

Draft
National Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board Meeting
Reno, NV

November 17, 2008

Board Members Present: Robin Lohnes; Gary Zakotnik; Larry Johnson; Dr. Vernon Dooley; Richard Sewing; Dr. Wayne Burkhardt; Renee Taylor; and Dr. Boyd Spratling. Board Member Absent: Melissa Scott. Washington Office Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Staff: Deputy Director, Henri Bisson; Deputy Director, Renewable Resources and Planning, Ed Roberson; Don Glenn; Dean Bolstad; Sally Spencer; Ramona DeLorme; and EK James. BLM Nevada State Director, Ron Wenker and Nevada State Wild Horse and Burro Lead, Susie Stokke. USDA, APHIS veterinarian, Dr. Al Kane.

Robin Lohnes opened the meeting at 8:17 a.m. She introduced the Advisory Board Members to the public and noted the Public Interest position is currently vacant and that position is not represented.

Welcoming Remarks

Ed Roberson introduced himself and the BLM officials in attendance. He noted that Henri Bisson would be speaking after lunch. He stated the program has changed over the years; however, there still are a lot of opportunities and challenges within the program. The goal of the program is healthy horses on healthy rangelands; and BLM and everyone would like to find good homes for the horses that need to be removed from the range. There will be a presentation on the Government Accountability Office Report. BLM appreciates the work of the Board.

Nevada Report

Ron Wenker welcomed the Board to Nevada. He noted Nevada has the highest number of horses on the range and the wild horse and burro program will always be an important program to the state. Nevada has come a long way with horse management. Today, Nevada estimates a population of 18,800 animals. The Appropriate Management Level (AML) is 12,618, which is about 6,000 over AML. Nevada BLM has been focusing their attention to set AMLs for all Herd Management Areas (HMAs). BLM is working with the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) to improve census techniques.

Nevada is still facing challenges; it is in the 10th consecutive year of drought. In FY2008, Nevada removed 3,800 animals, with 2,900 removals done under emergency gathers. Nevada State Office will be keeping a close watch in FY2009 for poor forage and water conditions. There are about 2,300 animals that may need to be removed under emergency gathers. Also, if money becomes available, Nevada BLM would plan to do normal gathers of about 1,100 animals.

Nevada has had good success with multiple partners such as the Mustang Heritage Foundation and the Northern Nevada Correctional Facility, which has a new wild horse facility making it more accessible to the public.

The Board asked about the AML of 12,618. Ron explained one of the reasons the number has decreased from 13,200 to 12,618 is that the Ely District had combined some HMAs and returned some HMAs to herd area status due to insufficient habitat to manage for healthy and diverse populations of wild horses over the long-term.

Susie Stokke addressed the Board and said she appreciated the Mustang Heritage Foundation and the National Wild Horse Association. Nearly 1,000 Nevada mustangs have been trained and adopted through various Mustang Makeovers, Challenges, and adoption events. As a result of finding these animals good homes, a savings of \$12.5 million dollars in holding costs will be realized over the next 20 years. Susie thanked the Advisory Board members who attended a field trip to look at range and horse conditions recently. Dr. Boyd Spratling attended the Callahan Complex HMA trip and Larry Johnson attended the Buffalo Hills HMA trip. They noted there was very little forage and the horses' body conditions were 3 and 4. There are 1,900 animals at risk in these HMAs.

June 30, 2008 Minutes

The Board asked for two corrections on the minutes. The first is in Attachment 1. The word "call" should be "class". The second is in the Recommendations. The date June 30, 3008 should be June 30, 2008. The Board approved the June 30, 2008 minutes.

Status of Nominations

Sally Spencer reported the Nominations Package for the positions of Wild Horse and Burro Advocacy, Veterinary Medicine, and Public Interest are presently going through the approval process within the U.S. Forest Service and the Secretary's Office of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). With the USDA vetting process and the fact the government is in the midst of the holiday season and the administration transition, BLM hopes appointments will be completed within 2 months.

Sally noted in the next few months, BLM will prepare a new Federal Register Notice for requests for nomination for the positions of Humane Advocacy, Wildlife Management, and Livestock Management. These positions expire on November 6, 2009.

Robin explained the nomination process and noted the Bylaws allow members to continue to serve on the Board until a replacement/or re-nomination is in place.

BLM Response to Recommendations

1. The National Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board recommended that the BLM review its census data to ensure that adjustments are taken into account to reflect a more accurate number of horses on the range. The Advisory Board would like an update at the next meeting.

