

ROUGHLY EDITED TRANSCRIPT

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
WILD HORSE AND BURRO ADVISORY BOARD MEETING
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>> KATHIE LIBBY: Ladies and gentlemen -- ladies and gentlemen, ladies and gentlemen, we've got about three minutes.

We have three minutes before we start.

So I just want to give you the time to comfortably get yourselves settled and your four-legged friends as well.

>> FRED WOHL: The meeting will now come to order.

First order of business is something that I'm always honored to be able to do.

I would like every veteran in the house to stand up, if you served in the Army or the Navy or the military, or currently serving, we would like to honor you at this time.

If you are a member of the US Armed Forces, please stand.

(Applause)

And if everybody else will please stand, we will take the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

Thank y'all.

Thanks, everybody, for coming this afternoon.

We want to welcome you.

We are very happy to be here in the great state of Oregon.

We are honored to be here and we have lots of work to do.

So we are going to get right into it.

Our first order of business and we're honored to be able to do this too, is we have three brand new Board members.

We are going to -- every Board member is going to introduce themselves.

But we will start with these three.

I will start over here to my left.

Steven, tell everybody who you are.

>> STEVEN YARDLEY: I'm Steven Yardley, from Beaver, Utah.

I represent the livestock industry.

We have a cow/calf operation and a feedstock operation down in southern Utah.

We raise and sell about 200 head of bulls annually throughout the nation and Canada and Mexico.

I'm very excited and pleased to be working on the Board and with these members of the Board.

>> FRED WOEHL: Thank you, Steven.

Ms. Ginger.

>> GINGER KATHRENS: Hi, I'm Ginger Kathrens, I'm the executive director of the Cloud Foundation and I'm very pleased and surprised to be a member of this Board and I hope to represent the wild horses and burros and the humane advocate.

>> FRED WOEHL: And last but not least of the new Board members is Ben.

>> BEN MASTERS: Hello, my name is Ben Masters.

I'm the wildlife management position.

I'm also very nervous right now.

(Laughter)

But, you know, I guess the last five or six years of my life, I devoted to wild horses and trying to get them adopted.

You know, searching for a humane solution.

And I just -- I don't know which power it be I need to thank for allowing me to sit on this Board, but I'm very excited and hope to make a difference.

>> FRED WOEHL: Thank you, Ben.

Jen.

>> JENNIFER SALL: My name is Jen Sall and I live in Wyoming.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: I'm from Idaho which is 90% federal land and as such representing resource management.

>> DR. SUE McDONNELL: I'm Sue McDonnell, I live in west Chester, Pennsylvania, I'm at the University of Pennsylvania vet school and I'm on the Board representing research.

>> JUNE SEWING: I'm June sewing, and I'm with the national mustang operation and Fred has -- which I have grateful for, I'm the eldest, longest standing member of the association instead of the oldest.

(Laughter).

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: I'm Julie Weikel, I have been on the Board just a year this month, and I represent the veterinarian position.

>> FRED WOEHL: I'm Fred Woehl, I serve as the Board Chair.

I represent the public interest with a background in equine behavior, and to my right is the person that's responsible for all of us, and I will let her introduce herself.

>> KRISTIN BAIL: And you told me I wasn't going to take any responsibility.

(Laughter)

I'm Kristin Bail, I'm the designated federal officer for the Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board.

I'm serving in this capacity as the acting assistant director for resources and planning for the Bureau of Land Management and that acting means I'm filling in that role on a temporary basis, while they are filling the position permanently, but it is my pleasure and honor and privilege to be working with the Board and to be meeting with you all today.

>> FRED WOEHL: Thank you, Kristin.

And now I would like to introduce the chief, Mr. Dean Bolstad.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: Thank you, Fred.

Welcome to the returning Board Members and a sincere warm welcome to those new members.

We have good diversity on the Board and -- not that we didn't have diversity before.

Also I would like to introduce a pretty large contingency from the state of Oregon, BLM staff from the Oregon State office, Prineville district and the Burns district.

I would like to recognize those staff members from the Oregon State office.

You are going to hear from the acting deputy state director of resources, Bob Hopper.

Lee raise your hand.

Bob Hopper, Oregon State office, co-wild horse and burro state lead, and Rob Sharp, for operations and wild horse and burro management.

I understand there's team members from the Vale district, Wendy Rickman, manager of the Burns corrals and JW Rose, Derrick Hammer, wrangler at the corrals and Chrisy Matterson, she has a large contingency of volunteers that help out in Oregon.

Lisa Grant, wild horse and burro specialist in Burns.

Leslie.

Way in the back.

Karlee Yurek, the Eastern State office, are you here?

Maybe joining us tomorrow.

Kathie Libby, our facilitator down here.

Thank you, Kathie, Ms. Holle' Hooks who leads our office in Oklahoma City.

Bryan Fuell, our on range branch chief, Bryan?

He stepped out.

Paul Griffin is not here with us, but will be presenting via telephone.

He's our research coordinator on the Washington office staff.

Jason Lutterman, another public affairs officer in the back.

And Debbie Collins and the team back in the back, helping to put this on live, web streaming across internationally.

Debbie, Art Ferrero, Kristin Nolan and Rebecca Moore, I don't think you are with us yet.

Arriving today.

And our budget specialist and Georgie Johnson from the Prineville district, thank you for coming over to help to serve the public today.

I think that's it, Fred.

Welcome to all members of the public.

We have a nice turnout.

So we'll let things unfold here.

>> FRED WOEHL: Thank you, dean.

Ms. Kathie.

>> KATHIE LIBBY: Thank you, Fred.

So welcome, everybody.

We are really sincerely pleased to have you here.

You are a lot -- this is primarily a board meeting, as you know, the national advisory board but you are such a huge piece of their work and all of our work at BLM in the wild horse program.

Oh, when I get to my rules of the room, we will talk about cell phones.

So even though we are not there yet, feel free to turn yours on to silent.

I also want to welcome the -- I don't know how many folks who are with us by Livestream.

It's really weird the majority of folks get to hear and see some of what this program is about.

So we welcome you very much.

I hope I'm saying this truthfully that by now the agenda and the power points should be posted.

Yes.

Perfect!

So you can access those.

One quick little mention while I'm thinking about it to board members, as you are speaking, you are going to be doing a lot of listening over the next day and a half, but as you are speaking, please do use those microphones.

They are not -- they need to be reasonably close to you.

Some of you not so much because you are louder, but some of you we really need you to work on that.

So briefly, for the agenda, I suspect you can all read.

So I will not read it to you.

Just a few highlights.

At 3:00 this afternoon, we will take a break, and at 3:15, the public comment period will start.

We will divide the time, we have an hour and a half.

We will divide that time based on how many people.

If six people want to talk, you get a lot of time.

If 90 people want to talk, you get a lot less time.

We will figure that out.

We need you to sign up prior to the break.

So at 3:00, there are no further sign-ups.

Because we need to do the math and get you in order.

That's the big one for this afternoon.

We do intend to adjourn at 5:15.

Tomorrow, we will begin at 8:00 promptly.

Livestreaming will also start at that time.

Again, because this is mostly a board meeting, there's lots of updates about what's going on in the program, and so lots of information will be provided.

We do have a break at 10:15.

Those are 15-minute breaks and we discovered today there's no place locally to get coffee or anything like.

That so you may want to come prepared.

Other than the updates at about 1:45 tomorrow, until closing, the Board will be discussing with each other the -- they have subcommittees and subgroups and they will come out with their own recommendations and so there will be a lot of board output and discussion during those last couple of hours of the meeting.

So that's what we are planning to do.

Most importantly, in order to do this effectively and respectfully, I need to remind you of the rules of the room.

If you are Livestreaming, you get to do whatever, but if you are sitting in the room, where we have a few things that we need from you.

So you can see where you can sit.

So one of our gentleman has a nice, good-sized camera.

Obviously we don't want those anywhere in front here to obstruct people's views.

So there is a section for cameras.

If you need to get up and walk around, just do it in the back of the room, so, again, you are not, you know, getting in the way of information that's being portrayed.

This line right here is really significant.

The audience, visitors, the public is on this side of the room and you do not come on this side of the room.

That is -- this is where the board meeting so much, you know.

It takes place and so this is your border line and we do it in bright pink so it's really clear.

If you are doing a public comment, you will use this table right up here.

We will help you get settled, as that occurs.

And no placing microphones or cameras or other things that are in the way of other people.

So it's really an awful lot about being respectful, understanding it's a board meeting, turning off our cell phones.

You are going to want to chat every once in a while but do it very quietly and limited and if you really want to chat, just go to the back of the room or step outside and come on back in, because that allows everyone else to hear what they came to hear.

If there is a really significant disruption, that's why you came here.

You will be asked to leave or you will be escorted out.

Simple as that.

We need to be allowed to hold this meeting and the public needs to be allowed to hear what it came to hear.

If you have handouts, please leave them with the ladies in the back.

We are not letting people just kind of bring all the handouts up to the board stairs.

So we are not having signs or placards or other kinds of displays.

What we have learned from the past is that just really gets people attention away from the mission of the meeting.

So all of that is not allowed.

When you do the public comment period, you will find -- hopefully -- that the Board will not respond.

Okay?

That doesn't mean they agree with you.

That doesn't mean they disagree with you.

It means that they are there to listen.

So they won't respond and no interpretation at all in terms of how they feel about what you said or think about what you said.

At the conclusion of the public comment period and this does not happen very often, but we like to just say it, the Chair does have the authority, whatever, if there's a real factual inaccuracy, the Chair might speak to that at the end of the session, just so that we are informing the public to the degree that we can.

We are committed to maintaining these rules.

You have them in writing yourself, and we do that in the best interest of you and the horses and our resources that support the horses.

So again, thank you for being here.

Fred, I'm going to turn it back to you, and as I do that, I'm just going to say to the Board briefly, you know -- well, some of you are new.

So it will be fun to watch you all convalesce as a Board.

Fred is an amazing chairperson and he will run this meeting very well.

I know that.

If at any point I feel like you need a little help, Fred, just look at me, you will get it.

Okay?

So we will want to be respectful, both on this side of the line and on this side of the line.

Thank you.

>> FRED WOEHL: Thank you very much.

>> Fred, I neglected to introduce our Forest Service folks who are here.

>> FRED WOEHL: That's important.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: So Mr. Allen Rowley, will you take the lead and introduce your folks, please?

I'm not sure who all is there.

>> Sure.

(No audio).

>> FRED WOEHL: At this time, the Board will recommend -- recognize Lee, who is the acting deputy state director for the state of Oregon BLM.

Lee?

>> LEE FOLLIARD: Thank you.

I guess I better get this mic.

>> KATHIE LIBBY: Yes, right into it.

>> LEE FOLLIARD: Well, as far as welcome, I certainly do want to welcome the board and the public and the Washington office folks to Oregon.

Again, welcome on behalf of the state directors office in Oregon.

I want to extend that welcome to all of you and prospects of a great meeting.

I know you all started yesterday with some things, and will carry on until tomorrow.

So, again, glad you could spend some time in Oregon.

Just a few -- a few points about my background.

I do work at the Oregon/Washington state office and I am in an acting deputy state director position, and as Kristin helped define what "acting" means.

So I'm in this in a temporary situation.

I'm not -- I don't closely follow the wild horse and burro program, but you can't hardly work for the Bureau of Land Management without knowing some things about the wild horse and burro program.

So actually, my regular job is I manage western Oregon's timber program, and I guess I would say, there's probably similar passion, interest, and controversy between managing federal forests and managing the wild horse and burro program.

So thank you for being here, and I'm glad you had a chance to spend some time at our facility in Oregon yesterday, near Burns.

I understand that was a good day, and I'm sure there were lots of things to see and hear and we feel very fortunate to have that facility.

It's a great -- a great facility for helping us implement wild horse and burro management and also to give the public an opportunity to view and tour kind of what goes on in some of that.

So glad you had a chance to be there.

I wanted to give you just a little bit of context for Oregon and some of this you may have already heard and some of it you will hear more of when Bob Hopper and Rob Sharp, I think, are at this table.

Just briefly, in Oregon, we are -- we are not one of the largest programs in the Bureau, as far as wild horse and burro.

We have 17 herd management areas, about 4,000 animals and, you know, approximately 10% of the Bureau's appropriate management level.

So certainly, not the largest program nationally, and I'm sure the Board gets around and sees some of the larger programs, but it's certainly important.

I don't think the size dictates the level of interest or challenge, and so we have lots of work to do here for sure.

And I did want to acknowledge, I -- it's interesting for me, kind of new to some of the perspectives of the program, it seems to be mostly about wild horses but we do have, apparently, wild burros.

And I'm told in Oregon, we have about 59 burros out there.

So let's not forget the burros.

Quickly, I wanted to touch on a few highlights, just broadly, and you will no doubt hear more about this from Bob and Rob, but just a few highlights from Oregon.

Some of the things we are proud of in the way of more collaborative efforts or partnership efforts, certainly, you know, we stand to gain in working with others, whether it's internal folks, other federal agencies, or external stakeholders.

So just a few highlights and if any of these are of interest, you may have heard about them or you can certainly follow up in your time here.

But just a couple of things.

So we do have a joint management program with the Forest Service, the Malheur National Forest for the Murderers Creek herd management.

There's an EIS to develop a new herd management plan.

And so certainly work with our other federal partners is important.

As far as other work with federal partners, I will highlight work with Fish & Wildlife Service, in the Tri-State working group.

This is an effort with BLM, both Oregon, California, and Nevada, to work with Fish & Wildlife Service and their Shelton Hart Mountain refuge system to address issues at a pretty high level but across a very large, you know, geographic scope, approximately 9 million acres, but there's good coordination that goes on there, as far as fencing issues, census issues, budget issues.

So, again, we -- we used to work with the federal partners there.

I will mention the potential for spay research.

You, I think, heard about some of that at the Burns facility, and working with our partners at the Oregon State University to explore prospects there.

We hope no move forward with some research there.

And we are still completing the NEPA process, but exciting -- exciting times there.

Someone mentioned volunteers and you think we have a coordinator here.

From the standpoint of partnerships, I wanted to acknowledge our volunteers and I know we have a whole network of those that help us with compliance checks and our adoption program and such.

And really, we couldn't get the work done that we need to get done without those volunteers.

So very important part of us getting the work done that -- that we need to get done.

And lastly, I wanted to mention a recent horse gather we had out of Beaty Butte here in southeast Oregon and the Lakeview district.

And just a couple of things about that.

I'm sure many of you understand that we have gone through a large national -- really a national conservation planning effort around greater sage-grouse and we finalized those plans last September, and we have begun implementation there.

There's a number of new land use provisions and management direction that, you know, we are implementing at that point, and one of those is the designation of sagebrush focal areas.

And this Beaty Butte was the first in the sagebrush focal areas.

So it was pretty important for the bureau to pull that off, it was -- for Oregon, it was a large gather.

We gathered over 1,000 horses.

So a big first effort at a gather in one of our sagebrush focal areas.

We there very good coordination with the ranchers and stakeholders there and we are looking forward to further engagement with them as we get assistance with adoption and potential future gathers there.

So lots of work to be done and it's exciting times to be, you know, in public service and on the forefront of, particularly, I think, a national effort to address sagebrush conservation.

Certainly horses are a part of that sagebrush ecosystem, as well as sage-grouse and many other animal and plant species.

So it's exciting times for the Bureau.

There's some big things, you know, to be implementing and all the states that have sage-grouse and sagebrush are gearing up for that implementation.

So I want to thank everyone for coming and, again, you know, both the Board and Washington office folks and the public and lots of BLM folks here, many of which I haven't met yet, but certainly exciting to be here.

And, again, on behalf of the state director's office, welcome.

And a special thanks to the Board for, you know, really dedicating your valuable time to assist BLM with this important issues.

The Cascades and the Three Sister Mountains and Mount Bachelor, it's hard to beat that view, at least in my opinion.

I hope you have a great time and welcome and thank you for all of your efforts.

>> FRED WOEHL: I owe somebody up on the podium with me an apology and that's Ms. Kristin by me.

I left my glasses in the other room and I couldn't read very well and she was supposed to be next on the agenda and I skipped her and really didn't mean to skip her because she's a very special person.

She's our designated federal official.

She's the one that's in charge of this.

She's actually, I guess you could put, it my boss and so I want to be sure that --

(Laughter)

-- so anyway.

It's yours.

>> KRISTIN BAIL: I thought you were just being a good guest and letting the hosts go first.

Again, I'm Kristin Bail and I'm very glad to be here in Oregon.

I started my career here in Oregon over 31 years ago, and six of those years here in Central Oregon.

So it's good to see a few familiar faces and the beautiful mountains and the great mace that people get to call home.

And I want to echo my welcome and gratitude to our new board members and our board members who have served us for one or more years.

There's a lot that goes into being a board member that you all don't see, a lot of work that happens over the phone and a lot of reading and listening to reports and I certainly appreciate everyone's personal commitment and sacrifice to give back to this resource that you all care so much about.

So thank you for your service.

And I'm -- every day, I'm very grateful that we have Dean Bolstad at the helm for the wild horse and burro division, he's in that position permanently because we've had some vacancy to deal with in the Washington office.

So so glad to have Dean here.

He's got an amazing amount of experience with the program, and has worked with the Board for a long time.

So he brings that skill set to the work that we do today.

Over the last few days, it is really come home again to me, you know, that this is a complicated, complex, series of resource issues that so many people care about, and it's held very dear to everyone's heart.

It gets at a lot of what we hold as values and what we want to see for the welfare of the animals and for our public lands.

And I very much appreciate all of you taking your time out to share your thoughts with me and the Board and also to participate in this process.

The Board has done a great amount of work over the years, you know, just in preparing for this meeting.

I looked over a set of very robust recommendations that the Board gave to us at the last meeting and part of what you will hear today is a report out on what the BLM has done to further those recommendations, but it goes to show in the broad spectrum of actions and

recommendations -- of recommended actions that the Board has provided, that there's a diversity of things that the Board would like us to do to address the needs of the program, and also just the thoughtfulness and care that has gone into developing that set of recommendations.

I also was struck over the last few days, when I heard people say, from whatever perspective that they came from is that their goal is healthy range, healthy horses, healthy ecosystems and happy people on the land.

And that was a comment across whatever perspective, and to have that unity of purpose in a group that comes from diverse perspectives, I'm very grateful for, because that means that this Board is set to make the most of this opportunity, which is to provide advice to us, as a Bureau and moving forward on a long-term complex issue that has, you know, a lot of interest and a lot of things to consider.

Lee mentioned, you know, the sage-grouse and the plans and the land use plan amendments that were recently signed in September and that it truly is a broad scale commitment not only for the BLM but for the Forest Service to make some commitments, priorities, strides, in managing the sagebrush ecosystem, and that does affect all program areas, whether you are talking about livestock grazing, you are talking about oil and gas development, but also how we manage our wild horses and burro and herd management areas and we have certain commitments that were made in those plans to address habitat conditions and where those cross herd management conditions, you see us paying a lot of attention to that, getting information, monitoring data and working to make progress on those areas.

So that's truly going to be seen as the focus of our program moving forward, and, of course, as we continue to move forward in the season, you know, some places have been undergoing drought conditions, depending on where you are, some of it is bad, some of it is worse, some places are getting by.

But we continue to be dealing with that to varying degrees as part of the overall management of the range and -- and of the horses.

And if that was not enough, just the program itself has a lot of long-term needs that I think you all have heard about and we'll talk about further.

You know, both animals in holding, animals in corrals, and animals on the range.

We all care very deeply about all of those factors.

One of the things that's challenging for me and is probably hard for other folks is sometimes we will talk about actions we need to take and we want to see results and progress right away or soon, but some things we are going to have to invest in over a period of years.

Some of maybe the research we are talking about, some of the changes and approaches we are talking about, you know, mother nature throws fires or drought our way.

Sometimes, you know, other changes take a long time.

And I really appreciate those of us who have stuck with the program and the issues for years, because some things, you know, it's -- it's trite but it's true.

Some problems, you know, the easy ones get resolved relatively quickly, and the ones that are tougher, we are chewing on them a bit and that's where we are in some instances.

I recognize that sometimes we are taking steps further and sometimes the journey will be long and, I know the Board thinks about that as far as the recommendations and either the short-term or the long-term direction that they would like the program to take.

We are also looking at a lot of different ways to address appropriate management levels, issues on the range, issues with horses.

And you will hear a lot of ideas and things we are pursuing.

I will take one as an example.

We are looking for what ways can we find great homes for horses, get them adopted and into great homes and long-term stability for them, no, you know, risk of any harm in the future, and having happy people that have a great horse to live with for the rest of their lives.

And so one of the things that we are considering is, you know, how we can make the transfer of ownership to federal, state and local partners more easy.

For example, what a great way to show what a mustang to do is if we had more border patrol agents mounted on these horses.

You know, so you will hear us talk about different ideas like that, and it's not that we want to move the program wholesale, you know, hundreds of, you -- you know, tens of thousands of animals into that, but the more tools we, have the more opportunities we, have I think the more good we can do as we look for all the options moving forward.

So, yes, BLM has asked for that tort to see where we can find those good homes, make the transfer process more easy for our local, state and federal partners with, of course, the long-term welfare of the animal in mind.

But that's just one thing.

You all are going to hear and the Board has been hearing a lot of information today, the next day and into the future and just know that we are all here with a passion for the land, for the program, for the animals and all want to move forward on that.

And make progress in different areas, and we all will define progress in a different way, and that's a good thing.

That's why we have the diverse Board that we have.

I really look forward to continuing my time with the Board that we started this week.

I'm looking forward to hearing from you and, again, thank all of you for everything that you are doing on behalf of this program, and your public lands.

>> FRED WOEHL: Thank you, Kristin.

I would like to introduce a couple of men that I'm proud to be able to call them friends.

I have served some -- I have come back here last November and spent some time with them and saw their passion and their love for the resource, their love for the horses and it's a privilege for me to be able to introduce these two and they are Rob Sharp and Bob Hopper.

>> Thank you, Fred and thanks, again, Board for coming out and the great discussions.

>> BOB HOPPER: Rob and will give you a little bit of information about Oregon.

So with that, Oregon has 17 herd management areas.

We comanage as Lee indicated the Murderers Creek, with the US national Forest Service and there's one solely on managed by them solely, the Big Summit.

And we have 19 herds and our AML is 2800 roughly and the current combined adult population of horses and burro as Lee recognized is a little over 4,000.

Next slide, please.

This just a demographic of herd management areas in Oregon.

You can see the majority are more to the south and the east of us here.

Next slide.

This is the depiction of the national situation.

You can see Oregon is about 10% of the AML and it's representative when you compare Oregon and Nevada.

In the '80s, Oregon reached AML, I'm not certain if some of you board members know, but Dean was actually stationed in Burns and had a lot to do with that.

So Dean not only helped us get kicked off, but he's now leading the program in the Washington office.

So we really appreciate your early efforts and ongoing efforts, Dean.

We have horses that are highly desirable, and we have managed for temperament, size and color and confirmation and we have great public support.

The next slide, please.

>> ROBERT SHARP: You all were there yesterday but for the rest of the folks in the room who have never been there, we have the Oregon wild horse corral facility located outside of Burns, Oregon.

We typically house approximately 650 animals year round within that facility.

It is the off range corral for Oregon.

The facility serves as a walkup adoption facility.

We also provide animals for satellite adoption events throughout Oregon and Washington, as well as animals for Internet based option events, facilitate adoptions and all the animals that are picked up in Oregon for the trained horse events, Extreme Horse makeover, those types of events.

Our adoption program, some stats for you.

We adopt 200 animals out of the Burns facility each year.

The demographic of those events has changed fairly significantly from what it was, you know, ten years ago.

We used to be able to go to satellite adoption events throughout Oregon and Washington with a truckload of 30 animals and within two or three takes we would adopt nearly every one of them.

That's, of course, changed.

Changed with the times, with the economic times, and majority -- and I think last time I ran the numbers, majority of our adoption or some form of gentling horse, extreme horse makeover, some of our partnerships with volunteer organizations throughout both states, you know, some form of gentle horse adoption, about 75%.

Some very successful partnerships to note are our partnership with the teens and Oregon mustangs.

That's in conjunction with the mustang heritage association.

It was a youth program but now it's both youth and adult program.

They are moving through the adoption pipeline, 30 or 40 horses.

If you have never been to a youth-based wild horse adoption event, it completely changed my perspective on the adoption program, to see, number one, what those kids could do to the horses but number two, what those horses were teaching the kids.

It's truly a pleasant experience.

Also up in Washington, we have the mustang yearlings and the Washington youth program, very similar program to the teens and Oregon mustangs event.

The youth taking animals and gentling them and adopting them after competition.

And they also have morphed into including an adult-trained horse event with their annual event every summer.

It's been brought up, but I just want to hammer on it one more time.

Volunteers for our Oregon and Washington program, it's huge.

Our adoption program would not exist without the support of the literally hundreds of volunteers between Oregon and Washington.

We have folks conducting our compliance inspections for us.

We have folks in those situations where adoption doesn't work out and the animal needs to be rehomed, they will take those animals, foster them, gentle them, retrain them and help us rehome.

We also have volunteers that are out within our herd management areas doing some checking waterers and checking animal conditions.

Giving us animal counts, locations and that type of thing.

Huge support.

So some of them, I know, are in the crowd today.

I just want to thank you all one more time.

So before the rest of this meeting kicks off, something I have learned in the wild horse and burro program is it's very easy to lose track of why we are all here, why we have a national Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board and why I have a job in the wild horse and burro program.

The biggest question is why manage?

What is that stage?

The next few slides, I think are going to demonstrate that for us.

So we all hear the saying healthy herds on healthy rangelands.

We need to take a second to think about what does that mean.

And the set of photos that are up there right now is a good depiction of that.

That top left photo, that's a small band of horses, standing in a relatively intact sagebrush habitat.

We have good residual feeds.

It's a late summer photo, obviously.

The horses are in very good body condition.

That's exactly what we are looking for.

The vegetation photos on the right, those some are trend photos.

Top photo, that's a range ecological site post-fire.

That's first growing season after a wildfire the previous summer.

That site is resilient.

It has the components that we were discussing yesterday out in the field, to hold that site

together.

That bottom picture is just another example of an intact sagebrush plant community.

As long as we are providing for rangeland health, we will provide for those healthy horses up there on that slide.

We will provide for the wildlife, the other multiple uses of that piece of ground.

Where conditions can start going south, those top two pictures, the one on the top left, is a long-term trend photo, it's within a relatively lower elevation site within the Snake over in Burns district.

Exact same time frame.

We were over AML.

We had over 100 horses standing on that same piece of country year round and we saw a very accelerated transition to a less desirable plant community.

We talked about it yesterday.

That grass you see in that top right photo is the invasive exotic species medusahead rye.

It's taken over a lot of our rangelands.

We are also losing our sagebrush component.

That site is very quickly approaching an ecological threshold, where it will never be the same, it won't provide habitat for horses or livestock or anything that's demanded of our rangelands.

The bottom picture on the left, that's an instance where habitat conditions for horses are getting slim.

That's a water hole location in the background there, if the dust wasn't there, you would be able to count about 60 horses out there.

That's a trigger.

That's telling us something is going on with the habitat, that's not able to support the animals that are out there depending on it.

Bottom right photo, again, that's the higher elevation picture from the Snake and Water

herd management area.

A couple of years ago we had a large fire that ripped through the Snake and Water herd management area and the BLM.

That's a prime example of, I guess, how fragile and how quickly conditions can change for the habitat of these animals.

That's an example of the forage was there one day and gone the next and believe it or not when wildfire comes through, those white specks you see in the middle of that, those are horses back there the day after the fire.

They are there looking for forage.

The ugly.

Go ahead and run the video if you would.

This is what happens when a habitat conditions can't support populations of horses.

Typically it's not the young or the old and the sick.

When we run out of water, we're looking at entire populations, entire herds of horses that are in jeopardy.

And although, you know, some of these pictures are gruesome and tough to look at it.

To me, the biggest tragedy -- travesty, is that bottom right photo.

That's, again a site within the Snake and Water herd management area that's completely dominated by Medusa Head Rye.

That piece of country will never be the same.

We lost it.

We lost the habitat components for the horses and all uses for that piece of ground.

That photo in the top left, where the conditions are good, that's summer of 2011.

2011, we had an emergency declaration within the county because we had too much flooding.

Portions of our town of Burns were being flooded out.

Jump ahead to 2014, we were on the third year of severe drought.

We had an emergency declaration because of drought within the county.

It's just a prime example of why we need to manage these animals and why we need to maintain appropriate management levels and what is at stake, the consequences if we do not.

>> BOB HOPPER: All right, well, Lee mentioned the effort greater sage-grouse and within there, the Bureau made some big commitments to not only to livestock grazing, horses, mining, et cetera.

So this is just a quick recap of some of the objectives and some of the management decisions and we want to preserve and maintain a thriving ecological balance with other uses as Rob mentioned.

We want to manage within appropriate management levels.

One of the big things dealing with sage-grouse is that we made a commitment that we will go out and assess sage-grouse habitat and its indicators not only for grazing, for wild horse and burros but for any activity on BLM land and there's a pecking order for that.

So SFA is sage-grouse focal area.

That's the highest priority area.

You heard Lee mention that Beaty Butte, that will be the high priority, but priority habitat management area outside of the focal areas, and then general habitat.

A summary of the management decisions, again, highest priorities for gather, population suppression, adjustment for AML and monitoring is in the sagebrush focal area and priority management area and then general.

We need to continue to coordinate with professionals to utilize and evaluate new population control methods and inventory techniques.

For Oregon, there are 11 management decisions.

That was just a quick summary of them.

I encourage you to look at the Oregon approved Resource Management Plans, specific to horses.

>> ROBERT SHARP: I just wanted to include that slide in there.

Most of these pictures you are looking at, these are all from wild horse photographers that come to our HMAs and this is a prime example.

Those are two Snake and Water stallions up there.

But just the -- you know, it goes to show the number of people that are coming out to truly enjoy, photograph, be around, our Oregon wild horses on the range.

>> BOB HOPPER: All right.

New and different.

We discussed it.

We discussed it in detail yesterday in Burns but for the benefit of the public here, I want to quickly go over the spay research being proposed by the BLM being carried out through Oregon State University.

We are looking at three separate methods of mare sterilization through a grant agreement with OSU.

>> ROBERT SHARP: We are quantifying the safety and the efficacy of three efforts.

One is ovariectomy via colpotomy.

We are looking at treating mares.

And the next is tubal ligation and going in with an endoscope and laser and cauterizing the fallopian tubes and we are looking to do that on 50 mares at various stages of gestation and lacer ablation, looking at performing this on 50 open mares because actually if you roll to the next slide, ovariectomy, all these are vaginal entry and it's internal incisions for the mares.

Going in and removing the ovaries.

That's the take home message on the ovariectomy via colpotomy.

And lacer ablation, we are going through the vagina and through the cervix and into the uterus.

We know if we do that on pregnant mares we will likely cause abortion.

This will be performed on open mares only.

The tubal ligation, going into the vaginal wall, and into the cavity and these are with

diode lasers to cauterize different parts of the reproductive tract.

>> BOB HOPPER: Thanks, Rob.

Lee did daylight some of the collaborative efforts we have going with stakeholders.

We bride ourselves in kind of pushing the bounds and whatnot.

As mentioned earlier, we had a gather Beaty Butte this past fall.

Kind of in the background two years prior to that, there was community -- community actions and discussions on how we can get to AML and once we get to AML, how can we stay within that -- within that level.

In January, BLM solicited and assistance opportunity for gatherers for fertility control and marketing.

Typically, you will see a lot of the facilities or training and adoption or tip type programs, and the thing that makes this different is going out and assisting with fertility control, as well as marketing and adoption.

The solicitation ended in March, and we had one application and it's going through the verification process for our solicitor.

We are hopeful that we can begin implementation of this agreement.

The overarching idea is to adopt -- train and adopt approximately 30 horses a year.

And even bigger than that is the intent of having a group assist with the fertility control and gathers is to really eliminate the need for large helicopter gathers from now and on into the future.

So we are really glad to be part of this Lakeview district and other stakeholders have a lot of input, and we are looking forward to awarding this and moving on.

And Rob, do you have an idea when we might move forward with, as far as implementing infrastructure on the private land?

>> ROBERT SHARP: We hope to have an award and assistance agreement by the end of this month and begin construction.

Hopefully in May sometime.

>> BOB HOPPER: And then horses, when do we anticipate horses moving -- moved from the corrals to that facility?

>> ROBERT SHARP: Yeah, sure.

So right now our timeline is towards the end of July, hopefully, getting that facility constructed and have the facility receive the first round of horses.

>> BOB HOPPER: And one last item, the facility, it will be located in Adele, Oregon which is 45 miles east of Lakeview and if you get up on Fish Creek Rim, you can see Beauty Butte.

It's unique that we have a herd management area closer there and so we also hope to foster visitation to the herd management area with the facility and stuff there.

>> ROBERT SHARP: All right.

To wrap it up here, guys.

I know we are getting close on time.

I want to throw out some examples of habitat improvements we have been doing in Oregon for the last few years.

First off is a solar livestock well.

We have been converting a lot of our existing wells and drilling new wells and a lot of our desert herd management areas where water is a limiting factor.

This provides a very efficient and easy access to water for the animals although it does take them oftentimes quite a little while to discover that, indeed, there's perennial water present at the location.

That middle picture there, that's just an example of what we call a double gate.

It assists us, you know, for horse passage through an interior pasture boundary fences.

It basically creates a 50-foot gap when we take down both sides of those gates and it's also extremely beneficial when it comes time to gather with the helicopter, especially if they are located along usable horse trails.

The top picture on the right, that's the vegetation management project.

That's looking at the Kiger herd management area.

Anyone who has been out to the Kiger herd management area in the last ten years has seen that we altered the landscape through the use of juniper control and prescribed fire

and wildfire, for that matter.

It's very important to maintain the ecological help in a lot of our higher elevation plant communities to be treated, western juniper encroachment.

With that, I will field any questions -- remaining questions that the Board has.

>> FRED WOEHL: Board, any questions, comments?

Go ahead.

Steven?

>> FRED WOEHL: Just talk?

>> STEVEN YARDLEY: Who has been the effect of the horses on the sage-grouse habitat in the state of Oregon?

>> ROBERT SHARP: Yeah, so the biggest thing that we see, and it was actually documented there in some of those photos is any time you have, I guess, a disturbance, be it grazing by cows or horses or wildfire, any time you have a disturbance, sometimes it can be positive, and sometimes it can be negative.

In the case of year-round grazing, you know, as we talked about yesterday, grazing the same piece of country during the growing season year in and year out, we are causing a disturbance, a negative disturbance to those perennial grass species that are holding that plant community together.

What we see and oftentimes it's escalated post wildfire are those sites that have been stressed to the point where they are no longer resilient.

And oftentimes they are transitioning into less desirable species such as cheatgrass and medusahead.

That's been the biggest issue is, you know, the weakening the resilience of those communities to a disturbance.

>> STEVEN YARDLEY: And then a little bit of a follow-up question too.

On that Beaty Butte gather where they were so far over AML, what was the body condition score of the horses and what were the -- what was the range trend in that area?

>> ROBERT SHARP: Yeah, so real quick on the range trend, there were places that we were seeing a marked downward range condition.

A lot of it was attributed to heavy and severe utilization by wild horses that particular HMA is riddled with perennial springs and we saw impacts to riparian vegetation at the hands of the horses because that was the only water remaining during the last three years of drought.

The horses were in reduced condition.

Typically when we gather horses in Oregon, we don't see a body condition 2 horse.

We saw numerous body 2 conditions, and were euthanized because therm in condition two and below.

It was absolutely affecting the condition of the horses.

>> STEVEN YARDLEY: Thank you.

