark Tempid
CA	6
ES	22
NM	4
OR	3
UT	20
WO	3
Total	58

Adoptions by State for FY 2015

Pmaca Admin State Code	Freezemark Tempid	Returned
AZ	158	13
CA	310	42
CO	193	32
ES	783	82
ID	93	21
MT	2	0
NM	388	22
NV	112	18
OR	158	55
UT	142	33
WO	118	11
WY	156	22
Total	2,613	351

Sales by State for FY 2015

Sale Admin State Code	Freezemark Tempid
AZ	10
CA	12
CO	13
ES	92
ID	1
NM	33
NV	3
OR	3
UT	17
WO	72
WY	11
Total	267

**Wild Horse and Burro Division
Deputy Director's Report for March 25, 2016**

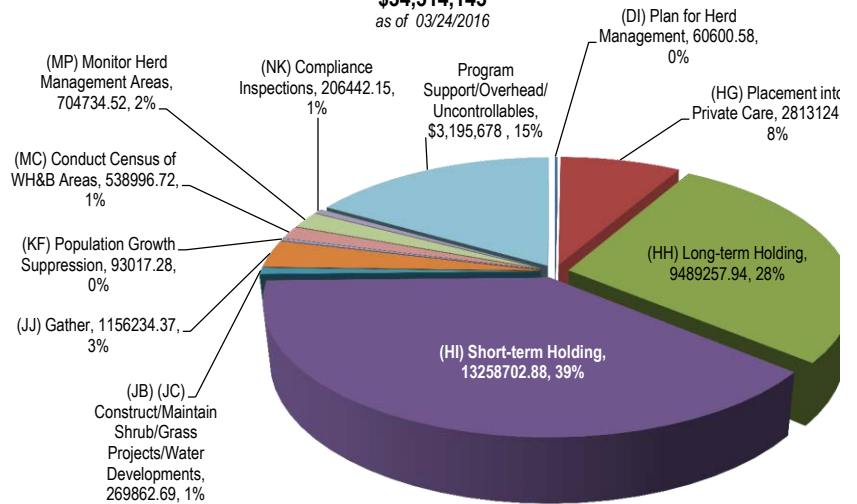
Off Range Holding Status	Cost range per animal per day	Current Inventory	Available Space	Increase or Decrease in Current Inventory	As of Date	Additional Capacity Updates
<i>Off-Range Corrals</i>	\$3.75 - \$5.25	11,155	6,465	Decrease (369)	3/24/2016	
<i>Off-Range Pastures</i>	\$1.57 - \$2.25	30,492	2,077	Decrease (122)	3/1/2016	
<i>Inmate Training Programs</i>	\$3.60 - \$6.50	4,646	2,144	Decrease (191)	3/24/2016	
<i>Eco-Sanctuaries</i>	\$1.52 - \$4.36	534	66	No change	3/1/2016	

TOTAL		46,827	10,752			
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PLACED into PRIVATE CARE		Partnerships providing training to animals for placement into private care. Adopted numbers are included in Grand Total.	Adopted	Currently in training
<i>BLM Facilities</i>	410	<i>Mustang Heritage Foundation</i>	270	284
<i>Satellite Adoptions</i>	456	<i>Burro Training Program</i>	47	27
<i>Internet Adoptions</i>	98	TOTAL: Trained Animals	394	311
<i>Reassignments/Readoptions</i>	15			

SUBTOTAL: Adoptions	979
<i>Inmate Training Programs</i>	77
SUBTOTAL: Training	1,056
<i>Burro Sales</i>	11
<i>Horse Sales</i>	48
SUBTOTAL: Sales	59
GRAND TOTAL:	1,115

**FY 2016 Expenditures
\$34,314,143
as of 03/24/2016**



Trained Animals for FY 2005 Through FY 2015

FY 2005

Halter	Saddle	
0	330	No agency information
0 burros	6 burros	
Total Adopted 5,491		

FY 2006

Halter	Saddle	
0	316	1 saddle DOC Honor Farm
0 burros	11 burros	
	1 mule	
Total Adopted 4,986		

FY 2007

Halter	Saddle	
0	499	9 saddle USBP
0 burros	8 burros	7 saddle DOC Honor Farm
Total Adopted 4,621		

FY 2008

Halter	Saddle	
0	698	9 saddle USBP
0 burros	0 burros	1 untrained horse; 4 untrained burros US Marine Corp
Total Adopted 3,599		

FY 2009

Halter	Saddle	
18	673	16 saddle USBP
0 burros	10 burro	1 saddle US Marine Corp
		3 saddle DOC Honor Farm
Total Adopted 3,339		

FY 2010

Halter	Saddle	
242	501	29 saddle USBP; 5 untrained
10 burros	0 burro	2 saddle US Army; Ft Carson
		3 saddle USFS
Total Adopted 3,097		

FY 2011

Halter	Saddle	
284	347	55 saddle US Border Patrol (USBP); 5 untrained
10 burros	1 burro	2 saddle US Marine Corp; 1 untrained
1 mule		1 saddle US Forest Service
Total Adopted 2,749		

FY 2012

Halter	Saddle	
300	356	76 saddle USBP; 1 untrained
11 burros		1 saddle US Marine Corp
Total Adopted 2,525		

FY 2013

Halter	Saddle	
222	259	6 saddle USBP
14 burros	1 burro	1 saddle Mounted Color Guard
1 mule		
Total Adopted 2,519		

FY 2014

Halter	Saddle	
375	277	39 saddle USBP; 2 untrained
102 burros	6 burros	4 saddle US Dept of Corrections; Ft Grant
Total Adopted 2,099		

FY 2015

Halter	Saddle	
544	476	43 saddle USBP
78 burros	1 burro	6 saddle US Marine Corp
		1 saddle KSU Agriculture Research Dept
Total Adopted 2,628		

2016 Wild Horse and Burro Adoption Schedule

BLM Corrals	Ewing	IL	4/2/2016
Angelina County Fairgrounds	Lufkin	TX	4/15-16/2016
Idaho Horse Expo	Nampa	ID	4/17/2016
BLM Office	Blm.Gov/adoptahorse	Internet	4/19-5/03/2016**
Horseshoe Park & Equestrian Center	Queen Creek	AZ	4/22-23/2016***
Knoxville Livestock Auction Center	Knoxville	TN	4/29-30/2016
Jacksonville Equestrian Center	Jacksonville	FL	5/6-7/2016***
Artesia Horse Council Arena	Artesia	NM	5/6-7/2016
BLM Corrals	Ewing	IL	5/7/2016
NRS Arena	Decatur	TX	5/13-14/2016
Wyoming Honor Farm	Riverton	WY	5/20-21/2016*
Red Horse Ranch	Cassopolis	MI	5/20-21/2016
Hutchinson Correctional Facility	Hutchinson	KS	6/03-4/2016
BLM Corrals	Ewing	IL	6/4/2016
BLM Office	Blm.Gov/adoptahorse	Internet	6/07-21/2016**
Rock Springs Wild Horse Corrals	Rock Springs	WY	6/10-11/2016
Northern Nevada Correction Center	Carson City	NV	6/11/2016*
Sonoma County Fairgrounds	Santa Rosa	CA	6/11-12/2016
Legacy Event Center	Farmington	UT	6/17-18/2016
Oxley Equestrian Center	Ithaca	NY	6/17-18/2016
Kay Rodgers	Ft. Smith	AR	6/17-18/2016
Livestock Events Center	Reno	NV	6/18-19/2016***
Leavenworth County Fairgrounds	Tonganoxie	KS	6/24-25-2016
Rock Springs Wild Horse Corrals	Rock Springs	WY	7/08-9/2016
BLM Corrals	Ewing	IL	7/9/2016

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U.S. Department of the Interior
 Bureau of Land Management
 Wild Horse and Burro Program

2016 Wild Horse and Burro Adoption Schedule

Missouri State Fairgrounds	Sedalia	MO	7/14-16/2016***
Craig County Fairgrounds	Vinita	OK	7/15-16/2016
BLM Office	Blm.Gov/adoptahorse	Internet	7/19-8/02/2016**
Cheyenne Frontier Days	Cheyenne	WY	7/22-31/2016
Idaho Horse Park	Nampa	ID	7/29-30/2016***
Rock Springs Wild Horse Corrals	Rock Springs	WY	8/05-6/2016
Topsfield Fair Facility	Topsfield	MA	8/05-06/2016***
Lightening C Arena	McAlester	OK	8/05-06/2016
BLM Corrals	Ewing	IL	8/6/2016
Wyoming State Fair	Douglas	WY	8/16-20/2016**
Cheshire Fair	Swanzy	NH	8/19-20/2016
Nevada County Fairgrounds	Grass Valley	CA	8/20-21/2016
Virginia Horse Center	Lexington	VA	8/25-27/2016***
Texas Rose Horse Park	Tyler	TX	8/27/2016*
Western Idaho Fair	Boise	ID	8/28/2016
BLM Office	Blm.Gov/adoptahorse	Internet	8/30-9/13/2016
Eastern Idaho Fair	Blackfoot	ID	9/5/2016
Utah State Fair	Salt Lake City	UT	9/14/2016
Will Rogers Memorial Center	Ft. Worth	TX	9/15-17/2016***
T. Ed Garrison Arena	Clemson	SC	9/23-24/2016
Cherry Agricultural Expo Center	Murray	KY	10/7-8/2016
Wasatch County Events Center	Heber City	UT	11/12/2016*

* Trained animals

** Trained and untrained animals

*** Extreme Mustang Makeover

Tentative Wild Horse and Burro Adoption Event Schedule

Prepared March 29, 2016

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U.S. Department of the Interior
 Bureau of Land Management
 Wild Horse and Burro Program

**Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board
Member Biographies**

Dr. Robert E. Cope, DVM – Salmon, Idaho (Natural Resource Management)

Dr. Cope, who earned his DVM at Kansas State University, has practiced veterinary medicine since 1975. After relocating to Idaho, he was elected Lemhi County Commissioner in 2001 and still serves in that position. Dr. Cope has been active in the National Association of Counties (NACo), serving as chair or vice chair of NACo's Environment, Energy, and Land Use Steering Committee for nine years. As a veterinarian for nearly 40 years, Dr. Cope has focused on large animals, particularly range livestock.

Ms. Ginger Kathrens – Colorado Springs, Colorado (Humane Advocacy)

Ms. Kathrens is the Founder and Executive Director of the Colorado-based Cloud Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation of wild horses on public lands. Kathrens is an Emmy award-winning creator of the acclaimed Public Broadcasting System series documenting the birth and life of a Pryor Mountains (Montana) wild stallion called "Cloud." Her first Cloud film was voted the most popular documentary in the 25-year history of the Nature series on PBS. Kathrens is an honor graduate of Bowling Green State University and holds a Master of Art's degree in Mass Communications from Florida State University.

Mr. Ben Masters- Bozeman, Montana (Wildlife Management)

Mr. Masters, founder and Chief Executive Officer of Fin & Fur Films, LLC. is best known for his successful documentary *Unbranded*, an account of a 3,000-mile ride on wild horses that has raised awareness of the BLM's adoption program and the myriad challenges facing public land managers. Masters holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences from Texas A&M University.

Dr. Sue M. McDonnell, Ph.D – West Chester, Pennsylvania (Wild Horse and Burro Research)

Dr. McDonnell is Clinical Associate and Adjunct Professor of Reproduction and Behavior at the University of Pennsylvania School of Veterinary Medicine. Also, as a certified applied animal behaviorist, she consults privately on equine behavior and welfare. Dr. McDonnell, who holds a Ph.D. from the University of Delaware, co-edited the current leading academic book on horse behavior, titled "The Domestic Horse: The Evolution, Development and Management of its Behaviour," published by Cambridge University Press.



Ms. Jennifer Sall – Lander, Wyoming (General Public –wild horse protection; wildlife management; animal husbandry; or natural resource management)

Ms. Sall has 25 years of experience caring for and training horses, including as manager of the National Outdoor Leadership School's (NOLS) Three Peaks Ranch. There she managed a herd of 75 horses and trained halter-broken mustangs to become dependable working mountain horses. Ms. Sall is currently the Program Manager for the Rocky Mountain Branch of the National Outdoor Leadership School. Previously as a NOLS instructor, Ms. Sall logged more than 100 weeks in the field on public lands teaching leadership, outdoor skills (including leading horse-packing trips), and environmental studies. She has a Bachelor of Science in Biology from Bates College in Lewiston, Maine.

Ms. June Sewing – Cedar City, Utah (Wild Horse and Burro Advocacy)

Ms. Sewing is the Executive Director and Secretary for the National Mustang Association, for which she has worked since 1985 carrying out various responsibilities, including managing the association's wild horse sanctuary. Ms. Sewing has also served as the president of local charitable organizations – as trustee on the Cedar City hospital board for 20 years, and on a committee dealing with the endangered Utah prairie dog. Ms. Sewing has received a Citizen Volunteer award from the Chamber of Commerce, Board of Realtors, and Southern Utah University.

Dr. Julie Weikel, DVM -Princeton, Oregon (Veterinary Medicine)

Dr. Weikel earned her Master of Veterinary Science and DVM from Washington State University and has practiced as a large animal veterinarian for 42 years with an equine and bovine focus. As a Professor in the College of Veterinary Medicine at Washington State University, she taught advanced large animal medicine, radiology, and large animal clinics. Dr. Weikel has served on the Southeast Oregon Advisory Committee (in the wild horse and burro position). She has also served as a member of the Oregon Natural Desert Association; on the Morrow County School Board; and as a court-appointed special advocate volunteer.

Mr. Fred T. Woehl, Jr. – Harrison, Arkansas (General Public – Equine Behavior)

Mr. Woehl has been involved in the horse community for more than 40 years as a trainer, natural horsemanship clinician, and educator. He is actively involved with the Equine Science Department at the University of Arkansas and taught Equine Science at North Arkansas College. He has served as a volunteer for the BLM's Wild Horse and Burro Program for 10 years, conducting demonstrations of wild horse versatility and assisting with adoptions. Mr. Woehl worked as a senior agricultural adviser for the U.S. State Department from October 2008 to November 2009 in Iraq, where he was responsible for the development and implementation of agricultural programs and policy for the Ninewa Province.