BLM Response: Dean Bolstad reported that according to research being conducted by the US Geological Survey (USGS), the aerial direct count method of population estimation that BLM has primarily relied on in the past years substantially and variably under-counts horses in many cases. Two new inventory methods, simultaneous double-count and photographic mark-resight, have been developed by USGS through a research project that started in 2004. These methods should provide more accurate estimates of horse population numbers because statistically analysis is used to account for animals that are not seen during aerial surveys. Results of the research will be published in the upcoming year.

Dean also stated that implementation and use of these new methods will require training for BLM specialists to ensure that the best method is selected for each HMA and each survey is conducted properly. BLM would like to begin implementation this fiscal year and is in discussions with USGS to determine the best approach. Use of these new methods in all inventories will not occur immediately because of the extent of the training required. BLM will keep the Board informed of their progress.

The Board asked if there was money for the training in the Wild Horse and Burro Budget. Dean said that the money will come from the Wild Horse and Burro Program. Also, BLM will need a statistician which will be an additional and substantial cost of implementation.

2. The National Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board recommended that the BLM identify three HMAs for sex ratio modifications and non-reproducing gelding herds.

BLM Response: Dean stated that herd sex ratio adjustments to favor males, by managing for either greater numbers of stallions or a gelding herd component, have the potential to suppress population growth. Non-reproducing herds may also have a place in herd management and may be helpful to reduce long term holding expenses.

The proposals for sex ratio adjustments or non-reproducing herd status are more appropriately identified by local field offices and analyzed in National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) documents. BLM will keep the Board informed as opportunities for this kind of management action are identified and proposed.

3. The National Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board recommended that the BLM act timely to complete the final Herd Management Area manual and requested a status report at the next meeting.

BLM Response: Dean reported that the draft 4710 Herd Management Manual is completed and has been distributed to field offices for review. BLM anticipates that field comments

will be incorporated and a final draft sent to the Washington Office in January 2009 for final review and implementation. The Board requested a copy of the draft manual be sent to them once the internal review is complete.

Pending Litigation

Don Glenn reported the following and current potential litigations:

In Montana, the District Court ruled in favor of the BLM in the Pryor Mountain PZP litigation. However, the other part of this case was against the U.S. Forest Service to expand the wild horse range. In that case, the District Court ruled in favor of the U.S. Forest Service. The litigants have now appealed the ruling to the 9th Circuit. The BLM Solicitor does not feel the PZP portion is part of that appeal.

The Nevada Wild Horse Commission recommended the State of Nevada file a suit that would require BLM to achieve and maintain AML in Nevada. There is no change from the last Board meeting.

In Colorado, the plaintiffs filed for summary judgment against the proposal to remove all horses from the West Douglas HMA. BLM will issue a gather plan in July 2009 and an injunction is expected. The gather plan for the 2008 removal was signed; however, the gather was cancelled for budget reasons. There were no appeals through Interior Board of Land Appeals (IBLA) and no injunctions filed. The document is on hold until BLM obtains a decision from the judge. All NEPA requirements have been met and BLM is prepared to go forward with a gather provided the judge issues a favorable decision.

The Wyoming Department of Agriculture has requested information regarding the gathers to comply with the Wyoming Consent Decree. BLM informed them that funding was not available at this time to conduct the gathers. Litigation is possible.

Budget Update

Don Glenn reported the FY2009 budget is \$36.2 million under the Continuing Resolution. There was a \$1.8 million carryover from the FY2008 budget. Most of the money will be going to holding which will leave little money for other program needs. Adoption fees are placed in the 5200 account. Also, there will no longer be Fire money available for emergency gathers.

Gather Update

Dean Bolstad presented the completed gathers for FY2008. He also presented a list of tentatively approved gathers for FY2009. The gathers that have been approved support relief from emergency range conditions, fertility control research, and gathers paid for by the U.S. Forest Service.

There was a discussion on body condition scoring of animals at emergency gathers. Animal & Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) veterinarians have assisted BLM with evaluation of the horses. Emergency gathers are conducted when range evaluations determine there is a shortage of forage and/or water resources for horses, and may be conducted when animal condition has declined or is threatened as a result of poor range conditions.

Dean stated that gathers tentatively scheduled for July and August of 2009 will be paid by Forest Service or the benefiting subactivities.

Dean also noted the Pryor Mountains have never been declared an emergency; however, BLM is being proactive and will continue to monitor and assess the situation.