>> FRED WOEHL: Anybody else?

Rob, Bob thank you very much.

Good report.

>> ROBERT SHARP: Thanks.

>> BOB HOPPER: Thank you.

>> FRED WOEHL: , I call your attention to the minutes from the last board meeting and note any changes you want to make to them.

If everybody has done that and is okay, I would entertain a aye or nay we approve the minutes as we have.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: On page 48, it states that I was not convinced that that the sage-grouse was a political decision.

If indeed that's what I said, I assure you I meant the exact opposite.

I have a feeling that's not what I said.

>> FRED WOEHL: So you are recommending that we remove the word "not."

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: Either that or switch the words political and scientific.

>> FRED WOEHL: Well, I think just crossing out the word "not" would be a lot easier.

That change is noted.

Anybody else?

All right.

If not, I will take silence means consent and the minutes are approved as submitted.

How is that, Kathie?

That caught us up a lot!

Now, I will turn the meeting over to Dean Bolstad, who is our division chief and he will go over our recommendations and BLM response to our recommendations from the last meeting.

And that would be in Section 4.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: Yes, look at tab 4 so you can follow along.

These are posted online for the public.

So this the most difficult part for me of the whole meeting.

We 19 recommendations --

>> FRED WOEHL: 20.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: 20.

Last time, I think there was 19.

Anyway, the Board has been busy and I will try to cover these in a succinct way without reading every single word in the six pages that I have to present.

So the first recommendation and I will read each recommendation word for word and then try to paraphrase BLM's response.

BLM is encouraged to proceed with a programmatic environmental impact statement 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.

BLM's response is we are still considering this.

We haven't taken steps to proceed.

It's costly.

It's about three years out.

So no decision to proceed is still being considered.

Recommendation number two.

And I guess if the Board has questions along the way --

>> FRED WOEHL: They will just ask.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: All right.

I will wait for you to interrupt me then.

>> FRED WOEHL: Okay.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: Number two recommendation.

Encourage BLM to proceed with utilizing pasture rotations for horses, wherever feasible with respect to the HMA.

Intended purpose of these rotations is to maintain thriving ecological balance.

The BLM accepts the recommendation, agrees with the intent of it, but also would like to point out to the Board that it's rarely practical to implement or successful when we attempt to do it, however, there are instances that it has been successful, and where it can be helpful to manage for rangeland conditions, we would do that.

I know of one situation in Oregon where the Oregon team does exactly that.

Recommendation number three, apply best management practices through restoration of rested pastures.

So some of these recommendations and this was one of them, that we followed up after the meeting to further understand what the intent of the board's recommendation was.

So this one, we accept the recommendation.

And the intent of it was to restore rangelands, some of the improvements that Oregon talked about, and rest them from grazing and when they are being rested, allow them to recover.

So as a first priority for the future, most restoration projects are going to be focused on greater sage-grouse habitat, that may include some HMAs but may not.

Restoration projects normally require tightly controlled grazing, or full rest to be successful.

Recommendation number four, consider wild horse and burro management and monitoring activities at appropriate and multiple scales.

So that's another one that we ask for interpretation from the Board.

BLM accepts the recommendation and based on our discussions, we understand the recommendation to mean that full management should take a landscape approach in which groups of HMAs are managed as complexes or in aggregate versus on an individual herd management area basis.

Within that landscape approach, some HMAs could be managed as reproducing and others as non-reproducing, wholly -- wholly or in part and still maintain genetic health and long-term sustainability of the larger herd unit composed of a combination of HMAs.

Number five, develop a proposal to the national advisory board at a large scale that combined population growth suppression and the concept of reproducing and non-reproducing herds.

In other words, a mix of fertility control methods.

So BLM accepts this recommendation.

Recommendation 8, and I will get to in a few minutes requests the development of alternative management scenarios and the response includes scenarios and incorporate non-reproducing components.

These management alternatives demonstrate how the principles and the approaches of population growth suppression recommended by the Board could be applied.

If BLM were to pursue any of these options, analysis and public engagement would occur in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act.

Factors to consider when selecting populations to manage, as reproducing or non-reproducing wholly or in part, include things such as but are not limited to overall population management goals.

Achieving and maintaining AML, genetic diversity, habitat requirements, and also managing a complex or a group that has greater flexibility to apply fertility control

methods.

Also to consider habitat conditions, crucial habitats for threatened or endangered species or species of concern like sage-grouse, and also historic public and private land issues.

Recommendation number six.

>> FRED WOHL: Let me remind the Board if you have any comments or questions, during this, just speak up.

>> STEVEN YARDLEY: Can I just ask one question?

On three and four, on that -- those recommendations, you said that -- or excuse me, on two and three.

You said that it's not very feasible in most situations to apply these practices.

What percentage of the population wild horses out there would these actually be applicable to in your estimate?

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: It's strictly an estimate and a guess and I won't try to quantify it.

I think it depends, Steven.

HMA's in Nevada where you have 1 million acres and there's not very many fences, obviously, you won't move horses around.

You may, if the situation provides for, it be able to turn waters off and on and control use by horses, but moving them through fences and trying to relocate them, that's not going to work in those great big areas.

Other smaller HMA's, with smaller herds, sometimes they have a favorite pasture they like to be in, and sometimes a few horse men and women can go out and open the gates and they would move away and move on into the other pasture, but I think it's really pretty small percentage that we might be able to begin to control grazing like horses like we do livestock management where the timing and the duration and the intensity of use is very controlled with the livestock and but not very controlled with the wild horses.

>> STEVEN YARDLEY: Thank you.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: Okay.

So I think I was on number six.

So continuing there, the Board recommends -- it states the deadline of 2020 to achieve appropriate management level and 22 herd management areas in sagebrush focal areas is too far out.

The Board asks BLM to expect -- expedite reaching AML in sage-grouse sagebrush focal areas as quickly as possible utilizing all effective tools.

The BLM agrees that this is a desirable goal to reach AML as soon as possible in the sage-grouse focal areas and the sagebrush focal areas are the best habitats that the Bureau of Land Management has for sage-grouse and it's where the greatest density of birds are and they are the most important habitat areas for us to manage and conservative the habitat.

There are other habitats called priority habitat where maybe the density of birds is lesser and maybe the habitat is not quite as intact but still very important.

And then there's a third category.

It's a little further down the rung as far as priority.

That's called general habitat.

So the Board was encouraging us to speed up our achievement in AML beyond the schedule of our five years.

The five-year schedule is what we can do in the 22 herd management areas to achieve AML within five years considering our financial resources.

We don't have the capability -- and I will talk more about this later -- to gather many horses like we used to.

So we are limited in how many we can remove, thus limited to achieving AML over the course of the next five years in sagebrush focal areas.

>> FRED WOEHL: Dean, I would like to point out at the time that when we made this recommendation, the sage-grouse was being reviewed to be on the endangered species and if that would have happened, it would have impacted all the HMAs throughout in a hard manner and so what we were trying to do, which is to help out and this is a good thing but that was the intent behind this.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: And the Bureau would like to provide quicker and if resources are available, we will.

>> FRED WOEHL: Okay.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: Because we know that the Fish and Wildlife Service is going to review the status of the bird and five years is it Kristin?

>> KRISTIN BAIL: That's my understanding.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: So it's highly important to preserve sage-grouse habitat and proceed with our plans.

Okay.

Number seven kin and expand efforts to embrace and implement cohesive strategy to make herd management areas landscapes, fire resistant.

Cope, this was kind of your recommendation.

So the BLM accepts it and is committed to the national cohesive wildland fire management strategy, and implementation of the accompanying national action plan.

So it's all about managing fire and conserving sage-grouse habitat and we're committed to that.

There's a pretty lengthy response here that I'm not going to read.

You guys can read that on your own and it's available to the public.

Number eight, present to the Board three to four draft alternatives, including a timeline and one alternative that includes appropriate management level without the rider that refers to the congressional restriction for use of appropriated money to destroy healthy horses and to sell them without limitation.

So analyze alternatives to achieve -- various alternatives with varying methods of fertility control to achieve the AML and HMAs.

So the BLM has accepted the recommendation.

We have drafted the scenarios that you have requested but they haven't been fully reviewed and vetted and I will have to submit those to the Board at a later time.

>> Do you know how soon that is coming down the pipes?

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: I think it will be soon.

We have had some Congressmen ask a very similar question and the Board will get the same answer, that is responsive to Congress, to the congressional inquiry.

>> Okay.

>> FRED WOEHLE: Dean about that, I would like to point out and just reiterate the board's position on this, is not to implement any of these but we need to know -- we need to have tools that we can base things on.

We don't want to be an ostrich with our head in the sand and that's why we were doing this.

Not to say this is what we want to do, but we want to know the alternative to this.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: Let me explain what you can expect as far as a response.

About a half dozen scenarios of management have been evaluated for cost and benefit and the time that we would make progress or achieve AML in each of these different scenarios.

There is an alternative that maximizes PZP vaccine application alone by itself.

There's a couple of alternatives that involve aggressive removals to achieve AML in a very short time.

There's an alternative that evaluates the status quo, along with each of these alternatives is a projection of what the wild horse population nationally would look like, knowing the number it is today.

There are scenarios there that incorporates spay and neuter.

So there's a variety of alternatives and as you requested, the cost and the benefits and the amount of time to make progress towards or achieve AML would be projected.

That's what you can expect to receive.

>> FRED WOEHLE: Thank you.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: Number nine, BLM should structure AML so that the low extreme can sustain herds despite climatic change.

BLM accepts the recommendation and notes the current policy enables AML to be guided by changing environmental conditions.

We have stipulations in our hand books that provide for periodic review of appropriate management levels and changing them if appropriate.

So we're not stuck with the AML stated today for any given area and we have the ability

to adjust to climatic change or drastic changes in habitat as a result of a catastrophic fire.

We have that flexibility already.

But your suggestion was that the initial AML ought to be set at a level low enough that it can be tolerant of periodic temporary climatic conditional changes.

So we accept that and I think we have the flexibility to do that.

Recommendation number 10.

We are about halfway there.

Develop strategy to train to support wild horse and burro activities on and off the range.

We accept the recommendation again, and I think there's increasing awareness that a number of states have large volunteer programs.

Oregon is one of them.

Another program in Colorado.

But you have asked us to develop kind of a national framework to facilitate and help volunteers be aware of opportunities and perhaps to make it easier for our district and field offices utilize volunteers when and if it's appropriate and they desire to do so.

So we'll work towards that, but I'm going to address in a minute that we are kind of thin on staff and this is one at the moment that maybe doesn't rise to the highest priority that we have to deal with among all of your Recommendations, but it is important and we will proceed there when we kind of get staffed up.

>> FRED WOEHL: Well this was my recommendation because I feel very strongly, you know.

I appreciate that and understand that, but it will be mentioned again.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: I appreciate that.

And I don't mean to diminish the importance of it.

>> FRED WOEHL: I know.

I understand.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: I want you to understand about our capabilities.

>> FRED WOEHL: I understand.

I honestly do.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: When I saw the passion of the Oregon team and Chrissie talk about -- I think she said 63 volunteers.

You can see there are some programs that are out there and alive and well and very necessary to the success of our programs.

Okay.

Moving on.

Recommendation number 11, develop a strategy to publicize needs so financial donors are aware of opportunities to support the Wild Horse and Burro Program by purchasing materials and supplies.

So, again we accept the recommendation.

Currently there is a national policy for all BLM programs that outlines the terms and conditions for accepting donated materials and supplies.

It's drafted.

It's under review.

And in the past, when people have wanted to donate to us, we kind of struggled in exactly how to approach this.

So there's guidance coming that will help us out.

We have a fund that cash money can be donated to that Holle' and her team are trying to kind of get figured out and streamlined and make available to the public when there's a desire to donate.

So I think we need to embrace donations but we need to do it in an appropriate manner and our policy is coming that will help us know how to do that.

Recommendation number 12, BLM 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,

nongovernment organizations, local government, state and federal resource -- and resource management agencies.

So we recommend -- we accept that recommendation to actively participate in collaborative groups and notes that these groups are often more successful and establish and driven by coalition of stakeholders and NGOs and local government.

So I won't read all the rest of this, but it is more widely recognized than ever before in the horse program, that partnerships are a part 69 path forward.

We are embracing that, Mike Tupper, when he was here, he emphasized that.

We need everyone's help.

We need everybody at the table.

We need the diversity of opinions to help us arrive at management options that will be successful and yet can be supported and more important than anything, the local community groups have to be in and supportive and recognize the benefits that can be achieved when ecotourism and things like that come about.

And it's achievable when you have everyone at the table to talk about that.

Cope, I think that's what you were talking about.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: My experience, when we are addressing Forest Service land and fuel reduction, as well as collaborative groups that help the counties develop their CWPP, the community wildfire protection plans, we found we make real good progress and we have a much better cross education of differing ideas when we bring all of those players to the table along with the land management agencies.

It's been a good way to go in other areas and I think it can work here.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: Well, thank you.

Recommendation number 13, considering using well visited herd management areas as an opportunity to educate visitors with challenges and adoption opportunities using interpretive signs, kiosks, cell phone technology, consider including and recreation plans for those areas.

We accept the recommendation.

These types of educational opportunities have been used in self-states to promote wild horse and burro through maps.

Bryan was trying to find a pilot area to try to bring this to the information technology age and have a cell phone application and something like that.

So these things will evolve over time and they are good things to do.

We'll pursue some of those.

Recommendation number 14, eco-sanctuary operators should adequately represent the challenges and opportunities associated with the wild horse and burro program.

We accept the recommendation and recognize that the three eco-sanctuary operators we have currently don't have good materials to provide for public education and Holle' and her team are working on that.

That's a little bit off in the future.

We can't accomplish everything.

So it's important to review.

Holle' may review that in her presentations tomorrow.

Number 15.

Five more to go.

Express support for continued commitment to long-term research, encourage BLM to keep its eye on the goal of supporting horses on the range with minimal interference.

So we kind of talked to the Board to find out more about what your intent was there.

So we found that out, and we accept the recommendation and we are implementing research to be conducted over the next five years with some projects delivering near term results within the next one to two years.

The BLM will complete the research it's launched with universities and USGS on tools to manage population growth and on tools for population monitoring and management, currently an investment of about \$11 million.

So that's our plans.

The goal is to provide tools to manage horse and burro populations at a minimum feasible level to accomplish the herd and the rangeland management objectives.

So I think that's an important point in our response.

A minimal feasible level to accomplish the objectives.]

That might mean a lot of intervention in some cases, whatever it takes to accomplish the objection.

And in other cases lesser intervention.

Sometimes people grab the term "minimal feasible management" which is in the Wild Horse and Burro Act, and want to interpret that that is a hands off, stand back, don't do anything, but the burro's position is that it's whatever it takes to achieve the objective for management.

Recommendation number 16.

Prioritize use of currently available tools in the field to reduce population growth suppression.

Right now, implement new promising tools as quickly as they become available.

We accept the recommendation.

Our current policy is to treat all release mares with PZP where growth suppression is desired.

We currently have six HMAs with PZP darting systems that are successful and we are currently establishing more.

We aim to have pilot projects to administer -- oh, pilot projects to administer more PZP vaccines.

One example is burros in the Black Mountains.

The Humane Society of the United States is assisting.

We have one GonaCon trial in Nevada.

There could be more of those.

We desire to enter into more agreements with community groups like the Oregon folks presented.

And in time as research proves that spay/neuter methods are safe to use, we would plan to introduce some non-reproductive animals in one or more herd management areas to incorporate those techniques.

Recommendation --

>> STEVEN YARDLEY: Can you just really quick cover the administration of GonaCon in the Water Canyon area.

I'm not familiar with that.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: So it's a little pilot where a few mares are being treated with GonaCon.

There's a larger GonaCon study in Teddy Roosevelt National Park that will yield some results but GonaCon with one application, the data shows it's not very effective.

Less so than a one-year PZP vaccination, however, there's some other data that seems to be emerging that a second vaccination, a booster might indicate that GonaCon might be really effective.

So we watched a little pilot there, also we're anxiously awaiting further results from the larger study on Teddy Roosevelt.

And we are just seeing how that will work.

You will hear more about that, I think, from Dr. Paul Griffin tomorrow, when he reports out on all of our research studies.

Or maybe that -- yes, that's tomorrow.

Okay.

Three more to go.

Number 17.

Given that our -- that would be four, cope.

I can't count.

I have 19 stuck in my head, not 20.

So I will let Kristin do the 20th one.

So I only got three more to go, just to be straight for the record here, okay?

(Laughter)

I recognize this is getting pretty lengthy.

Number 17, give than our goal is fewest possible handlings and we can only achieve that by slowing reproductive rate, encourage BLM to use the best available technology for monitoring individual animals, example use of long range chips.

So we accept that recommendation and we're looking into technology to microchip all of the animals that go back to the range.

We anticipate using a wide array of tools in the tool box for population growth suppression, and we can no longer rely on a few freeze marks to identify which mare has received which treatment or -- so it's recognize microchips are an advancing technology that would help us.

The Board is encouraging us to look into chips that might emit radio signals that you wouldn't have to be right up beside and an animal and have them inbound a trap to see how they were treated.

So we are looking into that as well.

So I think we may be moving towards a program and Brian has a team at work that might involve microchipping every single animal that comes into the corrals in the future, and also any and all animals released back to the field.

It's what the modern age brings and we need to embrace that.

Recommendation number 18, as population growth suppression decreases herd numbers, program dollars currently used in the long-term care should be devoted to rangeland health improvement within herd management areas with the goal of healthy horses.

So we recognize that recommendation and as we're successful, and achieving population growth suppression, then, of course, less animals will be coming into holding.

Maybe we can decrease those populations and, of course, that money then can be devoted instead of feeding animals and caring for them in holding, to on range practices.

Number 19, recommend BLM work with board members to develop a comprehensive adoption program utilizing the following incentivized adoptions more pick up pointing, for example, more storefronts, similar to the East Mantle Ranch.

We accept that recommendation and we have been working actively on all of these things.

Holle' will report out, I might address it a little bit in my next presentation.

So a good idea is we think that is important.

We can make progress there.

>> FRED WOEHL: Well, I want to say that a lot of the stuff that y'all are going to be talking about is already being done.

I mean, y'all have really worked on that real hard.

You got a good partnership with Mustang Heritage Foundation, and the Board is impressed with the work that you have done in this area and we just want you to keep it up.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: Thank you.

We tried to keep you abreast so you would not wait six months to have a meeting to know what we are up to.

Thank you, Fred.

So the final recommendation is number 20 and Kristin is going to address this one.

I will read the recommendation.

And -- oh, I'm sorry.

Was there a question?

The final and number 20.

BLM arrange for a Wild Horse and Burro National Advisory Board delegation to meet with the Secretary of Interior to discuss issues related to the program.

Kristin, do you want to take that one?

>> KRISTIN BAIL: Sure.

As I explained earlier, I'm filling in this position temporarily.

So also just starting this position, this is month one.

So I let the Board know that I need to figure out how do you request a meeting with the Secretary of the Interior and we are committed to doing that and following the

appropriate procedures to do so.

And knowing that we are also at a time where we want to find out the best match between the Board, meeting with the secretary and just the new administration coming on Board and when might that be the best fit.

>> FRED WOEHL: Okay.

Thank you.

All right.

Any questions?

Comments?

Concerns about what we just talked about?

Thank you, Dean and now I would like to introduce Dean who will talk to us about the BLM program update.

>> KATHIE LIBBY: As we transition to Dean's update, I wanted to remind everybody in the room, if you do wish to make a public comment, you want to be signed up before he stops talking, before 3:00.

>> FRED WOEHL: Kathie, I would like to point out, that we gained some time.

Instead of being further behind, we are five minutes behind, instead of 15.

Just want to point that out.

(Off microphone comment).

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: All right.

Thank you.

This will be the last, and then you can move on to more eloquent speakers.

>> FRED WOEHL: There you go.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: Okay.

So I want to address what I think are, perhaps, the highest three challenges and issues that the Bureau cases.

It's not that we don't have many, but I think these are kind of the top three.

We have continually growing and expanding populations.

The herds are moving outside of herd management areas, on to highways and private lands outside of those areas designated for their management.

Only 5% of our herd management areas, 5% approximately of all 179 that we have, are currently at target management numbers.

Achieving AML, appropriate management level, is the Bureau's one and only performance measure.

That's how success in horse management is measured, but that's just one general term for the importance of managing for horses in combination with multiple uses, to manage for healthy lands and all of those things together and if appropriate management levels are set up with other uses and the capacity of the land, then we achieved success.

March 2015, at the last meeting, I reported to you that we had 58,000 wild horse and burro on public lands and some on private lands and other ownerships.

Our March 2016 data is almost tabulated and I don't have the official number for you folks today, but I anticipate that it's going to be at about 67,000.

That's compared to target numbers, appropriate management levels of 27,000.

To interpret that further, it's two and a half times AML on a national level.

That's 40,000 animals beyond target numbers.

Some herd management areas are as much as eight and maybe even now ten times target management numbers.

Resource availability is becoming an issue in some areas.

You know last year we did an emergency gather in Las Vegas where there were imperilled animals, some that did not survive, and others that we were able to bring back into health.

We were using population survey methods that are recommended by the National Academy of Sciences for a while.

Our numbers were at issue and question, but we have better scientific methods and we have much higher confidence in those estimations being more accurate.

Almost all of our herd management areas, were in our third year of implementing those methods and almost all of them would have been counted with these new methods.

So there's a lot less question about how many animals we have.

So that's issue number one.

Growing and expanding populations with limited tools to control them at the present time.

Issue number two, holding costs.

2015, we had about 50,000 animals in holding, 47,000 currently.

It cost the Bureau of Land Management, you as taxpayers \$49 million to maintain that.

Was 64% of our budget.

That's a big deal because that doesn't leave very much money left to do the other things that are important.

The adoption program, fertility control on the range, all of those things that are critical to wild horse and burro management.

So the costs are going to increase again, but it's not because we have more animals in holding because we haven't been removing very many.

The costs are increasing because our unit costs are going up.

Our average pasture cost for contracted pastures was \$1.61 last year in 2015.

I already know that the average is going to be about \$1.99 per horse per day in holding.

That's about \$4 million increase.

Issue number three, large scale removals are no longer possible with current funding levels.

We are limited to removals of about 3,500 animals per year.

That's about the same number of animals that leave the system through adoptions, through sales to good homes, and also leave the system through more natural mortality attrition.

Again, removals are limited to about 3500.

67,000 horses maybe have 15% of that, how many babies is that?

I don't know, 12, 14,000.

So we are not keeping up with the increase on the range, continual advancement on larger populations.

So in the past, removals have been the main tool, and some advocate for more removals.

3500 is it.

Let's just say we bring in 1,000 more that don't get adopted or leave the system.

1,000 more at \$5 a day in corrals, actually the cost was \$5.19 per feed day in corrals last year.

That's almost \$2 million for each thousand not adopted.

So we almost become insolvent immediately if we remove and bring in more animals than can be adopted, sold or that leave through attrition.

That's where we are at and that's why we are not removing more animals.

So in regards to those 3500 removals, they are currently aimed at satisfying court orders.

Pretty high priority.

We are not going to have the Secretary of Interior be in contempt of court.

We will address public safety and health.

There are animals on highways.

There are animals in lettuce fields in Arizona where those fields cannot be harvested because of exposure to e. coli.

Private land encroachment is another high priority and we are going to conduct some gathers to implement research projects and also the sagebrush focal areas, the management for sage-grouse habitat are a high priority.

We spoke recently, we need to maintain good animals in the system for adoption.

So we may do some removals that are called selective removals and no would be removing young desirable animals that are much more adoptable than the older aged classes that are not of high demand to adopters.

We may or may not be able to address emergencies as we have in the past.

If we have large scale removals to rescue animals that are needed, we may not be able to do those because we can't afford it, without it additional money.

Okay.

Given these challenges, it's extremely important that this program change course, and build a bridge to a future any more sustainable program.

So Rob and the Oregon folks kind of picked up on my mantra, new and different.

We have limited capacity to do new and different but it's extremely critical that we move towards that.

So research that's been talked about several times, it's going to be addressed again tomorrow, but it's imperative that we advance the research to develop more effective fertility control methods.

It's important that we use the fertility control methods that we have now to the ability we can.

We have PZP, it's effective one year.

Repeated applications may make it more effective.

We need to continue our ground darting programs and expand them where we can.

We may do some helicopter gathers later in the season to do some secondary and follow-up PZP treatments perhaps in Cedar Mountain and Utah, might be other opportunities for that as well.

So the long-term goal and the best outcome would be that we have vaccines that are longer duration and that we're able to develop them.

I hope that comes out of our research.

But in the absence of that, maybe the interim is some of the spay/neuter enough.

And I know -- and that will depend on the results of research studies.

I know it's a great concern of those, some of you in the audience.

I know you are very upset about that.

There's been a lot of emails coming in.

So I hope that tomorrow during research presentation, that you will hear and listen.

There's been some misinformation out there, a good deal of it.

So we are going to proceed with good science and we are going to proceed according to the university's protocols.

We will proceed with licensed veterinarians.

It's not BLM people doing these kinds of things.

It's imperative that we develop some new tools to help us with this problem.

But the spay/neuter may be an interim bridge to a time when we have better tools.

Is it going to affect the behavior?

Yes, it would if we use them.

Does PZP affect their behavior?

Yes, anything and everything we do in regard to this affects their behavior.

Previously, we managed for large-scale removals.

I mentioned that we have 40,000 animals on the range in excess of target numbers.

Does it affect their behavior when we remove them?

Absolutely.

And in the past, we would have removed all of those 40,000 animals.

We are not removing them now.

So in the interim, I'm going to suggest that in lieu of removals, maybe it's reasonable to consider spay and neuter those 40,000 animals would have been removed.

Spay and neuter might not be the best solution but it might -- it may not be the best long-term solution but it might be the best interim solution, and considering normally we would remove those, maybe it's reasonable to consider those methods when we have so many excess animals on the range.

All right.

I want to move on to a third of ten points and then I'm going to kind of lay off here and turn it over to the Board, Fred.

My third point is we need to advance reducing holding costs through the acquisition of lower cost pastures.

We need more animals in pasture and less in corrals.

Holle's team is at work.

She will probably talk some more about that.

Number four point, we need to increase the number of trained animals available and we need to increase the number of storefronts in the east.

We are working on that.

Fred you know that.

That will be addressed by eastern states office when they present to us tomorrow.

Number five, and extremely important and I already mentioned this, the Board has advocated for partnerships.

It's important that we embrace that and build new ones, embrace the existing ones, and also more fully embrace volunteers.

So that's for not only the adoption program, but where it's feasible, it applies to on ground management also.

Oregon teams talked about the Beaty Butte follow-up and hopefully not have to do large-scale removals with helicopters.

We need to move to a better place and I applaud Oregon for working towards that.

The Cloud Foundation.

Has been in discussion with Wyoming BLM who welcomes their help and some ground

darting PZP programs that have not been considered before.

We have a volunteer agreement with Laura Lee in Nevada for some PZP application and everything is helping.

Humane Society in Arizona is helping with a PZP burro darting program to see if that's feasible for burros or not, and investigate that.

We're beginning discussions with the state of Arizona.

There's a number of departments there that want to talk with BLM and work with us on burro management in Arizona.

So that kind of goes towards what you were talking about, Cope.

We're trying to get folks at the table there.

They came to us.

We are embracing that.

We got large volunteer programs in Oregon and California.

So number six point here, is that greater sage-grouse habitat is critical.

We have 106 HMAs in it.

102 of those are high priority sage-grouse habitat.

Number seven point, adoption incentive pilot.

The Board has encouraged us to look into that.

We have been and we're moving towards something that's not been fully vetted but it might look something like an assistance agreement whereby adopters that we would incentivize adopting animals that might be of an age that not normally are adopted we would incentivize assisting adopters by providing some reimbursement for their care of those targeted animals, and also for training them.

So maybe we're talking about some little older animals than are traditionally adopted, like the 6-year-old, the 7-year-old horses and burro is a little older age class and to get people to adopt them.

We might help them with their feed costs and their training costs.

Animals get trained and then they will be in a good home.

So that's what you have encouraged.

That's what we are looking forward to.

And we haven't perfected what we are going to do.

Director Kornze is also interested in that.

He mentioned in the 2017 budget justifications with Congress.

So another important point is our comprehensive animal welfare program and policies.

You have been handed off the rest of our standard operating procedures for our working group to consider and we'll look forward to the board's comments on those.

So we hope to have that wrapped up by the end of the year.

We are going to hire a comprehensive animal welfare coordinator to oversee the implementation of a full fledged program.

So a little group of some other things that came out of our recent state lead meeting.

I mentioned the microchipping, maybe further and doing more bait and water trapping for fertility control treatments, managing our herds for more adoptable animals and for the short-term here removing those animals that are more desirable for adoption.

We need to update our policy for herd management area and aim for the long term.

And we're thinking about doing contract NEPA for new pasture contracts to get some of that stuff done quicker.

Director Kornze has asked us to continuous solicitation for pasture knowing that pastures are less expensive.

So we might have a solicitation that might be open for two or three months, close that, open another one, close that, and open another one with a goal of having less expensive pastures.

So that's kind of the end of what I want to say, and I welcome some questions if you have them, otherwise we can move on.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: Considering the fact that you have five and a half months in the fiscal year and coming through the summer I think back to a year ago, I think of the Soda

fire in southwest Idaho that forced the relocation of several bands of wild horses of the Clark County drought that necessitated the removal of horses that were starving and dying of the thirst.

I thought I heard you mention that you didn't have funding for emergency removals when we still have multiple fire-prone landscapes and drought susceptible landscapes out there and it would be very easy to envision a repeat of Clark county's problems.

Do you have a reserve built into your budgetary process somewhere to account for those potential emergencies?

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: We have not finalized decisions on all removals.

I said we could remove about 3500.

Currently about 2500 are scheduled.

We have made a commitment to Arizona that they can remove 250 burros to try to address burros on highways and public safety issues and car accidents which leaves about 750 more.

I received an email from deputy director Poole this morning asking for a meeting to discuss what we're going to do in the event of emergencies.

So we have about 750 more removals to address.

So the quandary is do we schedule those removals or do we hold a little bit in reserve?

Do we schedule a gather that could be a repeat PZP treatment?

What is the highest and the best use of the limited capacity we have?

So it's really difficult to decide because we have important things to do everywhere, and we have not even close to near enough capability to deal with it.

So that decision remains whether we hold a little bit in reserve or not, and if not, then the only answers are that we would ask the director for more money to deal with an emergency, bringing in more animals that we don't have enough money to feed, which means eroding next fiscal year's capability to remove and do fertility controlled treatments and the like or do we do something different, deal with the emergency in a different way that does not involve removals.

Those are the choices and they are hard choices.

>> STEVEN YARDLEY: Has there been any serious discussion or investigation into

letting the states and/or the counties within those states where wild horses and burros are running to take control of those animals to ease up the burden of the federal government in taking care of those animals?

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: So the only discussion of that has been two bills introduced in Congress that have not become law, and internally within BLM, the discussion has been, of course, we would cooperate with whatever laws were passed and legislation but until that happens, I guess we don't have a lot to talk about.

We would cooperate with the law and cooperate if that were so.

>> Out of ignorance, really, how much latitude do you have to move money from one place to another?

I noticed that, you know, PZP and the noninvasive techniques are 0% in the budget.

They are budgeted but they are not enough to even be 1%.

Is there any latitude ever once you have your budget fix to move any monies around?

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: Ginger, a point of clarification here in your question.

Do you mean within the wild horse and burro program budget or do you mean among BLM's big budget enter?

>> GINGER KATHRENS: No, I meant within the wild horse and burro budget.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: We have latitude to spend the money on whatever we choose.

The first and highest priority is, of course, feeding those 47,000 animals and taking appropriate care of them.

That's 65% of our budget, actually 64 last year, probably more next year.

And yes, we have latitude for the rest.

So the choice is, again -- there's not much decision space left here.

We have an adoption program.

We have a relationship with Mustang Heritage Foundation.

We are funding some other partnerships and so we can fund those things and we are.

We are doing a little bit of that and then we are doing a little bit of removals to address

very high priorities that I mentioned that we are doing removals, but very few of them -- we can move the money around Ginger, but there's not very much money to move around.

I'm not sure I have answered your question totally.

>> GINGER KATHRENS: No, you answered it.

You know, just the use, as you know, the dartable PZP is very inexpensive and if there's a volunteer cadre of people, could you probably save a lot of money with a few volunteers using a \$25 vaccine.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: You are right, Ginger and you know I have committed support to Wyoming if they want to embrace a new darting program, Stewart Creek, is it we can stand up new and different there, and never have to gather horses again.

I have committed to fund a term position there that would support that, give full-time to the new program.

So low cost, big payoff, if we were successful.

>> FRED WOEHL: I appreciate you trying new methods approach.

That's what -- you know, they say that doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results is insanity and I really appreciate the fact that we're looking beyond what we have done in the past.

These private partnerships, like what is going on up at the Beauty Butte area, I think that's where the future lies.

The volunteer program that Ginger just talked about, and you just talked about, that's where the future lies, getting people involved with this.

Good people that have the resource in mind that want to make things done.

Board have any more questions for Dean?

Because we have Kathie standing up and when she stands up, I get nervous.

>> KATHIE LIBBY: So we are committed to starting our public comment period at 3:15.

It gives you about 14 minutes to stretch your legs.

We've got all the sign-ups we can use.

I will fill you in when you get back.

Thank you.

(Break)

>> KATHIE LIBBY: Hello, everybody.

Hello?

Hate to break up the fun, but we are going to start in two minutes.

Okay.

>> FRED WOEHL: If I can call the Board back to the podium.

Kathie, I will turn the meeting over to you to tell how we will do the public comment period and the length of time that they will get to talk.

>> KATHIE LIBBY: Okay.

Are we ready?

Are we ready?

Are we quietly ready?

Good.

Welcome back.

So for those of you in the room, it is now time for everybody -- for everybody, it's time for public comment period but only those in the room will be making public comments here.

You will use this microphone that happens to be the better of two, easier to get to, when your name is called.

I will kind of call three names in a row so you know if you are up next.

Oh, yes, we will have to do the phone thing.

So there are 35 of you who would like to comment.

I know, we have 90 minutes.

But I believe in thinking positively.

So you are all going to get three minutes.

Even though that's a little over what we would do.

But it will work.

I know it will work.

Remember in terms of our -- excuse my back.

In terms of the rules of the room -- the rules of the road I almost said.

The rules of the room.

When you come to the podium, use your three minutes, direct yourself to the Board.

Speak your heart.

Speak your mind.

Speak whatever you need to speak, but do not carry items with you.

This is not a time for placards and whatever.

This is a time for thoughtful speech and thoughtful listening.

Okay?

So when the three minutes is up -- I will so be around here.

And I will give you a signal when you have one minute left.

It will just be my little one finger sticking up in the air, and then my phone will go off with a cute little tune when it's time for you to stop talking and let the next person.

Come?

Okay?

Any questions?

First three people -- and, again, in advance, thank you all.

We have -- of course, I can't read the first name but it looks like Gayle from the Central Oregon Wild Horse Coalition.

Would that be correct?

And after Gail would be Sara Lowe and Jim Bishop.

>> I don't mind at all being first, in front of all of you.

Not intimidating a bit.

First of all, yes, I'm Gail Hunt from the Central Oregon Wild Horse Coalition over in Prineville and I'm so pleased that y'all came to see you.

Nobody ever comes to see us.

Thank you for doing that.

As the state director already said, Oregon doesn't have the most wild horses, but we don't let that stop us from generating controversy, do we?

So I'm glad that we can all be here to have some respectful meaningful dialogue about these issues.

You told me I couldn't bring one.

And I will have you hold it up.