Mr. Steven Yardley - Beaver, Utah (Livestock Management)

Mr. Yardley, Vice President of Yardley Cattle Company, is a public land rancher and private landowner who holds grazing permits from the BLM and the U.S. Forest Service. A graduate of Southern Utah University, Yardley has been active with the Future Farmers of America, Utah Cattlemen's Association, National Cattlemen's Beef Association, and Southern Utah University's Block and Bridle Club. Currently, Yardley serves as Vice President of the Western Rangelands Conservation Association.

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U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Wild Horse and Burro Program

HISTORY OF THE MUSTANG HERITAGE FOUNDATION

In 2001, the Mustang Heritage Foundation was established with a mission of helping to increase the number of successful adoptions of America's Mustangs that are under the management of the Bureau of Land Management's Wild Horse and Burro Program.

From 2001 to 2005, the Foundation worked on selecting a comprehensive and effective Board of Trustees from diverse equine backgrounds. Selected trustees then worked to develop a plan for meeting its mission. The Foundation was incorporated in Nevada, and ran a virtual office for the first four years with an executive director based in Colorado. While the first formative years were spent on developing the governance of the organization, it was in 2005 that a group of trustees and equine industry leaders got together in a strategic work session to map out how the Foundation could reposition the mustang among the most influential audience, horse trainers.

Also in 2005, the trustees presented to BLM officials a plan on how it would gain the necessary traction in promoting Mustang adoptions and ultimately diversify the Foundation funding beyond the grants that came through the BLM and the State of Nevada Commission for the Preservation of Wild Horses, funded by the Heil Trust.

In 2006 the Foundation entered into a continuing Financial Assistance Agreement with the BLM's Wild Horse and Burro Program. The agreement focused on MHF creating and implementing marketing and adoption programs that would support the BLM Adoption Program and increase the number of successful adoptions.

In accordance with the agreement, the Foundation created the Extreme Mustang Makeover, a wild-horse training event that gives horsemen and women 100 days to gentle and train an assigned, untouched Mustang in preparation for an all-around equine competition. At the conclusion of the event, the competing, gentled Mustangs are offered to the public for adoption through competitive bid. The event was designed to show the trainability and versatility of the living legends.

In 2007, the first Extreme Mustang Makeover training event was held in Fort Worth, Texas. A large crowd gathered at the Will Rogers Memorial Center to witness the first-time event showcasing 100 trainers and 100 previously wild Mustangs that had 100 days of training. The event was highly successful and soon became the talk of the horse industry. Today, the Extreme Mustang Makeover has traveled to more than 15 states and has provided thousands of equine enthusiasts the opportunity to witness the talents and capabilities of these amazing equines while creating a demand for the brand.

The following years consisted of a continuation of the original idea as well as the implementation of youth programs, the Trainer Incentive Program, veteran programs, and the monumental Mustang Million that placed over 560 Mustangs into adoptive homes through a single event and attracted over 6,000 people to the freestyle finals. All MHF programs focus on the gentling and adoption of wild horses to encourage successful adoption.

Since that first event in 2007, the Foundation has successfully placed over 6,300 BLM-housed Mustangs into private care, saving taxpayers hundreds of millions of dollars. More importantly, MHF programs and events have elevated the desirability of the American Mustang within the horse world.

With over 10 EMM events scheduled for 2016, the Foundation has high hopes of placing over 1000 horses into private care. If you are interested in training or adopting through one of the Foundation's programs, or would like to become part of MHF's official community supporting Mustang adoption, Mustang Nation, visit www.mustangheritagefoundation.org.

MUSTANG HERITAGE FOUNDATION COMPLETED, PENDING AND PROJECTED ADOPTIONS

COMPLETED ADOPTIONS BY STATE:

2015-16 ADOPTIONS Oct.1, 2015 -March 10,	Arizona	California	Colorado	Idaho	Montana	ES - MS	Nebraska	Nevada	New Mexico	Oregon	Utah	Wyoming	ES - WI	TOTAL
October	4	6				9	1	3	4	1	2		6	36
November	4	8				7		1	4	4	2	3	2	35
December	4	7		1		2	3	2	4	5	1		4	33
January	25	5				25	2	1	20	2	1	1	2	84
February	5	9	11	3		11		2	7	2		3	3	56
March	5	2				7		1	7	2	1	1		26
April														
May														
June														
July														
August														
September														
LOCATION TOTALS	47	37	11	4	0	61	6	10	46	16	7	8	17	270

PENDING ADOPTIONS BY PROGRAM/EVENT (horses currently in training):

Trainer Incentive Program	141
EMM - Louisiana	16
EMM - Arizona	30
EMM - Florida	30
EMM - Colorado	34
EMM - Nevada	33

Total Pending Adoptions:	284
Total Completed Adoptions:	270
PROJ. ANNUAL ADOPTIONS TO DATE:	554

BIP Summary

Report Date: 3/12/2016

FACILITY	# OF PICKUPS
RIDGECREST	68
FLORENCE	5
EWING	4
Grand Total	77

% OF GOAL **51%**

AdoptionYear	Total Adopted & Purchased
2015	10
2016	40
Grand Total	50

COMPLETED ADOPTIONS / PURCHASES BY STATE

Month	ARIZONA	CALIFORNIA	INDIANA	TOTAL
NOVEMBER 2015	0	3	0	3
DECEMBER 2015	0	7	0	7
JANUARY 2016	2	3	3	8
FEBRUARY 2016	1	20	0	21
MARCH 2016	0	11	0	11
APRIL 2016	0	0	0	0
Total	3	44	3	50

Name	State	# In Training	# Adopted	# Purchased
JEN LYON	CALIFORNIA	4	0	0
MICHELLE THOMAS	CALIFORNIA	0	0	0
SHAWNEE ARMSTRONG	CALIFORNIA	1	0	0
TERRI FRANKLIN	ARIZONA	2	3	0
CLAUDE ENGLISH	CALIFORNIA	0	7	3
FAMILY HORSES	CALIFORNIA	12	16	0
NADIA HEFFNER	INDIANA	1	3	0
HEATHER WILCOX	OREGON	0	0	0
ELENA VELEZ DE PARRA	CALIFORNIA	2	2	0
KATE LACROIX	CALIFORNIA	2	2	0
TY NITTI	CALIFORNIA	2	14	0
		26	47	3

STATUS / AGE	# OF BURROS
ADOPTED	47
1	11
2	13
3	11
4	4
5	3
6	1
7	3
8	1
IN TRAINING	27
1	3
2	6
3	4
4	3
5	2
6	4
7	1
8	1
13	2
16	1
PURCHASED	3
11	1
16	1
21	1
Grand Total	77

Off-Range Pasture Solicitation FAQs Updated 3/16/15

Why does the BLM have off-range pastures?

Under the authority of the 1971 Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act, as amended, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) manages and protects wild horses and burros while working to ensure that population levels are in balance with other public rangeland resources and uses. Wild horses and burros have virtually no natural predators and can double in population every four years.

The current free-roaming population of BLM-managed wild horses and burros is estimated to be 49,209, as of March 1, 2014, which exceeds by more than 22,500 the number determined by the BLM to be the appropriate management level. The BLM is using population growth-suppression (PGS) measures, and is supporting research to improve existing and develop new PGS tools. As of January 2015, there were more than 31,000 wild horses being cared for in off-range pastures.

What is an off-range pasture solicitation?

An off-range pasture solicitation is the mechanism used by the BLM to request interested parties to submit a proposal that demonstrates they can provide a free-roaming environment for wild horses removed from Western public lands. If the proposal is accepted, a contract may be awarded to do business with the Federal government, in this case the BLM.

What are the general requirements for an off-range pasture contract?

The general purpose of the contract is to continue the maintenance of the federally protected animals, removed from Western public lands, in pastures large enough to allow free-roaming behavior. To meet the general requirements of the contract, the contractor shall provide all necessary land, food, water, facilities, personnel and supplies necessary to maintain the wild horses in good condition. The contractor must provide humane care for a one-year period, with a renewal option under BLM contract for a four-year or nine-year period. The BLM may require one or two public and/or media tours hosted by BLM staff and the contractor during the life of the contract.

Which states can apply to the current off-range pasture solicitation?

Proposals will be accepted from the following states: Arkansas, Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Texas, and Wyoming. Historically, the states in the Great Plains Region have a higher chance of meeting the targeted specifications for the contract. If additional proposals are needed, a second solicitation will be announced for the remaining lower 48 states.

What are the steps in applying to an off-range pasture solicitation?

Applicants who have never conducted business with the government must first obtain a Duns and Bradstreet number at www.dnb.com before registering at www.sam.gov/ to complete the initial process. The System for Award Management (SAM) is the official U.S. government system that consolidated the capabilities of Central Contractor Registration (CCR), Online Representations and Certifications Application (ORCA), and Excluded Parties List System (EPLS). There is no fee involved for either step. Once both steps are completed, you are ready to apply to the solicitation.

Where do I locate the off-range pasture solicitation?

To locate the solicitation: (1) go to www.fedconnect.net; (2) click on “Search Public Opportunities”; (3) under Search Criteria, select “Reference Number”; (4) put in the solicitation number “**L15PS00182**”; and (5) click Search” and the solicitation information will appear. The solicitation form describes what to submit and where to send it. **Deadline for submitting proposals to current solicitation: MUST arrive on April 22, 2015 by 3pm EST.**

For further assistance, visit www.blm.gov or the BLM’s [Financial Assistance page](#). You may also contact Eric Pagal at (202)-591-5079/epagal@blm.gov or Ken Lund at (202)912-7034/klund@blm.gov. They can assist with general questions and/or coordinate a meeting for you with a local BLM contracting officer and small business specialist.

What are some of the specific requirements that must be met for consideration?

(Refer to “General Services” section of the solicitation for a complete list of the requirements.)

1. Provide land, forage, salt, minerals, water, and fences necessary to properly care for and maintain a minimum of 100 up to a maximum of 5,000 wild horses (based on what the applicant is proposing).
2. Pastures, or combination of pastures, shall be of sufficient size to allow horse’s freedom of movement and the ability to exercise for good health, natural hoof trimming, and to continue their free-roaming behavior.
3. Pastures must be capable of producing sufficient standing forage for a period of at least 8 months or longer. Supplemental feeding may need to occur for a period of up to 4 months. Contractor must also provide supplemental feed as necessary to maintain the horses in good condition (i.e. during periods of drought, deep snow, ice storms, fire, during times when the forage is depleted of protein content or when other circumstances warrant).
4. Pastures should have sufficient rock and soil type to maintain proper hoof size and shape without trimming. In situations where pastures do not have sufficient rock and soil type, horses will have to have their feet trimmed by the contractor (a chute will be provided).
5. Perimeter fences shall be a minimum of 48” in height and completely enclose the facility and shall be of barbed wire. All division fences shall consist of four strands of barbed wire or other acceptable fencing materials. In some areas, wildlife-friendly fences will need to be constructed. The need for modification of any existing fences or the construction of any new fences to meet wildlife-friendly guidelines will be identified as mitigation during the BLM’s Environmental Assessment (EA) process. The one constant is that the height of the fencing shall not be any lower than 48”. Gates, rather than cattle guards, should be used at all road crossings or fence openings to keep horses in pastures.
6. Provide corrals and adequate facilities to load and unload wild horses on an as-needed basis.
7. Any land that is included in the proposal must be privately owned lands owned by the offeror or controlled by the offeror for a period of time no less than the contract period. The offered lands cannot include unfenced public lands; therefore, **Forest Service or BLM lands may NOT be included** in the proposal. If any unfenced public lands are located within the privately owned or controlled lands, the public lands must be fenced out.



Is there anyone that can assist me in developing the proposal?

The BLM is aware of two companies, but you may google the internet to see if you can find additional sources. The BLM does not endorse any company, but the following two companies have provided us with permission to release their names: 1. Fed Biz Solutions, Inc., Attn: Dale Wells, 970-660-7100/303-895-8822 www.FedBiz-si.com; 2. Reba Payne, 405-401-9718, rebap@allegiance.tv

How many off-range pasture contracts will be awarded?

The BLM expects to award several contracts; however, the total number of contracts awarded will be based on the number of acceptable proposals received and number of animals each proposal can accommodate to meet the BLM's needs.

What does the BLM pay a contractor to hold horses on an off-range pasture?

The applicant must submit a business plan that supports the dollar amount needed per head/day to conduct business with the government. The BLM cannot provide a suggested rate.

Will the BLM visit my property before making a decision?

Yes. If your proposal meets the BLM's needs, several BLM technical experts will complete an on-site visit before making a final recommendation to award a contract. Additionally, throughout the contract's period of performance, a BLM contract specialist will be your immediate point of contact, and he/she will closely monitor your performance for compliance.

If awarded a contract, when would BLM begin shipping horses?

The BLM will begin shipping animals to a facility only after the offered property meets the minimum requirements outlined in the contract specifications together with any mitigation or additional requirements identified in the BLM's EA. Shipment of animals to the facility is anticipated to occur within 120-150 calendar days from the date of award. No payments shall be made until after animals are received at the facilities and have resided at the facility for one month.

If awarded a contract, how many horses are shipped and when?

Horses are typically shipped 34-36 animals at a time using a semi-truck and trailer. Contractor will need to be able to offload horses using a loading chute. Access to facility should be on all-weather road or when conditions permit trucks getting into the facility. A BLM representative will coordinate all loads prior to arrival at the facility.

Each awarded contract will receive all mares or all geldings. The BLM does not ship a mix of genders to any contractor to reduce the chance of any additional animals born in captivity. However, the contracts that receive all mares will have to wean some foals during the first year. The BLM does not do a pregnancy check on mares removed from the range.