Adoption and Sale Update

Dean Bolstad reported on adoptions and sales. In FY2008, there were 3,693 animals adopted and 351 were sold. In comparison with FY2007, there were 883 fewer animals adopted. As of November 12, 2008, there were 418 animals adopted: 365 wild horses and 53 burros. In comparison with FY2008, there have been 59 fewer animals adopted. There have been 42 animals sold to date in FY2009.

Each State has submitted their list of planned adoptions with a budgetary justification for FY2009. There have been 25 adoption events through March that have been approved. BLM continues to use the Save the Mustangs Fund for 501 (c) 3 groups that are able to raise public awareness about the Wild Horse and Burro Program and provide a good home for the animals. BLM continues to promote this Fund as a means for people to donate money to help find homes for the horses.

Dean stated there is a new link on the website called Monthly Review of the Wild Horse and Burro Program. This link lists gather, adoption, sale, and holding facility information.

The Board would like historical information added to the website. It was noted this information had once been posted, but errors were found and the information is being revised.

The Board requested BLM present a comparison of the number of animals adopted in FY2001 through FY2008 and the budget allocations to the Adoption Program each year.

The Board also asked if there had been an increase in the number of animals returned to BLM in FY2008. BLM noted that approximately 500 animals were returned in FY2008 and in past years 300 animals were returned. The Board then discussed the economic problems in the horse market. It was noted most of the animals were returned because the adopters could not afford them.

Facility and Pipeline Reports

Dean Bolstad provided an update on short- and long-term holding facilities. On November 3, 2008, there were 8,061 horses and 194 burros in short-term holding facilities that have a total capacity of 15,245 animals. There were 22,234 horses in long-term holding facilities that have a total capacity of 22,100. The long-term holding facilities are full.

Research Update

The BLM and the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) are collaborating on a fertility control research project that will be conducted in the Sand Wash HMA in Colorado and the Cedar Mountain HMA in Utah.

The new Fertility Control Instruction Memorandum will incorporate protocols for darting. There are other Instruction Memorandums that are being updated and reissued including:

- Gelding of Wild Horses/Burros and Gelding Vouchers
- Managing Planned, Escalating Problem and Emergency Gathers
- Wild Horse & Burro Genetic Baseline Sampling and Monitoring
- Population-Level Fertility Control Field Trials: Herd Management Area (HMA) Selection, Vaccine Application, Monitoring and Reporting Requirements
- Wild Horse and Burro Vaccinations in Short Term Holding Facilities

2008 Public Land Statistics

The FY2008 Public Land Statistics will be published this spring and wild horse and burro statistics will be listed on the BLM website in early 2009.

Forest Service Update

No Forest Service representatives attended the meeting.

Mustang Heritage Foundation

Patti Colbert, Executive Director, of the Mustang Heritage Foundation (MHF) reported that Velma “Wild Horse Annie” Johnston was inducted into the National Cowgirl Hall of Fame and she introduced all trustees in attendance. Since September 2007, the MHF has adopted more than 800 mustangs through the Extreme Mustang Makeover and Challenge Events and the Trainer Incentive Program. Patti discussed how the MHF and the BLM have worked together to make these events a success. There are more than 91 approved Trainer Incentive Program trainers participating in the program. She also noted there are over 700 trainers in their database and over 10,000 people signed up for their electronic broadcasts. Mustang Nation, the virtual adoption and education piece, should be released soon. Patti discussed the tentative Makeover

events for 2009. She also discussed the MHF Adoption Plan, creative programs within the horse industry and letters of support the MHF has received.

The Board requested a copy of the Mustang Heritage Foundation's Adoption Plan.

GAO Report

Jeffery Malcolm, of the Government Accountability Office (GAO), stated the report is now available to the public and there is a link to the report on the BLM website. Jeff gave an overview of the GAO and reported that the GAO is within the Legislative Branch of the Government and they review Executive Branch programs. The request to review the Wild Horse and Burro Program came from the House Natural Resources Committee. The GAO did a previous review of the Program in 1990. The report uses Government Auditing Standards.

The Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act does not use terms like expand and increase, but focuses on preserving herds as they were in 1971 and the language in the Act is sparse. The acreage issue was not addressed because the BLM is currently reviewing it and the GAO needs a baseline body of work to review.

The report covers four questions: BLM's progress in setting and meeting AML; BLM's management of animals off the range through adoptions, sales, and holding facilities; BLM's controls to help ensure the humane treatment of animals; and what challenges, if any, BLM faces in managing for the long-term sustainability of the program. Jeff noted progress has been made since the 1990 report; however, some guidance's is still lacking. Many factors were considered and GAO spoke with headquarters and state offices.