I want to respect all the opinions.

You might see in central Oregon some people carrying pocket versions of the United States constitution.

Well, that inspired us.

So we have pocket versions of the Wild Horse and Burro Act.

And ours is the red letter edition, all the original language in red text, and the reason we did that was because we really feel at our level, which doesn't have any white tablecloths or polite people or anything, we just kind of live in the dirt where the horses are, and so there -- there's a disconnect between where you guys are and would like to be and where we actually are.

And what we see is that -- there has probably been a departure from the compassion that was inherent to the original words the act and if nothing else, I would like to leave

everyone with the message that is so critical.

In fact on the cover of our little pocket version of the Wild Horse and Burro Act, we could have used the photogenic horses of the Ochocos but we chose an image from Mark Turrell, of mutton bunch where they adopted a sheep because that's how compassionate they are.

They deserve at least that much from us.

And the only other thing I will say in respect for time is Kristin, you mentioned things we can be doing differently in terms of adoption, getting horses into different hands.

Right now, we are under the judicial review process of a corrections program that targets diversion level, rather than the entire infrastructure of a prison and this will save tremendously on infrastructure cost and staffing cost and it will achieve the same thing.

The same intensity of the prison program and it's replicable all over the nation in every single community.

And if anyone would like to talk about the template we have already established, we would be happy to do that, but I think it's very doable and it -- it's not going to run out of horses.

So that's all I got to say.

>> KATHIE LIBBY: Perfect!

Just quickly I want to say, thank you, Gail, for starting us off and for modeling behavior.

Thank you.

>> All right.

My name is Sara Low, I'm a veterinarian in Virginia, and first of all, I was encouraged to hear a mention of the comprehensive animal welfare program and I hope the work in this area continues to grow.

As part of a practice exercise for research, training fellowship and equine behavior and welfare, I recently attended four BLM adoptions in different regions the country to observe animal handling.

I incorporated production animal welfare audit methodologies and my observations from the first adoption visit to design an animal handling assessment.

I applied this animal handling assessment at three adoptions.

Here are some of my observations.

Animals moved at a run or jump during 78% of animal sorting events.

Animals collided with Gates or water troughs at 70% of sorting events.

During haltering 33% of animals had head collisions with the halter box.

During loading, 20% of animals were trucked by handlers and bystanders.

Strikes were from hands, flags, paddles and hats.

Blows occurred on the face, neck, body and rump.

One animal was hit at least ten times.

Multiple animals were pushed on to adopter trailers using trailer gates.

They experienced stress diarrhea, including all animals at one adoption.

One group of horses had stereotype with acute high stress.

These high rates of undesirable animal outcome associated with primarily fear based confrontation handling actions indicate considerable opportunity for the BLM to improve handling welfare of off range wild horses and burros.

I encourage the BLM to follow examples set by the nation's leading zoos and food animal producers by implementing a system of low stress, low fear, nonconfrontational animal handling.

It would enable the BLM to identify metrics for positive and negative welfare, test solutions to welfare problems and communicate findings so that animal handling and welfare is continuously improving and responding to changing animal and human stakeholder needs.

In the case of the BLM, there are some unique benefits to be gained from implementing a system of low stress stockmanship.

These benefits include, one a less traumatized animal for adoption that is more easily trained, leading to improved reputation of BLM horses and, two the modeling of respectful nonconfrontational animal handling to adopters and the public leading to improved welfare of adopted horses and burros and establishing the BLM as a conspicuous leader in state-of-the-art animal handling welfare.

I encourage the BLM to take advantage of this considerable opportunity to improve the lives of programs horses, burros and people who work with them.

Thank you.

>> KATHIE LIBBY: Thank you very much.

And Jim Bishop.

And as Jim takes his seat, let me just -- as Jim takes a seat, let me say that the next three people will be Sandy Force, John Goodell, and Skip Miller maybe.

>> Welcome to Oregon.

My name is Jim Bishop and I live about a mile from the BLM horse corrals in Burns.

It's a little like living next to the candy store.

My wife and I currently have seven mustangs and two burros and miscellaneous rescue horses.

So we have been there and we have had them for -- one of them for 23 years.

I also have a master's degree in a thing called economic system planning and I'm retired and so out of my own curiosity, I used some of the BLM numbers to model some of the challenges that you are dealing with and it's interesting that so many of things that you are doing are supported by that model, but I will just very briefly read what my model came up with, and what the math says.

Horse members will continue to increase, essentially forever without some strategy to permanently reduce the 18% annual growth rate between gathers, whether this is done by surgery or drugs or some operational strategy, will await the results from the trials of the Board has recommended and the BLM is pursuing.

The model seems to predict that the stable growth rate is about 8 to 9%, instead of the 18 that is currently going on.

But at that point, long-term holding numbers start to drop slightly.

And the time between gathers changes to about 8 to 10 years which is a positive.

PZP and similar one off approaches will delay growth numbers, and extend gather timing but will not change the long-term population growth rates.

And it won't change the strategies that you need to deal with.

And as you have discussed, exceedingly high AML on almost all the HMAs right now is just -- it's doing damage to the resources, that I see you are pretty much stuck with making those decisions.

Thank you.

Anyway, in conclusion, I'm pleased that the BLM has authorized a number of trials regarding the longer term limits on population growth rates and the effects that may occur with horse behaviors.

I applaud the contracting to see what's really going on and -- and I think it's going to produce some better outcomes for everyone and in this case for the horses and burros that I truly enjoy and support.

So thank you for your attention.

>> KATHIE LIBBY: Thank you very much.

Okay.

Is it Sandy Force.

Correct.

And then next John Goodell and Skip Miller.

We are taking minutes of the public comment period, which we have not always done in the past.

If you have your comments in writing and you want to leave them at the back table to make sure the recorder gets it correctly, we would be happy to receive them.

>> It's nice to be here and see all of you.

This is my second trip in front of this Board.

A few days ago, I sent a proposal for internship to a number of you and so we fleshed this out a little bit.

So it actually broke into a twofold proposal.

One is internship on short-term holding facilities which would be a one to three week intern requiring an application facility and the people interning would be those who are interested in learning more about the horse program, how to handle BLM horses,

day-to-day opportunities of it.

The advantages TV would be to use the people to take photos, do the minor things that hold up some of the facilities in terms of lack of manpower, doing simple things like pulling shots, prepping things for feet, just the little stuff, photos.

Under the goal of eventually getting every horse on the Internet photographed with a history and where it was gathered, when it was gathered to improve the adoption of the individual horses.

The second part of the proposal actually came from Ginger and it is a field and HMAs internship, which would be a collaborative of both private parties.

We have a tremendous senior citizen population in this country who are looking for things to do.

And the internship to do that would be to go work on the HMAs, to document things as simple as the Flora, the fauna, the health of the horses, herd behavioral issues, have scientific training on how to do proper documentation, and so that all of that could be geared to send to the local land universities such as our own OSU so that all of this information could be correlated and build a solid history and informational background per HMA per region for the BLM to work with and improve their basic management structure without having to apply more manpower out of their budget.

Thank you very much.

>> KATHIE LIBBY: Thank you very much, Sandy.

And John Goodell coming with a laptop.

Your notes?

>> Notes.

I'm John Goodell.

The wildlife society across North America represents 10,000 wildlife biologists, the Oregon represents 400 professional field and research biologists, educators, students administrators and conservation law enforcement officers from many areas of both public and private enterprise and by one of the -- the mission of our -- of the wildlife society is to promote wise conservation of wildlife resources in Oregon by serving these professionals but also a central purpose is to aid are public discussion of natural resource management in our state, by communicating sound science to entities engaged in management decisions.

So with regard to this subject, the science behind free roaming horses and burros is there's a robust body of peer-reviewed scientific literature that reveals that free roaming horses and burros negatively impacted rangeland sources.

They compete with native wildlife and disproportionately impact critical habitats such as seeps, springs and riparian zones.

Furthermore, the grazing strategies are not ecologically equivalent to manage cattle.

Consequently free roaming horses consume as much as 65% more forage than a cow of equivalent body mass, and clip vegetation closer to the ground further impeding plant recovery.

Therefore appropriate management levels for free roaming horses and burros are calculated on the scientific understanding of the unique herbivore that has morphological behavior and physiological traits and therefore the impacts on the native species and the habitats.

Considering this best available science, the wildlife society encouraging the Advisory Board to support scientific solutions that quickly and effectively the number of on range horses and burros to ecologically sustainable levels.

Failure to do so not only sustains ecological damage but it prevents a significant barrier to collaborative conservation on behalf of the greater sage-grouse conservation plan.

But also sage steppe conservation broadly speaking.

The greater sage-grouse conservation relies on ongoing collaboration with key stakeholders.

While the social values may vary, the financial interests may vary, science is the common language used by agencies to negotiate conservation outcomes which could be, for example, rest rotation grazing systems that benefit broad rearing habitat for sage-grouse.

Oregon wildlife managers established credibility with key stakeholders based on the mutual acknowledgment of the best peer-reviewed science and they are adjusting their practices in ways that may negatively affect their bottom line with the understanding based on science that these practices benefit grouse.

So to finish the collaborative conservation prevents exciting new possibilities but it's a two-way street, ignoring best available science with respect to free roaming horse and burros undermines credibility of resource managers and the precarious goodwill of these groups throughout the west.

>> KATHIE LIBBY: And Skip Miller.

Come on up, sir.

>> Hi, my name is Skip Miller, and I'm just representing myself.

45 years ago, dad claimed the horses on his allotment.

And the reason he did that is because what wild horse Annie did, you couldn't manage the horses under that, and he knew it would be chaos.

And we did.

We ran them horses and got them off our land.

And so I know something about that part of it too, but 45 years later, it's still chaos.

Wild Horse Annie did not base her act on reality.

There were never wild horses in the Great Basin.

They came in with the cattleman.

If you read the journals from the trappers and the Army, the horses were not in the Great Basin until afterwards.

So anyway, to -- my solutions, I think they are just plain simple and I think the departments have done a very good job with what they have, and with the tools they have been forced to use.

I think they need to allow the Department of Interior to sell the excess horses.

They've got to get rid of the excess horses.

That frees up money.

And number two, I don't know whether this applies to this program, but we cattleman raise cattle, they sell them.

They hunt big game to control the populations.

We need slaughter houses for our horses.

We are just sending them to Mexico and killing every bit as many horses.

They are going to Mexico to get killed.

And three -- I think we should create wild horse reserves in the southern plains or up this in the Palouse, because that's where the huge horse populations were when the horses expanded out.

Especially in Texas.

And then I believe we should get all the free range horses out of the Great Basin.

And to those -- and to those reserves.

It will be closer to the people.

I seen the buses in Oklahoma or wherever it is, where they bring the people in to see.

That would be close.

And it would be easier on the horses.

It -- and I probably shouldn't say this, but I went through cattle-free by '93.

So Great Basin, horse-free by '23.

>> KATHIE LIBBY: Thank you, Skip.

So next three people, Marika Rupe, and Susan Netherlands and Suzanne Roy.

>> No, please.

It's all good.

My name is Marika Rupe and I reside in Moser, Oregon, I'm representing the American wild horse campaign, which is the nation's largest wild horse and burro organization dedicating to preserving the wild horse and burros on public lands in the west as part of our national heritage.

Today I would like to address the BLM's budget request to Congress, specifically Section 110 which opens the door to the destruction of wild horses by creating a mechanism to circumvent the current congressional prohibition on selling captured wild horses and burros for slaughter.

The BLM is seeking authority from Congress to amend the Wild Horse and Burro Act through the appropriations process to transfer the horses to other federal, state and local agencies for use as work animals.

Horses transferred in this manner would lose the federal protections that currently prevent them from being sold for slaughter.

With no limits to the number of wild horses and burros that can be transferred in this manner and no definition of a work animal, the BLM's proposed language creates a large legal loophole that could provide a direct route into the slaughter pipeline for hundreds and potentially thousands of wild horses.

In testimony before the house interior appropriations committee in February, BLM director Neil Kornze says that horses transferred in this manner would have no protection for being sold from slaughter in states like Oregon, Utah, and Wyoming, where the livestock industry dominates local politics, county and state governments have been vocal in the request for more and more wild horse roundups.

Section 110 would create a mechanism for the BLM to deliver unrestricted number of wild horses into the hands of very -- of the very agencies that actively lobby for the mass removal for public lands and slaughter.

This is unacceptable.

The BLM asserts that such language is necessary to facilitate the transfer of the horses to acts like the Border Patrol, however, the BLM currently successfully adopts numerous horses to Border Patrol, and other mounted patrols.

And they say the adoption is too cumbersome, even such inspections account for just .02% of the agency's \$80 million budget.

The demand for work animals can be met through the current adoption and sales framework which protects horses from slaughter while allowing the BLM to adopt more than four horses to qualified adopter at its -- at the discretion of the secretary.

The polls repeatedly document the American's support of wild horses on our public lands and strong opposition to horse slaughter.

These are our wild horses and burros and public lands.

Please listen to the people by making a recommendation against the 110 budget language which is nothing more than the end run around the will of the Congress and the American people.

Thank you for your consideration.

>> KATHIE LIBBY: Thank you, Marika.

And Simone Netherlands.

That puppy is listening very attentively.

>> Hi.

My name is Simone Netherlands.

I'm the president of the Salt River Wild Horse Management Group.

Our group is 100% volunteer based, and we monitor and record our Salt River wild horses on the river every day.

We know each and every horse personally, and we have kept those records for over 18 years.

And we keep birth rates, death rates and a record on each horse.

Back in July of last year, the Forest Service was planning to remove the Salt River wild horses.

You know, as we care about each horse personally we were outraged and the public was outraged with us.

Just a few days ago, it's been a long road, but just a few days ago our Arizona senate voted almost unanimously for a law that codifies the management of our wild horses between all authorities, the Forest Service, the ag department, Maricopa County sheriff's office and private entities and we think this is progress.

We care about birds and the environment as well.

But what we see nationally is that wild horses and burros are discriminated against.

Wild horses and burros have value.

They have economic value.

They have historic value.

They have enormous recreational value and they have scientific value.

And with feel that public opinion matters and that we want the BLM to pay closer attention to that because the public is the biggest stakeholder on our American public lands.

In my capacity as the president of the Salt River wild horse management, I was invited to the Dr. Pielstick's project and I was there from beginning to end.

I'm extremely concerned about that because I don't think he portrayed that experiment truthfully to the BLM.

I personally saw that there was also one horse that he performed the same colpotomy research on and the horse is completely emitted and to my best knowledge, I heard that that horse passed away.

There were six burros instead of five.

There were two male burros.

Those might be irrelevant to this research project, but that horse certainly wasn't.

I saw that animals were suffering.

They were not anesthetized adequately.

I saw there was no respect for the burros.

There were four people sticking their hands in the statement burro during the same procedure.

I saw one burro being kicked by Dr. Pielstick for no apparent reason.

And I don't feel that these surgeries under a high enough research project or in a stage of research that they can be performed on our wild horses and burros.

I feel that at this stage, when you don't have enough proof, you don't have enough data, he admitted that at Sheldon, did he not do any follow-up on the mares.

So at this stage, I feel that you need to find ten domestic horse owners and ask them to perform those surgery on those horses because the owners of these horses, the public, does not agree with you performing experiments on the wild horses and burros.

>> KATHIE LIBBY: Thank you.

I appreciate it.

And Suzanne.

And you are not taking all that paper with you, Suzanne?

You wanted to give us a visual.

>> I will do my talk and bring it to the back.

>> KATHIE LIBBY: Next is Leon Pielstick and Calo Rito and Karla Bowers.

>> Okay, I'm Suzanne Roy, I'm the executive director of the American wild horse preservation campaign.

We represent over 150,000 citizens across the US and a coalition of more than 60 organizations.

It's great to see some new faces on the Board, especially my colleague Ginger.

And I wish I could be optimistic about the direction that this would signal a new direction, but unfortunately, the BLM's pursuit of sterilization of our horses on the range makes me less than optimistic.

AWHPC is strongly opposed to the BLM's mare sterilization experiments because they are invasive.

They are costly and they pose serious risks to wild mares and their unborn foals.

Unlike domestic horses that undergo this procedure, wild mares cannot be given follow-up postsurgical care that's required.

For example, in domestic horses, it requires even Dr. Pielstick during the Phoenix workshop advised that the horse that he performed the procedure on be tied tightly overnight to prevent her from lying down and rolling because of the risk of evisceration, which is the intestines coming through the surgical incision.

This cannot be done for our wild horses.

So it makes it an inappropriate procedure to do on these wild animals.

It also will inalterably change their behaviors making it an inappropriate management tool on the range.

Oh, they took my papers.

I'm here today to represent tens of thousands of Americans who have spoken out against these experiments.

I have 16,000 petition signatures collected in just six days to your Board asking for a recommendation against proceeding with these dangerous experiments.

And there were also 21,000 public comments submitted on the environmental assessment for the mare sterilization project at the Burns corrals.

I have the names and addresses of those citizens as well.

So the public has spoken loudly.

Someone else who has also spoken is the director of the southwest wildlife conservation center which sponsored the spay workshop that Simone just talked about in Phoenix.

She told me that she believes at this point, that spaying mares is an inappropriate management tool.

She would not recommend it due to the follow-up care that was required for the animals who went -- underwent the procedure.

They did it on at least five burros.

One the burros died.

One of the burros lost her 50 to 70 day old fetus, and other burros developed post-operative infections.

Those animals could be treated because they were tame, and they require extensive follow-up care.

Can't be provided to wild horses.

So the --

>> KATHIE LIBBY: So thank you.

>> Let me conclude by saying it's unjustifiable to do these experiments on these animals when there are less invasive alternatives available.

>> KATHIE LIBBY: Thank you very much.

Please understand.

I need to be consistent.

I mean if we say don't bring matters to the table, don't bring matters to the table.

I can't say okay for you but not okay for someone else.

I'm just explaining.

I'm just explaining.

I'm not criticizing.

Okay.

So Leon.

No comment, sir?

You just saved us three minutes.

We love you.

Thank you.

Bonnie?

And next will be Karla Bowers.

>> I will comment as you proceed with your new tool.

I challenge the 160 -- the 179 HMAs.

I went through the HMAs.

I only have 160 of them because 19 of them have no horses or burros in them.

So how can you say they are herd managed areas?

Okay?

Now, Dr. Guscosrin is concerned with the diversity and the genetic viability of the horses and the burros, and the genetic conservationists have come up with the idea that a minimum -- a minimum of 50 breeding horses are necessary with -- in order to have that, you have to have 150 to 200 horses in a herd.

You will still have some decrease in your diversity and some decrease in your viability, but it will be slow.

So if you look at your horse herds, you only have 30 horse herds that have low appropriate management levels of 150 or more.

You only have three wild burro herds left that have 150 or more low AMLs.

Now horses have social structures and you kind of talked about it today.

They have roles that they play.

And they do that for their survival and for their generational continuity.

You have already compromised somewhat on their survival and their continuity in that you have removed and released without considering the family bands, and you have also done geldings and now you are thinking to do spaying.

And you have to ask yourself what will this do for their survival that they need and their continuance on the range?

The Sheldons, the Sheldons -- okay.

The Sheldons were vasectomized by your are Dr. Leon Pielstick.

They saw a lot of fighting among the horses.

As they came off the range, the different people that took them -- I followed these horses for five years as they came off the range and I repeatedly heard, including the president of the mustang makeover, who took them year after year, the horrible condition that they were in as they came off the range.

And I don't know if it was due to the spaying, the vasectomizing, and they have bit off ears and blown out knees.

And you can see that when you go to see that on the Northern California.

>> KATHIE LIBBY: We know that three minutes is not much.

Karla.

>> I would like to share some national numbers for perspective.

Out of 650 million total federal land acres only 29 BLM and Forest Service acres are allowed for wild horse and burro use and this is shared with livestock where wild horses and burros are only allocated from 5 to 17% of the forage.

We have got three to five million livestock, 1 million elk, 780,000 pronghorns and millions of deer and 70,000 big horn sheep on public lands compared to the maximum target numbers of 26,600 wild horses and burros allowed by the BLM in the ten western

states.

These numbers clearly show that America's wild horses and burros are not getting their fair share of land, forage and water.

Over three-fourths of our herds at their target maximum numbers on the range will not be genetically viable or diverse long term.

These animals are not over populated on the range as Washington would have the public believe.

They are over the extremely low management numbers set for them.

This Board should be challenging these low numbers and fighting for more equitable coequal balance on the range between wild horses and burros, livestock and other wildlife.

Instead of advocating for possible barbaric sterilization and extreme fertility controls on our herds which will push them towards extinction.

In light of these points I offer the following solutions to be seriously considered by this Board.

Recommend the BLM raise the AMLs below 150.

And lessen the excess reproduction caused by fragmenting the social structures.

Three BLM reserve the Massacre Lakes herd for scientific research purposes.

It's one 69 last herds left that has not been touched by man or helicopter, since 1988.

And has a family bands intact.

Number four, recommend the BLM hire wildlife biologists ecologists and behaviorists who understand wild equine life on the range to advise the BLM about their management instead of relying on professionals who are only versed in domestic livestock care and management.

This Board should have those requirements and the RACs should have those requirements.

Number five, recommend that the BLM address the fiscal shortfall that live stock grazing program places on the budget yearly.

The American taxpayer foots this bill over \$100 million a year for BLM and Forest

Service lands.

The livestock permittees are not paying their Rex.

Recommend that BLM amend Section 1339 of the Wild Horse Act that the secretary should relocate wild horses and burros to areas of public land where they did not exist in 1971.

Then all grazing permittees would share in the responsibility for the wild horses and burros not just the few number ever permittees who share the HMAs lands with the animals currently.

>> KATHIE LIBBY: Thank you, Karla.

I appreciate it.

>> I've got more.

>> KATHIE LIBBY: I'm sure and you will give us your written comments and we will get them in the record.

The next three, Scott Beckstead, and Gillian Lyons and Hollerwer.

Three minutes each.

>> Good afternoon.

For the record my name is Scott Beckstead the senior Oregon direct for the Humane Society of the United States.

Own behalf of my organization, welcome to Oregon.

The Humane Society of the United States owns and operates an 1120-acre horse sanctuary down in southern Oregon and a portion of those animals are -- originated on our public rangelands and were removed by the BLM.

It's interesting to me whenever I go out into the interesting mix of horses on our property, it's always the mustangs that I find telling all the other horses how to live their lives.

They are very, very smart.

They are naturally strong leaders and they are a lot of fun to watch.

So I would like to just say that the Humane Society of the United States understands that the BLM has a statutory mandate to manage our public lands for multiple uses.

And that under that legal landscape, the BLM has determined that the management of wild horses and burros is necessary in many HMAs.

However, we believe where the agency is working to manage wild horses and burros populations the management tools used by the agency must be both humane and effective but they must also reduce the need to remove horses to an absolute minimum.

Put another way, it's the position of the Humane Society of the United States that wild horses must be managed on the range whenever and wherever possible.

That said, we are concerned that the BLM is not making a consistent use of all the currently available tools while research is pending into longer lasting methods of fertility control.

For example, in 2015, only 469 mares were treated with fertility control.

As such, we request that this Board make a motion to request that while the BLM focus on research into longer lasting fertility control methods, that it also pursue on range management with currently available tools.

We recommend, for example, a goal of treating at least 1,000 mares and Jennies a year with PZP.

Thank you very much for listening to my comments and good luck in your work here.

>> KATHIE LIBBY: Thank you very much, Scott.

And Gilliam.

>> Hi.

Thank you for having me.

I represent the Humane Society of the United States like my colleague Scott.

I wanted to follow up on some of the information that he provided and just let the Board know that the HSUS is helping the BLM to provide additional tools for on range management.

Westerly currently working in conjunction with Purdue University to develop a single injection PZP vaccine, which we are hopeful will aid the agency in more easily applicable management schemes on HMAs throughout the country.

The overarching goal of this research is to develop an improved PZP vaccine that will

induce multiyear infertility with one injection.

To do this, Purdue University is pursuing three different research projects.

The first is to look at an adjuvant that will strongly enhance the immune response to the vaccine and can be used in control released formulations similar to PZP 22.

The second is to develop a synthetic PZP protein which will significantly reduce the cost of the PZP vaccine.

And the third is to develop a controlled release formulation that induces long-term infertility.

So we currently started this research in conjunction with Purdue University.

We are hopeful that the research will be completed within three to five years.

We also wanted to let the BLM know and the Board know that HSUS is a supporter of the BLM's sterilization research program aimed at reducing overpopulation of unwanted horses, however, we are concerned that the surgical techniques proposed in the Oregon study are slightly an issue to this, in regards to patient handling, post operative pain management and expected complications in a herd of mustang mares.

This is dependent on the agency showing that this will only be used in wild horse populations that are significantly over AML and in situations where the agency has shown that less intrusive methods of management are not feasible on those HMAs.

And that's it.

Thank you for giving us a chance to speak.

>> KATHIE LIBBY: Thank you very much.

And I misspoke before.

Next up is Lisa Friday.

And then Linda Hannock and following Linda, Buck Taylor.

>> Thank you.

For those of you new on the Board, my name is Lisa Friday.

I'm the wife of a cattle farmer.

I know all about cattle farming.

I know all about livestock and I know all about wild horses.

I used to believe that it was futile to travel several thousand miles and spend several thousand dollars to speak for three minutes but I do see some progress here and I'm real excited about it.

The progress is shown with areas of cooperation, communication and just plain doing the right things.

Well in some cases.

Please make recommendations.

This Board is required to advise the BLM and make recommendations and your first recommendation is to read the 36 large animal vet comments that I have submitted with mine from East Coast veterinarians that the proposed sterilization study will have high morbidity and mortality rate.

By the way, my horses -- in 2011, and Al Cane put in writing and went on record that he didn't recommend it.

The NAS had it very far down his list of options.

The second recommendation you should be making is increasing the use of PZP.

It's proven efficacy.

The BLM promised in 2011 to Congress, to increase every year 2,000 doses.

Now I'm not very good at math, but that means we should be using 10,000 doses every year.

A promise that the BLM did make to Congress.

It's BLM's responsibility to manage these horses humanely and with good fiscal stewardship.

Recommendation number three has been accepted, but I haven't seen any increase in the partnership yet.

I can't wait.

I can't wait to be a part of this increase in partnership, but somebody needs to make

those calls.

Number four, the BLM is trying to decrease the number of horses in holding, please ensure that the additional language that's added to the proposal of transferring the horses to other agencies be them state, local or federal, that there's certain language in there that protects them and gives them the same protection that wild horse adopters require.

This includes, funny, but one year, maybe some shade.

Maybe some shelter and appropriate care.

Keep in mind, however, transferring ownership to other parties as in the sitland agreement in Utah, remember that the 10th circuit court of appeals said that it's illegal to delegate NEPA responsibilities.

Thank you and I'm looking forward to a positive response in recommendations to the BLM.

Think about having appropriate land management levels instead of 170.

Thank you.

>> KATHIE LIBBY: Thank you very much.

Linda Hannock.

The next three are going to be Buck Taylor, Kate Beardsley, and Mary Schranger.

>> Good afternoon.

My name is Linda Hannock.

I'm from Estes Park, Colorado, and I also represent the Cloud Foundation.

The ethics of animal research, it has a checkered reputation among American people, doesn't it?

I represent those people today, and I'm speaking for those people who have spoken to us.

Bernard Rawlings who is a distinguished professor of philosophy, animal science and biomedical science at Colorado State University addresses what he calls moral science.

Pain as a physical phenomenon does not begin to capture all the ways that what we do

to animals matters to them.

The animal research community has been remised in failing to address all levels of ethical concern from animal research.

Can you guess what direction I'm going here?

The Cloud Foundation with a following of nearly a half a million people on our social media and our website and mailing list conducted a survey on surgical sterilization of mares last weekend, for two days.

As the manager of our Facebook page, I composed this research, put it up on our Facebook page -- I'm sorry, not research, survey.

Put it up on our Facebook page, a very simple survey, with four possibilities.

The question what was: What is your opinion of surgical sterilization of America's wild horses?

Which of the following alternatives do you endorse?

Ovariectomy via colpotomy, PZP, or no permanent sterilization procedure and I explained each procedure.

And you should have this by the way.

I hope you have it.

Here are the results on a graph on a paper you should have.

We had over 4,000 respondents.

95.7% said no permanent sterilization procedure.

2.6% chose ovariectomy via colpotomy, 1% the endoscopic procedure and less than 1% the laser ablation.

In closing I would like to give some remarks from equine veterinarian Dr. Lisa Jacobson, who has treated wild and domestic horses in her practice and also works with the Colorado State University vet school.

I'm in shock that the BLM and any veterinarians are considering mare sterilization.

The colpotomy is so barbaric and risky I have never been behind it with domestic let alone wild mares.

>> KATHIE LIBBY: Thank you.

And we have buck.

>> Hi, folks.

I'm Buck Taylor.

I can't believe what I'm hearing here at the end, ignorance is bliss.

But anyway, we have, since 1964, run on the range where I believe there's supposed to be 200 head of horses and there are approximately over 400 horses now.

We moved here in 1964 and have been on that same range and, yes, it is a treat and a thrill to see wild horses on the range.

There are times that you would only see possibly six to ten of the bunch and now you see way too many.

They are eating themselves out of house and home.

I personally was involved with helping the horses two years ago by hauling water to them, hauling water to our cattle and then thus so, they actually have watered horses also.

I was not paid to do this.

Everyone in this room is a horse lover, or they wouldn't be here.

The management level of these horses was dictated in 1971 by the act.

And there were so many horses to be allotted and that was agreed upon by all the ranchers, the BLM, by everybody.

Since that time, through lack of funding, which no one said anything was going to be lack of funding just so we couldn't take care of the horses.

That was not even a question.

The horses were to be taken care of and we agreed that the BLM was to do this.

Somehow I believe this agreement has been backwashed and you folks wonder -- not you folks but a lot of folks wonder what was the Bundies doing and what is -- I know this might not interject to what they are thinking but what causes the Bundies to do what they

did in Hornet county and all over the west.

Well, regulations that have gone awry is causing a lot of these problems and this is one of the regulations in my mind that has been snowballing to the effect to where the intent of this bill is not being upheld to by the government.

And the rancher has been doing his best to uphold its end 69 agreement, but we are not getting any cooperation by so-called lack of funding, other quantity measures that we do not have any control on, that the actual government does.

And you wonder why there are uprising in this country, and we have a letter.

I hope you folks have.

It thank you for your time.

>> KATHIE LIBBY: Kate Beardsley.

>> Hi, I'm Kate Beardsley.

I'm mustangs to the rescue.

It is a 100% local nonprofit.

We manage horse populations wild and otherwise.

We place horses formerly in dire need packer forest patrol and research and rescue.

So there are some of those volunteer partnerships that you are guys are looking for.

Those partnerships are alive and well in many, many areas.

I have been on a few boards and I am thinking I'm so glad I'm not on this one.

So I admire what you are doing and I know -- I know the challenges.

I'm somewhat familiar with those challenges.

So I wrote down a few concepts that I would want to keep in my head if I were sitting in your chairs.

And I'm just going to throw them out for you.

I like the new and different concept, flexibility, creativity, build that into your recommendations.

You don't have to make large sweeping blanket policies.

I would like to warn you of the dangers of blanket policies.

Any recommendations you have can be specific, and -- and it's -- it's your ability and somewhat your responsibility to choose to make those recommendations as specific or as general as you feel meets the need and there's a lot of pressure to make bigger blanket policies and I say don't feel the pressure.

I loved hearing Dean being very clear that BLM has a clearly established ability to adjust AML.

Great to hear that.

Every time I hear it, I love it.

So far, our managing agency has shown that they are very good at managing down from the top, from a high AML.

I would like the members of this Board to give me faith that our federal agencies or managing agency can also manage as well at the bottom side of the AML.

There are some groups of horses that are managed entirely too low and when they are that low, the management is very intense.

I get a little resentful when I feel like my government is farming horses and when it's -- and when the AML is too low, it's farming.

Check in with the congressional act every once and a while.

Be aware of what the archaeological record shows but know that these horses are protected by a congressional act so that their history, their origin doesn't matter as much as the fact that we have laws that protect them right now.

If you have questions about year round grazing, in one area, don't question just the numbers.

Question the management.

Question the bigger picture that landscape view that you spoke with earlier.

You have guys, good luck making all of these decisions and come up with great recommendations.

I really appreciate what you guys are doing.

>> KATHIE LIBBY: Thank you very much.

It always amazes me when people do it in exactly three minutes.

Mary Schranger.

You are going to pass.

Thank you, ma'am.

Lovely to have you here nonetheless.

Next three people are going to be Caroline -- Carolyn Ellerton.

Following her will be Nicole Ribard and following Nicole will be, oh, a duo, Steve and Debra Conklin.

Say it again.

It's hard to split three minutes between two people, isn't it?

So do we have Carolyn?

(off microphone comment).

>> Thank you for the opportunity to visit you today.

My name is Carolyn Ellerton.

I have been a horsewoman for 67 of my 72 years.

I have raised my own horses.

I trained my own horses and I didn't just fall off the turnip truck.

I don't represent the group other than the public at large and people who are really, really tired of the way our natural resources are being managed.

They don't feel like they are being managed at all.

I'm new to this scene, in particular, because I just moved back to the area.

So I'm not going to make any broad statements without having the facts, but something's

going really, really wrong with BLM's management of these animals and the American public is getting mad.

They say inhumanity and brutality everywhere they look.

They see ignorance of science.

They don't pay any attention to, like, other speakers said, the family groups and what's happening to them.

I have listened to Marian Simons who is a well-known equine behaviorist in Washington, I believe the BLM had consulted with her to go on a roundup with them and she told them the fact that you are separating the lead mares from the rest of the group are making them go crazy.

It's like you are not paying attention to what makes it go better.

The public sees helicopters dive bombing mares and little foals, dragging the foals off with broken legs.

What the heck happened to compassion?

That is brutality!

If any of us did, it we would be sent to jail.

I beg you and so do the people who feel the same way I do, which are in the millions, please be kinder.

If you have to round the horses up, don't wait six years.

I believe the Beaty Butte round up was approved in 2009.

And it didn't take place until last year.

And they had to have an injunction to have observers there.

Why is that?

Is there something going on that you don't want us to see.

The American people want more transparency and they want you to pay more attention to what the heck they want instead of the special interests and we all know who the special interests are.

The statistics, the minutes, and all the records are very clear on who is paying -- or paving.

I'm not accusing anybody, but really and truly the American public are fed up.

They will start asking for some jobs and I just pray y'all think about all the comments that have been made today.

People said the same thing I wish I could have said.

So thank you.

>> KATHIE LIBBY: Thank you.

>> I appreciate it a lot.

>> KATHIE LIBBY: Thank you for being here.

Nicole.

>> Hi.

I respectfully disagree with Lee who said earlier that spay research is an exciting time for wild horses.

It's not an exciting time for wild horses.

It's a horrific time.

It doesn't seem to be a great time for the public either as we seem to be treated more and more like pests.

As I look over at the orange tape, it feels like an artificially low AML.

Hopefully we all get out of here without being PZPed.

The first group of wild horses I ever saw roaming free with their families were from the white mountain herd in Wyoming.

I was so thrilled my hands were shaking to the point that some 69 photos I took actually com out blurry.

That's why aim a correspondent for friends for horses.

The latest putrid scream to undermine Wyoming's wild horses.

As members of the Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board we ask you to recommend that the BLM get a complete overhaul, one that replaces the decision makers with people who are not wedded to welfare, cattle and sheep ranchers who claim that wild horses are over populated.

We hope the BLM's wild horse extinction plan will be stopped before it's too late.

Six states have lost their wild horse populations completely, Missouri, Iowa, Texas, Oklahoma, and Kansas and BLM's latest -- and from BLM's latest proposals it looks like Montana and Wyoming are next.