What is the standard payment timeframe for an off-range pasture contractor?

Each contractor keeps track of the number of horses on the off-range pasture facility and invoices the BLM once a month. After approval of the invoice, funds are distributed on a monthly basis.

How do I find out when the BLM is soliciting for additional off-range pasture facilities?

The BLM posts all solicitations on the official Government-wide Point of Entry (GPE) portal at www.fbo.gov and www.fedconnect.net. Once a solicitation is posted, a press release/announcement is posted at www.blm.gov and through media outlets. Advertising is procured based on budget availability.

How many off-range pasture facilities are currently under contract with the BLM?

The BLM has more than 20 off-range pasture contracts that range in size from 1,000 acres up to 35,000 acres; the average size is 20,000 acres. The pastures are currently located in Iowa, Kansas, Montana, Nebraska, Oklahoma, and South Dakota. There are nearly 32,000 wild horses living in the current off-range pastures. They were gathered from one of nine Western states: California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, New Mexico, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, or Wyoming. There are no off-range pastures for wild burros.

What are the BLM's current population numbers on and off the range?

Per population estimates as of March 1, 2014, the BLM estimates that about 49,209 wild horses and burros (about 40,815 horses and 8,394 burros) are roaming on BLM-managed rangelands in 10 Western states, which exceeds by more than 22,500 the number determined by the BLM to be the appropriate management level. As of January, 2015, there were 47,925 wild horses and burros fed and cared for at current off-range corrals and off-range pastures.

Why does the BLM continue to remove animals from the range?

Under the authority of the 1971 Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act, as amended, the BLM manages and protects wild horses and burros on western public lands while working to ensure that population levels are in balance with other public rangeland resources and uses. The BLM removes animals from the range to control the size of herds, which have virtually no predators and double in population every four years. The BLM plans to remove from the range about the same number of animals for which private care can be found each year. For animals that remain in holding, the BLM is seeking high quality, lower cost holding space.

What health care does the BLM provide to wild horses before shipping to off-range pasture facilities?

When wild horses are removed from the range, they are shipped to an off-range corral for an overall health inspection by a veterinarian. They are also vaccinated, dewormed, freeze marked, tested for EIA, and aged. A health and gather history is created for each animal and entered into the BLM's national database for tracking until the animal is adopted, sold, or dies.

In the case of wild horses shipping from an off-range corral on to an off-range pasture, a four-digit hip freeze mark is added to assist in visual tracking by the BLM compliance inspectors and contractors.

What health care does the BLM expect for the wild horses after arrival to off-range pasture facilities?

In the event a wild horse is observed to have a health issue, unless it is impacting the quality of life, the BLM expects the contractor to leave the horse alone to heal naturally as it does in the wild. In the case of a health issue that impacts the animals quality of life, the animal will be evaluated consistent with BLM policy.

What is the life expectancy of wild horses living on off-range pastures?

The horses may live up to 30-plus years of age. Wild horses that are six years old or older may live out the rest of their lives on an off-range pasture.

Are population growth suppression measures used on the off-range pastures?

All wild horses that go to off-range pastures live in non-reproducing herds. Prior to shipment, all males are gelded. The mares and geldings are kept in separate pasture contracts to prevent possible reproduction. If mares are pregnant upon arrival, they will foal in the large off-range pastures. After the foals are weaned, they are shipped to off-range corrals for placement in the adoption program.

How do I obtain general information about the BLM's Wild Horse & Burro Program?

You may visit BLM's Website at www.blm.gov or phone 866-468-7826 or e-mail wildhorse@blm.gov. You can also follow the program on [Face Book](#) to see great adopter stories and updates.





This is a perfect opportunity to
DIVERSIFY
YOUR RANCHING
OPERATION

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is seeking proposals for new pasture contracts to care for wild horses in the following states: Arkansas, Colorado, Iowa, Idaho, Kansas, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Oregon/Washington (excluding west of the Cascades), South Dakota, Texas, Utah, and Wyoming.

Each proposal must show it can provide humane care for a minimum of 200 wild horses in a free-roaming pasture setting on an annual basis, plus describe a supplemental feeding plan for the dormant months. The proposal must include documentation to support the carrying capacity listed and your required cost on a per head/day basis. Deadline will be announced soon, but you can start getting ready now!!

To locate the full list of requirements for the proposal and obtain further assistance,

[click here](#) or call 866-468-7826.



Wild Horse and Burro Program
Bureau of Land Management
U.S. Department of the Interior



DIVERSIFY YOUR EQUINE TRAINING OPERATION

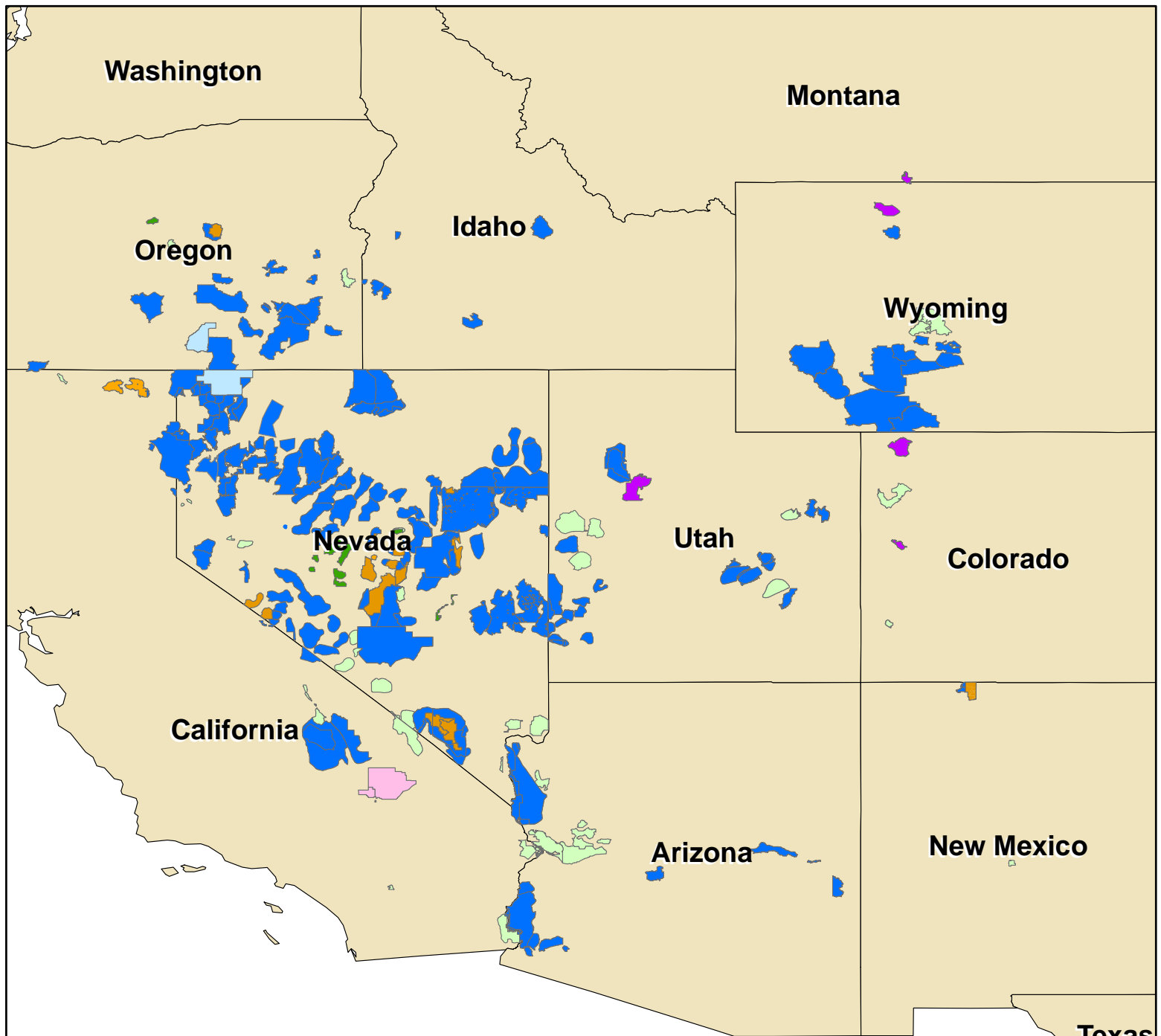
This is a perfect opportunity to diversify your equine training operation! The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is seeking proposals for a new pilot program called the Trainer Ambassador Pilot Program (TAPP). The goal of the TAPP is for the BLM to contract with experienced trainers, using minimal resistance or natural horsemanship techniques, to train wild horses and help the BLM place them into good homes. The deadline for submitting a proposal is April 22, 2016.

Applicant's proposal must indicate they reside in one of the following states: Alabama, Arkansas, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Mississippi, North Carolina, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee, Vermont, Virginia, West Virginia, and Wisconsin.

To review the proposal and obtain further assistance, **click here** or call **866-468-7826**.

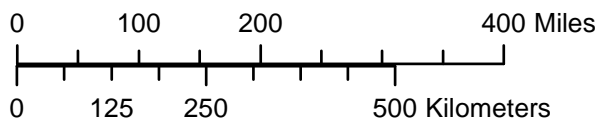


WILD HORSE AND BURRO PROGRAM
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR



BLM and USFS Wild Horse and Burro Surveys with new methods, Feb. 2014 through April 2016

- BLM Herd Management Area (HMA), not surveyed
- HMA or HA, Surveyed with new methods
- HMA, Surveyed with ground counts
- DOD lands with incomplete WH&B survey
- USFS Wild Horse Territory (WHT), not surveyed
- USFS WHT, surveyed with new methods
- US Fish & Wildlife Service, new methods



Wild Horse and Burro Numbers in Holding Facilities
(Report Date: March 23, 2016)

State	Short-Term Holding Facilities		Horses	Burros	Total
	Facility Name	Facility Cap	3/23/2016	3/23/2016	3/23/2016
Arizona	Florence Prison	1,000	626	64	690
California	Elk Grove Prison	20	20	0	20
California	Litchfield	1,000	351	37	388
California	Redlands	20	8	6	14
California	Ridgecrest	1,000	482	27	509
Colorado	Canon City/Mens Training	50	33	0	33
Colorado	Canon City Prison	3,000	1,759	11	1,770
Idaho	Boise	200	138	0	138
Idaho	Bruneau	3500	2,042	0	2,042
Idaho	Challis	150	0	0	0
Illinois	Ewing	300	183	53	236
Kansas	Hutchinson Prison	350	356	2	358
Kansas	Scott City	1,400	1,310	1	1,311
Montana	Britton Springs	20	0	0	0
Nebraska	Elm Creek	500	336	1	337
Nevada	Carson City Prison	2,000	1,399	1	1,400
Nevada	Fallon	3,200	2,260	13	2,273
Nevada	Palomino Valley	1,850	595	11	606
Oklahoma	Pauls Valley	600	445	10	455
Oregon	Burns	750	774	0	774
Utah	Axtell/Burro	1200	0	926	926
Utah	Axtell/Horse	1000	671	0	671
Utah	Delta	300	217	7	224
Utah	Salt Lake Staging	0	7	0	7
Wisconsin	Mequon	20	1	1	2
Wyoming	Mantle/Chugwater Training	200	197	9	206
Wyoming	Rock Springs	800	240	2	242
Wyoming	Riverton Prison	200	167	2	169
	Total	24,630	14,617	1,184	15,801
State	Long-Term Holding Pastures		Horses	Burros	Total

Age of Horses in STH			
0-4 yrs	5-10 yrs	11+ yrs	Unmarked
3,760	8,530	2,235	92

Age of Burros in STH			
0-4 yrs	5-10 yrs	11+ yrs	Unmarked
387	639	108	50

Age of Horses in LTH

	Facility Name	Facility Cap	3/1/2016	3/1/2106	3/1/2016
Iowa	Mt Ayr/Geldings	400	421	0	421
Kansas	Cassoday/Geldings	2,011	1,987	0	1,987
Kansas	Grenola/Mares	2,600	2,519	0	2,519
Kansas	Matfield Green/Mares	606	461	0	461
Kansas	Teterville East/Geldings	1,720	1,652	0	1,652
Kansas	Teterville West/Mares	550	507	0	507
Montana	Ennis/Geldings	1,150	920	0	920
Nebraska	Atkinson/Mares	1,000	837	0	837
Oklahoma	Bartlesville/Geldings	2,175	2,021	0	2,021
Oklahoma	Catoosa/Geldings	2,000	1,861	0	1,861
Oklahoma	Davis/Mares	200	213	0	213
Oklahoma	Foraker/Geldings	1,400	1,391	0	1,391
Oklahoma	Foster/Mares	750	711	0	711
Oklahoma	Gray Horse East/Mares	1,735	1,801	0	1,801
Oklahoma	Gray Horse West/Geldings	1,015	931	0	931
Oklahoma	Hickory/Mares	1,600	1,517	0	1,517
Oklahoma	Hominy/Mares	1,059	1,047	0	1,047
Oklahoma	Hulah/Geldings	2,648	2,598	0	2,598
Oklahoma	Nowata/Mares	900	869	0	869
Oklahoma	Pawhuska/Mares	2,800	2,756	0	2,756
Oklahoma	Strohman/Mares	850	832	0	832
Oklahoma	Tishomingo/Mares	600	617	0	617
Oklahoma	Vinita/Geldings	200	195	0	195
South Dakota	Mission Ridge/Geldings	1,000	1,026	0	1,026
South Dakota	Whitehorse/Geldings	400	379	0	379
Wyoming	Horse Creek/Mares	1,200	423	0	423
Subtotal		32,569	30,069	0	30,069
State	Eco-Sanctuaries		Horses	Burros	Total
		Facility Cap	3/1/2016	3/1/2016	3/1/2016
Oklahoma	Coalgate/Mares	150	153	0	153
Wyoming	Centennial/Geldings	300	290	0	290
Wyoming	Lander/Geldings	150	91	0	91
Subtotal		600	534	0	534
	Total	33,169	30,603	0	30,603
	Grand Total	57,799	45,220	1,184	46,404

