

Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board Meeting  
Recommendations to Bureau of Land Management  
July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021

**Comprehensive Ecosystem**

**Recommendation 1:** The current and likely continuance of the unprecedented drought situation in much of the Intermountain West and Desert Southwest, has revealed the need for a viable, catastrophic WH&B contingency plan for this and future protracted drought scenarios. Board recommends BLM immediately develop and implement as necessary an emergency action plan including the capacity to gather and house an unprecedented number of equids, coincidentally contacting FEMA and Interior regarding possible funding, and issuing an emergency declaration. The intent of this is to restore a thriving natural ecological balance, prevent further range degradation, and provide for habitat that exists and persists in the future.

Vote: Unanimous

**Recommendation 2:** Board recommends BLM identify two (2) HMAs, one horse and one burro, and Forest Service identifies 2-3 territories, to implement a comprehensive gather-contraception program based on the best population models, to meet established AMLs and demonstrate successful planning/management outcomes.

Vote: Unanimous

## **Humane Handling and Communication**

**Recommendation 3:** A comprehensive and standardized “gather preparation and evaluation” brochure and on-site presentation should be developed by BLM to be shared with the public observing gathers. This presentation would include but not be limited to:

- A. What is normal behavior/physiology for horses and burros
- B. What is going to happen and when during the gather
- C. What the end result could be (ie. Mortality and morbidity statistics)
- D. Process for immediate debriefing participating public post-gather

Vote: Unanimous

**Alternate Statement:** The Board is aware of the public’s concerns and appreciates the thorough investigation and subsequent outcome of BLM’s efforts to properly ensure the welfare of adopted horses and burros to the best of their ability/to closure.

Vote: Unanimous

**Recommendation 4:** The Board recommends pursuing alternative, non-cash incentives to ensure a high standard of welfare for adopted wild horses and burros.

Vote: 8-1

## **Organizational Structure, Advisory Board Interaction, Collaboration**

**Recommendation 5:** Recommended that Board members attend WHB activities in order to gain a better understanding of how all portions of the program are implemented to utilize them to educate and communicate with outside stakeholders.

Vote: Unanimous

**Recommendation 5.5:** Recommended that BLM utilize and involve Board members based on their individual expertise on an ongoing basis.

Vote: Unanimous

**Recommendation 6:** In order to improve the WHB program's efficiencies and coordination, especially the ability to respond to emergency situations, the Board recommends that an outside (non-government) third party be retained to study, identify and make best practice recommendations for systemic improvements in the WHB program.

Vote: Unanimous

**Recommendation 7:** The Board recommends that BLM leadership direct BLM state directors to comply with national strategic WHB program plans and standardized data collections methods.

Vote: Unanimous