BLM's tools for executing its extinction plan are becoming more and more horrific.

And more and more unlawful in terms of the Wild Horses and Burros Act of 1971 which is to protect wild horses and not ranchers.

The rock springs Wyoming field office is proposing to round up horses from the white mountain and the little Colorado herd offices and spaying the mares.

Why spend millions of dollars on research which studies already exist proving the negative effects of fertility control, such as the use of PZP on a America's wild horses.

FOA believe it's because the newer research was not published by BLM cronies.

When the Humane Society obtained ESA registration for PZP in 2012, the organization never provided evidence that PZP doesn't have negative side effects.

It just provided information about the efficacy of finance and waivers ordinarily required from the applicant seeking pesticide registration, including a Texas city study, ecological effects and environmental fate guideline study.

In addition, the national academies of science has specifically recommended against spaying wild mares under field conditions, because they may be followed by prolonged bleeding and peritoneal infection which can be fatal in hours.

Instead of wasting time and money, the BLM should be focusing its attention on reevaluating the artificially low appropriate management levels.

On two HMAs encompassing over 1 million acres of public land, BLM allocates forage for at least 400 wild horses.

And yet on those same public lands, cattle and sheep are allotted forage at 400 times that rate.

>> KATHIE LIBBY: Thank you, Nicole.

>> Thank you.

>> KATHIE LIBBY: I thought I would let you get to the period there.

Is this Steve?

I'm sorry, next is going to be Kali Hendrickson, and Keith Norris.

>> I thought you were sending me away.

>> KATHIE LIBBY: Nope.

>> First thank you not Board for allowing us to speak.

I'm just a private citizen here today.

My name is Steve Conklin but my background is as a rancher in central Oregon now and before that as a NEPA specialist across the western United States.

You guys were handed a species management problem in 1971, and I just want to put that a little bit in perspective because realize the National Environmental Policy Act wasn't passed until 1969.

And the Endangered Species Act wasn't passed until '73.

So it wasn't until two years after horses were recognized as important iconic members of the western US landscape that we even thought about grizzly bears or sage-grouse or other endangered species.

So horses actually hold a more vaulted opinion in the American public's view than even the even endangered species we deal with.

Others talk about the herd management sizes required for genetic diversity and one of the problems is there's not enough genetic diversity or population size in the individual HMAs.

Within Oregon there are 11 HMAs with 363 per average HMAs so there's not enough animals to promote genetic diversity.

The NAS study of 2013 actually said that the BLM should or must routinely monitor frequently and monitor color and or morphological anomalies to see if there's adequate genetic diversity and that's not been done.

Overall the issues can be characterized as follows.

Individual populations are small, below the numbers to maintain genetic diversity.

HMA's, if you think of them as species reserves are too crowded with the animals on them and animals must compete with livestock and wildlife at the same time.

The total habitat available for horses has been reduced 41% in 45 years.

We went from an initial 53.8 million acres designated as HMA's down to a current number of what is it 36 give or take.

So we have lost 41% of the available habitat for horses in the 45 years.

Climate change is resulting in changes to the biology of HMA's and yet the herd numbers are not being revised to keep up with that.

So we are not managing the numbers within the HMA's to reflect the current biology.

Unlike wildlife, horses are not permitted to migrate or to move to other areas across areas.

They are constricted to very small HMA's and that's another management problem with them unlike wildlife that's allowed to move.

The BLM stated earlier today, thank you that only -- the only measure of performance, the only measure of success for them is if they are meeting the AML's and the HMA's but they have only done that for 5%.

So right now, the BLM is not making their own performance standards.

We have a problem today that needs to be addressed.

So some of the things that need to happen is you need to stop removing HMA's from the overall acreage available for horses.

If they don't have a horse on them, you have an over population of horses in other areas.

Repopulate these areas.

That method is known and done already for endangers species.

Grizzlies condors.

They are moved from high population to low population areas.

We have should be looking for opportunities to transfer grazing leases from ranchers to preservation groups.

Let the preservation groups come up with the money to pay for those grazing leases and own.

This use local groups to establish best management practices to control access to those water so that the horses behavior is mannered so that they are controlled and we are addressing these animals on an ongoing basis and not on an emergency basis.

Thank you.

>> KATHIE LIBBY: Thank you so much.

And next we have Kelly Hendrickson.

>> Good afternoon.

And I appreciate the opportunity to speak with you guys again today.

My name is Kali Hendrickson, and I want to thank each and every one of guys as board members and the BLM and the Forest Service staff that live this issue every day.

I appreciate your work.

Today I have the privilege of speaking on behalf of several organizations who have submitted written comments and I'm sure that you will have the chance to look at those.

First is the White River and Douglas conservation districts which are home to 600 horses where there should only be about 235.

Also the national association conservation districts which represent 17,000 locally elected officials across the country.

And third is the American farm bureau federation, which represents 6 million families.

Both national organizations are grass roots organizations that vet policy very strongly before it's ever approved at the national level.

Both have very strong policy at keeping horses within AML.

As you know, the act requires BLM and Forest Service to have the horses at thriving ecological balance.

Did you no that the BLM has horses and burros are managed in a manner that ensures significant progress is made towards achieving land health standards for the upland vegetation, riparian plant communities, water shed functions and habitat for animal populations.

You all know the significant number of excess horses are destroying rangelands in a number of locations.

In response, BLM is removing AUMs instead of the excess number of horses this not only the livelihood and the private property rights, the economic viability and also restricts BLM's income and ability to adapt management strategies to the environmental conditions.

A successful horse program would get horse and burro numbers at AML within ten years and implement fertility control program that would keep them at AML without further removals.

Therefore both organizations support implementation of fertility control, but fertility control is not going to get us there.

We have to remove excess horses.

Without a monumental increase the number of excess horses directly removed all fertility control research and adoption discussions are simply a distraction from the real issue of just how significantly the horses are degrading the land.

So let me repeat that if I have time.

Without a monumental increase in the number of excess horses being directly removed all fertility control research and adoption discussions are a distraction from the real issue of how bad the land is being degraded.

Thank you.

>> Thank you.

Good afternoon, Board.

Good to see some of you again, and welcome to the new board members and glad to have the opportunity to present in front of you today.

My name is Keith Norris.

I'm the director of the government affairs and partnerships for the wildlife society, that's an international organization of professional wildlife biologists of which you heard one of

our members present to you earlier this afternoon.

I also in my capacity at the wildlife society share the national wild horse and burro management coalition and it's through that coalition that I will provide testimony to you today.

That coalition is composed of 14 national organizations, as well as some additional state level organizations, spanning the spectrum from wildlife sportsman livestock and land conservation and collectively we represent over 8 million Americans.

We as a coalition are greatly concerned about rangeland health and our concern about rangeland health continues to expand as the horse and burro populations grow on the range.

As Dean was mentioning earlier, estimates for population at the BLM is expected to put out here in the next few months in 2016 are likely in the 66 to 67,000 horse range.

There are additional horses on US Forest Service lands, some where in the neighborhood of 10,000 horses and those are just the horses on BLM and Forest Service lands which is what you are primarily concerned with but just as a note, there are tens of thousands of horses elsewhere across the western landscape and specifically the BLM and Forest Service lands that is two and a half times AML.

Now with an 18 to 20% growth rate, we can expect, you know, an additional 13,000 horses or so to be added on this year.

Further expanding the extent to which those populations are over AML.

Now, why are we concerned about rangeland health.

We recognize that healthy rangelands are where healthy horse herds can thrive, where healthy horse herds thrive and where healthy -- where native wildlife populations can thrive, livestock can be grazed successfully as well as all of the other multiple uses of rangelands are there.

So we require management to achieve that rangeland health.

Now Dean mentioned the new and different approaches and several priority areas and I want to stress that the coalition is really supportive of the fertility control research, that's being done of the application to do that, of the adoption programs but I want to stress that while all of those are great efforts, none of them are enough to deal with the numbers that we have before us.

Either individually or collectively as initiatives.

They won't deal with the additions of 13,000 horses that we'll be dealing with over the next couple of years in order to really bring those populations down to AML within a reasonable amount of time.

I want to stress the need of more gathers of a substantial number of horses in order to achieve that AML and really refocus less on the margins of these numbers and more on substantial numbers that will produce an impact.

>> KATHIE LIBBY: Thank you so much.

I want to say we have 11 people left and if everybody takes exactly the three minutes we are going to be running a little late, but we want you to have that time.

But I would like to transition to go smoothly.

So Melinda Kirsten.

And if you know you are coming up next, be ready.

That would be helpful.

>> Good afternoon, my name is Melinda Kirsten and I'm here representing the institute of range and the American mustang which was founded by Dayton Hyde in 1988 as a nonprofit organization, it operates the black hills wild horse sanctuary in South Dakota.

Our purpose is to provide freedom for unadoptable wild horses but also a research area dedicated to solving the problems of wild horse herd management that will contribute to the well being of wild horses everywhere.

With more than 13,000 acres, the sanctuary home to 700 horses.

The horses are free roaming within the boundaries of the property.

With that much land and number of horses, the sanctuary addresses many of the same concerns as the BLM.

The health of the herds, the quality of the rangeland, the availability of water, and the threat of wildfires.

In many ways, the sanctuary could be considered a nonprofit privatized version of the BLM HMA.

However, every decision made is based on what is best for the horses as individuals, as family units as herds.

A significant challenge for the sanctuary is the management of large numbers of the wild horses on open range.

Approximately 8500 acres of our property is home to 300 plus wild horses that live with minimal human intervention.

The land has limited access.

It is comprised of numerous canyons.

Is bordered by US Forest Service land on many sides, and even land locked the piece of BLM property.

A well makes water available, should summer drought drain the resources of our Cheyenne River.

The sanctuary must be diligent with population of the herd on this acreage.

Since 2009, more than 425 of our mares have been vaccinated with PZP.

Every attempt is made to gather any young colts for gelding each year.

This works because our qualified staff have made a commitment to the horses and the herds.

It is concerning that the BLM has not embraced the use of PZP to control wild horse populations on the range.

Thus avoiding the treacherous and stressful roundups.

The options considered are unnecessarily invasive and the risks to the health and the well being of the mares are overwhelming.

There's one H. MA that is committed to making PZP work up in McCullough peaks.

Perhaps other HMAs could learn from their example.

Managing the population on the range means that the horses can continue to thrive in their own environment with their families.

It is shameful to think that 20 years from now, perhaps the only place people will be able to see America's wild horses is the sanctuaries like the black hills.

Your answers would be much easier if you would follow the mandates of free range wild horse and burro protection act and put the well being of the horse first on the land on

which they have the priority.

It is possible and the right thing to do.

If you doubt that, I invite you to visit the black hills wild horse sanctuary to see how this mind-set works.

>> KATHIE LIBBY: Thank you very much.

And Virginia.

>> Hi, my name is Virginia Hudson.

My husband Jeff and I drove from western Montana to listen and to submit our comments.

I'm really shaky right now.

I'm sorry.

We frequently visit the Challison Creek, HMAs and we plan to make several stops to observe and photograph those herds as well as the Kiger herds.

I wanted to say first to -- thank you so much to the many presenters for your research and knowledge and presentations.

They are so articulate.

You guys have such a difficult job.

You are hit from all sides.

Horse advocates, cattlemen, constitutionalists, wild-eyed environmentalist groups, politicians, your own organizational management, any policy which is initiated will not result in everyone's satisfaction 100% of the time.

I know in reality, the correct answer to all of our conflicts lies within the thoughtful dialogue of all sides.

Having said that, I do ask you to reject the proposal to perform permanent sterilization procedures on the Saylor Creek herd, as well as any herd.

I refer to the national academy of science study using science to improve the BLM wild horse and burro program.

You are familiar with that.

Published in 2013.

In Chapter 4, methods and effects of fertility management, NAS revealed methods of fertility control and free ranging horses and burros.

It discussed both male and female directed sterilization methods citing both the advantages and disadvantages of all methods known at the time of the study in conclusion, the study stated that the most promising methods of fertility control are PZP, nonhormonal, vaccines, the GonaCon, which is hormonal and chemical vasectomy.

It requires handling of stud and the result is considered permanent, however, these methods -- thank you -- result in the fewest and least serious effects on herd health, herd structure and the expression of the natural behavior.

9NAS did not put field sterilization on the top of the list.

The use of PZP has been successful in the Maryland Assateague herd of about 300 ponies for decades now.

This herd is contained in a 41,000-acre park.

The Saylor Creek HMA covers 100,000 acres and is the home of reportedly 50 horses.

The research done in the Shackleford herd of North Carolina is thought provoking.

It would seem apparent from these and similar studies and programs that the fundamental goal is to maintain a balance of healthy horse herds and ecological integrity while also reserving as close to natural behavior as we can achieve.

I think I'm done.

>> KATHIE LIBBY: Yes, great.

Well done.

Thank you so much.

And are we going to have Jeff?

There you are.

Just so you know, and I may be ruining your names.

The next three will be I think it says Sonya Spaziani, something like that.

You got it?

Jan Shultz, and Adid Berncrank.

>> Ready?

>> KATHIE LIBBY: Please.

>> I will try to keep this under three minutes.

I will hit the bullet points here.

There's no such thing as a viable herd as anything less than 500 animals.

It's been proven over the last 40 years by ecologists.

Less animals have an ability to move from one area to another, which none of these horses do, you need to be thinking -- and the thinking is an island as an ocean.

500 animals allows breeding to be diversified enough to prevent interbreeding and it also allows for any emergencies such as a storm, a drought or anything else that can reduce those numbers down.

So getting up to that number for each HMA is going to be difficult for you to do.

I suggest you create pathways from the smaller ones to each other, and viable ways through the Forest Service or possibly Park Service if necessary so these animals can move around.

And no -- and no way uncertain points should permitted sterilization be considered.

If you do that, then you basically have a horse park with a bunch of geldings that have been brought in and then brought back out there for people to look at.

We already have options for that and we already have places such as in Idaho where you can drive and see horses all over the place.

I would also suggest going to Congress which I know would be your job and getting the fees for the AUMs up.

\$1.35 an animal is ridiculous.

Why is the federal government charging -- charging amounts that were a good deal in

1950, much less in 2016.

That money could be put back into the program and it could be raised back up to use the additional funds for training to be adopting trained horses rather than get horses that weren't trained out.

And that's it.

>> KATHIE LIBBY: Thank you so much.

Was it Sonya?

Come on up.

>> Greetings and welcome to beautiful Oregon.

I also want to welcome new people to the Board and also thank previous members for their service too.

My name is Sonya Spaziani and I'm also known on social network as Mustang Meg.

I work directly with Oregon BLM.

I work with ranchers, advocates, but mostly I'm here for the wild horses.

I have photographed mustangs and have utilized BLM public rangelands since 1994.

And I have been known by social network since 2008.

What I want to begin here with is the Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act of 1971.

The Congress finds and declares that wild roaming horses and burros are living symbols of historic and pioneer spirit of west, that they distribute to the diversity of life forms within the nation and enrich the lives of 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 should 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 public lands.

Now, along with the Wild Horse and Burro Act, we also have federal regulations and mandates that help to drive the Free-Roaming Wild Horses Burros Act.

This federal regulation states herd management areas may also be designated as wild horse and burro ranges to be managed principally -- and that's the key word, principally but not necessarily exclusively for wild horses and burro herds.

On -- there's a confusion between HMAs, HAs, private lands and other federal lands that on HAs since the 1971 act, these horses are protected to be in the Midlands to be managed principally for the wild horses and burros but also multiuse.

It further states -- the mandate states it's necessary to provide habitat for wild horses or burros to implement herd management actions and to protect wild horses from disease, harassment, injury, the authorized officer may close appropriate areas of public lands to create -- to grazing use by all or a particular kind of livestock.

This is what we do and this is what -- what our HMAs are for, our herd management areas.

Also, knowing --

>> KATHIE LIBBY: Thank you very much.

I'm afraid we will have to stop there.

Thank you, though.

>> Thank you very much.

>> KATHIE LIBBY: And I apology is it Nan or Jan Shultz?

>> Jan.

>> KATHIE LIBBY: Sorry.

>> I have been sitting too long.

Okay.

Hi.

I'm Jan Shultz.

I'm from Placerville, California.

And I drove because I don't like to fly.

So I have an opportunity to go through the land and see how it's being used and abused.

And I have a very long association with the Wild Horse Act issues, and with all of the horse issues that we're presently dealing with on the American scene, including slaughter.

As I listen to the Board here speaking it strikes me that you have a very controlled and very small world view on what is actually going on to the wild horses.

So that's my initial standpoint.

The language due to public 929105, states unequivocally that it's the policy of Congress that wild free roaming horses and burros shall be protected from capture, branding, harassment or death.

That's pretty simple.

The American people rejoiced at the passing of that law and we assumed that it was being enacted.

The duty to enforce this law was given to BLM, but knowing where BLM is footed, an advisory committee was written into the law.

I remind you today of these very simple words and encourage you to stand up for the furtherance of intent written into those words.

Notwithstanding any interpretation.

You are the voice the American people.

I'm here to request that you recommend the end of a continued 16-year experimentation on the reproductive systems of wild horses and now the burros.

Experiments that have sent millions of taxpayer monies into the pockets of facilities and vendors to invade pregnant mares, to sterilize stallions at multiple locations and the experiments that are gruesome by their nature and the outcome being death by infection, shock, evisceration, broken necks and backs and abortion of unborn foals or death by stillborn.

So to go on, I would like to remind you of testimony before the senate on April 14th 1971 by senator Gaylord Nelson of Wisconsin.

The plight of these creatures is a classic example of man's encroachment on the natural habitat of wild animals due to domestic grazing, recreation and reclamation.

Following his testimony was senator Howard cannon of Nevada who stated the existence is in -- their existence is endangered by man who slaughters them for profit.

Senator Nelson said if mustangs do disappear, it's because of economics and the wild horses lack of status as an endangered species.

Please support them to carry this through.

>> KATHIE LIBBY: Thank you so much.

Okay.

And Adid, and the next three people following her will be -- we would like you to sit at the table.

You can sit at that end of the table, if you would.

I would rather you sit at the table.

>> Can this go on, though?

Is there a reason I can't use this?

I prefer to --

>> KATHIE LIBBY: It's on.

>> It's not on, though.

Can everyone hear?

I don't think it's on.

>> KATHIE LIBBY: Yes, it's on.

Just sit at the table.

>> (No audio).

>> KATHIE LIBBY: Just please sit at the table.

>> I'm not going to sit there's nothing in the rules that says to sit.

So I can stand.

Thank you.

We were founded in 1957, we are not here today to beg or plead with the BLM to do the right thing because we already know that it's a hopelessly corrupt organization, agency, that acts an extension of the meat industry.

And that's really the crux of the entire problem -- issue here.

That the wild horse and burro program is acting like the meat industry and we have the meat industry well represented.

Welcome Steven Yardley who before asked a question that made him sound like he was a member of the Bundy clan about state take over of land that's federal land.

And we have Ginger Kathrens who was once a fierce advocate for the horses and now has completely sold out and should have PZP after her name in initials because that's what's being promoted now.

You know, we heard a lot against spaying and neutering of wild horses and burros which, of course, is an outrage.

Courses -- wild horses and burros are not dogs and cats to be spayed and neutered.

So we strongly oppose spaying and neutering, wild horse and burro but we oppose PZP and others.

We have no right to be forcibly drugging our wild horses and burros has demonstrably negative impacts on the herds.

We have no right to be rounding them up.

We need to get the welfare ranchers off of our public lands.

It's the cattle and sheep that are destroying the rangelands and we're giving it over to them.

Wild horses and burros have been getting screwed for a long time and what I heard here today and what I hear every year is getting worse and worse and friends of animals is getting disgusted with it.

We are disgusted with this.

We are disgusted with sitting in these meetings year after year and hearing this nonsense and seeing the window dressings of Ginger Kathrens and Ben Masters on this Board, to shut down activism and neutralize the activism, we will not neutralize the

friends of animals.

We will continue to fight roundups and HSUS PZP Frankenstein monster show and we will continue, and continue and continue show up and we will not be silent.

I'm not done yet.

>> KATHIE LIBBY: Well -- okay.

We are just being equal.

And please sit down.

>> No, I'm not sitting down.

>> KATHIE LIBBY: Please sit down.

So we will just take a breath for a minute.

Okay.

Let's be civil.

Let's just be civil.

Okay.

Take a deep breath.

You are telling me to stop?

Wait one minute.

Okay.

I can just tell them something, though, can't I?

Thank you.

So you can be prepared.

Take a deep breath because we have a couple of other people to listen to and we want to respectfully do that.

Sandra Longley will be next.

Mia Shepherd will follow Sandra and Nancy, I'm going to say Embretson.

Are we okay?

We are good.

>> Hi, I'm Sandra Longley and I'm here to speak about the wild horses and burros.

And I am requesting a moratorium on all roundups of wild horses and burros until such a time that numbers can be actually counted and verified by neutral party, identifying an exact count of remaining wild horses and burros still on public lands.

It's been well established that we don't have those exact numbers.

And until you have those exact numbers, you cannot develop a policy because they are already at levels that are dangerous.

And in conjunction with the moratorium and the many violations and illegal activities being pursued by the BLM in violation of the protections issued under the 1971 law, it should be reviewed by Congress and litigated in federal court and funding for these activities should be cut for the BLM by Congress.

And BLM should focus their time and funding on improving actual management programs.

Future removals of wild horses should be limited to the amount of horses who are adopted in the previous year.

No more massive uncontrolled removable to long-term holding.

No more age stallions and aged mares should be remove.

Only those of adoptable age.

I suggest that we the people who pay to support this program file a class action lawsuit to address BLM's many violations of the protections issued by law and in violation of the 1971 law passed by Congress, rather than pursuing this roundup by roundup means of dealing with it, with lawsuits.

I have think it's time to come to a solution.

Thank you.

>> KATHIE LIBBY: Thank you very much, Sandra.

Mia Shepherd.

>> I have to read from my phone.

Because I'm short?

It's okay.

Hi, my name is Mia Shepherd and I'm the Oregon field representative for the Theodore Roosevelt conservation partnership and on behalf of TRCP, we appreciate this opportunity to comment and share our thoughts on wild horse and burro management.

TRCP is a national 501(c)(3), nonprofit that works to guarantee all Americans a quality place to hunt and fish.

The TRCP supports the position of professional wildlife biologists through the professional organization the wildlife society and virtually all sportsman organizations that wild horse and burros are a nonnative species that poses significant threat to native wildlife and challenges for land managers.

However, we also recognize the lure and the history of wild horses in the American west and by law the Wild and Free-Range Horse and Burro Act of 1971 allows for their occupation of public land.

The act explicitly states that wild horse and burros shall be managed in a manner that produces a thriving natural ecological balance.

We believe that current situations does not reflect thriving or natural ecological balance that can be sustained without your irreplaceable damage to ecosystems, water sources and native wildlife.

Wild horse and burro populations are well over management objectives and currently stated possibly at 68,000 horses, or 68,000 individual animals, current estimates have suggested wild horse and burros can double in every four to five years if left unchecked and the natural horse and burro rangeland management coalition and BLM suggest that lands managed for horse and burros can only sustain 27,000 individuals to achieve the legal required and desired thriving and natural ecological balance.

The current situation is completely unsustainable and needs to be addressed.

These tools are not currently, utilized to the extent and the scale necessary to control wild horse and burro populations.

As church the TRCP supports the use of all available controlled mechanisms allowed by

law under the act to reduce wild horse and burro populations.

Failure to immediately change the course of management actions to control wild horse and burros threatens native ecosystems, wildlife and the ability of state agencies to meet their population goals and also in return it threatens the opportunity for sportsman and our outdoor heritage.

>> KATHIE LIBBY: Thank you, Mia.

>> Thank you.

>> KATHIE LIBBY: And now Nancy.

And I'm sorry, following Nancy will be Craig Brookhart and last but definitely not least, Dave Nelson.

Nielsen.

>> Hi, my name is Nancy Engelbrett and I'm an equine facilitated learning practitioner.

What I know from my work is that horses have a huge limbic brain and that's where as humans have a limbic brain, and that is where our emotions reside.

They are very emotional animals and unlike the sage-grouse that I heard a lot of talk of today, I have -- I have nothing against sage-grouse.

I don't want them to be diminished, but they don't have a limbic brain.

Okay?

They are birds.

They don't have feelings.

Horses have feelings.

That's why we are all here, because we love horses for their ability to feel and to connect and that is what makes the tribe -- or the herd so important to them and separating babies from mommas or breaking up family systems, it's -- it's a matter of emotion, and that's why we feel so strongly about it.

And I hope you will take this into consideration.

You have a limbic brain.

I assume you have emotions and so do horses.

Thank you.

>> KATHIE LIBBY: Great.

Thank you so much.

And now we have Craig and then David.

>> Good afternoon, my name is Craig Brookhart.

I'm the chairman nor the Crook County Natural Resources PAC and as some of you are aware the topic of natural resources in Crook County has featured prominently in the public and several town halls attended by concerned citizens.

A group of touch concerned citizens formed the natural resources PAC.

Around 100 members of the PAC have been focused on developing a plan.

That man is now complete and will be presented to the Crook County court with the purpose of motivating the court to invoke coordination with agencies such as the BLM and the US Forest Service.

As the chairman of the PAC, I would like to speak you to briefly about how the wild horses have figured in the group peace plan and as a featured resource for Crook County.

So here's an excerpt from the plan.

The wild horse is a great value economically, aesthetically and recreationally in Crook County.

Very few counties or natural forests can claim the wild horse herds.

They have populations materially and spiritually for centuries but the list of resident wildlife species also includes a very unique herd of wild horses.

Visitors come from all over the world to see and photograph them.

Horseback riders, campers and families, select the Ochocos as a place for vacation.

The wild horse has been on the national geographic website and in trail rider magazine, as well as appearing at children learning.

Adopted Ochocos have excelled as kids horses pack horses and therapy horses.

Crook County recognizes that wild horses are indeed a resource unique and treasured by the community.

The wild horses are protected under the Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burro Act of 1971 and in doing so this declared wild horses as living symbols of historic and pioneering spirit of the American west.

In accordance with the act, there's a designated big summit wild horse territory which consists of approximately 27,000 acres in the general area of Round and Lookout Mountains.

Historically it shows that the horses of big summit wild horse are descended from the early horses of America.

Let me skip down.

We now find ourselves caught between the obsolete management plan adopted in the '70s and the future plan presently in process but possibly years away.

Horse estimate numbers are from 150 to 400 and few would disagree we strayed far from the original plan.

It is our contention that it's in all stakeholders best interest to work out an interim plan to address the best welfare of our wild horses rather than attempting to address the original flawed plan of '70s.

So we are proposing to move forward and invite stakeholders to the table to talk about this plan.

And it will cover such things as genetically viable horse herd numbers using PZP for fertility control and she's flagging me.

And some other things.

You have a copy of the handout.

>> KATHIE LIBBY: Thank you very much.

And Dave, you are going to close us out.

Does the Board -- do you need a stretch break?

>> FRED WOHL: Let's take a five-minute stretch break.

>> KATHIE LIBBY: Once he gets done.

>> FRED WOEHLE: While the next one is getting up.

>> Are you ready?

>> KATHIE LIBBY: We are ready.

We have been waiting for you.

>> It's a long wait.

Good afternoon and welcome the high desert.

We are glad you are.

My name is Dave Nielsen.

I grew up in Willamette valley, when they considered that the natural resources for infinite.

I was trained in biology at Cornell University in the 1960s and with lamb met university.

I spent more than 40 years.

We retired to the high desert in 2013.

I remember a time in Oregon when wildlife management decisions were made by professionals.

It seems that activists, folks who have emotional connections to the environment, but perhaps little understanding of carrying capacity and sustainability now drive decisions regarding wildlife management in Oregon.

Examples are that hunters may no longer use dogs to hunt or harvest black bears or cougars in Oregon.

I'm told that voters are responsible for those decisions.

Shame on them and shame on Oregon for allowing voters to make important wildlife management decisions.

What do most voters know and understand about wildlife management?

Another example is the delisting the gray wolves from the endangers species status.

Again, it is my understanding that stakeholders with scientific background and experience, so called environmentalists and other stakeholders hammered out an agreement about how many wolves need to be documented in the stay before they are delisted.

As far as I know, the numbers far exceed the threshold but some folks persist in their efforts to keep wolves on the endangered species list here in Oregon.

Wolves are no longer in danger of extinction in Oregon.

In fact, they are expanding their range.

Uninformed and misinformed environmentalists -- by the way, I'm an environmentalist -- need to stand down and let professional wildlife managers do their jobs that they have been trained and hired to do.

This does not mean that this should not be oversight of professionals in any field.

We all know that by the time we have reached the age of retirement, that everyone seeing a physician needs an advocate to accompany them to their appointments.

My daughter and I did that for my wife today about two weeks after life-saving surgery.

I think it's nice and appropriate that nonprofessionals watch what's going on with our land and its inhabitants.

By now you can probably tell where I'm going with this narrative.

We have dropped the ball in the management of wild horses and burros in the USA.

They are nonnatives who are devastating our environment, displacing native species and costing taxpayers millions of dollars annually through ineptness or pandering so so-called environmentalists who have a hard time making decisions.

>> KATHIE LIBBY: You can leave the written record.

>> You will leave this for the record.

>> KATHIE LIBBY: Thank you, sir.

So we have one final presentation and it's some very interesting information about research on adoption demand.

But let's take a little bit of a break.

Five minutes.

Get up, stretch.

Use something you need.

(break).

>> KATHIE LIBBY: Okay, everybody.

Come on and sit down.

Folks?

Please.

We have about another 20 minutes.

We would like you all to take your seats.

All righty.

Settle in.

Ready?

Okay, everybody.

We have the whole Board.

We are good.

Fred, you are up.

>> FRED WOEHL: Take it away, Ms. Lori.

>> LORI MITCHELL DIXON: All right, well, thank you very much for the opportunity to share this information.

We have gone through much of it already.

So I'm going to just quickly for those of you that are listening, I am a marketing research consultant and I'm working with the wild horse and burro program to help them

understand the situation from the perspective of the staff, also from data that they have been collecting and also doing other interviews so that they can use information to make their decisions.

So I'm going to move through it a little bit quickly.

As I said, the process was the interviews.

The data here are showing the profile of animals that have been adopted.

And this database that I have been analyzing for the wild horse and burro program is only on those animals that have found homes in the private sector.

So this is the adoption database.

You can see that it's about half our gelding and about half are female and there's a few males that have gone through the adoption process in the last five years.

The place of birth of the animals, which has been changing because of the different patterns with respect to the gatherings.

You can see that a larger percentage of the animals have been born in captivity or in the pastures and the corrals and the actual number -- and I think this addresses what the Board and I were talking about this morning.

Is the actual number of adoptions is on the lower axis of the chart and you can see that the number of adopted animals has fallen off from -- in 2013, it was about 2500, about 2500 in 2014, but down to about 1600 in 2015.

So this is, again, a situation in which the Wild Horse and Burro Program is working under fewer placements of the animals.

The adoption sales per month, again we analyzed this a little bit this morning and I have learned subsequently that the general feeling is that there are about the same number of adoption events throughout the year.

So it does case that there's disproportionate interest in adopting in the month of May.

So I think that can be used as a way to help to strategize and put together the calendar for some kind of a national adoption program.

And, again, just to reiterate, we were talking a little bit about how long the animals are in BLM custody before they were adopted out and the average number -- the number of years has increased to 2.42 years, that the animals under BLM care before they are adopted.

So, of course, the main thing is the implication on cost and as you heard from Dean this morning, there's a lot of research being conducted on the costs of keeping the animals and this also will influence the strategies that can be used because you are having older animals available in the adoptions.

This PMACA site code is showing where the animals were adopted from, and the main thing to note here is the change in venue so there are fewer animals that are being adopted through the temporary adoption events, and more are being adopted through foster care and the Internet.

So this shows fantastic efforts on the part of the Wild Horse and Burro Program to find new ways to get animals adopted and most importantly, you can see that the Internet adoption is becoming viable and there's a lot of strategy being offered to increase the Internet adoption.

The other trend that is very important is that the purple bar that's foster care is showing that the animals that are coming out of the foster care are trained animals.

So, again, that's a change in the types of animals that are being made available, and it shows the partnerships that BLM and Wild Horse and Burro Program have made with other organizations to have more trained animals available.

Also this morning, we were wondering if the phenomenon here reflects a change in the actual number of animals, and just to add some clarity to that, between the 2012, 2013 middle segment and the 2014/2015 segment, it's actually an increase of about 100 animals that have been adopted through foster care.

So they have training.

We didn't get to talk about this this morning, but this pie chart shows the adoption outcome.

And as you know, the horses are titled after a year.

This shows that about 83% of the horses adopted in the last five years or so have been titled.

About 14% are still without title.

That does show an opportunity for there to be, I guess, an improved way to get the horses titled that are eligible to be titled.

This information now is showing 12,000 horses that have been adopted from October of 2010 to September of 2015.

So this is information that we haven't had a chance to go through yet.

The main thing that you are looking at is that every one of these blue dots represents where an animal was placed into private care throughout the United States.

To some extent, it shows population clusters, because you have got a database that's so large.

But it definitely shows how many states are interested in and have been homes for the wild horses and burros.

The next few slides use these data points to try to show where there might be opportunities for increased placement of the animals.

This is 205 data.

Unfortunately, I'm learning that this might be the most recent data.

I'm also learning you probably need very good glasses to read the actual numbers.

You might want to rely on the colors, but the darker the red color, the more horses that actually exist in those states.

So you can see the first step here is looking at where are the horses now.

With the second step, where might there be opportunities for more wild horses and burros to be placed.

So this slide shows a comparison between the adoption rates and the actual equine population.

So the red and the more intense red states show the greatest opportunity because the number of wild horses and burros in those states is less than what might be expected given the percentage of regular or quote/unquote domestic horses that they have.

So these data can be used to help with identifying areas where storefronts might be helpful or more opportunities for adoption events, specifically in Florida, the Ohio area, and any of those more dark red areas represent the greatest opportunity.

So a lot of work and strategy that I'm putting together are looking at opportunities to get horses into those areas.

Another value of looking at this database from 2010 to 2015 is where horses have landed after they have gone through the Internet adoption.

Horses and burros.

So you can see the blue dots again, and about half -- that's okay.

I can tap dance really well!

If you look at the map, I'm sure that you can imagine that red line is about on the Mississippi.

So east of the Mississippi you've got about half of the Internet adoptions have ended the horse -- the horses have ended up on the right and about half have ended up on the left, again, it's a way for us to use the data to put some strategies together, to identify opportunities to have more horses going out east, which is an opportunity based on the colored map that you saw before that, and the opportunity for those to be through the Internet has proven to be pretty interesting and more work is being done on strategizing how to optimize Internet adoption programs.

So we started this morning to talk about some initial thoughts on how to increase adoptions.

And many, many things were discussed this morning and throughout the public comment but my focus is strictly on trying to understand opportunities to get horses into private care.

So I keep doing more research and talking to more people and listening to more opinions and things are just now coming in to focus at this point in time.

But clearly you heard from the numbers that success in getting horses into private care is critical.

Some of the things that we talked about were changes going on in the marketplace in which these changes require a different way to think about marketing.

We talked a lot about the fact that interest in animal ownership is changing and it's getting softer.

So this is an opportunity for the partnerships for Wild Horse and Burro Programs to partner with programs and increase in owning horses but as good marketing, the wild horses and burros out east, it's an opportunity to build secondary demand for the mustangs.

We talked about the fact that there's no outlets for unwanted animals.

There are a lot of strategies for putting in place so that owners understand that this is a

long-term commitment for having an animal and that's the emphasis on trained animals so they can become loved animals right away.