The report noted BLM has made significant progress toward setting and meeting AML and that the field offices GAO surveyed considered similar factors in determining AML, such as rangeland conditions; however, BLM has not provided specific formal guidance to the field offices on how to set AML.

Recommendation #1: To improve the management of BLM's Wild Horse and Burro Program, the Secretary of the Interior should direct BLM to finalize and issue the new Wild horse and Burro Program Handbook that establishes a policy for setting AML to ensure that AML is determined based on consistent factors across HMAs in the future.

The report noted BLM has made significant progress toward meeting AML, but some HMAs remains far over AML. BLM has established a formal policy on gathers and removals that specifies the key factors that should be considered in the decision-making process. Also, research and experience have shown BLM's on-the-range management population estimates are too low.

Recommendation #2: To improve the management of BLM's Wild Horse and Burro Program, the Secretary of the Interior should direct BLM to continue to adopt and employ statistically

based methods to estimate animal populations across HMAs, such as those being evaluated by animal population researchers, to improve the accuracy of population estimates integral to BLM's management of wild horses and burros on the range, and in planning for capacity needed for excess animals once they are removed from the range.

The report noted the declining adoptions and sales have increased the need for short-term and long-term holding facilities, and holding costs have increased. Also, BLM has implemented multiple controls to help ensure humane treatment, including random checks on adopted horses and agreements with adopters and buyers to prevent slaughter.

Recommendation #3: To improve the management of BLM's Wild Horse and Burro Program, the Secretary of the Interior should direct BLM to continue to track the number of animals harmed or killed during the gather process in a centralized database system and determine what information on the treatment of gathered animals, short-term and long-term holding animals, and adopted animals could easily be provided to the public to help inform them about the treatment of wild horses and burros.

The report noted challenges to the long-term sustainability of the program include growing holding costs and limited options for dealing with unadoptable animals. If these challenges are not controlled, off-the-range holding costs will continue to overwhelm the program.

Recommendation #4: To improve the management of BLM's Wild Horse and Burro Program, the Secretary of the Interior should direct BLM to develop cost-effective alternatives to the process of caring for wild horses removed from the range in long-term holding facilities and seek the legislative changes that may be necessary to implement those alternatives.

The report noted that under the current law BLM's options are limited for dealing with unadoptable animals. Also, under Government Auditing Standards, the GAO is duty bound to report an Agency to Congress when the law is apparently not being followed.

Recommendation #5: To address BLM's noncompliance with the Act, as amended, the Secretary of the Interior should direct BLM to discuss with Congress and other stakeholders how best to comply with the Act or amend it so that BLM would be able to comply. As part of this discussion, BLM should inform Congress of its concerns with (1) the Act's requirement for the humane destruction of excess animals and (2) the possible slaughter of healthy horses if excess animals are sold without limitation, under certain circumstances, as the Act requires.

Jeff commented that he often heard, during the audit, if animals were not removed there would not be a problem. However, Jeff stated regardless of the current number of horses on the land, the number will eventually reach and exceed a capacity threshold on the land. He noted that this would create a problem as to what BLM will do the next year. BLM will have the same situation it has now, but will be in worse shape with larger number of animals. It is all of the pipeline management process. Populations increase until they reach that threshold and animals need to be removed.

The GAO will continue to follow-up and track the five recommendations annually. The Board asked if the recommendations were evenly rated and Jeff reported they all have equal priority. The Board asked about the acreage issue. Jeff responded the GAO did not look into that because they had limited resources and the BLM is currently working on the issue and therefore, it is not ready to review.

The Board thanked the GAO for a good report and requested BLM provide a response to the GAO Recommendations at the next meeting.

Mustang Heritage Foundation (continued)

Patti Colbert showed the Wild Horse Annie induction video from the National Cowgirl Hall of Fame and highlights of this past year's Extreme Mustang Makeovers and Challenges. She noted that the MHF is only a yearling (young organization).

The Board noted the funding agreement between the U.S. Forest Service and BLM will expire September 30, 2009 and the Board recommends the partnership continues.