0-4 yrs	5-10 yrs	11+ yrs	Unmarked
25	5,915	25,086	0



Tentative Fiscal Year 2016 Wild Horse and Burro Removal and Fertility Control Treatment Schedule

(As of March 24, 2016)

State	Herd Management Area (HMA)	Proposed Start Date	Proposed End Date	# Animals Planned to be Gathered	# Animals Planned to be Removed	# Animals Removed	# of Mares to be Treated with Fertility Control	Method of Gather	Species	Reason
AZ	Havasu	10/1/15	10/26/15	50	50	51	0	Bait	Burro	Private Property/Health and Human Safety
AZ	Outside Pirates Cove	10/1/15	10/6/15	40	40	8	0	Bait	Burro	Private Property/Health and Human Safety
CO	Sand Wash Basin	10/1/15	9/30/16	0	0	0	125*	None	Horse	Fertility Control
NV	Triple B	10/3/15	10/15/15	100	100	53	0	Bait	Horse	Emergency
ID	Sands Basin	10/15/15	3/1/16	35	35	30	0	Bait	Horse	Emergency
NV	Antelope (Water Canyon area)	10/26/15	12/12/15	55	40	31	12	Bait	Horse	Population Management and Fertility Control
OR	Beaty Butte	11/3/15	11/25/15	1,450	1,400	1,063	25	Helicopter	Horse	Population Management/ Sage Brush Focal Area
AZ	Black Mountain	12/10/15	12/10/15	8	8	9	0	Bait	Burro	Private Property/Health and Human Safety
WY	McCullough Peaks	1/1/16	9/30/16	0	0	0	52*	No Removal	Horse	Fertility Control
CA	Centennial/Slate Range Herd Area	1/15/16	3/1/16	200	0	14	100	Helicopter	Horse	Fertility Control
CA	Centennial/Slate Range Herd Area	1/15/16	3/1/16	86	50	3	0	Helicopter	Burro	Population Management

CO	Spring Creek Basin	2/1/16	5/30/16	0	0	0	22*	No Removal	Horse	Fertility Control
ID	Challis	2/1/16	9/30/16	0	0	0	35*	No Removal	Horse	Fertility Control
NV	Outside Eagle/Outside Caliente Herd Area Complex	2/8/16	2/28/16	120	120	128	0	Helicopter	Horse	Emergency/Health and Human Safety
CO	Little Book Cliffs Wild Horse Range	3/1/16	7/30/2016	0	0	0	20*	No Removal	Horse	Fertility Control
UT	Onaqui	3/1/16	5/31/16	0	0	0	40*	No Removal	Horse	Fertility Control
UT	Sinbad	3/14/16	3/31/16	200	154	126	0	Bait & Helicopter	Burro	Research
NV	Outside Red Rocks	4/1/16	6/30/16	40	40	0	0	Bait	Burro	Private Property/Health and Human Safety
NV	Outside Johnnie	4/1/16	6/30/16	40	40	0	0	Bait	Burro	Private Property/Health and Human Safety
UT	Conger	7/1/16	7/10/16	150	97	0	0	Helicopter	Horse	Research
UT	Frisco	7/16/16	7/25/16	150	85	0	0	Helicopter	Horse	Research
WY	Little Colorado	8/1/16	8/15/16	427	375	0	0	Helicopter	Horse	Research
MT	Pryor Mountain Wild Horse Range	8/1/16	9/30/16	0	0	0	65*	No Removal	Horse	Fertility Control
WY	White Mountain	8/1/16	8/15/16	355	180	0	0	Helicopter	Horse	Research
UT	Blawn Wash Herd Area	8/8/16	8/12/16	150	150	0	0	Bait	Horse	Court Agreement/Population Management
AZ	TBD	TBD		250	250	0	0	Bait	Burro	Health and Human Safety
	Private Property/Public Safety Removals	10/1/15	9/30/16	0	0	5	0			
	TOTAL			3,906	3,214	1,521	496			

* Animals will receive fertility control vaccines via ground darting programs, which do not require that animals are gathered.

Litigation Update (As of April 1st, 2016)

Bureau of Land Management

Eastern States

Bierlings v. BLM. On 12/22/2013, NE FO sent decision letter to Bierling notifying that her database file was coded to make her ineligible to buy any additional wild horses or burros as a result of being found to have engaged in prohibited acts under 43 CFR 4770.1 (treating a wild horse or burro inhumanely). On 1/22/2014, Bierling filed notice of appeal with ES; ES forwarded notice of appeal to SOL on 1/27/2014. On 4/8/2015 IBLA dismissed the appeal for untimeliness.

Ness vs. BLM. On August 3, 2015, the BLM ES Southeastern States District cancelled the adoption agreements and repossessed the horses. On August 24, 2015, Ms. Ness appealed the decision of the Southeastern States District to repossess the horses. On October 6, 2015, she filed a petition to stay the effect of BLM's decision to recover the animals. The Interior Board of Land Appeals affirmed the BLM's decision on October 30, 2015, denying your constituent's petition.

Idaho

American Wild Horse Preservation Campaign, The Cloud Foundation, Return to Freedom, and Virginia Marie Hudson v. DOI et. al., Case No.: 1:16-cv-00001-EJL (D. Id.) (filed Jan. 4, 2016). Plaintiffs filed a Complaint for Injunctive and Declaratory Relief in the Idaho District Court concerning Idaho's Jarbidge Resource Management Plan approved on September 2, 2015. The RMP includes a decision to manage the Saylor Creek HMA as a non-reproducing herd because the HMA has no natural water sources and wild horses rely solely on extensive pipelines and troughs. The groups allege BLM violated NEPA, APA, WHA, TGA, and FLPMA by conducting inadequate analysis of any significant impacts and failure to fulfill statutory obligations. The groups' allege BLM did not adequately analyze the impact of a non-reproducing status on the health of the individual horses and the herd as a whole, the potential effects on behavior and physiology, the impact to the range as a result of managing a non-reproducing herd, any relative cumulative impacts on horses from sterilization, and the claim that BLM did not consider a reasonable range of alternatives to sterilization.

Montana

Jerri Joette Tillet v. Bureau of Land Management; Interior Board of Land Appeals; and Department of Interior, Case No. CV 14-73-BLG-SPW (D. Mont.) (filed June 9, 2014). Plaintiff challenged BLM's plan to use multi-year prescribed fires on approximately 6,200 acres in the northern portion of the Pryor Mountain Wild Horse Range. Plaintiff alleged that BLM's authorization of the plan violated NEPA. On August 28, 2015, the District Court ruled that BLM complied with all but one of its NEPA obligations: the requirement to take a hard look when it considered the impacts of the prescribed burns on sensitive species in the area, in particular the Clark's Nutcracker. The Court granted in part and denied in part BLM's motion for summary

judgment, vacated decisions regarding impacts on sensitive species and remanded the matter back to BLM to address the issue. The BLM has not reissued the decision as of March 1, 2016.

Jerri Joette Tillet v. Bureau of Land Management; Interior Board of Land Appeals; and Department of Interior, Case No. CV 15-48-BLG-SPW (D. Mont.). Plaintiff, a pro se litigant, filed this complaint after the IBLA denied her stay petition (See IBLA 2015-133). At issue is whether BLM's updated 5 year fertility control plan and the darting of several wild horses constitutes "malfeasant" behavior. The U.S. filed an answer to the complaint on August 7, 2015 and submitted a proposed briefing schedule. On August 10, 2015 the Court issued an Order to Show Cause as to why this and two other pending lawsuits filed by the Plaintiff should not be dismissed as duplicative and barred by res judicata, consolidated or stayed. On August 26, 2015, the Court consolidated this case with CV 15-61 (challenge to 2015 gather, described below). The U.S. filed its summary judgment brief on December 7, 2015 and the Plaintiff filed her response brief on January 15, 2016. The U.S. moved, and the Court granted, a motion to strike the brief and ordered the Plaintiff to file a new brief complying with local court rules by February 16, 2016. The U.S. reply brief was filed on March 1, 2016.

Jerri Joette Tillet v. Bureau of Land Management; Interior Board of Land Appeals; and Department of Interior, Case No. CV 15-61-BLG-SPW (D. Mont.). The Plaintiff, a pro se litigant, seeks to stop through injunction, BLM's decision to gather and remove 15 to 20 young wild horses from the Pryor Mountain Wild Horse Range. On June 16, 2015 BLM decided to gather and remove 15-20 young wild horse from the PMWHR starting in early August. The Plaintiff, who also filed an IBLA appeal, alleges that the BLM is engaging in ongoing and systematic malfeasance. On August 4, 2015 the U.S. Magistrate issued findings and recommendations that the injunctive relief be denied. On August 26, 2015 the Court consolidated this case with CV 15-48-BLG-SPW (see above). The U.S. answer to the complaint was filed September 4, 2015. The excess wild horses were all adopted in the early fall of 2015. The U.S. filed summary judgment brief on December 7, 2015 and the Plaintiff filed a response on January 15, 2016. The U.S. moved, and the Court granted the motion, to strike the Plaintiff's brief and ordered her to file a new brief complying with local rules by February 16, 2016. The U.S. reply brief was filed on March 1, 2016.

Friends of Animals v. James Sparks and Bureau of Land Management, Case No. 1:15- CV-00059-BLG-SPW (D. Mont.) (filed June 26, 2015). On June 16, 2015, BLM issued a decision authorizing the gather and removal of 15-20 young wild horses on the Pryor Mountain Wild Horse Range after finding that there was an excess of horses. The population was at 170 and the AML is 90-120 horses. On June 26, 2015, the Plaintiff filed a complaint and request for injunctive relief. At issue is whether the gather and removal of 15-20 excess wild horses from the Pryor Mountain Wild Horse Range violates NEPA and the Wild and Free Roaming Horse and Burros Act. A hearing on the injunction was held on July 29, 2015. The Court denied the injunction, and gather operations commenced on August 3, 2015. BLM's answer was due August 31 and the AR was lodged on September 30. The excess wild horses were all adopted in the early fall of 2015. Plaintiff's summary brief was filed on December 18, 2015 and the U.S. summary judgment brief was filed January 29, 2016. Plaintiff's reply brief was filed February 26, 2016 and the U.S. reply was due March 25, 2016.

Nevada

Cloud Foundation, et al v. Salazar, Case No. 3:11-cv-00459-HDM -VPC (D. Nev.) (Filed June 29, 2011 and July 7, 2011). (Triple B Complex). Plaintiff, Cloud Foundation, et al. filed a Complaint for Declaratory and Injunctive Relief (June 29, 2011) and a Motion for Preliminary Injunction (July 7, 2011) alleging a violation of the Wild and Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act (“WFRHBA”) by failing to manage the Triple B, Maverick-Medicine and Antelope Valley Herd Management Areas (hereafter “Triple B HMA” or “HMA”) principally for wild horses and burros, and by approving the use of overly invasive management activities for the wild horses in these management areas which go above and beyond the minimum feasible level necessary. Plaintiffs also allege that BLM violated the National Environmental Policy Act’s (“NEPA”) requirement to fully consider and analyze all reasonable alternatives to the Proposed Action by failing to consider an alternative which would reduce livestock grazing to allocate more resources to wild horses and burros. On July 15, 2011, the District Court issued an Order denying Plaintiff’s request for the preliminary injunction. On July 15, 2011, the Plaintiff filed an emergency motion for injunctive relief pending appeal, to halt appellees’ round-up of wild horses in the Triple B with the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, which granted the emergency injunction. After the U.S. filed its response to the motion for emergency injunction, on July 19, 2011, the Ninth Circuit issued an order that denied plaintiffs’ emergency motion for injunctive relief, and allowed gather operations to begin at the Triple B Complex on July 20, 2011. Gather operations ended August 31, 2011. On September 7, 2011, the Plaintiff filed a Motion to voluntarily dismiss its appeal to the Ninth Circuit from the District Court’s denial of its motion for preliminary injunction, and this motion was granted. On June 15, 2012 Plaintiff filed its Motion for Summary Judgment and on July 16, 2012 the United States filed its response and Cross-Motion for Summary Judgment. On March 26, 2013, the District Court denied Plaintiffs’ Motion for Summary Judgment and granted the United States’ Cross-Motion, finding that BLM had not violated either the WFRHBA or NEPA. Plaintiffs filed a Notice of Appeal to the Ninth Circuit on May 24, 2013, which was stayed pending the Ninth Circuit’s resolution of the Twin Peaks litigation (In Defense of Animals v. Salazar). After the Ninth Circuit affirmed the Twin Peaks (In Defense of Animals v. Salazar) ruling in favor of the BLM and denied Plaintiffs’ petition for rehearing and for rehearing en banc, Plaintiffs filed a voluntary dismissal of their appeal of the Triple B decision to the Ninth Circuit. On September 11, 2014, the Ninth Circuit issued an Order granting Plaintiffs’ motion to dismiss and this case is now closed.