It takes a lot of skill to train the wild animals.

The focus is to get more trained animals available and build the partnerships with those individuals who have the skill sets so they will use those skills to support the efforts of the Wild Horse and Burro Program.

The animals are expensive.

We know that.

Again, there's been a lot of discussion that incentives might be very logical way to encourage more individuals to get involved in training the animals.

So there might be an analysis of how much its to keep an animal, and have it trained and tip trainers, et cetera, using other partnerships that exist.

The other main concern is the availability of domestic horses.

If you are involved in the equine industry.

The availability of domestic horses means that the wild horses and burros are competing with the domestic horses which calls for a specific marketing strategy and a commitment to a marketing strategy to position the wild horses and burros so that they get an opportunity in the marketplace.

Finally one the greatest challenges as was discussed this morning and this afternoon, the supply so far exceeds demand that this has to be an effort at both ends to reduce the supply and to increase the demand.

My research is strictly about increasing the demand and therefore it's about increasing demand, which means increased availability of the horses.

So I was going to take a break there unless you wanted to -- maybe I should pause for any questions you might have and then we can hopefully continue discussing the strategies as more things come out of your work groups in the next day or so.

>> FRED WOEHL: , does anybody have any questions or comments?

>> LORI MITCHELL DIXON: You have to be exhausted by this point.

>> FRED WOEHL: We want to -- on behalf of the Board, there were some very unique and eye-opening comments and findings in this, that I think the Board after we talk about

them tonight in our working group meetings, we might have some more questions.

Are you going to be around tomorrow?

>> LORI MITCHELL DIXON: Absolutely.

>> FRED WOEHL: Okay.

All right.

Okay.

Thank you for taking the time for doing this and I think the Bureau got a jewel when they got ahold of you.

>> LORI MITCHELL DIXON: Thank you.

>> FRED WOEHL: Where did Kathie go?

What are you doing setting out there?

>> KATHIE LIBBY: I was sharing my seat.

>> FRED WOEHL: Are we through with our agenda?

>> KATHIE LIBBY: For today.

>> FRED WOEHL: And tomorrow we start at 8:00.

>> KATHIE LIBBY: Tomorrow it gets better and better and we do start at 8:00, timely.

>> FRED WOEHL: All right.

I want the Board I want to visit with y'all up here, just before everybody leaves, all right?

That concludes our meeting for today.

We'll be back here at 8:00 in the morning.

We appreciate you coming.

Tomorrow will be just as exciting as it was today.

So please come back.

>> KATHIE LIBBY: Thank you.

(End of meeting 5:28 p.m. Pacific Time)

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>> KATHIE LIBBY: So good morning, everybody.

We are going to get ready to begin.

I would like to ask you to take your seats.

So good morning again.

Welcome back.

As the rest of our board members get themselves settled.

Welcome back to the wild horse and burro national advisory board.

If you were with us yesterday or Livestreaming, you know that we had some updates on the program's business and that was followed by a public comment period and all of that, again, is available in Livestreaming and today's session is also available Livestreaming.

So -- (Off microphone comment)

My understand is yes.

Thank you for the question.

Very quickly before I turn it over to Fred, our Board chair.

Plenty of seating for everyone.

If you need to stand, just don't do it in front of other people.

If you have a stand-up camera and you want to do that, just do it in the section that's been set aside for you.

We ask that you not place microphones or cameras or anything in an area that is disruptive.

We ask most importantly -- and this is really covers almost everything else we say.

Let's give each other mutual respect, that means both for the board members, for each other sitting in this room with disagreeing views and for our people who manage the Wild Horse and Burro Program.

In part, we do that, obviously by listening.

That's how we learn.

We also do it by silencing cell phones, and that kind of annoyance that can sometimes get in our way.

We ask that you do not bring in placards or display signs because they are disruptive, and the BLM really commits to keeping to these rules and being uniform about them.

We don't play favorites.

We just ask that we all be respectful.

So thank you very much.

Welcome back.

Fred?

>> FRED WOEHL: Thank you, Kathie.

Again, we are tickled that everybody is here.

One of the things I failed to do there are two people that this meeting would not happen without these, and one of them is Crystal Calan she's our contact with BLM and the other one is Debbie.

And I just want them both to know that on behalf of the Board, we appreciate them very much.

Debbie and Crystal, we couldn't get this done without them.

One the things we will do is we will show a two-minute video.

¶

>> FRED WOEHL: Beautiful scenery.

If you want to clap, go ahead.

I think that's really great.

I mean, one of the things that as Board Chair I get to do I get to do some things that are not on the agenda.

We will do a little bit of that right now this morning.

We have three brand new board members and I would like them, putting them on the spot this morning.

They didn't know this was going to happen and before Barry talks, I want them to take about a minute or two and tell us what their impression of being on Board has been so far and we'll start with you, Steven.

(Chuckles).

>> STEVEN YARDLEY: I don't know why Fred always likes to pick on me.

He seems to like it, so I guess it's quality entertainment for him.

I'm really honored to be on the Board.

I have been very impressed with the other members of the Board, with their vast amount of knowledge and their willingness to work together in -- in coming up with some

solutions for very complex problem.

I'm finding out very quickly that working with the government and dealing with all of the things and all of the guidelines and regulations placed upon them by Congress and by other entities is kind of frustrating, and not -- it's not quite as progressive as when you are a small business owner and kind of coming up with ideas and moving forward, but then there's a lot of loopholes and red tape you have to go through.

So I -- I appreciate -- I'm coming to appreciate a little more everything Dean Bolstad has to go through and hats off to him.

I think he's doing a great job for all of the stipulations that are placed upon him.

I do want to say for those of you -- just from the public comment yesterday, really quickly, I would like to say how dedicated the grazer -- the public land grazers that I know are to the public lands and the -- they have put a lot of range improvements in and water developments in.

That benefit not only the livestock but the wildlife and the wild horse populations and you hope that you will take that into consideration because, really, the livelihood of the ranching community depends upon their ability to have a sustainable resource and to take care of those rangelands that they run on.

I know personally, we love our ranges.

We are grateful for opportunity to run on them and I'm also grateful for the opportunity that I have of serving on this Board.

So with that, I will turn the time over to the other new board members.

>> FRED WOEHL: Thank you, Steven.

Ginger?

>> GINGER KATHRENS: Well, it's a different experience for me.

I spent many years sitting out there.

And I think my impression of the Board is -- is a little surprising.

I think that despite the vast diversity in opinions, and backgrounds, I think we're all respectful of each other.

And I think that's the only way you really can get things done is to understand not necessarily agree, but understand where someone else is coming from.

Try to walk in their shoes for just a moment and then try to come up with solutions that will benefit the land and the wild horses and burros that live there.

It was my great privilege to be introduced and welcomed into wild horse society and walk with them and understand how they live and how vital it is for them to remain in their -- their social family units as undisturbed as possible and I think the management is supposed to be at the least feasible management.

And so I would not have supported some of the initiatives that are now being contemplated but I think that going in, BLM was aware of that.

But I think they are also aware that the dedicated wild horse advocacy community is not one that wants to disrupt, but we want to collaborate.

We want to move forward for the well being of animals that in my personal experience have given me so much.

Thank you.

>> FRED WOEHL: Thank you, Ginger.

Ben, last but not least.

By the way, that film that we just saw couldn't have been made without Ben's help and I wanted to make sure that everybody knew that that is an awesome film.

I can't hardly watch it without tearing up.

So --

>> BEN MASTERS: I like to make movies to express my feelings.

It's a lot easier than putting me on the spot.

First off, I would like to say that Fred is probably one of the most intelligent people I ever met and one of the greatest leaders.

>> FRED WOEHL: Thank you.

Now you are making me feel bad.

(Laughter).

>> BEN MASTERS: But you know, I guess kind of coming from Ginger's standpoint, I

trained a bunch of mustangs and cover -- done a lot of pack trips in public lands and seen a lot of wild horse herds and have also been a journalist and sitting out there and looking up here and being like, come on, guys!

I mean, it's not that difficult of a problem.

Like, you know, get it figured out.

All you have to do is use fertility control to slow the population growth to where the gather demand equals the adoption demand and then it's perfectly sustainable.

I don't know if that's simple, but I don't think it's that difficult either.

And it's just an honor and a privilege to be up here and -- and trying to make a difference and hopefully I will come up with some good ideas.

It doesn't happen often but it does happen occasionally.

That's all.

(Laughter).

>> FRED WOEHL: Thank you, Ben.

Oh, goodness.

Barry, that's a tough act to follow, my friend.

But you've got it.

>> BARRY IMLER: It is not the first time you folks have done this to me.

On behalf of the Forest Service, you know, I would also like to welcome the board members.

And renew some acquaintances with the other board members.

This morning, I'm going to be a little faster than I have been, a little quicker, a little shorter than the last few meetings.

And just to do a fairly quick overview of the Forest Service program from a national level, and identify a few issues that you are probably going to hear about as board members.

Some related to wild horses, some related to horses that aren't covered by the act.

Just a heads up that you will probably hear about these things and then when I get finished, Amanda McAdams, the forest supervisor for the Modoc National Forest is going to talk to you a little bit about the Devil's Garden herd and her plans to start addressing some of the issues we have out there.

Kind of an overview for the Forest Service.

We have four areas we are looking to concentrate on at this point.

The first and in many ways the most important is to continue to cooperatively work with the BLM, you know, as much as possible within our respective authorities.

I think we discussed in the past how we have some differences and some things -- there are some things we can do together and a few things we can't do together.

We are trying to reduce the number of horses we have in long-term holding and avoid placing any more animals in there.

I think we have made some progress.

As recently as five to six years ago, we were paying the BLM about \$1.75 million a year for taking care of horses in holding.

This year we are -- despite the rising costs, this year we are under \$1.1 million and we hope to continue to reduce those costs, and it's not because we don't want to pay.

It's because -- well, yeah it is.

It's not that we don't want to pay you for what you do, Dean, we just don't want to send the animals there.

We are looking at ways to expand our use of on-range population growth.

Some population growth methods, some ways to control that, and we're trying to build some local adoption programs in some of our units.

At the same time, we hope to start looking at a few more ways to work more closely for the BLM adoption, for the animals we have -- not only the ones we have in holding but the ones we feel we need to remove from the range.

Our horse issues that I want to talk about fall primarily into three different categories.

One is our wild horse and burro territories.

One is our non-wild horse and burro territories and then we've got a hybrid situation out

there that I know you will hear about.

On our wild horse territories, we probably have four that you will hear about -- well, a couple have you heard about, some you may hear about.

A couple I'm sure you will hear about.

A big summit here in Oregon.

You know, we have a collaborative forming out there or has formed, working with the community, working with some of the -- at least one advocacy group.

The grazing permittees to address the wild horse herd.

I think you heard some comments yesterday during the public comment period regarding the initial success of that group.

And what you -- I know at least one board member has already heard about is we did have a hard winter up there this past year, and we did have some unfortunate events.

So, you know, some things didn't necessarily go the way we would like, and you will hear about that if you haven't already.

The North Hills territory in Utah, I believe it's on the Dixie National Forest, there's some concern out there over the winter regarding horse condition and lack of forage -- animal health and lack of forage and we took some initial steps there.

I think June was involved in trying to address that situation.

Hopefully we're over the hump on that but we will see what happens.

We have a complex -- our three territories are red rock, Johnny Springs Mountains.

They are all in Nevada.

They are in the area where Cold Creek, where BLM had to do their emergency gather last summer.

Our folks on the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest are hoping to get a release on how they manage those herds or those animals.

You know, our new pre-decisional objection process, there will be some draft documents go out for public input, public comment.

As always, I suspect that there will be some controversial things in there, especially

considering the conditions we had to deal with the horses this past year.

And then Devil's Garden, we talked a fair about that over the last few board meetings.

This particular territory in Northern California has the greatest number of excess numbers of any territory in our agency.

We -- we believe we have approximately 3800 excess animals nationwide that are covered by the act, approximately 1800 of them are sitting on this one territory.

So unlike a lot of our territories where we talked about in the past how we think we can move through reduced numbers, probably in alignment with the local adoption market can handle, this one is going to be a little tougher.

And, you know, we're going to have to work our way through it.

As far as our non-wild horse territory issues, we believe at the moment that we have as many stray and abandoned animals, horses on Forest Service lands as we have excess wild horses.

These are animals that are not protected by the act, however, there are a lot of well-meaning folks out there who tend to assume that any free roaming, unaltered and a lot of states unbranded horse is covered by the act.

So we're running into some opposition whenever we try to do some gathers, do some removals of those.

In common vernacular, would be called a trespass animal.

Two of those areas you heard about -- one you heard about yesterday.

The Salt River herd in Arizona.

I think you heard from Simone yesterday about the steps being taken to address that situation.

And the other is Fort McDermitt, that has come up.

Fort McDermitt admits that they have hundreds of horses on the tribal lands.

They have been working to remove those animals.

This coming summer, they hope to remove them from the Forest Service land on to the tribal lands and at this point they asked for our assistance.

We are still working through the details and whether or not we can -- you know, whether or not we can provide assistance and how much.

Now the hybrid.

This is in Arizona in the Apache Sitgreaves National Forest.

Since then, we had two large fires down there that removed barriers to migration, holding the forest for horses and created all kinds of high-quality forage.

As a result of that, we have a large number of horses that have migrated, mostly from surrounding reservations, where they are having their own issues as far as too many animals.

We believe we have had some abandoned animals placed out there also.

We also have a court settlement from some prior litigation that's hindering our ability to respond to that situation.

Now, in response to the court settlement, and the ongoing resource issues out there, we're looking at moving forward with the territory management plan.

There's an environmental impact statement planned.

That NEPA analysis through an EIS is probably not going to begin until we finish getting through the forest planning process and get that finalized.

Forest land management plan governs what we can and can't do as far as the territory management plan.

The forest plan is already out on the street, it's been through the appeal -- it has been through the appeal process, in the appeal process right now.

We received appeals and we are working through the process on that.

Once we get through the process, we will have a final decision and then the forest is geared up and ready to move forward with the territory management plan.

A lot of these horses -- well, the area we are looking at is called the Heber wild horse territory.

It's sitting in the middle where a lot of these horses have shown up.

We believe -- at least the forest believes that for quite a few years before the fires, that territory was vacant.

There were no wild horses present.

So part of the analysis for the territory management plan is going to be to determine was it vacant?

Do we have animals -- or do we have animals there covered by the act?

If we do, how are we going to manage them?

You know, what do we have an AML?

How are we going to manage any potentially -- any animals potentially covered by the act?

And how will we manage all the other horses that are out there that are not covered by the act?

This one I'm sure will be controversial.

I'm sure you will hear about it.

It already came up as an appeal issue and why they do the territory plan before the forest management plan.

I was going to say -- we are trying to end on a positive note.

Along the lines of Dean's new and -- the new and different is what's been telling his folks.

I believe those were the terms I heard at the state lead meeting last month.

The Carson national forest, which has been really good at attempting to manage their herds within AML, they have been working with various groups, the Humane Society and some other groups with PZP.

They are doing some things as far as gentling programs.

They have managed to have -- they have nearly, if not -- nearly 100% adoption rate if it's not 100%.

They have come forward with a proposal to our Washington office within last few weeks where they would like to go up to one of the BLM facilities.

I believe they are looking at Canyon City and retrieve approximately 40 animals that came from the forest, that are less -- I believe it's up to or less than -- seven years old or

less that they believe would be highly adoptable and retrieve them and run them through their in-house gentling program.

They believe they can find homes for those animals that it falls in line with new and different, at least for us.

It helps us meet our -- attain our objective of reducing the number of animals in long-term holding.

So we think, you know, if it will work and right now we have a lot of faith in that they will make it work, that we can meet multiple objectives of that.

That's it for me, Fred.

I will take -- I said, I will do -- when Amanda does her presentation, you can talk to her, the specifics about --

>> FRED WOEHL: Well, I think the Board has a few questions for you, Barry.

One of the questions I have is how can you tell the difference between a -- without a brand, a tribal horse that wanders on to the forest over a horse that was on the forest?

That's --

>> BARRY IMLER: I'm not an expert of that, Fred.

When we went down this road a few years ago and dealing with the -- dealing with those particular reservations and to some extent the tribes over in Nevada, we have the livestock inspector there from the state.

We have some of our folks who may be able to recognize some of the animals, and the tribes apparently, unlike -- in many cases, unlike other ranchers who have an actual brand that everybody -- apparently they have various ways of marking their animals or otherwise tracking ownership.

I have no idea of the details and that's one of the reasons why we bring in the tribal livestock inspectors to help sort through that.

>> FRED WOEHL: All right.

Thank you, Barry.

Julie, you are antsy.

I know you have a question.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: It's related to your question.

I wanted to understand that McDermitt situation a little bit better.

As you know, the tribal headquarters are in Nevada, and it's considered a Nevada reservation, but the reality is that the actual land mass of that reservation is mostly in Oregon.

And I understand about US Forest Service up on the Santa Rosas and I grew up next to that reservation.

So I kind of know about how it leaks on to the public lands.

But I don't understand how the relationship works between BLM and the Forest Service and the tribes because there's sometimes 200 or more of those horses running in the southern Owhyees in the BLM lands.

So when you assist with a gather, are those some of the horses you are gathering too, even though they are not up on the Forest Service?

>> BARRY IMLER: Not to my knowledge.

To my knowledge, we are dealing with the animals coming on the Forest Service lands.

We have had ongoing issues.

We tried citations.

We tried a number of other various items but it didn't work.

So approximately three or four years ago, we went into a cost share agreement where we help the tribe -- maybe we did most of the work but we rebuilt all the boundary fences between them and the forest and now we are working -- we are focusing on pulling the animals off the Forest Service land.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: Okay.

Thanks.

>> BARRY IMLER: Now, Julie when we did -- I can say that whenever they -- the gathers, even the one we helped with a couple of years ago, again, state livestock inspector, tribal inspector --

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: Yeah, I know.

>> BARRY IMLER: We also bring in -- and in that particular case, I believe we brought in the BLM wild horse specialist in that area, just to make sure that we are not pulling anything in that might be covered by the act that needs to go back to BLM lands.

>> FRED WOEHL: Go ahead, June.

You are a little short for sure.

>> JUNE SEWING: Because I'm short.

And I'm getting shorter every day.

(Laughter)

Is your goal to remove all horses from forest land?

>> BARRY IMLER: No.

>> JUNE SEWING: Okay.

>> BARRY IMLER: Nationwide, no.

Where we have horses that would normally be considered trespass, yes.

>> JUNE SEWING: Okay.

Now according to the act, horses were supposed to be HMAs or whatever were supposed to be according to where horses were when the act was originally enacted.

Are there HMAs or whatever in the Forest Service lands?

>> BARRY IMLER: Yes, they are.

We call them territories.

>> JUNE SEWING: Okay.

All right.

That was my question.

Thank you.

>> BARRY IMLER: We have about 37 of them right now that have -- that are occupied

with some level of -- some level of population.

>> JUNE SEWING: Okay.

Thank you.

>> FRED WOEHL: Cope?

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: I thought the Cebala was the only early adopter.

>> BARRY IMLER: The Apache Sitgreaves is operating under another one.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: That's what I thought.

I thought when the plan was out on the street, you are talking about a draft DOS?

>> BARRY IMLER: No, they chose through the transition language in there, they did -- they were actually into an appeal.

They chose to appeal rather than pre-objection.

They had that option.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: This is what I'm getting to.

If this appeal is upheld and we have to go back do we have to use to the 12 rule and start over in the planning process or will they be able to be modified and be used in the 82 rule.

This looks like a mess coming to me.

That's why I'm asking.

>> BARRY IMLER: That's a discussion we are having internally, Cope.

>> Barry, what is the 82 rule?

>> BARRY IMLER: The 1982 planning rule was the guiding -- the guiding regulations on how almost all -- almost all of our forest plans, our land management plans were developed.

There was a new rule, a new planning rule developed, and it became final in 2012 that's changed the -- changed the process, changed the way we looked at things and changed the content of the planning -- of the land management plans.

Under the 1982 rule, I would -- I think the terms we have been using is in many ways it was prescriptive.

This is what you will do.

And this is how you will do it, versus under the 2012 plan, these are the things you can do in the area and these are the things you need to consider if you decide to authorize these kinds of activities.

I don't want to go into a lot of details because planning rules are -- I spend a lot of time working with me, but they are not my area of expertise.

(Off microphone comment).

>> FRED WOEHL: All right, Steven, we have time for one more comment.

>> STEVEN YARDLEY: On the horses that are kind of running along the Forest Service BLM boundary territory, in that area, when counts are done, how is it determined which horses are yours and which ones count and which ones don't because obviously there's a lot of crossover in those areas I would imagine.

>> BARRY IMLER: We have some joint management agreements where we share -- where we pro rated based on acreage or, yeah, number of AML.

It's happened various ways over the past.

We pro rated what the responsibilities are and divvy up the horses and how we divvy up the management costs and that type of thing.

Actually Dean's office and my office are working together right now to put in place a new agreement that spells out a lot more of that, including how we handle areas where we may have -- in stead of just having one territory, right next to one HMA, where we have these complexes where we have multiple territories or multiple both, where the horses are running back and forth across the boundary.

The horses don't recognize this political division.

How are we going to guide our field offices to handle that kind of management situation?

We are working on that now.

>> FRED WOEHL: Thank you, Barry.

If you would, please, if the Board has any more questions, you will be here all day and they can visit you?

>> BARRY IMLER: I'm here until tomorrow morning, Fred.

>> FRED WOEHL: Thank you, Barry.

Ms. Amanda, you are up.

>> AMANDA McADAMS: Thank you.

My name is Amanda McAdams.

I'm the forest supervisor for the Modoc National Forest.

I have been there about two years.

This is my first board meeting.

Hopefully it's not my last.

I also appreciate the Forest Service giving me the opportunity to tell the story of what we are doing, because it really is about collaborative relationships and I really appreciated the video talking about engagement because that's the place we are at right now.

We really want to talk about what engagement looks like for us and the help we need to have the right engaged audience.

What I want to talk to you about today is just a little background on our situation, where we are right now and what we are looking at at 2016 and beyond.

You may have seen some of this from Barry.

I want to make sure you hear it from -- I won't say the horse's mouth.

It almost came out, but it came from us.

We care a lot about the horses on the Modoc.

We are very happy to have them.

The Modoc is just over 1.6 million acres in far northeastern California.

Usually when somebody names a town in California, you either say north or east or both.

We are the far northeastern corner of the state.

We have about 1 million acres of rangeland out of 1.6 million on the Modoc and we have the largest wild horse territory in the Forest Service at 232,520 acres, and it's called the Devil's Garden wild horse territory.

Within that territory boundary a little over 224,000 acres is Forest Service, 7,000 BLM, 800 tribal, 640 state, and 500 acres of private.

Now the tribal, state and private are not officially under the guidelines of territory, but they are within the boundaries.

The map kind of depicts there's an east and west portion of the territory.

Again, you can -- not great detail, but it gives you a big sense of scope and scale.

The Devil's Garden territory was created in 1971 and it's primarily sage steppe ecosystem and forest and water and access are quite limited out there.

Relatively flat.

Rough and rocky and lava plateau.

This demonstrates it.

It's pretty open and flat, but hard to walk through.

The first was in 1985 and the AML was 300.

Helicopter gathers were conducted every few years up until 2006 and the total head gathered were 175 to 250 per year.

They are fairly tactically difficult gathers because of tree cover, primarily juniper and poor vehicle access.

Our sage steppe ecosystem, we have an EIS in place to manage the sage steppe, the sage-grouse is a concern for us.

785,000-acre EIS was signed with 240,000 acres threatened by juniper encroachment.

It's also important to note that the NRCS funds a lot of our work in the sage steppe ecosystem both on federal lands and on the adjacent private lands.

The most recent territory land was approved in August 2013.

The AML was set to 206 to 402 horses.

It authorizes gathering of horses above those numbers, fertility treatment, using PZP and actions to adjust the herd's sex ratio.

There was litigation on our plan, and the AML and the territory boundary were upheld in litigation.

We did do a census in February.

We are just getting the information back.

The results estimate a population of 2,246 horses.

About 100 during that snapshot were off of federal -- off of federally managed land.

Just for comparison, the 2013 census yielded 1260 adults.

So about 1,000 more horses in three years.

The current conditions included graded riparian habitat.

Conversion to annual grasses and invasive species, degraded sage-grouse habitat and increased juniper encroachment.

I want to note that the increased juniper encroachment is the removal of competing vegetation.

We have data to support.

That a couple of photos demonstrating from last year, this is June of 2015.

There's not a horse in the picture but there's an antelope.

We appreciate all of our wildlife.

And this was taken in October of 2015.

This is a map depicting the surveys from this year.

The light green lime color represents the territory, and probably more vivid in this photo is the blue dots or the horse groups that were within the territory and the red represent horses off the territory.

From an economic standpoint, there are economic impacts to private and tribal land, multiple requests to remove nuisance horses.

There's a \$2 million conservation easement in jeopardy that the NRCS has granted an adjacent private landowner specifically for improvements that the horses are impacting.

Potential safety issues near highways.

Livestock grazing has been impacted.

California has been in a fairly severe drought over the last four years and 2014, there was a 55% reduction in cattle grazing.

Drought was a distributor as well as horses.

Last year it was approximately 50%.

We expect around 50% this year.

We haven't determined the final numbers.

Just for a matter of record, there's eight grazing allotments within the territory boundary.

Everybody likes a grass so I had to throw in at least one.

The lighter blue color represents the horse forage and the darker blue color on the top represents the forage consumption by cattle or domestic livestock.

Cattle particularly.

As you will see, the -- we have been reducing cattle numbers on the territory, and so those numbers are reducing as the horse numbers are increasing.

Obviously there's no data for '16 and '17 because we are not there yet.

We haven't determined numbers.

2016, we're working to establish a collaborative to help us make recommendations on management of our horses, consistent with our approved management plan.

We really need the right people at the table if we have a bunch of people sitting at the table who all agree with each other, there's really no point having a meeting.

We are actively seeking to have folks at the table, the forest service has found funding to -- to furnish the facilitator, but we are really working with the county and some of our other very strong partners to figure out how we can get the right people to our community to help us resolve this issue long term.

Again, it's about engagement.

We are trying to find the right people to engage.

We also are looking at a gather this fall, not on federal lands but on the private and tribal lands.

We have a responsibility to get those horses either back on the territory or to manage them in another manner.

We are looking at adoption.

Moving forward, we want to organize gathers to reduce the wild horse populations to the AML in the boundary and continue to do the private and tribal gathers and find homes for any horses deemed excess.

Finally, the -- I want to talk briefly about the gather this fall.

We are looking at gathering about 200 horses.

We expect that will be the number off the territory.

It was a starting point.

It was a way for us to get moving since our last gather was in 2006.

As I mentioned, I have been on the forest two years.

I wasn't there in 2006.

Neither were a lot of staff on the forest.

We are lucky to have people in the area who have participated in gathers.

The BLM has been a strong partner with mentoring us, and helping us be successful, but we are trying to find the starting point, and right now, we have a responsibility on those private and tribal lands.

The tribe has been a strong cooperator with us.

We have been very fortunate for that.

Also again, we are inviting participation to our collaborative group that's focusing on identifying options.

And what we are really looking are humane solutions that are economically sustainable.

The Modoc National Forest views our wild horse herd as an overall asset to the forest and the community.

A wild horse herd managed in a thriving ecological balance contributes significantly to what we have to offer, drawing tourists to the area, giving the American people one more reason to connect with their national forest and we care about these horses and we want to make sure that everybody knows that.

And with that, if there's any questions, I will do my best to answer them.

>> GINGER KATHRENS: Thanks for your presentation.

This is a herd area, a territory that we heard a lot about from the advocacy community, because we have a strong advocate who is very intelligent and knows her tough up in that area and I'm wondering if you have reached out to people who are wild horse advocates and want to collaborate and help in any way they can.

>> AMANDA McADAMS: So the first press release about the formation of our collaborative came out last week.

So we haven't even awarded the contract.

So I want to make sure that we are reaching out to whoever you have in mind.

So if you don't mind sharing that with me at a break, I would love to get it.

I want to make sure anyone who has an interest in sitting at the table has that opportunity to engage with us.

We want to have a broad -- we can't have 100 people, but we want to make sure we have the broad range of input so I want to have your input.

>> FRED WOEHL: Cope?

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: My experience, the relationship between Modoc county and the land management agencies is occasionally rocky.

I'm really happy to hear that you are working with the county on this, but my question is: Is the county becoming involved in the collaborative process as well as to what degree are they working with the Forest Service?

Is that as a cooperating agency or just for recent information, how is the relationship between the forest -- between the Modoc forest and the county at this point?

>> AMANDA McADAMS: So the reality is we wouldn't be here without the county.

They are the ones enabling us to really have the political power to be able to start moving and start creating that momentum.

So I haven't probably recognized what the county has done to get us to this point, and helping to make sure this stays a priority for the forest.

We have a lot of priorities.

We have a strong relationship.

They would probably like us to feel more.

We are trying to start at a place where we feel we can be most successful.

This' a second part to that.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: I wondering what level were they functioning as a cooperating agency?

Do they have members on the I. D team?

>> AMANDA McADAMS: So the county is directly involved with the gather this fall and as we determine long-term success of the territory.

We hope that they will be conveners but the determination has not been made.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: Thank you.

>> FRED WOEHL: Steven?

>> STEVEN YARDLEY: You said there are eight permittees on this territory and they have been reduced by 50 plus percent every year.

>> AMANDA McADAMS: It varies from allotment to allotment --

>> STEVEN YARDLEY: When do they go on and off those allotments.

>> AMANDA McADAMS: I would be happy to get you that information.

In fact, we had our permittee meeting for this year's grazing program this week to talk about wild horses but we don't have the numbers yet.

>> STEVEN YARDLEY: It's surely got to be frustrating to those permittee holders when they are only on there a certain time of year and that's very controlled, to see the rangeland trends of a degraded riparian areas and conversion to annual grass and invasive species and sage-grouse habitat and increased juniper habitat, caused in large part by the excess of about 600% wild horse numbers.

And then to be -- see the rangelands depleted, when at the same time their numbers are being cut.

It's got -- what has been the frustrations and can you sympathize with the -- the permittee holders in their -- in their plight of seeing their permits and the land -- the rangeland depleted?

>> AMANDA McADAMS: So I will agree that the permittees are very frustrated.

The good news is they love the horses too, and they are working with us to solve the problem to find a way to manage this and engage as best they can.

So they are engaged with the process.

They understand that we are doing what we need to do but they are frustrated.

>> STEVEN YARDLEY: Well, think that would be the -- that would be the case, I think of a lot of permittees.

They love the horses but they love the rangeland and obviously this is a downward trend, and it appears that imminent action needs taken to prevent it from getting worse.

>> FRED WOEHL: Thank you, Steven.

Thank you all very much.

We've got to get back on schedule.

I appreciate it.

Barry, Amanda, thank you.

Kali, if you can get your stuff loaded and get up here, we would appreciate it.

>> KALI SUBLETT: Good morning.

>> FRED WOEHL: Good morning.

>> KALI SUBLETT: I brought Kylie with me.

I'm Kali Sublett, the executive director of the Mustang Heritage Foundation.

We have a lot going on with our partnership with BLM, we will try to keep it as quick and concise as I can, to leave plenty of room for questions and Fred, however you want to do, it I'm happy with questions as we go.

>> FRED WOEHL: As we go, that's good with me.

That's good with me.

>> KALI SUBLETT: It might be easier as we go.

So I did do a PowerPoint, just to kind of help us all stay on track and collect the information that we have to provide.

I personally have been with the Mustang Heritage Foundation since 2007.

I have played in many roles in the foundation, and became executive director in 2013.

Kyla is our marketing director and she will be available for questions after the presentation.

You will see on the first slide here, we have adoption education and awareness.

Through our past ten years of partnership with the BLM, we have taken on many different projects in those three areas, and we are going to show you a little bit about that today.

It started with our mission here.

I won't read through that, but our mission essentially is to increase the awareness and the adoption of America's excess mustangs and burros.

You can see through there, a few more points on our mission but a little bit of history is bylaws were created in 2002, from 2001 to 2005, putting together a comprehensive board of directors that could facilitate the foundation and give us direction.

In 2006, we signed the first assistance agreement and then in 2007, developed first training program which was the Extreme Mustang Makeover and then later that year, the trainer incentive program.

From 2007 to '13, we continued with those programs as well as adding some youth programs and camps.

2013, we had Mustang Million, which we'll talk about in a minute and then in 2015, we launched the Americas Mustang campaign.

In '16, we are really proud to announce that we are working with sell eligible animals in our program, Extreme Mustang Makeover and TIP program and then the store front program that I know Fred is very passionate about and we will talk about in a minute as well.

The board of trustees that we talked about earlier, we have had some come and stay, and some transition.

But these are our current board members right here.

Our president is Paula Carr out of Cross Plains, Tennessee.

The next slide is our staff.

As you can see, we are a pretty small staff.

Even a couple of those on there are contractors.

So a small team and we work really hard to get all of this work done.

Our BLM partnership I talked about a little bit.

We have been in partnership with BLM for many years.

We have worked with many different states and you will see a map here in a minute.

Oregon, we have been here three times with Extreme Mustang Makeovers and then we have a really excellent youth program.

So thanks to Rob and Wendy for all of the work here in Oregon that they do.

And then just some facts that you guys know as far as the mustangs on range and off range.

We also try really hard to develop industry partners through our Extreme Mustang Makeover, primarily, just to get the industry cooperation and let people know that we are out and what we are doing within the equine industry, because we are, we believe, causing a lot of excitement and interest in mustangs within the equine industry, which I think is kind of hard to do.

So we are proud of that.

And thankful to our partners is that support that.

We facilitate our mission mostly through training and adoption programs, and those primarily are Extreme Mustang Makeover, Mustang Million, the trainer incentive program, and now the store front program is kind of taking on more of a public role.

The Extreme Mustang Makeover is probably what we are most known for as far as publicly.

That's our national events.

This year we are celebrating ten years of Extreme Mustang Makeover and we have ten events scheduled.

In the past, we visited 40 cities, 22 states with 62 Extreme Mustang Makeover events since 2007.

All of that is coming with a mix of the TIP program, over 6300 adoptions.

>> FRED WOEHL: Kali, would you take a minute.

I don't know if you are going to talk about it later and go over the store front approach a little bit more.

I don't know if all the Board understands exactly what that is.

>> KALI SUBLETT: Yes, I have a slide for when we talk about the TIP.

The Extreme Mustang Makeover, we find trainers to pick up the mustang at a designated location and date and they train them for approximately 100 days and bring them back and they compete and then we adopt them out to the public.

So it's a very exciting event.

We are seeing a really good increase in new trainers, also seeing a lot of return trainers.

A part of that is the youth division, which we are seeing a lot of interest in the youth division.

They actually adopt the horses up front and then they come back and compete.

Mustang Million was an event that we did in 2013 where we adopted out over 561 horses over three weekends, or 562, and awarded \$1 million in cash and prizes.

We had over 412 competitors show up to the competition.

40 states represented and 6,000 people who came out that Saturday evening to watch the freestyle finals.

It is an event that we know we can do again.

It was very successful in all aspects, adoption, awareness, all of the above.

It's just figuring out, one, how to get support from the public, also from the equine industry, and then get to that \$1 million again.

So we are trying very hard to get there again.

Obviously getting the horses together was quite the feat in 2013.

We had to get 1,000 horses together to make available for adoption.

So that's always something that Debbie and I talk about and are continuing to work on to make sure that we are getting enough interest from everyone that would need to be involved.

The trainer incentive program is becoming more well known, but really we talk a lot about the Extreme Mustang Makeover.

Sorry my formatting is a little messed up right there.