New Business

Henri Bisson discussed that BLM has a difficult challenge and there are different opinions on what to do. The Wild Horse and Burro staff is focusing on these challenges. BLM has received over 40,000 comments, has a GAO report and will receive some Board recommendations. Henri Bisson noted BLM could react quickly, but will let cooler heads and minds prevail. BLM is working with groups who are willing to take horses. It is trying to find homes for horses on private and public lands, but cannot mix horses from the long-term holding pastures with horses currently on HMAs. BLM is focusing on ranch lands and has been contacted by people interested in taking 2,000 to 5,000 horses. BLM is focused on helping the horses before resorting to other alternatives. BLM is making no decisions today or next week. It is pursuing reprogramming of money until things settle down.

Mr. Bisson stated that BLM is restructuring the gathers. No gathers will be performed without the approval of the Assistant Director and would need to be identified as essential. BLM needs to give people time to decide. Also, Congress has not yet read the GAO report. The administration is in transition and does not want to move too soon. BLM will discuss these important issues with Congress; however, it is not lobbying or asking for money. If BLM is unsuccessful at the end of the fiscal year (September 30, 2009) in placing horses in good homes and Congress does not change the law, then a decision will need to be made.

The Board thanked Henri for his leadership. He said that Ed Roberson will work with everyone and will make tough decisions. Also, he believes that the intent of the Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act is to share with other resources.

Subcommittee Recommendation

A subcommittee of the National Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board was asked to explore all alternatives to reducing holding costs. The subcommittee members presented their 18 recommendations and asked that discussion be postponed until after the public comments. As a representative of the Wild Horse and Burro Advocacy and on behalf of the constituents she represents, Robin Lohnes noted that she could not and will not support the subcommittee's recommendation #16, relating to sale without limitation and euthanasia. Dr. Boyd Spratling stated that considering the herds on the range and as well as the herds in long-term holding, the legal and ethical issues involved, and the specific requirements of the Act, he could support the subcommittee's recommendation #17.

The Board asked Dr. Albert Kane, USDA, APHIS Veterinary Services, his thoughts pertaining to the recommendations. Dr. Kane stated he could not give an official APHIS response without asking the agency for that. However, he did participate in the work of the subcommittee and he would comment as a veterinarian and advisor who has been working with the BLM for the past six years or so.

Dr. Kane noted that for clarification, we are not talking about the euthanasia of animals for reasons related to animal health, welfare or handling. What we are talking about are excess animals that have already been removed from the range where the supply of those animals exceeds the adoption and sale demand and the animals remain unadopted and unsold. Under these conditions and where the demands of caring for these animals consume resources to the extent that it threatens the ability to properly manage the overall Program and provide appropriate care for the animals, he recognizes that the euthanasia of animals that remain unadopted and unsold may be an unfortunate and regrettable but necessary management decision. With this in mind, he does support the recommendation of the subcommittee.

He also believes an official opinion from APHIS Veterinary Services would follow the opinion and policy of the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) which does not oppose the euthanasia of unwanted animals when done in accordance with the AVMA's guidelines for euthanasia. He believes this also follows the views of some of the other groups that we often look to for guidance such as the American Association of Equine Practitioners (AAEP).

Richard Sewing stated he has a non-use cattle permit from the BLM, and has observed that the range land is in bad shape and the horses are depleting the land, adding that he has noticed that some advocacy groups do nothing at all.

Public Comments

Public comment began at 2:45 p.m.

Subcommittee Recommendation (continued)

The Board discussed the subcommittee recommendations and added two additional recommendations. The Board recommendations are attached.

The Board requested that the BLM have a report of the reduction of acreage at the next meeting. Also, the Board requested BLM provide a copy of the August 16, 1999, Immunocontraceptive Guidelines.

The Board requested that the recommendations be posted on the website.

Next Meetings

The next meetings are scheduled as follows:

February 23, 2009 in Reno, Nevada

June 8, 2009 in Reno, Nevada

November 16, 2009 in Reno, Nevada

Meeting adjourned at 5:46 pm.

National Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board Recommendations
Reno, Nevada