Laura Leigh v. Salazar, Case 3:11-cv-00608 (D. Nev.) (Triple B Complex). Plaintiff, Laura Leigh filed a complaint on August 24, 2011, alleging inhumane treatment of wild horses by BLM’s Contractor and a failure to follow its procedures during the Triple B Complex wild horse gather in Nevada which began on July 20, 2011. On August 25, 2011, Plaintiff filed an Emergency Motion for TRO to enjoin any remaining gather activities on the Triple B gather and to seek to prevent BLM from using Sun J as a contractor on any other gather. Judge McKibben held a hearing on Tuesday, August 30, 2011. At the hearing he found all of Plaintiff’s claims to be without merit, with the exception of the incident where the helicopter appears to touch a mare. A BLM Declaration clarified that the helicopter did not actually bump the mare. However, Judge McKibben made it clear that whether or not the helicopter actually touched the horse, that the close distance of the helicopter to the horse was nonetheless a violation of the Wild Horse and Burro Act. As a result, Judge McKibben granted Plaintiff’s motion for a TRO “as to the use

of the helicopter as demonstrated on 8/11/11, that is, striking horses with the skid or flying the skid or part of the helicopter being dangerously or unreasonably close to the horses during the remainder of the first phase of the round up at the Triple B Complex” (which was ending the following day). Injunctive relief was denied for all other aspects of Plaintiff’s case. When she initiated this case, Plaintiff challenged a single agency action – the Triple B Gather. In her first amended complaint and a related motion for a preliminary injunction that Plaintiff attempted to broaden the scope of her lawsuit, by speculatively and anticipatorily challenging potential future wild horse gathers. Plaintiff again attempted to alter the scope of this case when she filed her second amended complaint and a related motion for emergency injunctive relief, which added a challenge to the emergency portion¹ (i.e., the use of helicopters prior to July 1) of a gather taking place in the Jackson Mountain herd management area (“the Jackson Mountain Gather”). On June 20, 2013, the court granted an emergency injunction in part as to the start date of the helicopter gather in the northern section of the Jackson Mountain HMA but denied an injunction as to the southern section. The U.S. filed its answer to the amended complaint on June 29, 2012 and filed a motion to dismiss on January 2, 2013. On March 26, 2013, Judge McKibben partially granted a Government Motion to Dismiss those elements of the case dealing with the Jackson Mountain gather with respect to two of three claims (including a 1st Amendment claim), but denied the motion as to an inhumane treatment claim for emergency helicopter gathers during the foaling period. Plaintiff attempted to combine yet a third gather decision to her Triple B litigation by amending her complaint and seeking an emergency injunction for a bait/water trap decision for the Three HMA. The Court denied the request for injunction and to amend Plaintiffs’ complaint to add the Three HMA decision. The U.S. filed a Motion to Dismiss or for Judgment on the Pleadings on June 10, 2013. On January 3, 2013, the Court granted the United States’ motion for judgment on the pleadings. Plaintiff did not file an appeal and this case is now closed.

Leigh v. Salazar, Case No. 10-597 (D. Nev.) (Silver King HMA). Plaintiff alleges that the Bureau of Land Management (“BLM”) violated the Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act and the First Amendment of the United States Constitution in connection with an ongoing gather of wild horses and burros in the Silver King herd management area, which is located in southern Nevada. On September 24, 2010, Plaintiff filed a motion for a TRO and a separate motion for a preliminary injunction based solely on her First Amendment claim. On September 27, 2010, the Court denied Plaintiff’s TRO motion *sua sponte*, finding that Plaintiff failed to establish a likelihood of irreparable harm. On October 1, 2010, Plaintiff filed an amended motion for a preliminary injunction based solely on her First Amendment claim. We opposed, and the Court heard argument, including witness testimony, on November 16, 2010. On April 13, 2011, the Court denied Plaintiff’s motion for a preliminary injunction as moot, because BLM had completed the Silver King gather. Plaintiff appealed. On February 14, 2012, the Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit reversed and remanded the District Court’s opinion, finding that Plaintiff’s motion was not moot, because BLM’s decision document allowed the agency to return to the Silver King herd management area to conduct future gathers through 2013. We moved for reconsideration. In response, on April 16, 2012, the Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit upheld its mootness decision, but added clarifying language at the request of the Federal

¹ Plaintiff did not challenge the non-emergency aspects of the Jackson Mountain Gather.

Defendants. After months of settlement talks proved unsuccessful, the Court held an evidentiary hearing on February 19-20, 2013, on Plaintiff's motion for preliminary injunction. On July 19, 2013, the Court issued an Order finding there was no violation of Plaintiff's First Amendment rights and denying the request for injunctive relief. On July 19, 2013, Plaintiff filed a Notice of Appeal from the second denial of a Preliminary Injunction. Following briefing of the appeal, the Ninth Circuit held oral argument on December 3, 2013. On December 9, 2013, the Ninth Circuit panel vacated the appeal and referred the case for mediation. The mediation led to a settlement agreement under which the Nevada State Director issued a memorandum to Nevada staff reiterating her commitment to provide for meaningful public observation of helicopter gathers, while taking into consideration the need to conduct an effective gather that ensures the safety of the wild horses, public and BLM staff and contractors. Plaintiff filed motions to voluntarily dismiss her Ninth Circuit appeal and District Court litigation on July 25 and July 28, 2014. This case is now closed.

Laura Leigh v. Salazar, Case No. 3:13-cv-00006-MMD-VPC (D. Nev.) (Owyhee Complex). On January 4, 2013, Plaintiff filed a Complaint alleging inhumane treatment of wild horses being gathered from the Owyhee Complex and that BLM lacks the legal authority to remove horses from an HMA that is within the established Appropriate Management Level range. The same day Plaintiff also filed a Motion for a Temporary Restraining Order challenging BLM's authority to remove the 50 wild horses, which request was granted immediately granted by the assigned Judge pending briefing and hearing. At the TRO hearing on January 10, 2013, Judge Du agreed that the BLM has the legal authority to conduct the Owyhee gather and on that basis lifted the injunction, but in light of a Motion for Preliminary Injunction that was filed the morning of the hearing, she imposed a number of limitations on the gather operations that indicate she accepted Plaintiff's allegations that inhumane treatment occurred, even though these allegations had not been raised in the TRO motion and therefore had not been responded to as part of the TRO briefing. The Owyhee Complex gather operations resumed after the six day injunction and concluded on January 16, 2013. Plaintiff filed a motion for a Preliminary Injunction (PI) on January 10, 2013. The Government filed its response to that motion and the allegations of inhumane treatment on January 24, 2013. The hearing on PI Motion took place on August 21, 2013 in Reno.

Plaintiff filed a new motion for a Temporary Restraining Order (TRO) on August 9, 2013, challenging a possible emergency gather of Snowstorm HMA using water & bait trapping. Judge Du denied that motion for TRO at hearing on August 21. Plaintiff filed another motion for Emergency TRO filed on Aug. 14, 2013, alleging a Ft. McDermitt tribal gather was of Owyhee Complex horses. That motion for TRO was also denied by Judge Du on August 16, 2013.

On August 27, 2014, the Court issued an Order denying Plaintiff's January 10, 2013 motion for a PI for the Owyhee gather. Plaintiff filed a Second Amended Complaint on August 22, 2013. On January 13, 2014, the United States filed a motion to dismiss Plaintiff's lawsuit as to all allegations except her NEPA claims. Plaintiff filed her response to that motion on Feb. 3, 2013 and the Government filed its reply on Feb. 18, 2014. On September 24, 2014, the District Court granted the United States' motion for partial dismissal. On November 23, 2014, Plaintiff filed a notice of voluntary dismissal. This case is now closed.

Nevada Association of Counties & Nevada Farm Bureau Federation v. DOI et al., Case No. 3:13-cv-00712-MMD-WGC (D. Nev.) (filed Dec. 30, 2013). Plaintiffs allege that the BLM has failed to take mandated actions under the Wild Horse and Burro Act to maintain wild horse populations in Nevada at AML. The complaint also alleges this failure to act adversely affects private property water rights, livestock grazing and public safety. Plaintiffs further claim that the BLM has no authority to “stockpile” or “warehouse” wild horses in short- and long-term holding, and that BLM has failed to destroy or sell wild horses without limitation where adoption demand for excess wild horses is insufficient. On January 26, 2014, Laura Leigh filed a motion to intervene and on February 27, 2014, the Wild Horse Preservation Campaign (WHPC) filed a motion to intervene (in support of the Government). The District Court granted the motions to intervene on April 2, 2014. On May 29, 2014, the WHPC filed a motion to dismiss Plaintiffs’ lawsuit and on June 14, 2014, the Government filed its motion to dismiss Plaintiffs’ lawsuit. On March 12, 2015, Judge Du dismissed P’s complaint with prejudice, finding that P’s complaint failed to specify any particular agency action or failure to act which might fall with the APA’s cause of action, and also rejected the Fifth Amendment claims. On March 30, 2015, Plaintiffs filed a Notice of Appeal from the District Court’s decision and filed their Opening Brief on November 23, 2015. The Government and Intervenors filed their Answer on February 12, 2016. No reply brief was filed. This case is now fully briefed and awaiting ruling by the Ninth Circuit.

Pershing County et al. v. Jewell et al., Case No. 3:14-cv-00466-MMD-WGC (D. Nev.) (filed September 15, 2014). On September 15, 2014, Pershing County and a number of grazing permittees with grazing allotments in Pershing County filed a Complaint alleging that BLM has violated the WFRHBA by failing to remove excess wild horses from HMAs and Herd Areas with large sections of checkerboard land that are not managed for wild horses, and requesting that the court order BLM to remove excess wild horses. The United States’ Answer to the Complaint was filed on February 13, 2015. On March 19, 2015, American Wild Horse Preservation Campaign and Debra Davenport filed a motion to intervene, which motion was granted on June 12, 2015. On July 1, 2015, the parties and intervenors met for a mediated settlement session with the Magistrate Judge. Plaintiffs and BLM reached an agreement to resolve the litigation. Under the proposed agreement, BLM will conduct a decision-making process leading to issuance over the next 2-3 years of two separate gather plans for the HMAs and HAs within Pershing County. On September 28, 2015, Plaintiffs filed a motion to dismiss their lawsuit and Intervenors took no position on the motion. On September 30, 2015, the Court granted the motion to dismiss. This case is now closed.

DeLong Ranch IBLA No. 2012-235 (Filed 07-11-12). On July 11, 2012, Appellant grazing permittee filed a Notice of Partial Appeal from the Jackson Mountains HMA wild horse gather decision with the Interior Board of Land Appeals (IBLA) alleging that (1) BLM’s Jackson Mountain HMA is larger than the area where wild horses were actually found in 1971 (i.e., the herd area); (2) that BLM is required to immediately remove excess horses and using a phased gather strategy to reach AML over time is inconsistent with the Wild Horse Act; (3) that BLM is required to prevent, mitigate or compensate Appellant for consumption of privately owned waters by excess wild horses. On September 16, 2014, the IBLA affirmed BLM’s decision. This case is now closed.

Friends of Animals v. U.S. Bureau of Land Mgmt., Case No. 3:15-CV-0057-LRH-WGC (D. Nev.) (Pine Nut Wild Horse Gather). On January 26, 2015, the Plaintiffs (Friends of Animals and Protect Mustangs) filed a complaint in District Court for the District of Nevada challenging the BLM's November, 2014 Decision Record approving the Pine Nut Wild Horse Gather, a proposed gather of up to 332 wild horses and removal of approximately 200 excess horses from within and outside of the Pine Nut Herd Management Area ("HMA"). In making that decision, the BLM relied on an Environmental Assessment (EA) for a 2010 Gather Plan and a Determination of NEPA Adequacy. Plaintiffs alleged that the BLM violated NEPA by failing to prepare a new EA and failing to consider new information regarding the use of the contraceptive PZP.

On January 29, 2015, the Plaintiffs moved for a temporary restraining order and preliminary injunction. After accepting briefs from both sides and hearing oral argument, Judge Hicks enjoined the gather pending resolution of the Plaintiffs' complaint, finding that the BLM violated NEPA by failing to prepare an EA because the 2010 Gather Plan EA did not contemplate gathers after 2013 or gathers that were greater in scope. Judge Hicks also ruled that the Plaintiffs showed irreparable harm, that the balance of equities tipped in their favor, and that the public interest favored granting the injunction. To resolve the matter, the BLM agreed to prepare a new NEPA analysis and issue a new decision before implementing the gather. The BLM is negotiating a final stipulation on attorney's fees and costs to close the case.

Kathleen R. Gregg, Craig C. Downer, IBLA-2015-0013 (Pine Nut Wild Horse Gather). On January 14, 2015, the BLM received a "Notice of Appeal, Statement of Reasons and Petition for Stay" from Ms. Kathleen Gregg and Mr. Craig C. Downer (Appellants) challenging a BLM Decision Record for the Pine Nut Wild Horse Gather, a proposed gather of up to 332 wild horses and removal of approximately 200 excess horses from within and outside of the Pine Nut Herd Management Area. The Appellants allege that the decision violated the Wild Free-Roaming Horse and Burro Act and NEPA. On January 26, 2015, the BLM responded to the Appellants' Petition for Stay. The BLM also moved for an automatic 30-day extension of time, until March 16, 2015, to file an answer. However, the gather has been enjoined by Judge Hicks in a related case in the District Court for the District of Nevada. The BLM will need to decide whether to proceed with this appeal in light of the District Court proceedings.

Eureka Co. v. BLM; Borba Land and Cattle et al. v. BLM, IBLA 2015-102 (filed February 19, 2015). BLM issued the Fish Creek HMA Gather Plan on February 9, 2015, which provides for a phased approach and multiple gathers to reach AML and for repeated applications of fertility controls. BLM gathered a total of approximately 424 wild horses from the Fish Creek HMA between February 13-18, 2015. Over 230 of these wild horses were removed to be offered for adoption and the remaining 183 horses were to be released back into the HMA following application of fertility controls. Appellants are eight ranchers and Eureka County who oppose release of the gathered horses back into the HMA before AML is reached. They have appealed from, and requested an expedited stay, from the portion of the gather decision that allows for the treatment and release of horses. BLM agreed to place the horses to be released in short-term holding pending resolution of the stay petition. A Motion for Expedited Ruling on the issue of whether gathering for fertility treatment can be implemented as a full force and effect decision and Motion to Dismiss the stay petition because it seeks relief that falls outside the Board's

jurisdiction was filed on February 25, 2015. BLM's Motion to Dismiss the Appellant ranchers for lack of standing (since they failed to participate in the decision making process) along with BLM's Response (and opposition) to the Stay Petition was filed on March 2, 2015. Appellants filed a Response to the Motion to Dismiss, along with a Motion to Strike BLM's Response to Stay Petition on March 16, 2015. On March 30, 2015, the IBLA granted BLM's motion to dismiss all appellants, except Eureka County, for lack of standing. The IBLA also denied Eureka County's petition for stay, finding that Eureka County was not likely to prevail on the merits of its appeal. The IBLA did not address Appellant's claim that BLM cannot gather wild horses for purposes of fertility controls under a full force and effect decision pursuant to 43 C.F.R. § 4770.3(c). Eureka County filed its Statement of Reasons on April 23, 2015. BLM filed its Answer on June 26, 2015. This appeal is now fully briefed and awaiting ruling by the IBLA.