The Extreme Mustang Makeover gets a lot of national attention through news stories and media print.

The trainer incentive is noncompetitive.

It's kind of a do on your own schedule, trainers can pick up horses and put them into training and it's more of a gentling program versus under saddle training.

What we are proud of through the trainer incentive program is that trainers are really -- it's a marketing program, they are taking those horses, bringing them home and marketing them to the public which is something that the BLM can't do and go all of these locations that we have TIP trainers.

So we have over, I believe, 320 or so approved right now and by approved, they have to reapply every 12 months if they haven't been active.

So that's not just like a bank of applications we have received over the past ten years.

That's people actively interested in picking up horses and gentling them.

So kind of have a timeline there, as far as when we started the program, and then how we have changed it from the beginning.

We started off very specific, using 3 and 4-year-old geldings from Nevada.

And then from there, it's just expanded every year.

We incorporated the youth programs in 2009.

2010 we added older horses.

5 and 6-year-olds and then you also see there that that's when the store front program started in 2010.

And then 2011, we continued to expand and then down in -- I want to say '15, I guess, we got even more inclusive to having sale authority horses and then this year basically all horses are eligible for TIP.

So any age, color, sex, are eligible and adoptable, are eligible for the TIP program.

Really, our goal for the TIP program is to get horses gentled and into adoptive homes.

It's a gentling program and then they are actually finding an adopter, assisting that adopter through the application process, and then they fill out some forms in order to receive payment, and they are paid once all of that is done.

And I have there just a number, 2,988 mustangs adopted since 2007 and that was at the end of last year.

So the end of 2015.

>> FRED WOEHL: I need to probably take that I have been a TIP trainer for a long time.

>> KALI SUBLETT: Yes.

>> FRED WOEHL: And this is really a good program and I appreciate mustang heritage and the BLM doing this.

A lot of folks would love to have a mustang but they don't have the wherewithal to start one.

And this fits the need and as you can see, it's growing, and I for one want to thank y'all for that.

>> KALI SUBLETT: Thank you.

And thank you for your part.

And Fred has trained horses through the TIP program and gone a step farther by taking them to an event and not only making them available for adoption but also doing demonstrations for the public and advertising mustangs and the TIP program.

So I mention and Fred has mentioned the mustang store front program.

What that is, that started in 2010, really is when we got started and it wasn't really a public program.

It was one that we offered to individuals that we knew would qualify.

So we knew they had the ability to take more than 10 horses at a time.

And it wasn't a program that was -- that people were able to just go online, find the information and apply for.

We weren't really ready, BLM or MHF to start that kind of program.

So over the past five or six years we developed more of those locations.

I have down there some locations that are active and pending Texas, California, New Mexico, Tennessee, Pennsylvania, Wyoming and Massachusetts.

With a few others interested.

The premise of these store front program is to allow facilities and individuals who can accept more than -- more than four, obviously, but 10 or more horses at a time.

And they are compensated more than a typical TIP horse.

So TIP trainers are paid \$800 at the time of adoption, with the store front program when they are taking 10 or more horses at a time, they will not only get the 800 at the time of adoption, they will also get a 200 payment at time of delivery or pickup.

And that's just to help with some of the feed costs when taking a larger number of horses aft at a time.

So this program is actually -- we are fixing to release a press release next week and have some information on our website where people can actually apply.

They may not have already been a TIP program, which is where it was before.

You had to have been actively participating.

So we are really excited to see what comes of this.

We have been working with carry in the eastern states and really trying to focus on getting the horses to the people, and I think that's what the TIP program is doing on a smaller scale, right now.

But with the store front program, I think there's obviously room to expand where it could be a place for Internet adopters to pick up, or to have some wild horses available for adoption, and really be able to use these people that are interested and willing to open their facility to BLM and MHF and allow adopters to come out and pick up a mustang.

>> FRED WOEHL: Ben this was something that you were talking about last night.

Do you have any questions or want to talk about that a little bit?

>> BEN MASTERS: I'm in full support.

I don't have any questions.

You explained it really well.

>> KALI SUBLETT: Anything else?

>> FRED WOEHL: These sites can be used as Internet pickups.

One of the big things I hear all the time, getting horses back East.

It's hard for someone who wants a horse.

We used to have satellite adoptions in every state back East.

Well, that's not economically feasible and having storefronts where people can come pick up a horse if they want one, especially one that's started, is a great, great benefit to folks and having -- I mean, if I had my way, we would have probably four or five of these in every state, you know, and really move, because people want mustangs.

They really -- I mean, when they see them, it's incredible.

And this is really good.

Really good.

>> KALI SUBLETT: Yeah, and we're -- like you mentioned, Eastern states, there is a lot of interest there, with taking our extreme Mustang Makeovers to the East, we know there's interest.

We know people want a mustang and I think store front is a great way to start instead of taking out hundreds of people from the Eastern states and allowing them to get a horse that's started and they need to continue the training depending what they want to do with the mustang.

Just a good opportunity to get it going and started in the Eastern states.

>> FRED WOEHL: Thank you.

>> KALI SUBLETT: So thanks for your support.

America's mustang, now we kind of leave the training programs aside and move more towards the awareness.

In 2015, I kind of have a timeline up there, but a part of our mission from the beginning is education and awareness, not only training.

We have -- we did focus on training for a long time for the first five or six years.

But I spent a lot of time the last year, four years trying to incorporate more of the education, and more of the just general awareness.

In 2015, working with the BLM, we did create the America's Mustang campaign.

You will see there's not really a BLM logo on there.

There's not necessarily an MHF logo on there.

What we are trying to do is not to really promote either of those entities but to promote America's Mustang and to get people interested and to get people to the website.

So we started with that wonderful video and we did use a lot of Ben's footage and also used the guys that did their music, to produce the score for the video.

And just tried to create something that would -- could live on our website, and that's what was up there -- was the home page at America's Mustang website.

It's to get people interested and emotionally attached to not only the issue but to the horses and the burros and to get them interested at least in going to the website and getting educated.

Whether they have an opinion one way or the other, really we just want them to at least get the information so that then they can decide.

So we started with getting the look and the image and the logo and that video and everything together and the website which took a large part of last year and was just developing the campaign and then we had an expo in Missouri, a celebration expo, which was really exciting.

We showed Ben's film and had educational seminars and demonstrations.

We had 2,000 people, I think out on that Saturday evening.

So very successful.

And then this year, we are having three expos.

Each of those expos doing what we did last year, providing demonstrations, seminars and we will have BLM representatives there.

We will be reaching out to other groups and entities that want to come out and maybe have a part in it.

Have other groups coming and doing demonstrations.

They are doing them in conjunction with Extreme Mustang Makeover because we think that's always exciting for someone to come and see.

But kind of changing those three events to change the celebration events where the makeover is a part of it.

The next stage I have, some other things that we are doing this year that we didn't do last year, is we have hired someone who is going to equine expos and farm shows and taking a booth with information and talking to people about America's mustangs and getting them excited about it, and giving them promotional and educational information to leave with, so that they can hopefully take that and go back to the website and learn more.

We also have activities above and beyond the expos.

We worked with BLM and all the various facilities and have some off-range corral tours scheduled, HMA tours and eco sanctuary tours, the event appearances we talked about, demonstrations and seminars at various equine events through the country.

So I'm very proud of what that's doing and we have a Facebook page where people can go and learn more and try to keep that updated as quickly as possible.

>> FRED WOEHL: You couldn't have found a better person than Ann doing what she's doing.

>> KALI SUBLETT: She's very passionate.

>> FRED WOEHL: Passionate is putting it mildly.

>> KALI SUBLETT: Yes, she's wonderful.

Thank you.

>> GINGER KATHRENS: I would like to second what Fred just said.

I was at the Topeka event and saw the beautiful booth and on the table were pictures under glass, I think, or -- of not just horses but people and horses together, of all ages, disciplines, and Ann was just super.

Super friendly.

And stressing the relationship that can be built.

It was a terrific, terrific job.

>> KALI SUBLETT: Thank you.

>> GINGER KATHRENS: I think she's a wonderful asset to you and the booth is just gorgeous.

>> KALI SUBLETT: Good.

Thank you.

The youth programs, kind of moving on, we have a couple of different options for youth.

We have the Extreme Mustang Makeover, a youth division which is a lot like the adult division.

They adopt a mustang and come back and compete.

The only thing with that is we don't put the horse up for adoption.

We did that for a few years.

It's very emotional.

So we avoid that whenever possible.

So the kids keep the horse.

They just get to come and show and have a good time.

The youth mustang challenge, we do that through the TIP program, there's usually a TIP trainer that is a host.

It's not in conjunction with the Extreme Mustang Makeover.

They have that on their own time and own terms.

They work with us.

We provide the outline for the event and support financially and then this host would go to their Hometown and incorporate the event there and find the youth and facilitate it from there.

Oregon, I know I mentioned earlier, but they have been very successful in the youth and mustang program, I think seven they had here.

A couple in Wyoming -- or in Washington, and working with trainers in Oregon as well.

So very happy and thrilled with all the work that they have been doing with the youth.

We estimate 1,000 mustangs adopted through the youth programs, and then we also have a camp wildfire, which started quite a while back.

It doesn't -- it's more in line with our awareness and education efforts, and there's not really an adoption component there.

We do that with various groups, like girl scouts or -- we work with the county juvenile Justice Department, and facilitate camps where kids can either come to our facility or we send the supplies to these hosts and they have a camp where kids can learn about wild horses, the rangeland.

There's a lot of rangeland information in there.

And then also other artsy thing, they learn about the mustang or the freeze mark.

We try -- if it's local, we try to have a mustang, and have someone bring a horse out and how it's impacted them.

>> FRED WOEHL: Have you ever had Michael Martin Murphy show up?

>> KALI SUBLETT: We haven't.

>> FRED WOEHL: Since the name of the camp, he would be tickled to death.

>> KALI SUBLETT: We should.

Most of the things we talked about have been -- everything we do is in partnership with BLM but the majority of the programs we talked about before were funded through BLM and not 100%.

The Extreme Mustang Makeovers, I will mention, are about 40/60 right now.

So 60% is BLM funding but the program itself is bringing in about 40% of the expenditures.

So we are very proud of that.

That's through ticket sales, adoption income, merchandise, things of that nature.

So a couple of years ago, we really -- as the Board and staff, really decided that we are going to put a lot of effort into creating programs that are not funded through the BLM, that we can do with or without the BLM's financial support, which we think is good for the foundation, good for the future of the foundation and it's very important to us.

So Mustang Magic is something that we do at the Fort Worth stock show and Rodeo.

It's the same premise as the Extreme Mustang Makeover but it's a local event for us.

So we are able to kind of do that on our own and use that as a fund-raiser for the foundation.

Meet the mustang is something that we started this year.

We were having a lot of opportunities to go and -- go to events and have demos and things like that where there weren't necessarily adoptions or trained adoptions, I guess I should say.

So I tried to think of something that we could call that and advertise for people to come out and really meet the mustangs.

So that meaning we will have mustangs there, either for adoption or just for educational purposes.

And we have two of those scheduled this year.

We have one in -- well, I will -- I will talk about that in a second because I have a slide.

Veterans and mustangs, we also have a veterans program and a mustang heritage open which is an open show.

So I will move through my slides.

It will make more sense.

These are the ten veterans that we have in our veterans and mustangs program right now.

This is a program that we do at our office facilities.

So it's not a national program.

It's one that we manage in-house.

We work closely with Fort Hood in Killeen, Texas, locate local veterans who come out for an eight-week session and they work three days a week.

We have five to ten veterans we are session.

It's no cost to the veteran.

And no cost to BLM.

The veterans actually adopt the mustang, Mustang Heritage Foundation, pays the adoption fee.

We let them select pay mustang and then they come back and work with it for eight weeks at our facility.

It is -- it's not a therapeutic program.

We have no license therapists on staff.

It is a very experiential program.

And we don't really ask a lot about their story or their past in the military.

There are qualifications but we let that come naturally and typically, it's towards the end.

So basically we have a handbook.

They learn about mustangs, the rangeland, how to own a horse, what all it takes so they can leave prepared to take that mustang home and it has some gentling and also they have a general understanding of what it will take to maintain that horse.

So I think -- she's telling me I need to hurry up.

>> FRED WOEHL: No, you don't.

We are all right.

Have you thought any -- or are you looking at making it nationwide, because there's a lot of interest about that right now.

I have gotten -- in the past few days, several emails about this and I have told them about this.

>> KALI SUBLETT: Yeah, we are definitely interested in -- again, we are not therapeutic.

It's not a therapy program.

>> FRED WOEHL: Well, any time you are working with a horse, it's therapy.

>> KALI SUBLETT: Right.

Yes.

Yes.

So we are interested in discussing that and seeing what ideas people have.

I talked with Debbie and we have worked with PATH and some of their programs and trying to figure out how the mustang can fitting into that program.

A lot of them need a well trained mustang to go into a therapeutic program.

I think someone could easily go and do.

>> FRED WOEHL: The Board will be very interested in that.

We probably won't make a recommendation about that but I want you to know our interest in that and -- go ahead.

I'm sorry.

I get passionate about this stuff if I'm not careful.

I'm worse than Ben about some of this stuff.

>> KALI SUBLETT: That's good.

It has been fun for us to open up our facility to veterans and the mustangs and we are still figuring it all out.

I think we are on our fourth pilot year.

We are figuring it out.

>> FRED WOHL: I have to say, I was at Pauls Valley one time when they were doing some of this.

And it brings tears to your eyes.

When it comes to horses, I get emotional anyway, but --

>> KALI SUBLETT: Good.

Meet the mustang, I started on that a minute ago, but basically we have two events this year.

One in Decatur, Texas, and then one in Cross Plains, Tennessee, again non-BLM funded events.

We will bring -- BLM will bring in wild horses and burros for adoption, and we will have seminars and training demonstrations and then some TIP trainer education, which is really important to us, especially in the Eastern States in Tennessee.

We will really focus on getting TIP trainers out and providing them with some support from our staff.

The mustang open is an open show.

We looked up and saw over the past ten years we put out over 6,000 horses for adoption and just wondering what are they doing now?

A lot of them we hear about and then a lot of them we don't and a lot of them are looking for something to do beyond adoption.

So this is not just for Mustang Heritage Foundation horses.

This is for any BLM branded mustang or burro.

So we have three open shows.

They are all in conjunction with an Extreme Mustang Makeover, just trying to make the best use of our time and energy.

So it will have its own arena and own kind of management of the show.

There's three divisions and then a couple of different classes and they will have a burro incentive that we have added this year.

So those will be -- they are on our website, with the entry forms and everything right there.

Also just to make things even more confusing, moving towards marketing.

We have a project we are working on with BLM, that's really the only thing that we do that's not necessarily tied to Mustang Heritage Foundation as the foundation in general.

This goes more along the lines of our marketing and awareness efforts.

BLM came to us this past year, and asked if we could help with -- they had a need and needed some marketing materials and things done rather quickly and we are pretty good at getting things done rather quickly.

So we said, sure.

And so we helped them this year to develop a tag line development, trying to -- and Debbie or someone can probably speak to this, maybe Dean a little better than I, but I think the intention was to find a tag line and adoption sales, mustangs and burros.

So a lot of I think the promotional materials were leaning towards adoption and/or mustangs.

So trying to help them think of something that would incorporate all of the above.

So with our -- the team that we hired, and different people came up with uniquely American, uniquely yours, also thanks again to Ben Masters for some of his photos from "Unbranded" that made for a great ad.

So we are really proud to be given an opportunity for one, and then, two, to be able to help with this.

We are currently working on the BLM adoption brochure -- the adoption and sales information brochure.

So that's very exciting as well.

Numbers real quickly this may be hard for the public to see but you should have it printed in your packet.

We put together just our projected adoptions for the year, and also our actual adoptions, which is at the top.

This is by state, and this is a report that I sent to BLM monthly.

Usually at the first of the month.

So you will see the total adoptions per state with a total horses adopted.

That's February 28th.

So apologize that.

Was as of April 1st.

So 369 adopted and then to the left, the bottom left, you see the horses that we currently have in training.

So over, I think, 530 pending adoptions and that's mostly with our Extreme Mustang Makeover events that have been picked up and not yet facilitated.

The events haven't happened yet.

And then the trainer incentive program is at 127, that fluctuates each months between 100 and 130, every month in training.

We stay pretty consistent right there.

And the makeover events those are the adult horses you see listed there.

The youth are adopted.

So they are not noted on that left-hand side.

So projected annual adoptions to date, if we were to stop everything right now, and no more TIP horses would be picked up, we would be right at 899.

So conservatively projecting about 1200 adoptions for the year with the increase the store front and the TIP program.

>> FRED WOEHL: But those youth horses wouldn't be adopted if it wasn't for -- (Inaudible).

>> KALI SUBLETT: Those are shown at the top in the adopted.

So a little confusing.

I know these numbers may be a little old, Dean, but it's the numbers I had.

And so I kind of walked through basically just -- what I'm trying to do here is not only show why this partnership is so important to the BLM and the taxpayers, but also any partnership in general, I think is going to -- to just increase the work of the -- increase the efforts of the BLM, not the work, but increase the efforts in hopefully saving money while doing it.

So I just kind of went through starting with approximate costs that BLM would put into a mustang.

So, gathering and removal, off-range preparation, transportation, maintenance, et cetera, and then holding costs at 25 years for an average of 48,000, which I think may be at 50,000 now.

So all of these numbers would be a little bit higher, obviously.

And then I put there, the average cost to BLM for an MHF is 1850.

We try really hard to stay under \$2,000 per head with any program, any adoption program that we do.

And then I also put there that the average age of our program horse is 5.

And that's just an average.

It may not be accurate.

It's probably, you know, we have a lot of youth horses and quite a bit of older horses, but assuming that they have been gathered and held for five years, and then you add the \$1,850 Mustang Heritage Foundation cost per head, you are at about \$12,936 by BLM on that horse when it comes through an MHF program.

So if you take that nearly \$13,000 and subtract that from the 48,000 you are going to get

an average savings of about \$35,000 per head.

So if you take that and multiply that by the 6200 adoptions you are at \$217 million in savings through the partnership since 2007.

So we're really proud of that.

We continue to try to do as much as we can for as little and keep a small team and work really hard.

So we're proud of our partnership and hope to have many more years to come and continue to be creative and innovative in our efforts and how to get horses adopted.

>> BEN MASTERS: I would like to talk about Kali a little bit because she's super humble.

The past year and a half, I have attended, I don't know, five or so Mustang Heritage Foundation events, and talked with the trainers.

I have done the TIP program, and you know, the Wild Horse and Burro Program, there's so much controversy and negativity and success stories.

You know, I often get swallowed by the -- by the controversial aspect of the issue.

And the Mustang Heritage Foundation is like this giant beaming light of, you know -- of hope and, you know, these horses are finding homes.

And it's just wonderful.

And it's not just wonderful for the horses.

It's not just wonderful, you know, for the tax savings, but, you know, going to the events and seeing what these people have worked through with these horses in 100 days, and seeing what they have learned about themselves in those 100 days, it's -- it's just remarkable, and it really is, you know -- I have worked with the veterans programs before.

And I know a guy that before he adopted his mustang, he had attempted suicide and the next time he was going to do it, he was going to succeed.

Working with that mustang, it literally saved his life.

So, you know, the benefits that you guys are doing.

I think the Mustang Heritage Foundation, and Kali deserve a great big round of applause right now.

(Applause)

But Kali, you know, the numbers are going up on what you guys are doing.

How can we as an advisory board and how can the BLM help you and help your foundation increase these numbers from 1200 a year to 2,000 or 3,000 and really create or increase the adoptions?

>> KALI SUBLETT: A problem for us that has been kind of a continuous problem or it gets better and then it goes backwards is selection of horses, and I know that's not to any one person's fault or demise, but really just making sure whether it's for our programs or any kind of adoption program, that the people that are selecting the horses to go out to the public, to go into these training programs, where we are all putting money and time and effort into, to make sure that they are educated and they know what it takes to put a horse into training and what that horse needs and what kind of horses best fit the adoption program.

I know there are plenty of adoptable, sound horses out there.

It may not be the biggest horses and that's okay.

That's not necessarily what we are doing.

We are adopting out mustangs.

So making sure that we have quality animals to provide to the public and then also just continuing to get the horses to the East and figure out innovative ways where we can either through the store front or however continue to make it more accessible in the East and everywhere, really, with whether that's at the adoption facilities are just specifically in the East.

And then just adoption process, making sure that we are all, you know -- you know what it takes to adopt a mustang and everybody is consistent in what that is, as far as the different adoption offices and which makes our jobs easier when we are relaying the information to the public as well.

>> FRED WOHL: Dean, would you like to address some of that?

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: I think this is an issue that the Board has brought up before, screening animals before they go to adoption events making sure we have the best cars on the lot before we have the car sale and adoption.

Someone put it that way once.

Identify like that.

Thank you, Kali, and best and brightest out in front, I think is what we are talking about.

So well said, Ben.

Thank you very much, Kali, and your team.

>> KALI SUBLETT: Thank you.

>> FRED WOEHL: Steven, do you have a comment.

>> STEVEN YARDLEY: On your education of the youth and all the programs you have and thank you for doing those.

I think they are very beneficial.

Have you tried to include, like, some education too about the rangelands and kind of rangeland practices and --

>> KALI SUBLETT: Yes.

So with the training events no we don't get as many educational opportunities with the kids other than like the America's mustang expos but with the camp wildfire, yes we have quite a lot of information about rangeland management and BLM typically comes and does a presentation.

We kind of focus on the training and the horse aspect and then they will come and talk about just the multiuse of BLM lands and try to educate them on what that takes.

We also, with the Americas Mustang campaign, we created a kids zone where kids can come and we have different stations as you recall set up, where they can create their own rangelands and we have a tin foil pan where they can put in dirt and grass and we have little stick figure horses and they really enjoy that and we also have a video that they can kind of go through that talks about the rangelands and the impacts that the horses are having to the rangeland.

>> STEVEN YARDLEY: Thank you for that.

I think there's a disconnect to the rangeland and the youth right now.

Thank you for your efforts in that as well.

>> FRED WOEHL: Thank you, Steven.

We are running a little bit long but we want to take as much time as we need.

All right.

>> KALI SUBLETT: Thank you.

>> Thanks.

>> FRED WOEHL: We're going to have something.

The board has been waiting on for two days.

We are going to talk about budget.

>> RENEE FUHRMAN: Everyone's favorite topic.

>> FRED WOEHL: Yes.

>> RENEE FUHRMAN: So for those of you that I haven't met, my name is Renee Fuhrman and I am the acting budget analyst, and I'm going to talk about the '15 -- I'm going to give you a brief overview of what we spent in '15, FY '15 and what we spent thus far in FY '16.

The data is as of March 31st and we are still in the process of developing the FY '17 budget.

So that's not final yet.

Do you want me to wait?

Okay.

They should be right behind Kali's.

Do you not have one, Dean?

>> FRED WOEHL: The back of tab 6, Board, if you are looking.

>> RENEE FUHRMAN: Tell me when you are there and we'll get started.

So in FY '15 our enacted appropriation was \$77,245,000.

And you can see on the pie chart how it's broken down, how the money was spent.

I don't know that it will come to a surprise to anybody on where the majority of the money

is.

We spent about 42% on off-range corral holding, about 27% on pasture, whole off-range pasture holding, and the other ones are a little hard to read.

I will just read them, adoptions or placement into private care was about 6%.

Plan for herd management was not even 1%.

So it says 0%.

We spent \$188,000.

Program support, that covers a lot of areas.

It looks like a big chunk.

There's research in there.

There's other things that are not captured by what we call in the BLM our program elements.

So you will see these two little letters next to the areas and that's just how we code things.

So that's really more for my purpose of what -- what category it's in.

It doesn't mean a whole lot to you guys but program support is just anything that doesn't necessarily fit into any of those categories.

Compliance inspections, you can see we spent \$501,000, conduct census of wild horse and burro areas, 983,000.

Monitor herd management areas \$1.5 million.

Population growth suppression, \$76,000.

>> FRED WOEHL: Renee?

You are showing that you spent \$76,000 and there was 429 units accomplished?

>> RENEE FUHRMAN: Correct.

Correct.

>> Does it include both formulations.

When you say 479 units, is that doses of PZP, administrations of PZP?

What is that?

>> RENEE FUHRMAN: I think Dean will speak to that.

I will leave it to the expert.

(Laughter)

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: So the unit of accomplishment is animals treated.

So an animal that got a primary and a booster if it was the one-year vaccine would be one unit.

And somebody that got PZP-22 one time is one unit.

Number of animals treated.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: Okay.

>> FRED WOEHLE: And this also includes -- this is not only the cost of the vaccine, but the cost of doing it?

>> RENEE FUHRMAN: Yes.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: It's intended to be that way but I sincerely doubt that \$76,000 is all the expense that we incurred.

I think there's more, and we have been struggling with how to capture these costs, but I don't think we have done it very well.

But no matter how you slice the pie, I'm not saying that huge amounts of money have been devoted to this.

>> FRED WOEHLE: Well, we -- this is a topic that the board talked a lot about last night, and comparing these, we had \$429,000 at \$76,000.

For next year and I'm not really jumping ahead but I am but 59 units for \$103,000.

And the board really -- Ben, how much was that?

17,000 -- or \$1,700.

>> For the 429.

>> FRED WOEHLE: For the 429, and how much was it for the --

>> Let's see how much that was.

>> RENEE FUHRMAN: And like Dean said, there are other things that go into it.

Like labor should be accounted in this number as well.

It's not just the application.

>> JENNIFER SALL: Yes so 178 per horse to \$375.

>> FRED WOEHLE: Okay.

>> RENEE FUHRMAN: So it doesn't really break out in that way in actuality, right?

>> FRED WOEHLE: Well, just for us -- I mean, I don't know if the public has access to this information like we do, but if my -- if you just look at what it says, it looks like that.

It doesn't -- you know what I'm saying.

>> RENEE FUHRMAN: You know, coding is always a fun internal issue.

>> FRED WOEHLE: It doesn't pertain to this but the Board wants more PZP used.

>> JENNIFER SALL: I was reading the line above.

It changed to \$1,700 a head.

I was reading the number above.

>> KATHIE LIBBY: Board, if I would remind you to use the microphones.

>> STEVEN YARDLEY: The microphones are getting turned off on us a lot of times.

>> KATHIE LIBBY: Some of us are just not close enough to them.

>> GINGER KATHRENS: He would know that the PZP, it's around \$25 a dose and, of course, PZP-22, I'm not sure what it's up to now, it's over \$200 a dose, \$225 something like that.

>> It's more like \$340, but that's in the ballpark, Ginger.

>> GINGER KATHRENS: \$340.

>> RENEE FUHRMAN: So moving on to gathers --

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: Renee, so the ground darting programs are obviously a lot less expensive for PZP application.

Fred, I mentioned to you in the hall that there's more work going to be planned for PZP treatment in 2016 that we have not yet allocated funds for.

So very inexpensive with ground darting but using helicopters, putting animals in the corral, not every horse in the corral is a treatable mare.

Probably 40% of those animals in the corral are treatable.

And when you consider about \$1,000 an animal to put an animal in the trap, depending and it's variable, depending on the size, but your cost increase, substantially.

And our managers in the field are having a lot of difficulty when we are so far over AML, capturing animals and turn them back out, there's a lot behind the scenes, but there are some places where we feel like we can do more PZP and we understand clearly that the Board would like us to do that.

>> FRED WOEHLE: That's been a recommendation over the past several meetings and we were assured about three years ago that that was going to increase.

And not under your watch.

I don't -- but I know that you are looking at it and this was a topic that we talked about long into the night last night.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: Well, I have been on the horse program for a long time.

So I accept partial responsibility for that, but there's a lot to be considered here.

And I think I would not like to leave out GonaCon in this picture.

I think we need to consider all contraceptive vaccines and figure out what is the most effective.

>> FRED WOEHLE: Yes, we do.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: And there are some places where we are near or at AML and those ought to be the places that we target it.

And those areas that are far, far over AML, we're due to be litigated if we are turning animals back out when we are over AML.

So a lot involved here.

I appreciate the Board's consideration.

>> FRED WOEHL: Well, the Board was very interested and supports the use of volunteers and stuff like this.

I mean, we know that that's the future for BLM in management is the use of volunteers.

Ginger, didn't you have some comments on that?

>> GINGER KATHRENS: No, I think you summed it up well.

We would certainly like to see the tools in the tool box that we currently have being used efficiently and effectively.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: Thank you.

>> FRED WOEHL: Thank you, Dean.

Sorry, Renee.

>> RENEE FUHRMAN: That's okay.

Carry on.

So the next is gathers.

\$1.8 million.

And then construct and maintain shrub growth projects and water projects that includes fencing as well.

If you go to the next slide, it's the same dollar numbers that were on the last slide but then as you alluded to, Fred, the units of accomplishment which is how we measure things internally to BLM, so our units accomplished in FY '15, for plan for heard management for adopted 2644, I believe that includes sales as well.

Off-range pasture holdings, 31,000 animals.

Corral holding 16,000 and 35 construct, maintain shrub and grass projects.

Gather and remove 3,319.

Population growth suppression 429.

Conduct census of wild horse and burro areas, 92.

And monitoring HMAs 168, and 2,506 compliance inspections.

So that's a snapshot of 15.

In '16 --

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: Renee, can I address one thing?

>> RENEE FUHRMAN: Absolutely.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: Yesterday I mentioned how much holding costs are.

Is this fiscal '15.

Can we go back to the fiscal '15 pie chart, I mentioned that we spent \$39 million on holding all together.

I want to point out a contradiction and explain why there are different numbers and Renee's pie chart here, it shows about --

>> RENEE FUHRMAN: I think you said 64%.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: I said 64% and I said \$49 million spent.

These pie charts show \$52 million.

So the explanation of the reason there is in fiscal 2015, we actually spent -- charged out and paid out to contractors \$49 million.

This pie chart shows 52 and that reflects obligations dedicated to contracts that might actually be spent in fiscal '16.

We have to front load and pay contracts a year in advance.

So that's the explanation for that contradiction.

>> FRED WOHL: And one thing, Dean, these numbers, are exact counts, correct?

Because that's what you have to pay on?

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: The numbers, yes.

>> FRED WOEHL: The horses.

So just based on what we have here and I will round this up, 48,000 or so horses in holding right now.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: I think the number is 474.

There's a current report in here.

>> FRED WOEHL: But that's an accurate count?

What I'm saying is there's a lot saying there's not as many horses as there is but we are paying on this amount of horses and so that's an accurate count?

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: These are the numbers in holding.

>> FRED WOEHL: Okay.

>> RENEE FUHRMAN: Okay.

Yeah.

Let's go to '16.

>> FRED WOEHL: I didn't know it was going to be like, this Renee?

>> RENEE FUHRMAN: I think it's great.

It's fine.

So '16, as of March 31st, that was the end of our mid-year.

So we're halfway through the fiscal year.

We were a couple of years ago.

Our enacted appropriations went up slightly in FY '16 from 75 to \$80 million and you can see a slight change in the pie chart, corral holding is a little smaller, pasture holding a little bigger thus far.

So pasture is 46%, corral 25%.

I don't think I will read the numbers like I did last time.

But if you look at the next slide you can look at so far what -- what we have accomplished and what we have spent.

So we've done one plan for herd management, adopted 1,187 animals, which includes sales.

Pasture 31,000, corral 15,000, just rounding here.

Construct, maintain shrub and grass projects, three removed, gather and removed 1,473.

59 population growth suppression efforts.

26 conduct census of wild horse and burro areas.

25 monitor HMAs.

1,049 compliance inspections and we have spent about half of our enacted appropriations thus far at 44 million.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: But that's with five months of budget remaining.

May we assume that a lot of those shifts are relating to time as they go through?

>> RENEE FUHRMAN: Yes, that can be part of it.

Which area are you talking about?

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: Well, difference between the corral and the pasture holding.

I've got to believe that it's just we haven't spent it on the corral holding yet, because we have the summer coming up.

>> RENEE FUHRMAN: Well, we -- you know, we have been pushing for more off-range pastures and I'm sure Holle' will be talking about that in her presentation, but, yes.

I mean, some -- some of this, you know, it hasn't been spent yet because it hasn't happened yet.

We haven't put the money on the contracts yet.

You know, maybe some gathers haven't happened, you know, things happen in the

summer.

So sure.

>> GINGER KATHRENS: What does the plan for herd management entail?

>> RENEE FUHRMAN: You want to --

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: So Ginger, good question.

That's the program element that indicates the work dedicated to land use planning for herd management areas.

>> FRED WOEHL: Any other questions?

>> JUNE SEWING: Yes.

>> FRED WOEHL: Yes, Ms. June, go ahead.

>> JUNE SEWING: One of the focuses that we have is the rotation of land and the importance of what that is to all creatures using that, why is so little allocated to that?

For the construction maintenance of shrub grass projects?

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: So may I take that question, Fred?

So we are talking about rehabilitation of rangelands and juniper cuttings, plants, grass seedings.

Our budget is not very big to support those type of things.

There's more of it that is go on in herd management areas but it's not wild horse dollars supporting that.

I mentioned yesterday in response to one recommendations I think it was your recommendation, when it has to do with resting lands and recovery of lands.

So we are tagging on to efforts with sage-grouse and those that are conducted in herd management areas, horses will benefit.

But ours are mostly dedicated to water, developments and improvements some of the things that Rob and the Burns team addressed a couple of days ago on our tour.

So why it's so little?

We could do more, but that means we will have to take away from adoption programs or others and I kind of talked about we don't have very much discretionary money.

Renee mentioned that we have a \$3 million increase in budget in fiscal '16 over '15.

So what are we going to do with that money?

Recall yesterday when I said that our unit costs were pastures and had increased from the \$1.61 in fiscal '15 to the \$1.99 per fee day per horse and pastures.

I just multiplied that out again to make sure that what I represented yesterday was correct, 31,000 horses.

Fred, you asked if that was actual numbers.

It's approximately so, times 365 days times a 38 cents per fee day increase, the \$3.3 million.

So we actually lost 1.3 that I have discretion or we have discretion to do PZP with and other things.

Again, our decision space is closing in around us and it will help us decide what to do with the limited amount of we have.

Mustang heritage programs are wonderful, absolutely wonderful.

Can we do more of that?

Probably Kali and her team can, but without increases in budget, we won't do very much more of it without abandoning something else.

>> JUNE SEWING: When you talk about the limited funds for improvement, it goes back to things that I have been stressing in the past is use of private funds for those things like water improvement, more materials and things like that.

There might be an increase in trying to gather those private funds.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: That goes to the other recommendation, use of voluntary contributions and the program for that and I know you are your organization has been very active in that and there's been other offers to do things at corrals with structures and shelters and --

>> JUNE SEWING: But one of the things I have found difficult, even though I have, you know, contacted district managers and things like that, when I know they are doing some of those rehabilitation things and they have been very reluctant to accept those funds.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: Well, I think we better work on that.

>> JUNE SEWING: Thank you.

>> I'm curious if you could talk about the 15 or 18% budgeted for overhead, what percentage of that goes into research versus the uncontrollables.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: So that is the program element that purchase has been funded out of.

What percentage we funded research in 2014, 2015, and a little bit in 2016.

So the percentage of our total budget is variable and I guess we could calculate it if you want a percentage by annual basis.

>> JENNIFER SALL: Maybe I was misunderstanding.

Is research just one of the program support pieces within that 18% within that 6.6 million?

>> RENEE FUHRMAN: Yes.

>> JENNIFER SALL: And do you know how big the actual research budget is or about within the 6.6 million?

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: For '16 or '15, I don't know the exact number but I can tell you we dedicated \$11 million in the last three years to research.

>> JENNIFER SALL: Thanks.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: And actually there will be more money that goes along with it, as we implement the field research projects that will be associated with population surveys, to augment those research studies and also the gathers that it does for the research studies.