November 17, 2008

1. Recommend that BLM explore the viability of semi-privatizing the Adopt-A-Horse Program.
2. Recognizing that horses 11 years or older are currently sale eligible with the intent clause, recommend that younger horses also become sale eligible with the intent clause after they have been offered for adoption three times and have been available for adoption for 90 days. "Offered for adoption" includes satellite events, Internet adoptions, and each day a facility is open for adoption.
3. Recommend that BLM expand wild horse sales by offering organizations with existing adoption/sale networks such as wild horse advocacy groups, 501(c)(3) organizations, and private individuals an opportunity to adopt/purchase groups of sale eligible animals for virtual adoptions, rehoming or sale to approved homes.
4. Recommend that BLM advertise and market sale eligible animals (with the intent clause) in foreign countries with known good homes by offering "select sales" for sale eligible animals 11 years of age and over, and for younger animals that have been offered for adoption three times during a 90 day period.
5. Recommend that BLM continue to explore opportunities to foster foreign aid by providing sale eligible animals (with the intent clause) to foreign countries for agricultural (nonfood) use.
6. Recommend that BLM explore assistance agreements with wild horse advocacy groups and 501(c)(3) organizations to offset the costs of LTH, including but not limited to, assuming direct ownership of animals not adopted or sold, partnering with the Save The Mustang Fund to raise funds specifically for LTH care, and/or assisting in the placement of sale eligible animals through cooperative marketing efforts and increased public awareness.
7. Recommend that BLM disseminate information to horse advocacy groups, 501(c)(3) organizations, and private individuals interested in acquiring BLM livestock grazing permits through the purchase of private base property (requiring the conversion of livestock AUMs to horse AUMs in accordance with terms and conditions of the grazing permit) in order to provide long term private care for non-reproducing purchased or adopted animals.
8. Recommend that BLM provide the necessary information to wild horse advocacy groups, 501(c)(3) organizations, and private individuals who may be interested in contracting with existing livestock permittees to provide fee based long term care for purchased or adopted animals.
9. Recommend that BLM recognize that in the attempt to slow population growth, unproven field techniques may be considered and utilized, and as such, these new management practices

Approved: 03/02/09

shall be done on a conditional basis and until the effects of these practices and their applicability to future wild horse management are demonstrated to be effective through monitoring.

10. Recommend that BLM not use spaying of mares and vasectomies for stallions as population control methods unless these methods can be demonstrated as safe, practical and effective.

11. Recommend that BLM and the WH&B Advisory Board revisit the existing immunocontraception guidelines (dated August 16, 1999) to explore additional fertility control methodology and protocols to include, but not be limited to, agents that might be permanent for stallions or mares.

12. Recommend that BLM seek additional, dedicated funding, independent of proposed annual gather targets, for at least two HMAs per year in Nevada (as the first priority) that are at or near AML for specific techniques relating to the suppression of population growth rates, including but not limited to fertility control, adjusting sex ratios and/or adding a gelding component. Such funding would include monies for all census, population modeling, gathers, field monitoring, and the recruitment of additional personnel to assist in field monitoring related to each project.

13. Recommend that BLM implement changes to herd sex ratios to favor males in select HMAs where population growth suppression is desired. The sex ratio may be adjusted to favor males either by increasing the stallion to mare ratio or by adding a gelding component to the herd. As a minimum baseline for all wild horse herds, no herd should be managed for a sex ratio with a mare component greater than 50 percent. The effects of using sex ratios to favor males shall be monitored in select HMAs to determine, at a minimum, the effects of these practices on population growth and their applicability to future wild horse management.

14. In order to reduce the number of excess animals that need to be gathered, recommend that BLM consider criteria for establishing non-reproductive herds in select HMAs, especially where resource availability impacts the ability of the herd to be self sustaining.

15. Recommend that for all emergency gathers BLM have a veterinarian present, and that animals in the field that exhibit signs of disease, stress or body condition that would render them more susceptible to life threatening illness when moved into a holding facility be humanely euthanized.

16. As a last resort, recommend that sale eligible animals not sold or adopted after a period of 30 days be offered for sale without limitation (without the intent clause) or be humanely euthanized pursuant to current law unless the Director determines there is a viable alternative.*

*Robin Lohnes, Co-Chair and representative of Wild Horse Advocacy does not support recommendation #16.

17. Recommend that to accommodate the differences in operational capabilities among BLM and BLM-contracted facilities, the humane euthanasia of excess animals for which an adoption

or sale demand does not exist (as described in #16, above) may include, but not be limited to, contracting for on-site and/or off-site humane euthanasia and carcass disposal. Humane euthanasia for these reasons will be performed only by a veterinarian or under the direct supervision of a veterinarian in accordance with American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) guidelines and in compliance with the applicable state veterinary practice acts and applicable state, county or municipal laws or regulations.

18. Recommend that BLM continue to support the Mustang Heritage Foundation and the expansion of their activities.

19. Recommend that the USDA, Forest Service continue to provide funding to the BLM for the next 5 years (FY2010-FY2015) for wild horse and burro work conducted by the BLM for the Forest Service.