Oregon

Front Range Equine Rescue (FRER) v. BLM, IBLA 2015-173 (Kiger and Riddle Mountain Gather). On May 4, 2015, BLM issued a Decision Record approving the proposed action of implementing a wild horse gather in the Kiger and Riddle Mountain Herd Management Areas (HMAs) to return wild horse levels to the low ends of the respective HMA's Appropriate Management Levels. On June 8, 2015 BLM received Notice of Appeal and on July 8, 2015 received Statement of Reason from Appellant (no Stay Petition filed). FRER alleges BLMs plan to gather all horses within the HMAs and selectively return animals to the range based on color and conformation is a violation of the 1971 WHBA "minimum feasible management" standard, claiming this is breeding program for BLM to generate profits from. FRER also claims artificially low AMLs resulting in reduced genetic viability of both herds. On July 16, 2015 BLM filed motion to dismiss based on lack of standing. From 8/31/15 – 9/6/15 BLM conducted the Kiger and Riddle Mountain gathers. On January 16, 2016 IBLA issued order dismissing the appeal based on lack of standing. On January 27, 2016 FRER filed a complaint in United States District Court (District of Oregon) challenging IBLA's order dismissing their appeal based on lack of standing (FRER Vs. BLM IBLA Case 3:16-CV-00149-AC). BLMs answer to the District Court complaint is due April 6, 2016.

Utah

Western Rangeland Conservation Association (WRCA), et al. v. Jewell (Case No. 2:14-cv-00327-PMV). Filed April 30, 2014. Plaintiffs allege failure of the U.S. Department of the Interior and Bureau of Land Management (collectively "BLM"), to perform its mandatory duties to remove excess wild horses on the lands managed by BLM, "school section" lands administered by the State of Utah and on private lands pursuant to the Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act of 1971 ("WHBA"). Further, BLM has failed to comply with its duties in this respect, and its failure has resulted in an excessive wild horse population, which has severely damaged the public and private rangeland resources and has caused damage and injury to Plaintiffs, who are private landowners and federal and state grazing permittees, and to their livestock operations, livelihoods and way of life. Plaintiffs filed suit to compel agency action, they allege to be required by law, to immediately remove excess wild horses from BLM, State of Utah, and private land. On June 17, 2014 a motion to Intervene was made by the American Wild Horse Preservation Campaign, the Cloud Foundation, Return to Freedom, John Steele, and Lisa Friday. On July 15, 2014 Motion to Intervene was granted. On April 03, 2015 Judge Dee

Benson DENIED a motion by the Defendant-Interveners to dismiss the case, and stated that “the court is satisfied that the Plaintiffs have met the necessary pleading requirements.” On June 05, 2015 an Administrative Record was filed by BLM (Defendants) to the Plaintiffs, Defendant-Intervener’s, and Judge’s Chambers. Current negotiations and correspondence is occurring by all sides to amend the current AR, and a proposed deadline extension.

State of Utah, School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration (SITLA) v. Jewell, et al. (Case 2:15-cv-00076-BCW). Filed February 03, 2014. Plaintiffs filed suit in federal district court against Interior Secretary Jewell, BLM Director Kornze, and BLM State Director Palma (in their official capacities) for failure, under Section 4 of the WHBA, to remove wild horses from privately owned lands following a demand for removal. The complaint specifically seeks removal of wild horses from SITLA school-trust lands across the State of Utah within HMAs, and outside HMAs where wild horses have moved onto these lands. Plaintiffs claim that the Defendants’ failure and refusal to immediately remove the wild horses is unlawful and is arbitrary and capricious. Plaintiffs seek a declaratory judgment from the court requiring removal of the wild horses from the SITLA school-trust lands, as well as an award of reasonable costs, litigation expenses, attorneys’ fees, etc. Meetings were held with Assistant U.S. Attorney, BLM Solicitors Office, BLM Utah State Office, and SITLA Officials on May 22 and June 15, 2015. An agreement was reached to delay filing a formal response in Federal Court pending possible negotiations towards a settlement agreement. The Agreement would possibly be in the form of a Cooperative Agreement between BLM and SITLA regarding wild horse in the State of Utah. A meeting was held with BLM and SITLA on July 30 to draft up the beginnings of an agreement. A meeting is scheduled with all parties and their legal counsel to discuss the possible Agreement content on August 18, 2015.

Wyoming

State of Wyoming v. USDOJ, et al., 14-CV-248-J (D. Wyo.)

On April 21, 2015, the U.S. District Court, Wyoming granted the United States' and intervening wild horse advocacy groups' motions to dismiss for failure to state a claim upon which relief can be granted. The State of Wyoming filed a Petition for Review of Final Agency Action on December 8, 2014, that sought review of a “decision” not to remove wild horses from seven herd management areas within the state upon finding that horse populations exceeded the appropriate management levels. The State contended that by failing to remove an overpopulation of wild horses, the Department violated mandatory, non-discretionary duties under the Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act (WHA), 16 U.S.C. §§ 1331-1340, and challenged agency inaction under the Administrative Procedure Act (APA), 5 U.S.C. §§ 702 and 706(1). The motions to dismiss argued that the APA does not allow for a broad programmatic challenge, and that there was no non-discretionary duty under the WHA to remove wild horses merely upon finding that an overpopulation of horses. Rather, action is required under the WHA only after overpopulation exists and the BLM determines action is necessary to remove animals to preserve a thriving natural ecological balance. The court agreed, finding that under the WHA “action is mandatory if necessary to achieve and maintain a thriving natural ecological balance on the public lands, BLM is still left with a great deal of discretion in deciding how to achieve this Congressional objective. Therefore, ... the State's petition fails to set forth a discrete agency action that BLM is required to take.” The State filed a notice of appeal on June 19, 2015.

State of Wyoming v. USDOJ, et al., 15-8031 (10th Cir.)

Appeal of 14-CV-248-J (D. Wyo.), that ruled that the Department did not violate any mandatory, non-discretionary duties under the Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act (WHA), 16 U.S.C. §§ 1331-1340, or unlawfully withheld agency action under the Administrative Procedure Act (APA), 5 U.S.C. §§ 702 and 706(1). The District Court held there was no non-discretionary duty under the WHA to remove wild horses merely upon finding that an overpopulation of horses. The State filed its open brief on December 7, 2015. After being granted an extension of time to file, the United States filed its response brief on February 12, 2016.

American Wild Horse Preservation Campaign, et al. v. Jewell, et al., 14-CV-152-NDF (D. Wyo.)

On March 3, 2015, the U.S. District Court, Wyoming ruled that the BLM, Wyoming, Rock Springs Field Office, violated the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) by relying on a categorical exclusion (CX) for September 2014 gather and removal of wild horses. The gather removed all wild horses from portions of the Wyoming “checkerboard” (interspersed public and private lands), as provided for in the consent decree entered in Rock Springs Grazing Association v. Jewell, 11-CV-263 (D. Wyo.). The petitioners, three wild horse advocacy groups and three individuals, argued that BLM’s gather and removal violated, in addition to NEPA, the Federal Land Management and Policy Act (FLPMA) and the Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act (WHA). The Court found no violations of FLPMA or the WHA, and that BLM reasonably interpreted its CX to apply to checkerboard lands, even though it referred only to removal of strayed wild horses from private lands. But, the Court concluded that BLM did not take into account the full breadth of its discretion and the unique circumstances of this gather and removal. Therefore, its basis for relying on the CX, that the gather would not have an individual or cumulative significant impact on the environment, was not supported. The court remanded “the NEPA violation” with instructions to remedy the identified violations. On April 6, 2015, the Petitioners filed a motion for entry of judgment on their claims under the WHA and FLPMA. The Court granted petitioners' motion and entered final judgment on those claims on May 14, 2015. Petitioners filed a notice of appeal of those claims May 18, 2015.

American Wild Horse Preservation Campaign, et al. v. Jewell, et al., No. 15-8033 (10th Cir.)

In this appeal of the March 3, 2015 order in 14-CV-152-NDF, Appellants seek review of the District Court’s ruling that BLM complied with the Federal Land Management and Policy Act (FLPMA) and the Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act (WHA) when removing all wild horses from checkerboard portions of three Herd Management Areas in Wyoming. On May 27, 2015, the Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals ordered the parties to brief three jurisdictional issues: 1) whether the District Court’s March 3, 2014 order was a final decision for purposes of appeal, 2) if not, whether the District Court’s May 14, 2015 partial entry of final judgment complied with Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, Rule 54(b), and 3) whether the “administrative remand rule” applies. Appellants filed their jurisdictional brief on June 10, 2015, and the Government’s responded July 1, 2015. On July 2, 2015, the Court referred the jurisdictional briefing to a merits panel and allowed for merits briefing. Appellants briefing was filed November 21, 2015 and the Government’s response brief was filed February 12, 2016.

U.S. Forest Service

California

American Wild Horse Preservation Campaign et al. v. Vilsack et al. 1:14-cv-00485-ABJ (DC). Plaintiffs filed suit March 24, 2014 against the Secretary of Agriculture and U.S. Forest Service (USFS) alleging that the agency violated the Administrative Procedure Act (APA), National Forest Management Act (NFMA), National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA, Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act (WFRHBA) and the implementing regulations for those Acts by modifying the territory boundary for the Devils Garden Plateau Wild Horse Territory and adjusting the existing Appropriate Management Levels (AMLs), to new upper and lower limits. The District Court ruled in favor of the Forest Service on September 30, 2015. Plaintiffs filed a notice of appeal to the Ninth Circuit on 11/25/15.

Note: the text of the Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act of 1971, as amended by Congress since that time, has been compiled, organized, and reproduced below by the Bureau of Land Management as of January 2006

The Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act of 1971 (Public Law 92-195) was amended as follows: Sections 1332 and 1333 were modified by the Public Rangelands Improvement Act of 1978 (Public Law 95-514); Section 1338 was modified by the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (Public Law 94-579); the Omnibus Parks and Public Lands Management Act of 1996 (Public Law 104-333) added Section 1338a.; and Section 1333 was again modified by the Fiscal Year 2005 Omnibus Appropriations Act (Public Law 108-447)

THE WILD FREE-ROAMING HORSES AND BURROS ACT OF 1971 (PUBLIC LAW 92-195)

§1331. Congressional findings and declaration of policy

Congress finds and declares that wild free-roaming horses and burros are living symbols of the historic and pioneer spirit of the West; that they contribute to the diversity of life forms within the Nation and enrich the lives of the American people; and that these horses and burros are fast disappearing from the American scene. It is the policy of Congress that wild free-roaming horses and burros shall be protected from capture, branding, harassment, or death; and to accomplish this they are to be considered in the area where presently found, as an integral part of the natural system of the public lands.

§1332. Definitions

As used in this Act-

- (a) "Secretary" means the Secretary of the Interior when used in connection with public lands administered by him through the Bureau of Land Management and the Secretary of Agriculture in connection with public lands administered by him through the Forest Service;
- (b) "wild free-roaming horses and burros" means all unbranded and unclaimed horses and burros on public lands of the United States;
- (c) "range" means the amount of land necessary to sustain an existing herd or herds of wild free-roaming horses and burros, which does not exceed their known territorial limits, and which is devoted principally but not necessarily exclusively to their welfare in keeping with the multiple-use management concept for the public lands;
- (d) "herd" means one or more stallions and his mares; and

(e) "public lands" means any lands administered by the Secretary of the Interior through the Bureau of Land Management or by the Secretary of Agriculture through the Forest Service.

(f) "excess animals" means wild free-roaming horses or burros

(1) which have been removed from an area by the Secretary pursuant to application law or,

(2) which must be removed from an area in order to preserve and maintain a thriving natural ecological balance and multiple-use relationship in that area.

§1333. Powers and duties of Secretary

(a) Jurisdiction; management; ranges; ecological balance objectives; scientific recommendations; forage allocations adjustments

All wild free-roaming horses and burros are hereby declared to be under the jurisdiction of the Secretary for the purpose of management and protection in accordance with the provisions of this Act. The Secretary is authorized and directed to protect and manage wild free-roaming horses and burros as components of the public lands, and he may designate and maintain specific ranges on public lands as sanctuaries for their protection and preservation, where the Secretary after consultation with the wildlife agency of the State wherein any such range is proposed and with the Advisory Board established in section 1337 of this Act deems such action desirable. The Secretary shall manage wild free-roaming horses and burros in a manner that is designed to achieve and maintain a thriving natural ecological balance on the public lands. He shall consider the recommendations of qualified scientists in the field of biology and ecology, some of whom shall be independent of both Federal and State agencies and may include members of the Advisory Board established in section 1337 of this Act. All management activities shall be at the minimal feasible level and shall be carried out in consultation with the wildlife agency of the State wherein such lands are located in order to protect the natural ecological balance of all wildlife species which inhabit such lands, particularly endangered wildlife species. Any adjustments in forage allocations on any such lands shall take into consideration the needs of other wildlife species which inhabit such lands.

(b) Inventory and determinations; consultations; overpopulations; research study; submittal to Congress

(1) The Secretary shall maintain a current inventory of wild free-roaming horses and burros on given areas of the public lands. The purpose of such inventory shall be to: make determinations as to whether and where an overpopulation exists and whether action should be taken to remove excess animals; determine appropriate management levels of wild free-roaming horses and burros on these areas of the public lands; and determine whether appropriate management levels should be

achieved by the removal or destruction of excess animals, or other options (such as sterilization, or natural controls on population levels). In making such determinations the Secretary shall consult with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, wildlife agencies of the State or States wherein wild free-roaming horses and burros are located, such individuals independent of Federal and State government as have been recommended by the National Academy of Sciences, and such other individuals whom he determines have scientific expertise and special knowledge of wild horse and burro protection, wild-life management and animal husbandry as related to rangeland management.