So we are probably at about 3.5 planned expenditures, 13.5 million.

>> JENNIFER SALL: Great.

Thanks.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: I have a quick question that pertained somewhat to that last question, and that has to do with the funding for the mustang heritage program.

Are they primarily up in the adoption column or are they also in program support and allocated proportionally?

Because mustang heritage does things besides adoption support.

>> RENEE FUHRMAN: I think it's primarily in the adoption.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: Okay.

>> RENEE FUHRMAN: And what Dean spoke to, about the budget, you know, we got a slight increase in 2016 but we do know for 2017, that our president's budget set a reduction from FY2016.

That places additional challenges on us as we are planning for FY '17.

I believe it was a \$5,000 reduction.

>> FRED WOEHL: I think that shows up a lot -- I think with the number of vacancies that you have, as far as filling them, is that a --

>> Funding.

Funding.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: They are telling me that I don't speak loud enough or close enough to the microphone.

So no.

We need to have folks to do the critical work.

So we have set aside dollars whether these positions are filled.

That's not going to be a restriction.

>> FRED WOEHL: All right.

Anybody else have any questions for Renee?

We are running a little bit behind and Kathie is about to have a cat over here.

I have to get you back online and plus we have somebody on hold on the line.

>> RENEE FUHRMAN: Thank you, Board.

>> FRED WOEHL: Thank you, Renee.

Have we got Paul on the line?

>> PAUL GRIFFIN: Yes, I'm here.

Can you hear me all right?

>> FRED WOEHL: Thank you, Paul, yes.

Welcome.

I wish you could be here with us but I understand why you can't, but you are going to have a lot of questions.

>> PAUL GRIFFIN: Thank you with the opportunity to speak today about research and the program.

I want to echo the other speakers in thanking you very much for your service and the guidance and your questions.

The last time we spoke in September, you were very clear in saying, Paul make sure there's plenty of time for questions and we want this material to read ahead of time.

So I tried to accommodate that with getting you guys text and I will try to do that with a shorter talk today as well.

Well, the Department of Interior has prioritized advancing science as a basis for making informed management decisions.

The wild and free roaming horses and burros is an integrate part of national system of the land under the principle of multiple use as set out in the federal land management policy act of the 1976.

So managing horses and burros in this context is complicated and it requires a good understanding of many subjects, including the animals themselves, their population dynamics, their behaviors, the ecosystems they live in, and their relation to society.

So the BLM's goal is to support and participate in research of the highest possible caliber that is primarily directed at solving wild horse and burro management challenges.

Currently the program is making efforts to support and make use of science to the maximum extent possible to inform that understanding and our management decisions.

What I hope to talk about in this presentation is an overview of the current research

advisory team, the categories of research topics that are being funded by BLM, the overall budget for those research and pilot projects, the locations of those projects, two examples of ongoing or proposed projects in a little bit more depth, and then finally, leave a lot of time for discussion about our continuing -- any questions that you have, after I have just briefly touched on aerial survey program that I touched on for the population inventories.

I can't tell whether Debbie and Art have set up so you can see slides that I prepared.

There's only about nine of them.

I aim to keep my remarks brief so that there's more time for questions and discussion, and, of course, ask any questions at any time.

There might be a slight time delay.

I'm looking at what you guys did 10 seconds ago but I can hear what you are saying now.

And for those questions, I'm just part of the larger team of people that are engaged in and supporting research so for some of your questions, I might look to other BLM staff that are with you, if they can provide more complete answers.

And thanks very much, Fred, I actually -- I regret very much that I'm not with you in person today and I wish I could be there.

So I think in your binders, you received a set of summaries about research projects and pilot projects.

These are ongoing or have been approved but not yet started or they have been proposed by USGS and they are under review.

I have not included on that list several other proposed studies from nonfederal entities, applicants whose proposals are still under review.

So I'm not sure who is controlling the slides but I would ask that you please move to the second slide.

It says wild horse and burro research advisory team.

Okay.

So the research advisory team was rechartered last year, with a mission to help BLM identify and support legitimate research of the highest possible quality, addressing the needs of the BLM Wild Horse and Burro Program aisle ensuring humane treatment and

use of animals.

The team is charged with providing guidance so resources can be most efficiently directed to scientific research that best supports the needs of management.

So as laid out in the wild horse and burro handbook, all research requests related to Wild Horse and Burro Program are to be first reviewed by this team.

We meet almost every week.

During meetings, much of our time is spent reviewing research proposals that we have received, and I'm going to paraphrase Sue McDonnell who summarized our work well in a recent email.

We evaluate the relevance of studies that would be asked and the validity of proposed study design that would address those questions, the feasibility of success, the logistics of BLM helping to make that proposed work happen, including compliance with NEPA and other laws and policies.

We talk about budgets, personnel qualifications, and potential pitfalls or other opportunities that may or may not have been in this anticipated by the investigators.

So on the chair of the team and I pass along notes and recommendations from the team to the division chief, and every decision about what research to conduct or not what to approve or deny, what to do is up to the division chief.

Currently on the team, Sue McDonnell is the liaison to your board and her insights and advice, I'm acting as the chair and Bryan fuel is the cochair and Alan Shepherd and Al Kane round out the team.

So we have a diverse team.

But for proposals outside of our expertise we do seek expert peer reviews.

If a proposal has been approved, then the team also plays a role with follow through in helping to draft and review NEPA and other related documents that might be needed to make the research ideas a reality.

And recently Jared Biby has been helping out quite a lot in that regard and we always solicit help from other BLM staff that may have experience with and related NEPA and planning documents.

So as a related part of that follow through, I do have a hand in helping to administer and monitor the assistance agreements that is the grants that fund a lot of these research projects.

So if there aren't any questions about our team, then I will go -- it looks like we are already on slide 3, which is great.

So keep it right there.

The research and pilot project that BLM is supporting could be categorized into six broad groups that are up here on this slide with bullets.

And each one of these groups kind of addresses a pressing need for the program.

The background that Dean and Kristin and Rob and Bob discussed yesterday explains in large part the motivation for BLM funding the projects that it does.

Namely, current population sizes are, you know, about 67,000, give or take, whereas the target AMLs are only about 27,000.

In many areas, populations can increase at 20% per year, which means herds can double their numbers in four to five years if not managed.

And the consequences of unchecked population growth are unacceptable suffering and death from disease, dehydration, starvation, and public land degradation, including on sage-grouse habitat.

Removals alone are not a tool that BLM can use to reach and stay at AML because the cost of long-term care is so high.

And as Dean has mentioned, we can only remove about 3500 animals per year right now.

At the same time, the larger the on-range population becomes, the harder it is to get back to AML.

So for all of those reasons, having a safe and effective spay and neuter methods and long lasting contraceptive methods it would be a very high priority for us.

With populations as high as they are now, relative to AML contraception alone cannot reduce those eyes to AML over any reasonable time scale, even if it were applied very broadly, which it's not being done right now.

The upshot is that we need a combination of approaches to help slow population growth rates.

Dean suggested yesterday that spaying mares and neutering stallions could fit in as a bridge to help us reduce population growth rates until other options for long-term

contraception are available, but before spaying or neutering wild horses and burros on the range as a wide spread management tool, BLM needs to know that those methods would be safe and effective.

So we are funding several projects to look at the surgical technique safety and two that would look at behavioral effects at having is some spayed or neutered animals in herds that contain breeding animals.

And when I say neutered, I'm referring to geldings.

So we are funding a -- we are kind of along the lines of contraception.

We are funding a proposed pilot project that would apply PZP treatments to burros on the range in cooperation with the Humane Society.

That project is listed on page 4 of those research summaries you have.

But people cannot approach animals easily in many, if not most of HMAs where wild horse and burro live.

So having a contraceptive method that doesn't need annual application would really be a tremendous help and BLM is funding several university research projects to foster new PZP delivery systems and new contraceptive drugs that could serve as that kind of longer lasting single dose contraceptive.

Next, we need to improve our population models.

The current population dynamic models that BLM uses to project the effects of our decisions, which is called WinEquus is not suited for what we want to look at the future.

We looked at the US geological survey which is the Department of Interior's research Brant to update the WinEquus program that can account for different contraceptive methods and which makes use of new demographic data as it becomes available.

In most HMAs, the BLM relies on aerial surveys to make our population estimates.

But we know that burro populations are consistently under estimated.

Even using the most recent advances in the double observer methods.

As a result, BLM is funding a USGS study to defendant more reliable studies for burros, in particular, including the use of infrared cameras on airplanes and making use of data from radio collar burros.

Next the BLM is in the socioeconomic studies and funding two contractors to look at

programs and ways that BLM could improve the adoption program.

You heard yesterday from Lori Mitchell about her preliminary results from the patterns of adoption and that's something that we are looking forward to learning from and applying.

Finally, last broad category of projects that is that BLM is always interested in improving our understanding of just basic wild horses and burros ecology, habitat use behavior and genetics and several of the USGS studies that BLM is now funding would include data collection along those lines.

If there's no questions about the general areas, let's move ahead to the next slide, which is labeled research slide 4.

And I'm not sure if the slide has advanced or not, because I just can't see.

But one measure of the commitment to BLM's commitment to advancing science-based management is that the amount of funding that has been committed recently toward research.

So this is my own pie chart, it's a smaller version and it goes across several years.

So new research on population growth monitoring and management is being conducted mainly by universities and the USGS that you can see from this chart which breaks it down into who is receiving most of this research funding.

The program is moving forward with research on new tools to manage population growth, and to develop new tools needed for a population monitoring and management.

This is an investment of over \$11 million to the USGS and another \$2.5 million of support for capture and aerial surveys related to these research programs.

So, you know, in the context of the overall budget this is a substantial portion of our funding for the overall program, even spread out over about five years.

So what these studies are, it's about eight studies getting underway or that started late last year, at the university -- the university of Kentucky, Louisiana state university, Colorado state, Ohio State and Oregon State University.

And all of those are specifically aimed at surgical spay/neuter methods or developing longer contraceptive vaccines or of the use of GonaCon.

And BLM has obligated about \$3.4 million towards those projects.

And we may commit another almost \$600,000 more if the researchers in those studies meet their milestones.

Then the other big category is that BLM has approved or is reviewing proposals for 12 USGS projects that would total about \$7.4 million of which 6.8 is already approved.

Or in the works.

Among these two studies in Wyoming and Utah will examine whether surgically spaying mares or gelding stallions would change the movements and the behavior and movement of other animals in the same herds.

Two nearby populations where USGS will study demographic and movement rates will act as controls for those studies for population level comparisons.

Another study in two populations will detail burro ecology and demography and USGS has already tested GPS radio collars and radio transmitting tail tags.

We got a chance to see them in September when we went to the Pauls Valley facility.

They will be very valuable tools for all of these field studies.

The USGS is developing better aerial survey methods I will mention in a bit, and has tested the use of DNA from horse dung as estimating the population sizes.

Under planned USGS studies would include testing an IUD device in mares, intrauterine device, comparing different contraceptives in burros and improving the modeling software WinEquus that they use for population projections.

Okay.

Now let's move to the next slide, research slide 5, and it's the map.

This map is also in your binder of materials.

You know, I don't plan to go through this map at all project by project.

We wanted to point out the broad spatial distribution of the ongoing and approved research studies and pilot projects that BLM is funding and supporting.

These projects shown here have all been approved by the division chief, but many of them are still in the various stages of NEPA planning, and the NEPA process.

So without a record of decision yet issued to have them go ahead.

If there's no questions for this map, we can go ahead to slide number 6.

And so let me turn to the first of two studies that I did want to bring up in more detail.

And as I do this I want to thank Rob Sharp and Bob Hopper for their detailed discussions yesterday about the proposed sterilization studies at the Heinz corrals.

And I'm also glad that you had the opportunity to go to the corrals and discuss that proposed work with them, where it would be done and with the researchers that would be doing it.

But a lot of people mentioned yesterday in the public comment period, their extreme interest in these projects too.

So I want to add a little bit to those discussions and I especially want to point out how this research would -- this proposed research would fit in with the other research projects in that list that you have.

So when they reviewed the large number of proposals that came in to the BLM in response to our request for proposals on contraceptive related research studies, then the national academies of sciences identified these three surgical techniques in this proposed Oregon State study as being potential methods that could be applied by BLM in the near future to improve wild horse and burro management.

The purpose for the research in all three methods is to determine their safety and efficacy in wild horses.

So the context for that study, as Dean said yesterday is that BLM is aiming for contraceptive tool as that can be used for AML using the minimum feasible level of handling and in some cases, minimum feasible level could mean handling an animal just once and allowing it to live out the rest of its life on the range, not touching it ever again, rather than either handling it many times over its life or removing it from the range.

So the spay technique to be studied which is ovariectomy via colpotomy, it's already a widely used method in rural equine domestic.

They didn't think it would lead to any new surgical methods rather the thought was that -- that by testing it in wild horses we would be able to determine safety and efficacy in wild horses in a corral setting because that might be different from what is observed for domestic horses.

The two less invasive techniques are also new and different, but each of those methods would leave the mare's ovaries intact.

That means that we would expect those mares to continue to cycle, even though they can't get pregnant.

The tubal ligation technique would sever the oviduct and the laser ablation would scar the oviduct papilla to the extent that the eggs wouldn't go to the oviduct into the uterus.

So in their reviews the National Academy of Sciences identified all three of those as being contraceptive techniques that BLM could apply, as I said in the short term, if they are acceptably safe.

BLM has funded two other search studies that could lead to results that could lead to the management in the short term and that includes project numbers 4 and 5.

Project number 4 is another study of tubal ligation, where access to the oviduct would be via colpotomy, but where the surgeon would place a nylon cable tie tight enough to limit the blood supply to the ovary.]

That would lead to the same effect as an ovariectomy or spaying.

And Dean mentioned project number five yesterday.

This is a project where Colorado State University is testing to determine the optimal timing of vaccination or revaccination with the GonaCon vaccine and that's helping at Teddy Roosevelt National Park.

One dose of GonaCon does not reduce it too much but having the booster dose of GonaCon four years after they have the first dose, can lead to infertility at least in the first year after the booster shot.

We are anxiously awaiting results from the second year after the booster dose.

They are collecting those data now.

And that study really is aimed to find out whether the same kind of low fertility results from giving booster doses six months, one year, or two years after the initial dose.

So those studies with short-term application, you know, they are in contrast with several of our longer term project efforts with universities that aim to develop new and different drugs that would lead to several years of contraception or in one case a lifetime sterility from one injection of a drug.

And in your list of studies, those longer term studies are numbers six, seven, and eight.

Okay.

I'm guessing that you may have some questions at this time.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: Paul, this is Julie Weikel.

Would you please elaborate on when you use the word ovariectomy, and we see the word spay.

There's a lot of public misinformation about this.

BLM has elected to continue to use the word spay because of its familiarity to the public at large, but would you please elaborate that uteruses are not being removed here in the spay techniques or in the case of the Kentucky study, the uterus is still present and intact?

Would you mind?

>> PAUL GRIFFIN: Oh, no.

Thank you very much.

I wouldn't mind at all.

That's entirely correct and, yeah.

No -- there's no -- none of the techniques that we are considering would involve any surgery that would damage the uterus, and I think that you are also correct to characterize the reason for us choosing to use the word "spay" as being an internal decision made at some higher levels within the BLM because of the familiarity to the public with the concept.

In fact, you are right that anything that we are proposing to do is, in fact, less invasive and involves less surgical removal of any tissues compared to the -- what is commonly called spaying in -- in other animals.

It is something that, you know, we wrestle with, with our NEPA documents.

The competing desires to try to make ourselves -- to try to use language that is familiar to the public while, in fact, what we are proposing to do is -- involving even less surgery than typical spay that would be performed on a dog or a cat.

I don't know if that answers the question.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: Thank you.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: The USGS monitoring and population counts we tend to sometimes forget that while we are working at, this the overall objective is still natural resource conservation, particularly as it applies to the resources on the range.

Are there data or are the data from land fires sufficient to monitor changes in vegetation?

And is there something equivalent to the fire regime condition class that would apply to the HMAs that could be monitored to hopefully indicate the degree of change happening in the vegetation before it becomes critical?

>> PAUL GRIFFIN: You are -- Cope, if I'm understanding correctly, you are asking a question about our ability to monitor the change in vegetation conditions with respect to areas that have different horse population sizes and also with respect to different distributions that happened on the landscape?

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: And with -- yeah, and also when you have the population demographics change or the horseographics, could we possibly be able to correlate population increases or decreases with changes in vegetation and possibly prioritize some of our efforts for population control based on the vegetation changes or are the data from land fires sufficient to produce such conclusions?

>> PAUL GRIFFIN: We haven't really talked in detail among the research team about how we could incorporate remote sensing data and records about fire severity.

And I think there are other programs within BLM that have a more central -- where their central focus is management of the vegetation and keeping track of responses to disturbance.

I can say that prior to 20 -- the 2013 analysis by the National Academy of Sciences, there was -- well, there's always been interest in looking at how does horse population size and horse population growth rate influence landscape change own vegetation conditions.

What we have -- what I think the 2013 national academies report pointed to unfortunately was that the population surveys in general that relies on direct counts from the past didn't lead to reliable enough, at least not overly precise measures of population size that could be used to correlate with vegetation change.

But we definitely have kind of gross numbers over time from the past, and we now have, I think, more defensible population size estimates in most cases from the current survey methods.

So that type of work could be done but it's not on our radar right now.

Probably what we should do is be reaching out to our -- the other sister programs within BLM that have a more direct connection with vegetation management to look at this kind of thing, and you are right that USGS is a research agency that would be able to help us answer that type of question.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: It might be worth asking Henry bastion or Frank Faye if it's applicable or not.

I think they would know.

>> PAUL GRIFFIN: Well, in the positions that you guys are in, if you feel that that's a research direction that you would like to suggest, then I would say put it in writing and we would pay close attention to that suggestion.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: Okay.

I will try to find out if there's any applicability there.

There may not be, but it just crossed my mind looking at this.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: Interjecting here.

Our aim effort, assessment, inventory and monitoring is what Paul referred to, our sister programs to the Wild Horse and Burro Program, that's where most of the vegetation and monitoring program is coming.

From I'm not sure what you are referring to as far as fire.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: It's a data program and those data are available.

That's why I say it wouldn't be something we would have to go out and do.

My question is: Are those data transferable enough to monitor vegetation changes as they monitor the fire regime condition class changes for the Forest Service and I don't know.

It might be there.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: Okay.

Now I understand.

Thank you for that clarification.

>> PAUL GRIFFIN: The frequency of our aerial surveys is probably about once per three years in most cases.

So it may not be as detailed as certainly the satellite data.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: Mm-hmm.

>> PAUL GRIFFIN: Okay.

Well, if there aren't any other questions --

>> FRED WOEHLE: Paul?

Paul?

>> PAUL GRIFFIN: Yes.

>> FRED WOEHLE: Is there any way you can kind of speed up just a little bit.

We haven't had a break yet and I think some people are starting to float.

>> PAUL GRIFFIN: Yes, and the next slides I have, they are all much shorter.

>> FRED WOEHLE: All right.

Thank you, Paul.

It's not that I don't think that this is important, but -- you know how it is.

(Laughter).

>> PAUL GRIFFIN: Okay.

So if we could advance to research slide 7, please.

It's focus on some burro studies in Utah.

These studies are just starting in the Sinbad HMA in eastern Utah.

There are two studies there led by USGS in collaboration with Colorado State University and in your text, these are studies number 13 and 14.

They both are going to rely on radio collared jennies and there's ongoing capture operations right now to capture the burros and so that they can be fitted -- so that jennies can be visited with radio collars.

So far as of yesterday, 126 burros were removed, over 11 days of bait and water trapping and 56 burros were removed over the last three days via helicopter gathering.

Those animals will be taken to Axtell, Utah, and about 100 will be returned to the HMA with 25 to 30 of the jennies wearing GPS radio collars.

They will have satellite links and provide one to two locations per day, and if there is -- the USGS study in Oklahoma showed that there's no appreciable neck wear or injury to burros for the collars they used there.

Every radio collar that the burro will wear will have a drop off device that the USGS or the CSU could tell it to drop off and it will have a timed drop off to drop off at a particular time.

There are two studies at Sinbad and we hope to have the study repeat at lake pleasant.

The first study, the demographic and behavioral study there.

Is not much demographic data for the burros in the west.

They will be helpful in understanding behaviors and population modeling.

And then the second study is going to test two new population survey methods for wild burros.

As I mentioned usually aerial surveys lead to under estimates, really severe under estimates in some cases of burro populations.

And that meth ode -- that study will try two new methods.

One is to use the information from radio collared burros as a measure of how much the visual observers in a helicopter don't see burros.

And the other method will use infrared cameras as a more precise measure -- with a precise measure of the distance from the transact to the burro groups and that will help us get abundance estimates.

So these are studies where I think that BLM is trying to maximize the value that we are trying to get from research, by having two separate sets of questions, addressed with the same animals.

And in the interest of speed, we can go ahead to slide number 8.

So I do want to briefly switch gears and talk about the aerial survey program that Cope was alluding to.

The Renee's pie chart shows that census was 1 to 2% of the program's budget in most years but we really -- we count on those -- the results from those censuses because we need accurate estimates for making our management decisions.

There are a few areas where you can do ground counts to get estimates that are

accurate enough for management but in most cases, we need and we use aerial surveys.

So from 2003 to about 2013, USGS helped to develop new and improved aerial survey methods in particular two methods called simultaneous double observer, and photomark recite.

And both allow for a statistical analysis of the observation which is exactly what the 2013 national academy's report said needs to be done for aerial surveys.

So starting in 2014, based on that recommendation, BLM has had a real concerted effort to use those two new methods, and by the end of this year, almost all the HMAs will be surveyed with those methods.

We looked to help -- we get help from USGS in planning these surveys and training BLM observers and preparing data for analysis and with interpretation, and I want to note that Forest Service, the Forest Service has also made use of these methods and has gotten some help from the USGS for their most recent surveys the kind like the ones that Amanda mentioned for the Modoc National Forest.

So, in fact, before last June, I was the USGS employee in that role, and we look forward to USGS hiring a new wildlife biologist to provide that technical assistance to BLM moving ahead to the future.

The last slide that I wanted to have was just this one that I see you are looking at.

It's the map from your handouts, and I just wanted to point out that really the vast majority of the HMAs and Forest Service territories have been surveyed recently with one of these new methods within last three years.

So the blue HMAs have been surveyed with a new method and orange Forest Service territories also.

The HMAs shown in light green have not yet been surveyed with the new methods but most of them will be by the end of this year.]

That concludes my presentation, and I would be happy to answer any other questions.

>> The material that were on the slides.

>> FRED WOEHL: You don't have any of them?

>> GINGER KATHRENS: Uh-uh.

Cope said I could have his but I don't know if that's true with Ben.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: Right behind the budget.

>> GINGER KATHRENS: Uh-uh.

Do you have it?

Do you have it, Ben?

See, it's probably just me.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: Before the detailed research projects.

>> GINGER KATHRENS: Mine goes from -- well, yeah.

Jen knows.

Mine doesn't have it.

>> PAUL GRIFFIN: I'm terribly sorry.

We tried to email them to everybody.

We wanted to make sure that you had them well ahead of time to check out.

I'm so sorry.

>> GINGER KATHRENS: I have them now.

I was given Cope's copy.

>> FRED WOEHL: Sue, you are the board representative for this committee, do you have any comments or any questions or anything to add to what Paul has?

>> DR. SUE McDONNELL: No, I just -- I want to say that I think Paul's doing a really good job of helping the team be as efficient as possible and I worked on a lot of proposals, committees and groups and I have never worked with one who was so efficient as Paul.

So while I'm sorry that he's no longer on the survey, I'm really happy -- on the aerial research projects I'm happy that he's do the research coordination.

Thank you, Paul.

>> PAUL GRIFFIN: Thank you, Sue.

I wish I could be there in person to shake your hand.

>> FRED WOEHLE: Paul, I echo that too, based on the reports and just the interaction between you and the other members of the Board.

I appreciate it greatly.

Does any other Board members have any comments, concern, the request for Paul?

Go ahead, Julie.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: I would just like to make sure that the public is aware that all the research projects that have been mentioned here today are actually described in some detail online, on the BLM website.

So for additional information, that is available.

>> PAUL GRIFFIN: Thank you, Julie.

And I would like to echo for any members of public who don't know the process, all of the these research projects also are following animal care and use protocol that are overseen by animal care and use committee.

>> FRED WOEHLE: All right.

Thank you, Paul.

At this time, we are going to break for about 15 minutes.

>> KATHIE LIBBY: Can I ask that we come back at quarter till.

>> FRED WOEHLE: We will break for about ten minutes.

12-minute break.

Do I hear 13?

Thank you very much, Paul.

>> PAUL GRIFFIN: My pleasure.

I will be on -- listening in the rest of the day.

(Break).

>> KATHIE LIBBY: Okay.

Ladies and gentlemen.

Okay.

Are we all settled?

So we want to commit to freeing you for lunch between 12 and 1:00.

We'll see how the next couple of items go.

And whether or not we have to push something after lunch that was scheduled pre but we'll just see how it goes.

Okay?

Mr. Fred.

>> FRED WOEHL: Thank you, Kathie.

Before we proceed, I would like to recognize Dean.

He had something he needs to --

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: Fred, thank you.

Yesterday I neglected to introduce one of our key staff and that's Mr. Jared Biby who used to be the state lead of Montana.

Jared, would you stand up?

Jared has joined our national Washington office staff in Reno.

So we stole away one of the good ones to help with our national program.

So also I wanted to point out two other staff in the event you guys want to chat with some of our key staff members.

Rebecca Moore will be presenting to us this afternoon.

She resides in Fort Collins and is an economic in our Washington office planning staff.

And then also from eastern states, I mentioned that Karlee Yurek would be presenting

today.

Where are you?

In case somebody wants to talk to you.

Thank you.

Thank you, Fred.

>> FRED WOEHLE: You're welcome, Dean.

The Board recognizes Bryan Fuell.

>> BRYAN FUELL: Good morning.

>> FRED WOEHLE: Vietnam.

>> BRYAN FUELL: Thank you for this opportunity to address the board.

Again, I'm Bryan Fuell, I'm the on range branch chief, the on range branch is located in Reno.

We co-inhabit with the Nevada office.

And we manage the Palomino corral and holding facility.

Jared Biby is here and Jason Lutterman.

Paul you heard on the phone and we also have Amy Rouse who is detailing the horse specialist right now in the office.

So that's pretty much us.

Today, I wanted to kind of talk a little bit about the on-range issues and conditions going on.

And looking at the '16 population estimate, I will cover, gather, removals, fertility control efforts, the ongoing sage-grouse effort as it relates to wild horses and burros because there are a couple of burro HMAs involved in grouse habitat.

And cover litigation a little bit, if there's any questions.

So the current numbers are last year's numbers, as Dean mentioned.

We have not completed our summary of the March 1, '16 numbers.

So we have not released those.

We are working closely with the states who are working closely with the field to come up with those estimates.

I can't, as Dean mentioned yesterday, probably 9,000 head estimate for March 1st.

It's probably pretty reasonable and puts us at 67, 68,000 on range and then of course, foaling season is beginning.

So by summer's end, we should be well into the 70,000 range on range, minus, of course, any efforts we do for gathers.

I mentioned the numbers we have seen before, 26,715 is AML on the range, and last year's effort was 3819 head removed.

469 mares treated with PZP.

Looking at the next is a graph.

It shows kind of from 1971 to present.

The blue line is the current -- is the range number -- the numbers on the range.

You can see that '15, we were approaching an all-time high and I'm sure by '16, we are at the top we are going to top the numbers in the early years of program, 78, 81, 84 on that graph.

So that's what that represents.

You can see where we are.

The yellow line is the gather numbers.

So you can see that where -- since the beginning of the program, where the highlight -- where we have met numbers and we are currently in 2014 towards the bottom of that scale, as far as the numbers being removed.

So we -- as Dean mentioned yesterday our -- next slide, please.

The 3500 is our target number for gathers right now.

That our budget limitation.

That reflects numbers that have been adopted, plus the numbers that are reduced in holding from mortality, et cetera.

You see 35 is the number that we are targeting as an annual gather target for numbers that we can move from the range.

And in reflection, it's a \$7,000 to -- it's a \$7,000 to \$10,000 animal recruitment.

We are half of what recruitment is going on on the range.

'16 gather priorities, just to cover those real fast, public health and safety is always going to be at the top per the act, public land -- excuse me, private land issues where horses are on private land and requests to remove, it will be a high issue.

Research, court orders, land and health emergencies and another one that's not there, that could be there is threatened endangered species where horses are affecting a species, either Flora or fauna.

And then the greater sage-grouse focal areas which we will get to in just a minute to describe those.

So here's the FY '16 gather schedule as of this spring.

As Paul mentioned Sinbad is ongoing.

There was an effort to bait and water trap burros part of the sentinel study that was going on.

They were able to catch 125 or 126 and now they have gone to a helicopter gather to be able to catch their target numbers.

You can see a number of the HMAs that are scheduled coming up, Conger, Frisco, those are in Utah.

They are related to the gelding study with USGS.

Little Colorado, White Mountain, that's the mare study with USGS.

And acknowledge that Little Colorado and White Mountain are in sage-grouse habitat.

Blawn Wash, that was related to litigation on public school lands in Utah.

So that's kind of what the outlook is for coming this summer.

So here if you remember last -- I spoke a little bit about the ongoing sage-grouse management effort.

This is a map that shows there was 13 -- I believe 13 land use plan amendments or revisions that addressed habitat management.

Obviously not all that -- it's hard to see by the map, but not all -- all the HMAs are there.

It's kind of hard to see but we have a number of HMAs that are in all three habitat categories.

Sagebrush focal area is the highest priority.

It's actually a component of priority habitat, which is obviously a word that identifies the necessity of the habitat.

These are the highest values and highest importance to conserve and the highest level of management efforts have been determined to put into those areas.

In regards to wild horses and burros, all of those revisions, all essentially said that we will manage at AML in habitat and that we will adjust AML if horses or burros are determined to be causal factors for non-attainment of grouse.

So the next slide.

So as mentioned before, here -- here are the breakdown we have 22 -- in the west, of course, 22 HMAs are in sagebrush focal area which again is the highest priority for the Bureau in terms of grouse habitat.

Approximately 2 million acres and currently that's -- this is based off the '15 -- not gathered but population estimate and so you can see we have a lot of HMAs both in the focal area, the priority habitat, the general habitat, a lot of acres and a lot of animals.

So our -- our direction is to prioritize our gather strategy according to those priorities that you see, starting with the focal areas.

That's been the Bureau's direction is that we will start our trying to obtain AML in habitat in that priority.

So we have -- so the program was asked to derive a five-year program strategy in regards to grouse and so this is the five-year strategy that we put together.

There is a typo under the first FY '16, Utah does not have any focal area.

So that's a typo.

But Oregon, Beaty Butte was the gather you heard mentioned that was conducted in -- in October or November of last year.

That was FY '16's first gather and focal area.

White Mountain and Little Colorado those are the HMA for the mare studies.

They are to occur this summer.

Then as we -- as we can follow, the following five years out there, you can see where we are planning on going.

Now FY '17, divide base and salt wells, that is the court-ordered gathers that Wyoming and court decree they call, it that as a court ordered.

It's a priority gather for the Bureau because of that court order agree.

And so you can kind of reflect those numbers on the right column do show adjusted numbers by year.

In Hawaii, the red desert, that would be the FY '18 estimate for that complex.

So that's as far out as we have got planned.

So there's five year strategy to get to AML in 22 HMAs in regards no cross-habitat.

As you saw previous, we had 66 in priority habitat and 18 that have general habitat and what I mean by that is the highest level of habitat in the HMAs falls into that category.

If it has priority habitat, it's probably high likely, it will have general habitat.

So that number reflects those HMAs that just have priority and general and if it says general, it doesn't have any other category in it.

So this table shows this is -- it's an example, and I will apologize right now because I should have for you what the AMLs are in those different categories and it's on desk.

I apologize, I don't have it with me.

The 2015 column reflects the number of animals that are over AML.

So if you look at this, based on a 17.5%, as an example, of what growth would look like without any management.

We are not going to do any gathers and if -- if it's feasible, we would do PZP, but -- so this will show what the habitat or what the HMAs will do in habitat.

The growth that will occur over the next five years, if you look at the priority habitat as an example.

Right now there's 27,000 horses over AML and then by 2019, you will look at 52,000s over AML, again with no management, that's what the growth would look like.

So it gives you kind of an idea of where we -- where we are with has been that the management and how far that we would have to go to build and meet the objectives that we have been given as far as the management of AML.

So the next one is -- I wanted to mention, the board will remember the last time I talked about the Bi-State population.

Now the Bi-State is a distinct population.

It is a distinct subspecies of sage-grouse, and it exists in Nevada and in California.

It's Carson City area and south into California, Bridgeport.

So it is a -- as well as the greater sage-grouse effort, it is a Forest Service and BLM management plan, management effort for this Bi-State population.

In regards to BLM, there are five HMAs and they have a different -- it was a different planning strategy.

So they have a different definition of habitat.

So distinct population segments is what they are calling.

It's the same as priority habitat.

So they have -- BLM has identified five HMAs and currently there's 922 population over AML.

And then the pine nuts, if you heard that HMA, pine nuts is the highest priority HMAs that they will want to do management action on, because of its -- its relevance to the habitat.

This one is a lot more sensitive.

Fish and Wildlife Services has determined that they will not list the bird there, because -- and it was a distinct decision to this bird because of the huge conservation

effort that was going on.

It says the ROD was issued in 2015.

That's incorrect, it has not been issued, but it's expected to be issued this spring, if not early summer.

So I will also mention -- you don't have to go back, but there's two wild horse territories with the Forest Service that are in that management planning unit.

So just touch base real quick, there's -- and your hand book or your binder does have a very good description of the litigation.

Some of it is old.

Some of it is new.

It's been ongoing.

I mean, it's been around a while, and there's been -- the court has made decisions that they are being appealed, et cetera.

And you can see a highlight reel of what those cases look like.

There's a prescribed fire appeal, fertility control, non- -- six cases of alleged violation of the act and then seven cases of failure to remove excess wild horses.

Which is one of those was the -- the Utah case where I mentioned that there's 150 head removal planned for Blawn Wash and that's one of those seven appeals.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: Do you have any idea how many of those litigates under the equal access to justice act?

>> BRYAN FUELL: Okay it again.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: Under the equal access to justice act, do you know how many of those are being litigated under its provisions?

>> BRYAN FUELL: No, I wouldn't.

They are broad scale.

They are in IBLA, and there's that -- a lot of them under federal court, but, no, I don't know the answer to that.

That's what I have.

Any questions about on range?

>> FRED WOEHLE: Brian, you mentioned Fallon a little bit earlier, the corrals at Fallon.

>> BRYAN FUELL: Yes.

>> FRED WOEHLE: Is that a closed operation or adopt horses out of it?

>> BRYAN FUELL: Well, currently we offer tours.

I think they are semi annually, twice a year and there is an option to identify animals.

They don't adopt there.

Our offer is that if you see something you are interested in, we can transport it to Palomino Valley which is just not a huge long way and then that's really where the adoption facility is for access and adoption.

>> FRED WOEHLE: How often is that used, that method right there?

The reason why I asked, I have been asked by several folks that would like to get -- adopt a horse out of Fallon and they seem to be having problems doing that and I really hate to get into individual cases, but --

>> BRYAN FUELL: I apologize, John Neil, the manager there, would have to answer that question.

We have had some -- and also the contract is limiting.

So we are looking at changing things and try to offer more opportunity to have visitors at Fallon.