(2) Where the Secretary determines on the basis of:

(i) the current inventory of lands within his jurisdiction;

(ii) information contained in any land use planning completed pursuant to section 1712 of title 43;

(iii) information contained in court ordered environmental impact statements as defined in section 1902 of title 43; and

(iv) such additional information as becomes available to him from time to time, including that information developed in the research study mandated by this section, or in the absence of the information contained in (i-iv) above on the basis of all information currently available to him, that an overpopulation exists on a given area of the public lands and that action is necessary to remove excess animals, he shall immediately remove excess animals from the range so as to achieve appropriate management levels. Such action shall be taken, in the following order and priority, until all excess animals have been removed so as to restore a thriving natural ecological balance to the range, and protect the range from the deterioration associated with overpopulation.

(A) The Secretary shall order old, sick, or lame animals to be destroyed in the most humane manner possible;

(B) The Secretary shall cause such number of additional excess wild free-roaming horses and burros to be humanely captured and removed for private maintenance and care for which he determines an adoption demand exists by qualified individuals, and for which he determines he can assure humane treatment and care (including proper transportation, feeding, and handling): Provided, that, not more than four animals may be adopted per year by any individual unless the Secretary determines in writing that such individual is capable of humanely caring for more than four animals, including the transportation of such animals by the adopting party.

(C) The Secretary shall cause additional excess wild free-roaming horses and burros for which an adoption demand by qualified individuals does not exist to be destroyed in the most humane and cost efficient manner possible.

(3) For the purpose of furthering knowledge of wild horse and burro population dynamics and their interrelationship with wildlife, forage and water resources, and assisting him in making his determination as to what constitutes excess animals, the Secretary shall contract for a research study of such animals with such individuals independent of Federal and State government as may be recommended by the National Academy of Sciences for having scientific expertise and special knowledge of wild horse and burro protection, wildlife management and animal husbandry as related to rangeland management. The terms and outline of such research study shall be determined by a research design panel to be appointed by the President of the National Academy of Sciences. Such study shall be completed and submitted by the Secretary to the Senate and House of Representatives on or before January 1, 1983.

(c) Title of transferee to limited number of excess animals adopted for requisite period;

Where excess animals have been transferred to a qualified individual for adoption and private maintenance pursuant to this Act and the Secretary determines that such individual has provided humane conditions, treatment and care for such animal or animals for a period of one year, the Secretary is authorized upon application by the transferee to grant title to not more than four animals to the transferee at the end of the one-year period.

(d) Loss of status as wild free-roaming horses and burros; exclusion from coverage

Wild free-roaming horses and burros or their remains shall lose their status as wild free-roaming horses or burros and shall no longer be considered as falling within the purview of this Act-

(1) upon passage of title pursuant to subsection (c) except for the limitation of subsection (c)(1) of this section, or

(2) if they have been transferred for private maintenance or adoption pursuant to this Act and die of natural causes before passage of title; or

(3) upon destruction by the Secretary or his designee pursuant to subsection (b) of this section; or

(4) if they die of natural causes on the public lands or on private lands where maintained thereon pursuant to section 4 and disposal is authorized by the Secretary or his designee; or

(5) upon destruction or death for purposes of or incident to the program authorized in this section.

(e) Sale of excess animals;

(1) In general. Any excess animal or the remains of an excess animal shall be sold if-

(A) the excess animal is more than 10 years old; or

(B) the excess animal has been offered unsuccessfully for adoption at least 3 times.

(2) Method of sale

An excess animal that meets either of the criteria in paragraph (1) shall be made available for sale without limitation, including through auction to the highest bidder, at local sale yards or other convenient livestock selling facilities, until such time as-

(A) all excess animals offered for sale are sold: or

(B) the appropriate management level, as determined by the Secretary is attained in all areas occupied by wild free-roaming horses and burros.

(3) Disposition of funds

Funds generated from the sale of excess animals under this subsection shall be-

(A) credited as an offsetting collection to the Management of Lands and Resources appropriation for the Bureau of Land Management; and

(B) used for the costs relating to the adoption of wild free-roaming horses and burros, including the costs of marketing such adoptions.

(4) Effect of sale. Any excess animal sold under this provision shall no longer be considered to be a wild free-roaming horse or burro for purposes of this Act.

§ 1334. Private maintenance; numerical approximation; strays on private lands; removal; destruction by agents

If wild free-roaming horses or burros stray from public lands onto privately owned land, the owners of such land may inform the nearest Federal marshal or agent of the Secretary, who shall arrange to have the animals removed. In no event shall such wild free-roaming horses and burros be destroyed except by the agents of the Secretary. Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit a private landowner from maintaining wild free-roaming horses or burros on his private lands, or lands leased from the Government, if he does so in a manner that protects them from harassment, and if the animals were not willfully removed or enticed from the public lands. Any individuals who maintain such wild free-roaming horses or burros on their private lands or lands leased from the

Government shall notify the appropriate agent of the Secretary and supply him with a reasonable approximation of the number of animals so maintained.

§ 1335. Recovery rights

A person claiming ownership of a horse or burro on the public lands shall be entitled to recover it only if recovery is permissible under the branding and estray laws of the State in which the animal is found.

§ 1336. Cooperative agreements; regulations

The Secretary is authorized to enter into cooperative agreements with other landowners and with the State and local governmental agencies and may issue such regulations as he deems necessary for the furtherance of the purposes of this Act.

§ 1337. Joint advisory board; appointment; membership; functions; qualifications; reimbursement limitations

The Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture are authorized and directed to appoint a joint advisory board of not more than nine members to advise them on any matter relating to wild free-roaming horses and burros and their management and protection. They shall select as advisers persons who are not employees of the Federal or State Governments and whom they deem to have special knowledge about protection of horses and burros, management of wildlife, animal husbandry, or natural resources management. Members of the board shall not receive reimbursement except for travel and other expenditures necessary in connection with their services.

§1338. Criminal provisions

(a) Violations; penalties; trial.

Any person who-

- (1) willfully removes or attempts to remove a wild free-roaming horse or burro from the public lands, without authority from the Secretary, or
- (2) converts a wild free-roaming horse or burro to private use, without authority from the Secretary, or
- (3) maliciously causes the death or harassment of any wild free-roaming horse or burro, or

(4) except as provided in section 1333 (e), processes or permits to be processed into commercial products the remains of a wild free-roaming horse or burro, or

(5) sells, directly or indirectly, a wild free-roaming horse or burro maintained on private or leased land pursuant to section 1334 of this Act, or the remains thereof, or

(6) willfully violates a regulation issued pursuant to this Act, shall be subject to a fine of not more than \$2,000, or imprisonment for not more than one year, or both. Any person so charged with such violation by the Secretary may be tried and sentenced by any United States commissioner or magistrate designated for that purpose by the court by which he was appointed, in the same manner and subject to the same conditions as provided for in section 3401, title 18.

(b) Arrest; appearance for examination or trial; warrants; issuance and execution.

Any employee designated by the Secretary of the Interior or the Secretary of Agriculture shall have power, without warrant, to arrest any person committing in the presence of such employee a violation of this Act or any regulation made pursuant thereto, and to take such person immediately for examination or trial before an officer or court of competent jurisdiction, and shall have power to execute any warrant or other process issued by an officer or court of competent jurisdiction to enforce the provisions of this Act or regulations made pursuant thereto. Any judge of a court established under the laws of the United States, or any United States magistrate may, within his respective jurisdiction, upon proper oath or affirmation showing probable cause, issue warrants in all such cases.

§ 1338a. Transportation of captured animals; procedures and prohibitions applicable

In administering this Act, the Secretary may use or contract for the use of helicopters or, for the purpose of transporting captured animals, motor vehicles. Such use shall be undertaken only after a public hearing and under the direct supervision of the Secretary or of a duly authorized official or employee of the Department. The provisions of section 47 (a) of title 18 shall not be applicable to such use. Such use shall be in accordance with humane procedures prescribed by the Secretary. Nothing in this Act shall be deemed to limit the authority of the Secretary in the management of units of the National Park System, and the Secretary may, without regard either to the provisions of this Act, or provisions of section 47 (a) of title 18, use motor vehicles, fixed-wing aircraft, or helicopters, or to contract for such use, in furtherance of the management of the National Park System, and section 47 (a) of title 18 shall be applicable to such use.

§ 1339. Limitation of authority

Nothing in this Act shall be construed to authorize the Secretary to relocate wild free-roaming horses or burros to areas of the public lands where they do not presently exist.

§ 1340. Joint report to Congress; consultation and coordination of implementation, enforcement, and departmental activities; studies

After the expiration of thirty calendar months following the date of enactment of this Act, and every twenty-four calendar months thereafter, the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture will submit to Congress a joint report on the administration of this Act, including a summary of enforcement and/or other actions taken thereunder, costs, and such recommendations for legislative or other actions he might deem appropriate.

The Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture shall consult with respect to the implementation and enforcement of this Act and to the maximum feasible extent coordinate the activities of their respective departments and in the implementation and enforcement of this Act. The Secretaries are authorized and directed to undertake those studies of the habits of wild free-roaming horses and burros that they may deem necessary in order to carry out the provisions of this Act.



Release Date: 11/25/15
Contacts: Crystal Cowan, 405-234-5938

BLM Announces Second Call for Nominations to Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board

The Bureau of Land Management today issued a second call for public nominations to fill three positions on its national Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board. To be considered for selection, nominations must be submitted via email or fax by December 28, 2015, or postmarked by the same date. The BLM published its second request for nominations in the Federal Register at <https://federalregister.gov/a/2015-30019>.

Nominations are for a term of three years and are needed to represent the following categories of interest: humane advocacy groups, wildlife management organizations, and livestock management organizations.

Those who have already submitted a nomination in response to the first call for nominations (published in the Federal Register on August 14, 2015 (80 FR 48910)), do not need to resubmit. All nominations from the first and second calls will be considered together during the review process.

The Board advises the BLM, an agency of the Department of the Interior, and the U.S. Forest Service, an agency of the Department of Agriculture, on the protection and management of wild free-roaming horses and burros on public lands administered by those agencies. The Board generally meets twice a year and the BLM Director may call additional meetings when necessary. Members serve without salary, but are reimbursed for travel and per diem expenses according to government travel regulations.

The Advisory Board comprises nine members who represent a balance of interests. Each member has knowledge or special expertise that qualifies him or her to provide advice in one of the following categories: wild horse and burro advocacy; wild horse and burro research; veterinary medicine; natural resources management; humane advocacy; wildlife management; livestock management; public interest (with special knowledge of equine behavior); and public interest (with special knowledge of protection of wild horses and burros, management of wildlife, animal husbandry, or natural resource management).

Individuals shall qualify to serve on the Board because of their education, training, or experience that enables them to give informed and objective advice regarding the interest they represent. They should demonstrate experience or knowledge of the area of their expertise and a commitment to collaborate in seeking solutions to resource management issues.

Any individual or organization may nominate one or more persons to serve on the Advisory Board; individuals may also nominate themselves. In accordance with Section 7 of the Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act, Federal and state government employees are not eligible to serve on the Board.

For those interested, please submit a nomination letter and full resume. The following information must be provided: the position(s) for which the nominee wants to be considered; the nominee's first, middle, and last name; business and home addresses and phone numbers; e-mail address; present occupation/title and employer; education (colleges, degrees, major field(s) of study); career highlights; qualifications: relevant education, training, and experience; experience or knowledge of wild horse and burro management; experience or knowledge of horses or burros (equine health, training, and management); and experience in working with disparate groups to achieve collaborative solutions. Applicants must also indicate any BLM permits, leases, or licenses held by the nominee or his/her employer; indicate whether the nominee is a federally registered lobbyist; and explain why the nominee wants to serve on the Board. Also, at least one letter of reference from special interests or organizations the nominee may represent must be provided.

Nominations may be submitted by e-mail, fax, or regular mail. E-mail the nomination to ccowan@blm.gov. To send by U.S. Postal Service, mail to the National Wild Horse and Burro Program, Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, 1849 C Street, N.W., Room 2134 LM, Attn: Quiana Davis, WO-260, Washington, D.C. 20240. To send by FedEx or UPS, please mail to the National Wild Horse and Burro Program, Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, 20 M Street, S.E., Room 2134 LM, Attn: Quiana Davis, Washington, D.C., 20003. Or fax to Ms. Davis at 202-912-7182. For questions, please call Ms. Cowan at 405-234-5938.

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BLM NEWS RELEASE

U.S. Department of the Interior • Bureau of Land Management • Washington, D.C., Office • 1849 C Street N.W. • Washington, D.C.

Bureau of Land Management
For release: March 9, 2016

Contact: Debbie Collins
405-234-5935/918-625-5292

BLM Seeks Experienced Trainers to Train and Market Wild Horses

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) today announced a new opportunity for experienced horse trainers to participate in a new pilot program called the Trainer Ambassador Pilot Program (TAPP). The goal of TAPP is for the BLM to contract with experienced trainers, using minimal resistance or natural horsemanship techniques, to train wild horses and help the BLM place them into good homes. **Deadline to submit a proposal is April 22, 2016.**

Proposals for the pilot program will only be accepted from trainers residing in the following states: Alabama, Arkansas, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Mississippi, North Carolina, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee, Vermont, Virginia, West Virginia, and Wisconsin.

The proposal should include a description of the applicant's facility, expected feed and care costs, and horse training experience. BLM will reimburse the trainer a flat negotiated training fee and adoption/sales fee once the trained wild horse meets BLM's specific training criteria and is placed into private care.

To review the solicitation: (1) go to www.fedconnect.net ; (2) click on "Search Public Opportunities"; (3) under Search Criteria, select "Reference Number"; (4) put in the solicitation number "L16PS00289"; and (5) click Search" and the solicitation information will appear. The solicitation form describes what to submit and where to send it.

Applicants who have never conducted business with the government must first obtain a Duns and Bradstreet number at www.dnb.com before registering at www.sam.gov/ to do business with the Federal Government. There is no fee involved in registering with sam.gov.

For assistance, visit www.blm.gov/whb to review the resource page or contact Kemi Ismael, 202-912-7098, kismael@blm.gov or Michael Byrd, 202-912-7037, mbyrd@blm.gov. They can assist with general questions and coordinate a meeting for you with a BLM small business specialist. You can also visit the Procurement Technical Assistance Center (PTAC) [website](#). PTAC is funded by the Federal Government to provide assistance with applying to government contracts. Most assistance is free to little charge.

Under the authority of the 1971 Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act, as amended, the BLM manages and protects wild horses and burros while working to ensure that population levels are in balance with other public rangeland resources and uses. The current free-roaming population of BLM-managed wild horses and burros is estimated to be 58,150, as of March 1, 2015, which exceeds by more than 31,435 the number determined by the BLM to be the appropriate management level. The BLM is also using population growth-suppression (PGS) measures, and is supporting research to improve existing and develop new PGS tools.

For general questions about the BLM's Wild Horse and Burro Program, please contact 866-468-7826 or wildhorse@blm.gov.

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Release Date: 02/08/16
Contacts: Debbie Collins, 405-234-5935
Tom Gorey , 202-912-7420

BLM Announces 2016 Wild Horse and Burro Adoption Schedule

In accordance with Federal law, which requires excess wild horses and burros in the West to be placed with caring private owners, the Bureau of Land Management today announced its 2016 adoption schedule for these special animals that evoke the history of the American West. The new adoption schedule can be found at http://www.blm.gov/wo/st/en/prog/whbprogram/adoption_program/schedule.html.

"I urge people from across the country to attend an adoption event this year and bring home one of these icons of the West," said BLM Director Neil Kornze. "Giving a good home to a wild horse or burro has the double benefit of saving taxpayers nearly \$50,000 each time an animal gets adopted."

Kornze added, "Adopters are getting themselves a great companion and in the process are helping to sustain the health and productivity of Western public rangelands."

The BLM manages and protects wild horses and burros under the authority of the [1971 Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act](#) (as amended by Congress in 1976, 1978, 1996, and 2004). This law authorizes the BLM to remove excess wild horses and burros from the range to sustain the health and productivity of the public lands. Currently, more than 47,000 off-range horses and burros are fed and cared for in either off-range corrals or off-range pastures at a cost of \$49 million a year, which accounts for 65 percent of the BLM's Wild Horse and Burro Program budget. Each horse or burro placed into private care saves taxpayers nearly \$50,000.

Wild horses and burros are known for their sure-footedness, strength, intelligence, and endurance. An untrained animal generally costs \$125.

Adoption event sites and dates are subject to change without notice. Please call the National Wild Horse and Burro Information Center for the most updated information (866-4MUSTANGS or 866-468-7826; e-mail: wildhorse@blm.gov).

Wild horses and burros can also be obtained by contacting an [adoption facility](#); by placing a bid during a scheduled [Internet adoption event](#); or by buying sale-eligible animals through the agency's [Sales Program](#). Potential adopters should download the [adoption application](#) from the BLM's Website (www.blm.gov) and review the rules and requirements relating to adoption. For a list of frequently asked questions, and for more information on how to adopt a wild horse or burro, visit the [How to Adopt page](#) or [contact](#) the BLM.

To promote healthy conditions on Western public rangelands, the BLM determines the appropriate management level -- the number of wild horses and burros that can thrive on the range in balance with other public land resources and uses. Wild horses and burros that exceed this West-wide level -- which is 26,715 -- are subject to removal from the range, in accordance with the 1971 law. The current estimated on-range wild horse and burro population, as of March 1, 2015, is 58,150, an 18 percent increase over the 2014 estimate of 49,209. That means the current West-wide on-range population exceeds the appropriate management level by 31,435.

For general information about the BLM's Wild Horse and Burro Program, please visit the agency's Quick Facts and Myths and Facts pages at: http://www.blm.gov/wo/st/en/prog/whbprogram/history_and_facts/quick_facts.html and http://www.blm.gov/wo/st/en/prog/whbprogram/history_and_facts/myths_and_facts.html

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Release Date: 03/11/16
Contacts: Debbie Collins, 405-234-5935/918-625-5292

BLM Seeks Bids for Off-Range Pastures to Care for Wild Horses

The Bureau of Land Management is seeking proposals from contractors who can provide humane care for a minimum of 200 wild horses in a free-roaming pasture setting on an annual basis. This is a perfect opportunity to diversify a ranching operation. The deadline is April 29, 2016.

Proposals must show that the pastures are located in one of the following states: Arkansas, Colorado, Idaho, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Oregon (excluding west of the Cascade Mountain Range), South Dakota, Texas, Utah, Washington (excluding west of the Cascade Mountain Range), and Wyoming.

Each proposal must include documentation to support the land's carrying capacity and the contractor's required per head/day cost. In addition to providing a quality pasture, the contractor is required to provide supplemental feed during the dormant months. The contracts are for a one-year period, with a renewal option for a four-year or nine-year period.

To review the solicitation: (1) go to www.fedconnect.net; (2) click on "Search Public Opportunities"; (3) under Search Criteria, select "Reference Number"; (4) put in the solicitation number "L16PS00305"; and (5) click Search" and the solicitation information will appear. The solicitation form describes what to submit and where to send it for consideration.

Applicants who have never conducted business with the Federal government must first obtain a Dun and Bradstreet number at www.dnb.com before registering at www.sam.gov. There is no fee involved in registering with [sam.gov](http://www.sam.gov).

For assistance, visit www.blm.gov/whb to review the resource page or contact Kemi Ismael, 202-912-7098 (kismael@blm.gov) or Michael Byrd, 202-912-7037 (mbyrd@blm.gov). These contacts can assist with general questions and coordinate a meeting for an applicant with a BLM small business specialist. Contractors may also visit the Procurement Technical Assistance Center (PTAC) [website](http://www.ptac.gov), which provides assistance to applicants for government contracts. Most assistance is free to little charge.

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Release Date: 03/28/16
Contacts: Tom Gorey, 202-912-7420

BLM Announces Three Selections for National Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board

The Bureau of Land Management announced today the selections for three open positions on its nine-member National Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board. Ginger Kathrens of Fort Collins, Colorado, has been appointed for the category of humane advocacy; Ben Masters of Bozeman, Montana, has been appointed for the category of wildlife management; and Steven Yardley of Beaver, Utah, has been appointed for the category of livestock management. Each individual will serve a three-year term on the Advisory Board.

Ms. Kathrens is the Founder and Executive Director of the Colorado-based Cloud Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation of wild horses on public lands. Kathrens is an Emmy award-winning creator of the acclaimed Public Broadcasting System series documenting the birth and life of a Pryor Mountains (Montana) wild stallion called "Cloud." Her first Cloud film was voted the most popular documentary in the 25-year history of the Nature series on PBS. Kathrens is an honor graduate of Bowling Green State University and holds a Master of Art's degree in Mass Communications from Florida State University.

Mr. Masters, founder and Chief Executive Officer of Fin & Fur Films, LLC is best known for his successful documentary Unbranded, an account of a 3,000-mile ride on wild horses that has raised awareness of the BLM's adoption program and the myriad challenges facing public land managers. Masters holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences from Texas A&M University.

Mr. Yardley, Vice President of Yardley Cattle Company, is a public land rancher and private landowner who holds grazing permits from the BLM and the U.S. Forest Service. A graduate of Southern Utah University, Yardley has been active with the Future Farmers of America, Utah Cattlemen's Association, National Cattlemen's Beef Association, and Southern Utah University's Block and Bridle Club. Currently, Mr. Yardley serves as Vice President of the Western Rangelands Conservation Association.

The National Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board advises the BLM, an agency of the Interior Department, and the U.S. Forest Service, part of the Agriculture Department, on the management and protection of wild free-roaming horses and burros on public lands and national forests administered by those agencies, as mandated by the 1971 Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act. Members of the board, who represent various categories of interests, must have a demonstrated ability to analyze information, evaluate programs, identify problems, work collaboratively, and develop corrective actions. (Information about the board can be found at: http://www.blm.gov/wo/st/en/prog/whbprogram/Advisory_Board.html.)

Among its current efforts to strengthen the Wild Horse and Burro Program, the BLM has been moving forward with a population-growth suppression strategy consistent with recommendations of a National Academy of Sciences study issued in June 2013. The agency's new population growth-suppression research, representing an investment of approximately \$11 million in 20 research projects over five years, will focus on (1) developing longer-lasting fertility-control agents; (2) evaluating the safety, feasibility, and effectiveness of spaying and neutering on-range wild horses; and (3) implementing better methods for estimating wild horse and burro populations. To achieve those aims, the BLM is working with the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) and five universities -- the University of Kentucky, Oregon State University, Colorado State University, Ohio State University, and Louisiana State University. Detailed information about each project has been posted on the agency's Website (www.blm.gov).

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Last updated: 03-28-2016



Release Date: 03/31/16
Contacts: Debbie Collins, 405-234-5935 or 918-625-5292

BLM Sets Meeting of National Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board for April in Redmond, Oregon

April 13–14 meeting will be livestreamed at www.blm.gov/live

The Bureau of Land Management's National Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board will meet on April 13-14 in Redmond, Oregon, to discuss issues relating to the management and protection of wild horses and burros on Western public rangelands. The two-day meeting will take place on Wednesday, April 13, from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m., and Thursday, April 14, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. (The meeting times are local time; Redmond is in the Pacific Time Zone.) The meeting will be live-streamed at <http://www.blm.gov/live>.

The agenda of the upcoming meeting can be found in the March 23, 2016, Federal Register at <http://1.usa.gov/1Ry9VEd> (Note: a date correction to the notice is at <http://1.usa.gov/1RMSJ0s>). The meeting will be held at the Deschutes Fair & Expo, 3800 SW Airport Way, Redmond, Oregon. The expo's Website address is <http://www.expo.deschutes.org>; its phone number is 541-548-2711.

The Advisory Board provides input and advice to the BLM as it carries out its responsibilities under the 1971 Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act. The law mandates the protection and management of these free-roaming animals in a manner that ensures healthy herds at levels consistent with the land's capacity to support them. According to the BLM's latest official estimate, approximately 58,150 wild horses and burros roam on BLM-managed rangelands in 10 Western states.

The public may address the Advisory Board on Wednesday, April 13, from 3:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m., local time. Individuals who want to make a statement at Wednesday's meeting should register in person with the BLM by 3:15 p.m. local time, on that same day at the meeting site. Depending on the number of speakers, the Board may limit the length of presentations, set at three minutes for previous meetings.

Speakers should submit a written copy of their statement to the BLM at the addresses below or bring a copy to the meeting. There will be a Webcam present during the entire meeting and individual comments may be recorded. Those who would like to comment but are unable to attend may submit a written statement to: National Wild Horse and Burro Program, WO-260, Attention: Ramona DeLorme, 1340 Financial Boulevard, Reno, Nevada, 89502-7147. Comments may also be e-mailed to the BLM (at whbadvisoryboard@blm.gov); please include "Advisory Board Comment" in the subject line of the e-mail.

For additional information regarding the meeting, please contact Ms. DeLorme, Wild Horse and Burro Administrative Assistant, at 775-861-6583. Individuals who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may reach Ms. DeLorme during normal business hours by calling the Federal Information Relay Service at 1-800-877-8339.

The Advisory Board generally meets twice a year and the BLM Director may call additional meetings when necessary. Members serve without salary, but are reimbursed for travel and per diem expenses according to government travel regulations.

In its management of wild horses and burros under the 1971 Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act, the BLM is implementing recommendations made by a June 2013 report of the National Academy of Sciences. Among other things, the BLM is taking actions to increase the use of population growth-suppression measures on overpopulated herds roaming Western public rangelands and implementing methods developed by the U.S. Geological Survey for more accurate population estimates.

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Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board Membership Nomination Process

Each year, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) requests nominations for the Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board (Board) from individuals, national organizations, and associations involved with, and interested in, the protection and management of wild horses and burros on public lands administered by the Department of Interior through the BLM and by the U.S. Forest Service (USFS).

One-third of the Board positions are vacated each year. The Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act directs that Board membership reflect special knowledge about protection of horses and burros, management of wildlife, animal husbandry, or natural resource management. The positions on the Board are specified in the National Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board Charter. The Board members are appointed to serve 3-year terms.

Before a Board position reaches its expiration date the BLM starts the selection process. The selection process is as follows:

- The BLM Washington Office issues a public announcement in the *Federal Register* (www.federalregister.gov) and a press release calling for nominations. The public announcement is shared with state and local news media and posted at www.blm.gov and at www.blm.gov/wo/st/en/prog/whbprogram.html.
- After the nomination period closes, all nominations are reviewed. Nominees are evaluated based on their education, training, and experience that qualify them to serve in the position for which they have been nominated; experience or knowledge of wild and horse and burro management; experience or knowledge of horses and burros (equine health, training, and management); and experience in working to achieve collaborative solutions on challenging issues where there are diverse viewpoints. Consideration is also given to the BLM's advisory committee regulations (43 CFR 1784), that require each committee to be structured to provide fair membership balance, both geographic and interest-specific, in terms of the functions to be performed and points of view to be represented.
- The Director of the BLM and BLM's Assistant Director for Resources and Planning (who serves as the Designated Federal Officer for the Board) are briefed on the nominations received.
- The nominations are sent to the Department of Interior's (DOI) Office of the White House Liaison for vetting.
- After concurrence by the Office of the White House Liaison, the appointments are approved by the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture. After the appointment letters are mailed to the appointees, all other nominees are notified that they were not selected and encouraged to reapply. The BLM issues a news release announcing the selection of the members.