I don't foresee that it may change, that it might be an adoption facility but more opportunity to see animals.

We can move them to Palomino valley and that's a lot easier.

The public access is really good.

>> FRED WOEHLE: The more horses we can get people to see, the more opportunity we might get them out of short-term holding.

Anybody else have any questions for Bryan?

Well, Bryan on behalf of the Board, I really appreciate working as close with you as we have over the year.

I understand that will probably be your last BLM board meeting with us, and I, for one, will miss you, because I have always valued your input.

You have been honest and straight and you will be missed.

>> BRYAN FUELL: Oh, thank you.

(Applause).

>> FRED WOEHLE: Steven, you waited too long.

For you only, since you are one of my very special board members, I will let you ask a question.

>> STEVEN YARDLEY: I think they are all pretty special.

I do have a question.

You know, you look at the numbers.

You look at the graph of the numbers, the amount that are to be taken off is lower than it's ever been and it's beyond the ranges to become higher than it's ever been this year.

And what do you anticipate the range trends to be consequently because of that as we continue to follow this trend of decreased gathers and horses increasing at an ever quicker rate?

>> BRYAN FUELL: You are asking me my opinion what the range conditions are doing and we'll --

>> STEVEN YARDLEY: What will be the increase in numbers and the decrease in take off?

>> BRYAN FUELL: Well, I can -- I have not collected that data to say, you know, at the field level, please share with us what 9HMA looks like.

I have been a field manager and let me tell you what I know is that currently with our numbers on range, we -- we are far exceeding the capacity of the range without anything else being there.

I mean livestock, wildlife, that's kind of the big picture.

The HMAs that are 5, 10 times over AML.

They are -- they are utilizing the range beyond its capacity.

So ultimately, as a range manager, you have to understand that there's got to be a downward trend going on.

We have seen a number of states that have said that they are seeing animals that are escaping, if you will or leaving the HMA.

So they are in non-designated management areas which is now a concern to the range users in these allotments that are not designated for wild horses.

So we have seen permittees that have taken voluntary nonuse because of the lack of forage and then also in states like Nevada we have seen a huge drought which is a huge influence.

So across the board, it's getting -- getting tight.

You know, that's what I would say.

And the outlook is -- is -- could be bad.

I mean, you know, the range only supports so much.

It's not unlimited in forage.

Ultimately, you will see undulates to undesirable.

We have seen that.

We have seen not only horses but horses eating sagebrush which is not normally something they would do, as an example.

So I would say -- yeah.

>> STEVEN YARDLEY: Thank you.

>> BEN MASTERS: What if there was just an absolutely terrible drought, you know.

In the description that you just provided, is there a crisis plan or an emergency plan on a level where, you know, there was thousands of horses that had their health jeopardized?

>> BRYAN FUELL: The answer is those drought management plans are being written

and driven at the field level, and so, yes, they exist.

Do we have a master plan for the horse program?

But horses are included in those drought plans.

As to what actions, you know, what possible scenarios and actions will be taken.

>> FRED WOEHL: Everybody good?

All right, thank you, Bryan.

Ms. Kathie, I would like to point out to you that we are on time.

>> BRYAN FUELL: I did my part.

>> FRED WOEHL: You did your part.

Ms. Holle' Hooks will be talking to us next.

>> HOLLE' HOOKS: Good morning, Board.

So this morning, I will be talking to you about the off range branch.

In your books, more or less for the benefit of the new board members, we have added a fact street.

So you would have an idea on what the on range and off branch range does.

So since our last off range or our last advisory board meeting, and the off range report, I wanted to bring you up to date.

As far as the number of wild horses on off range pastures we have a little over 30,000.

In corrals, over 15,000.

And in eco-sanctuaries over 534 so it's a total of animals that under off-range holding about 57,000 -- I'm sorry, 46,000.

46,000 animals.

Eco-sanctuaries are something that we talked about in September and I informed you all that we were looking at doing some welcoming summer tourists this season or coming up this spring and then summer and developing an education and adoption components along with those eco-sanctuaries and we are on schedule with doing that.

Some of the things that -- or one of the activities that Kali mentioned earlier was the eco-sanctuaries too which will include a mustang marathon which is attached to America's Mustang campaign.

So the relationship with the eco-sanctuaries, it's cooperative agreements, it's fairly successful and we are able to communicate with those members pretty frequently and it's really positive.

Right now, we have a total capacity at eco-sanctuaries of 600 horses.

And we have two eco-sanctuaries located in Wyoming, and one in Oklahoma.

All three of them are near full and, again, open.

Existing off range pastures we have talked about.

Last year, we had an award -- a solicitation that closed and of that, we were making three awards from the overall 12 off range pasture proposals we received last spring.

It will give us about 900 new spaces.

We are still in the process of awarding them, but we are expected to have them open and ready to go in October of 2016.

So with the existing off range pastures, and our new awards that are being made, it will bring us to a total of 28 off range pasture facilities.

You can definitely look in your facility information.

I'm not sure what tab it's under.

Maybe seven.

That kind of gives you a list of off range pastures and corrals.

With not only the capacity but also the current inventory as of March.

We have a new off range pasture solicitation that opened on March 10th and we'll be closing on April 29th and that particular off range pasture solicitation was opened a little wider than before and we also changed the minimum to 200 and maximum capacity to 5,000.

So far, the states we excluded areas west of the Cascade Mountains, of course but we did open it up to a few new states which is exciting.

We received an overwhelming response and have already put together the TPAC that will be the committee to review those proposals once in and we hope to make an award within six months.

That's kind of our hope.

But the overwhelming response that I mentioned was due to the increase in outreach efforts that were made.

And a lot of them were based on off-range pastures, press release distribution and previous paid advertisements for the adoption program and various media platforms that use the advertising opportunity as well.

So we had radio and eblast and social media and just really ramped up that -- those outreach efforts.

>> FRED WOEHL: Holle', could you go in just a little bit on why it takes so long to do -- to award one of these contracts?

That was a topic we talked about last night is the length of time from closing to awarding.

>> HOLLE' HOOKS: That's a great question.

So last September when we took our tour to one of the new off-range pasture facilities we provided a list of the process it takes from the very time that we open the solicitation, all the way until we close it.

And there are several steps involved.

Once the proposals are received, they are reviewed.

Once they are reviewed and rated, then the team normally does site visits.

The site visits are, of course, in conjunction to the staff's additional duties.

Kind of an additional duty.

So we are trying to find a good time to go out on everyone's schedule and go and make the site visits and once the site visits are completed, then the recommendations come in, the contracting officers then start reviewing and negotiating pricing and then there's also NEPA that needs to be conducted normally, and then that also takes that time.

And then once all of those things are completed we make an award.

That would have been for the last solicitation.

This current solicitation, we did make some changes in that process that we hope will shorten it, but it's not going to be huge amount of time, maybe by 90 days or so, but it's just a process that we do hope to shorten as we go through.

We've gotten some guidance and direction from Director Kornze to make sure we do so that we are streamlining this process and shortening it as much as possible.

>> FRED WOEHL: Thank you, Holle'.

>> STEVEN YARDLEY: And how long is the typical grazing contract for?

>> HOLLE' HOOKS: We have authority, based in appropriations language to enter into multiyear contracts, cooperative agreements or contracts up to ten years, I believe.

So it's up to the contractors themselves, as to whether or not they would enter into a five year or a ten year and that's usually done at negotiation time.

>> FRED WOEHL: June in.

>> JUNE SEWING: We made that tour last year.

One of the things that the contractor mentioned was not the time from, you know, when -- for the award, but the complication of having to fill out the application.

He said, he actually had to hire somebody to fill out the application it was so involved.

>> HOLLE' HOOKS: That's actually correct.

And what we have done this year, Debbie made a huge effort and was able to find an organization and I could ask Debbie or you can holler back and ask Debbie, the name of the organization.

But they are an organization that are federally funded in some kind of way and they provide assistance in completing these proposals, which is really nice because the names of individuals and other businesses that do help people out, they charge quite a bit of money, I heard \$10,000 to \$15,000.

It depends on how it works out.

So this organization has been extremely helpful and on our call last week, Debbie mentioned that they had received phone calls from interested individuals.

So I hope that's going to be helpful.

>> FRED WOEHL: Debbie Collins?

Do you hear Ms. June asked a question.

And --

>> HOLLE' HOOKS: The name of the organization.

(Off microphone comment).

>> FRED WOEHL: Is there any way you can furnish us Board members with that information --

>> DEBBIE COLLINS: Sure.

Whoa!

It's on our website.

I'm sorry.

I was doing some other work.

I'm sorry.

It's on our web page.

I can see if we can grab a copy of that, otherwise, I can email it to you.

>> FRED WOEHL: Email it to us.

That would be fine.

>> DEBBIE COLLINS: Okay.

And we do know on our other solicitation that Holle' will talk about, we already know of one applicant that asked -- notified us that they were actually using the service.

And through 9NRCS folks, the national conservation folks, a lot of them are being very helpful to people that are applying to help them determine their stocking capacity.

So we have done a lot to try and, you know, help guide people into ways that will hopefully minimize any costs they may have to incur to produce these.

>> FRED WOEHL: Thank you, Debbie.

>> HOLLE' HOOKS: Debbie was being modest.

She did a huge outreach effort.

We want to outreach to the media outlets and she mentioned NRCS and other organizations that would be supportive in trying to assist us with finding interested individuals that would want to do business with the government as far as off range pastures.

So it was a huge effort.

>> FRED WOEHL: All right.

>> Can you speak to how difficult it is after a five or ten year contract ends for it to be renewed?

>> HOLLE' HOOKS: It actually is not, for the most part.

Once we have contracts that are going to be ending their term, we usually know that ahead of time.

If it's just through the five or ten years, then we would do another solicitation, and the applicants or the current contractors could rebid or not.

If they don't, then, of course, we would have to move those animals and find somewhere else for them to go.

If they are interested in rebid, they simply go through the process again.

>> BEN MASTERS: If there is a severe drought in one of those long-term pastures and the long-term pasture becomes unusable for grazing is there -- you know, what would happen then?

>> HOLLE' HOOKS: So two things.

One we did have a situation where we had an off range pasture contractor that experienced more drought than anticipated and he was able to provide us with information that he, you know, maybe supplement -- supplementally fit longer than he anticipated and would have allowed for the contract and requested some additional funding.

That's something we would review.

That goes through the core water specialist.

And if it was so damage, that -- beyond repair and that they just couldn't afford it and they needed to close down or us to come and get the animals then we would also do that.

Okay.

Any other questions?

All right.

Thank you.

This is just an example and I'm not sure how well everyone can see it, but you all should have it in your books there, this is an example of one of the ads that they pulled together.

Very nice ad.

We have gotten a lot of response from it.

It was placed in various publications, eblasts and also on the web.

So I actually forgot to ask Dean if this was super final yet, but I will move on and just talk about it.

We had this conversation before regarding the change in the shade and shelter requirements for adopters.

Policy was drafted and was signed and is in the process of being finalized, if not already, and it changes what the current requirement is from -- from having each state kind of had its own idea of what the shade or the shelter was and it was information that was in our old brochure.

Our new brochure and our new policy effective immediately is this and it's based out of our code will federal regulations, just that shelter should be available to mitigate the effects of inclement weather and temperature extremes and authorized officer may require that that shelter be a structure and identify what that should be.

So once the item is finalized, we will start working towards a manual and handbook revision as well, which is kind of a lengthy process.

Yes, Dean.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: So yes, the instruction memorandum indicating these

requirements has been signed as of Monday, and it is policy.

>> HOLLE' HOOKS: That is exciting.

It was a long haul.

Thank you, Dean.

This is a list.

This is the attachment that's in this policy and also will be what is provided in some form to adopters when they are coming to adopt animals.

We are working with the new brochure, development.

So this will be included and it identifies per state what the minimum requirement would be.

And of course the adopters and public can call the state with additional questions that they may have, but this is the way we are moving forward.

Okay.

Moving on.

Placement of animals in private care.

So you notice that the very first bullet talks about a team that I mentioned in September that was being developed, and the team was being developed to address adoptions and trainings and sale programs to review the various inconsistencies and issues and challenges that may exist within the process that we currently have to place animals into private care.

The team is essential to reaching down into the program and implementing significant changes, as well as wild horse and burro manual and handbook revisions.

That's probably the thing that will have to take place, definitely there will be some policy changes just so that in you adopt an animal in California, you can also go to Maine and adopt an animal and have the same requirements, the same opportunities across the board.

That's the hope.

>> FRED WOEHL: Holle'.

Concerning this, just -- I know that on the research committee, which is a very important committee the Board has a representative on that, is there any way that the Board could have a representative on this, just to add an outside input or --

>> HOLLE' HOOKS: Absolutely.

>> FRED WOEHL: Okay.

>> HOLLE' HOOKS: Absolutely.

And I don't know if it fits within the current working group that already exists, the BLM working group and I'm not sure -- I don't know if I have my copy of what that is in here, so if not, we can definitely add a Board member.

>> FRED WOEHL: All right.

Thank you.

>> HOLLE' HOOKS: No problem.

The adoption incentives, of course, the program is considering an adoption incentive program.

To increase the number of wild horses, maybe seven or older and burros nine and older that are placed into private care.

So there's a lot of discussion about this, how do we incentivize adoptions and how do we incentivize people to take more animals and keep them, basically.

So I don't know how far we want to talk about this, Dean, because I don't know what is really final.

I know that this is one of the -- one of the questions that we asked B Wade who is a wild horse specialist, and is basically the person who manages the inventory, the number of animals at the facilities.

She ran a report that I believe is also in your book under tab 7.

And it's entitled adoption age by species from 2011 to 2015.

So it would list all of the animals and ages in corrals, basically.

Just to give you an idea of the most -- the number of animals that we have at certain ages that would be available for adoption which is kind of where we came up with animals -- the animals would need assistance over 7, and burros over 9.

But in theory, the program believes that it may encourage adopters to train their animal, to a specified level and then apply for a title and ownership in the 12 month period.

That may be part of the incentive program.

The assistance might include offering the set payment or looking at training milestones.

I think that it's going to be pretty limitless in a sense regarding what the requirements would be under this particular incentive program.

We've had lots of discussion, not only with the Board, but also with solicitors and our procurement staff, to figure out exactly how this could take place.

And so we are still in discussion about it.

>> FRED WOEHL: One of the things that the Board has talked about, is this an incentive.

We have been very active in this and is this an outreach or an outbreak of what we have talked about, simply put, someone adopts a horse, they bring in back in a year's time, if it can perform, A, B and C, they get a title and a check?

>> HOLLE' HOOKS: Yes.

Yes.

It's a form of that, within the government limitations, basically.

We discussed the possibility of engaging partnerships that would be interested in working with their own constituents, their body of people, that would be interested in adopting an animal or they say, hey, if you adopt an animal to this train, let us train this animal to this particular level and stay with you and be helpful to you.

It's just a lot of a little bit of room.

I think we are finding out what will be the most effective.

>> FRED WOEHL: Okay.

>> HOLLE' HOOKS: And it doesn't mean that one size fits all.

Or perhaps there may be different incentive programs within there.

>> FRED WOEHL: That's one thing that I -- I really appreciate the last three or four

board meetings we have been at, is that new ideas, new approaches are being embraced and that's what we have to do.

You know?

That's what we to do are these brand new ideas.

I applaud you and your team for as much as you have done.

>> HOLLE' HOOKS: Thank you.

The only thing that is constant is change, right?

Okay.

If there's any other questions.

We can move on?

Yep.

Okay.

We're looking at increasing efforts to offer more trained animals.

So eligible programs is always what we want to encourage.

We are taking a number of steps to increase adoptions, including building on successful partnerships, that facilitate adoptions and increase the number of trains animals that would be available for adoption.

In addition to that, BLM is in constant conversation with a -- with several different organizations, to develop additional partnerships that include therapeutic programs.

Some of those -- one of the conversations is if they are interested in purchasing the animals, then there will be eligible animals provided to that particular organization, or if they are interested in acquiring animals from facilities, working them through their program or having the adoption component.

There's a lot of different discussion about it, but we continue to be in discussion and reach out and increase the number of partnerships that we have.

>> BEN MASTERS: I would like to make a statement here that one of the barriers of consumers wanting to purchase a horse or even adopt a horse is the paperwork required in the adoption process, and -- I know, the government can sometimes be

difficult to deal with.

>> HOLLE' HOOKS: I'm not difficult, Ben.

>> BEN MASTERS: I have struggled getting paperwork -- adoption paperwork in the past, and I think with good organizations like Kali's with the Mustang Heritage Foundation, I think they would be more successful at getting horses into private care if those horses didn't have all of that paperwork attached to it.

Just an observation.

>> HOLLE' HOOKS: To paperwork, you mean the adoption paperwork.

>> BEN MASTERS: Yes, the adoption and then at the end of 12 months they have to go through a test.

And then the mentality of, I'm getting this horse but it's not my horse.

>> HOLLE' HOOKS: Right.

That is true.

We do have a requirement, though as the government -- and we should, to ensure that the animals are going to go to homes that they have the required facilities, that they understand what to feed the animal, and there's enough space and whether or not they are going to move the animal or not.

There's a lot of discussion that happens between the adopter and the wild horse and burro specialist in the particular state of jurisdiction or the 1-866-4-mustang.

Anyone who is informed about the program.

They know that there's a level of paperwork that's going to happen.

And even with the Mustang Heritage Foundation as helpful as they are to us, you know, when they adopt animals they do still abide by our requirements.

They are the adopters or trainers are still required to fill out the application and in a year, then they do have to apply for title, but they also begin to increase the number of sale eligible animals that they use in their programs and some of the Extreme Mustang Makeover.

So that's new.

I believe that started this year.

So that also takes away from the adoption application, but people who are interested in purchasing animals still do complete an initial application.

They still -- they still verify that they have the required facilities and they still say I don't have any bad intentions on this animal and they complete this form and sign it.

Even though they walk away with a bill of sale that day, it still is under the impression with the BLM that they have every good intention with that horse.

So I understand what you mean.

>> FRED WOEHL: One of the -- the Board has talked about this an awful lot.

We have several new board members.

Would you mind going into what it would take to reduce that year period of time, that they don't own that horse and they have to apply for a title?

>> HOLLE' HOOKS: To reduce the year?

>> FRED WOEHL: Would you mind going in what it would take to get that done?

>> HOLLE' HOOKS: Legislatively you mean?

>> FRED WOEHL: What action BLM would have to do and you will the steps they have to do to get that reduced.

>> HOLLE' HOOKS: I think we are talking about legislative authority at this point.

So because it's one of the requirements and part of the law that we do have to -- that the adopter has to keep the animal for 12 months, we would have to make this request.

It's not something that BLM themselves can make a decision and reduce that number from a year down to, you know, six months.

And I believe once upon a time, we put in a legislative authority change to, I think one of our budget processes to reduce it or provide immediate title and we did not get approval to do so.

But we did ask the question, and I don't know if we'll ever get that authority, and that may be more of a question for Dean or Kristen if they are willing to go back and request the question again.

For the most part, what we have is the sale option and we have requirements on

whether or not an animal is eligible for sale, but as far as titling --

>> FRED WOEHL: One thing I would like to point out, though, it's not hardly any different to adopt a horse as it is to adopt a cat or a dog.

The paperwork still has to be filled out.

Checks have to be made and it's still -- it's pretty tough to adopt a dog and a cat in some places.

>> HOLLE' HOOKS: That initial.

And I guess what is different is the 12 months.

>> FRED WOEHL: The 12 months.

>> HOLLE' HOOKS: That's where the difference comes in.

But what I used to tell adopters when I was out in the field and they said, oh, I don't want the federal government in my business for a year.

I would explain to them, it's possible that I'm the person that gets to come out to your house and take a look at you and the animal and make sure that you all are doing okay, that the animal is still healthy and being maintained.

Sometimes it made people feel better, because they wanted me to come visit them, but sometimes they kind of stuck with that point, is that if I adopt this animal, it should be my animal.

I should be able to do whatever I want to do more of a livestock, I guess, perception to it, is that, I -- I buy and trade horses all the time and I really don't think that it's fair that this is any different.

>> FRED WOEHL: Right.

Steven?

>> STEVEN YARDLEY: There's been a little discussion on the Board, we talked about, you know, when you consider over the life of the horse, spending 48 to \$50,000 in a long-term holding facility, versus --

>> HOLLE' HOOKS: In a corral.

>> STEVEN YARDLEY: Versus getting it adopted out.

What would be the process you would have to go about if you wanted to drop the amount, say, even from the 125 down significantly like 10, 15 or maybe give the animal away to be adopted, rather than charging the person -- I know that there is a little revenue that's brought in, but when you consider the opportunity costs that's considered in keeping that animal, versus getting it out, it's a drop in the bucket.

So what would be that process?

>> HOLLE' HOOKS: I think you are asking about reductions in adoption fees.

>> STEVEN YARDLEY: Yes.

>> HOLLE' HOOKS: We do have the authority to do so and do at different times at different events for different reasons.

There is -- and I'm not sure if it's policy, but I do know that the AD has authority to do so, and that authority can be delegated down to state directors.

And so a lot of times if you are at an adoption event, you can reduce the adoption fee from \$125 to \$25 for animals that maybe it's their second adoption or certain age limits and different states have different reasons why they reduce that fee.

Eastern states and Karlee can definitely speak to it, they a lot of times used to have a buddy system.

Could you adopt one horse and the second horse could you adopt for \$25, because you are taking two home.

I don't know that they still do that, but I know of a couple --

>> FRED WOEHL: They do.

>> HOLLE' HOOKS: So there are different reasons that fees can be reduced, \$125, even if that's an adoption fee flat research advisory team, it barely pays for the shipping costs.

It definitely didn't pay for the off-range corral expenses that we would pay in any one year.

>> FRED WOEHL: Holle', you have been involved in this adoption program for a long time and Steven is new and trying to feel his way through some of this, but one of the things that members of board have indicated is that -- do you think that dropping the fee would increase adoptions?

>> HOLLE' HOOKS: No.

No.

I think if you are a person who -- and we have seen this time and time again, if you are coming to the adoption to adopt an animal, you will adopt an animal whether it's \$25 or \$125.

>> FRED WOEHL: But the fact that you can adopt a second or at least in the Eastern States drop it to \$25 for a buddy horse, that does increase adoptions.

>> HOLLE' HOOKS: Yes.

Yes, Eastern States they did a report back in 2007, and I remember that report was very clear that it did show a difference in whether or not that person took one or two animals.

That did make a difference.

>> FRED WOEHL: I can remember when I was at an adoption.

If you are going to have that horse by himself, get another horse and it will make it a lot easier.

We moved a lot of horses that way.

>> HOLLE' HOOKS: Perfect.

>> FRED WOEHL: Follow-up, Steve?

>> STEVEN YARDLEY: No comment.

>> FRED WOEHL: Ginger, do you have a question.

>> GINGER KATHRENS: I don't have a question.

I have a statement is that okay?

>> FRED WOEHL: Yes, ma'am.

>> GINGER KATHRENS: Over the years that I have been attending these meetings since 1990, the buy one get one free aspect was discussed or the buddy program and so forth and devaluing the horse and then we have the beautiful campaigns about the America's mustangs and how wonderful they are and better than any quarter horse.

We have to be consistent in our marketing message and the buy one get one free days, I think are long gone if we intend to market these horses to truly cap able, wonderful,

long-term care in the homes of people like me.

I'm an adopter.

And we also maintain some sale authority of horses as well.

I didn't find the process overburdensome at all.

I think if you want to buy a living legend and it takes you a half hour to fill out your paperwork, I don't think that's too much to ask.

>> FRED WOEHL: Good point.

>> HOLLE' HOOKS: Thank you.

Follow-up, Steven.

>> STEVEN YARDLEY: Yeah, I would like to touch on this, because I know how much Ginger cares about the welfare of horses and horse health and horse herds, you know, I have worked with horses, horses are a lot more content when they have a companion animal with them and that gives that person an opportunity maybe to have a companion animal for that horse.

And it also helps to free the system of excess horses within their system, allowing the money, the taxpayer money to be funded into other projects such as was mentioned by June on improvement projects and other places where fortunately because of lack of finances currently we are unable to do so.

That's just a comment.

>> HOLLE' HOOKS: Absolutely.

We can reduce holding costs or at least sustain them, not increase them, then, yes, it would free up other money in the budget to do other critical operations that need to take place.

But the question is: And I won't get into it too much because it's not off range.

If behavior remove animals from the range, which is totally necessary and needed at different points in time, in different HMAs, then they need somewhere to go.

And that means that they would come into holding and that's either corrals or in pastures and in order to bring in additional animals, it's going to cost additional money.

So that's a reality and I think Dean mentioned it yesterday that right now we are looking

at 3500 being our number, our set number of removals because it's what we believe is moved out of the corrals and pasture system in a year, through adoption and mortality or sales.

>> FRED WOEHL: Good deal.

Thank you.

>> HOLLE' HOOKS: Yes.

Sorry about that.

Okay.

>> FRED WOEHL: Train horses.

>> HOLLE' HOOKS: I'm sorry?

>> FRED WOEHL: I think you were fixing to talk about demand for trained horses.

>> HOLLE' HOOKS: Training horses.

The demand for trained animals east of the Mississippi is one of the things that has been talked about over the last year, more than I think I have ever heard.

And whether or not animals are being -- whether or not there are animals in the eastern states, where people could pick them up if there's an increased number of TIP trainers out there.

If there's any ability for trained animals, it's very slim.

So one of the things that has been looked at is that we realize that trained horses and burros are in greater demand, and they are more likely to be placed into the private care than untrained animals.

And based on that thought, we looked at what are some of the barriers to expand those trainer networks and some of them is for the need for basic and specialty trainers whether or not those trainers have the experience that would be needed in the Eastern States or whether or not there's enough money for the experienced trainers who would be more than comfortable working with the wild horse, if that's something that they could afford to do or if they were convenient locations for them to pick up these animals besides someone in Massachusetts having to drive all the way to Pauls Valley to pick up a horse, that's quite the haul and maybe not something that they would be able to do.

So based on all of these things, we put together an RFI, which is a request for

information, and we went through several different scenarios and lots of different questions that were asked, and posted and we received a lot of requests from interested adopters that we saw that there was this huge demand and interest to have more animals out in the East.

We talked about what would be existing trainer stipends and what would you charge in order to do different levels of training.

How much would it cost maybe to feed and care.

Are you interested in these things.

And based on the overwhelming response, we began to develop this TAPP program, the trainer ambassador pilot program and it's one that I'm sure you guys have heard of.

I know you have been talking about it a lot on the monthly board calls.

It's a two-Tiered program that has an ambassador trainer level and the specialty ambassador training level.

So those two tiers.

One of the things we looked at with this pilot or new initiative is that we wanted to establish a new incentive or a new training incentive for people who are experienced and would be willing to work with untrained mustangs and that they would be able to promote and place mustangs into private care, whether that's through adoptions or sales, so the TAPP is for trainers to market the mustangs and find other people independently and increase the program's outreach and reach markets that we potentially can't reach, based on we don't have an adoption event in that location, or if we do have an adoption event we will be offering trained animals at that particular location.

They will be working and experienced with mustangs and that they would be held to a certain level of basic training and there's a list of deliverables that I think you have already seen.

It goes through what some of those deliverables are, whether or not the animal can be approached, if it can safely load and there are a series of other options.

So based on that foundation trainer level, we have issued a solicitation for that -- for that training tier.

And that solicitation closes -- I believe we extended it to April 29th.

I will have to double check and see.

>> FRED WOEHL: Is there a train the owner component to that?

>> HOLLE' HOOKS: Train the owner?

Prior to the -- once the animal is adopted?

>> FRED WOEHL: Yes.

Or during.

Okay.

>> HOLLE' HOOKS: Yes.

>> FRED WOEHL: That's one the issues that I had a few problems with because just because I can do x, y, z with the horse don't mean you can do that same thing with the horse, depending on your background and training too and we want this to be successful.

>> HOLLE' HOOKS: The team was extremely receptive to that.

We had some trouble figuring out how to word it in the contract.

But we had some concerns about exactly how we wanted to say it.

How can we have this person continue to communicate, and what if they are states away, 45 states away and really can't see each other or whatever.

We did -- it's a great team that is has been put together, consisting of the Deo Chang who has been with the National Park Service and Debbie Collins and Joe Flora and Karlee Yurek and several members of this team worked through the statement of work, incorporating the recommendations that the board made, as well as additional feedback from some of the state leads that reviewed it, and so it was a really good discussion.

So what we have done is -- I'm just going to skip through it because I already talked about the RFI but the TAPP opportunity is available in 31 states and we looked at -- we looked at how long we should have this little station open and originally it was closing on April 22nd but we had such an overwhelming response to it with people asking lots of different questions, Debbie increased her outreach efforts as well.

They were pretty consistent with what she did for the pastures but it also sent it out through some of the partnerships which was a little by different because these partnerships are people who either adopted animals or worked with animals and not so much people who are housing animals.

So based on the outreach effort and increase and overwhelming response, we did extend the solicitation and now it closes on May 6th.

So our hope is to be able to award this solicitation and have, I don't know, 10 trainers.

We have 10 good proposals, I will be extremely happy award those particular contracts.

We hope to get them awarded this fiscal year.

>> FRED WOEHL: Outstanding.

>> HOLLE' HOOKS: And so as far as the second tier, we did -- we have started a discussion about developing a statement of work there.

Was a lot of solicitor review and questions about how it would work because we asked that the specialty trainer tier be ambassadors who take the animal that has been trained by the foundation level trainer and apply a certain specific discipline to that animal and train it to a discipline and then it participate in other events, and do some additional marketing.

So very excited about developing that statement of work and getting that solicitation out on the street here pretty soon.

So this next slide is an example of some of the publications and advertisements that Debbie did with her increased outreach effort which also included the press release distribution, and advertising in publications such as Horse Nation and radio, eblasts and social media.

Kathie is rushing me.

>> FRED WOEHL: She don't need to, because just FYI, we are going to break for lunch at 12:00, like we always do and we'll catch up in the afternoon.

I don't think the Board is going to use as much time discussing and all of that.

>> KATHIE LIBBY: I'm trying to -- I thought we were trying to get Jason in before lunch.

>> FRED WOEHL: No, Jason can wait until after lunch.

>> HOLLE' HOOKS: Jason said he only had two minutes worth of information.

>> FRED WOEHL: That's all he's got.

Jason talks a lot more than two minutes.

>> HOLLE' HOOKS: Yes, he does!

So this slide is a basic example of animals in private care and that's adoptions and sales over the last six years.

I just wanted to kind of show you what they look like.

They have been pretty consistent at about 2,000 animals.

A little more or less for adoptions.

And the sales have fluctuated quite a bit.

I didn't get a chance to ask Debbie exactly why she thought, you know, they were so low in 2014 or '13 and '14.

I'm not sure why they were that low.

There was not a big change in legislation in any kind of way.

We didn't get any different type of direction that says don't go and sell animals.

So that's just a snapshot of what they look like.

PS report, this is as of April 7th but it doesn't include animals that have been either repossessed or returned or reassigned.

These numbers are something that we are still working on for just consistency purposes.

When animals are adopted in any one year and they are returned or reassigned, it does change those numbers.

So it's a database issue that the program is working on.

Next slide.

Okay.

And this is -- this is the question.

But this is also a really good picture.

These are two geldings that are going to be available for adoption this weekend in Lufkin, Texas.

And so if you like them and you want more information, you can contact New Mexico Wild Horse and Burro Program.

They are currently at the Pauls Valley facility and they look very good!

Just a little plug.

>> FRED WOEHL: One of the things that -- I don't know if you know it or not, Holle', but you have four members of the board that have adopted mustangs and worked with them.

>> HOLLE' HOOKS: Oh, very nice.

>> BEN MASTERS: Four that have worked with them.

>> STEVEN YARDLEY: I grew up on a mustang.

>> HOLLE' HOOKS: We only want to give credit to those that adopted them.

One of the things I want to talk about that Bryan talked about and the Fallon facility.

They participate in Internet adoptions although they are not open to the public daily, they do have those two tours and they participate in every Internet adoption.

So that's --

>> FRED WOEHL: Really in.

>> HOLLE' HOOKS: Yes, they do.

I wanted to follow up on that.

>> FRED WOEHL: Well, help me a little bit understand that.

How do they pick the horses for the Internet adoption.

I hate to get into specifics but I would just like to know it, if you know.

>> HOLLE' HOOKS: So what I do know is that they have been receptive, if there are people who have been there and are interested in numbers, they do make an effort to have those animals placed on the Internet for -- and available for adoption, but other than that, as far as the workings, I would say it's probably however they are working the animals that particular time, what's -- what is going to be available.

I know they don't put the whole facility available for adoption, but I'm not sure that I know exactly what their process of elimination, who gets to go on at the adoption this month and who doesn't.

>> FRED WOEHL: But if you have a question, you can contact John Neil at Palomino valley.

Do you have any comments, Dean?

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: The crew that is out there are horsemen and they have an eye for a horse that would be successful with a new owner or adopter.

>> FRED WOEHL: I agree.

I agree.

Board, y'all look hungry!

>> HOLLE' HOOKS: I want to be scheduled before lunch all the time.

All right thank you.

>> FRED WOEHL: Thank you, Holle'.

Kathie, we are about five minutes before lunch.

Can we break early?

Do you think we can break early?

(off microphone comment).

>> FRED WOEHL: Come back 5 to 1:00.

Right.

Board, we're adjourned for lunch.

(Lunch break)

ROUGHLY EDITED TRANSCRIPT

BLM

Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board

April 14, 2016

1:00 p.m. PDT

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>> Hello, everybody.

As soon as the board is in their seats we're going to get started.

>> F. WOHL: Board, if we could all be here.

We're running late.

We're running late.

Steven?

>>> Welcome back.

We will reconvene, I guess would be the proper word to use, but we're just going to call back together, and before we go on to our next speaker, which will be Jason, and I don't see Jason in the room -- oh, there you are, Jason.

There you are!

You know, to put on an event of this size it takes a lot of different folks doing a lot of different things, and they have worked very hard.

Someone I forgot this morning was Jason over here.

Jason has worked extremely hard to make sure that everything went smooth on this meeting. Along with that, everybody in this room got coffee this morning provided by Lisa Clark and Georgeie Johnson except me.

They seem to have excluded me from the coffee this morning.

So I didn't have any.

But I trust everybody had a good cup of coffee this morning based on these two young ladies providing coffee.

>> I just got the last cup, by the way.

>> F. WOHL: Ben -- it's really good coffee.

Ben said he got the last coffee and it's really good.

That's what I was afraid of.

Cope got excluded, too.

Okay.

That's not very good for me.

Anyway.

All right.

Thank you all very much for coming back.

Jason, I appreciate your patience, because we got a little bit sidetracked -- not sidetracked, we just talked too much this morning, but we're yours now, my friend.

>> Okay.

What I'm going to talk to you guys about today is a new tool we have been working on for the past couple of months.

I presented sort of a development phase of it at the last board meeting but for the new board members and for the board members that were there half a year ago we have an update, an updated version, as you can see.

It's a more interactive version of this map.

What this is, this is -- we're calling it the wild horse and burro Webmap and it's really designed for us to visualize and display our data in a more interactive and user-friendly way so that when people want to find out information on a particular HMA or find an adoption location close to them, they can come to this tool.

I'll show you before we get into this what they have to do -- how we currently display our program information.

So, for example, on our website this is where we list all of our adoption events for the year.

You can see it's just in a table.

It's not terribly user-friendly, but it's there for people who want to find out.

We display this on our map I think in a more friendly way.

You can see here we release every year a PDF with many, many tables that display our population and other data related to our HMAs and HAs.

It's all here, but I'll show you how we're going to be displaying it in the tool.

And then we also have maps on our website for each state, and you can download and look at maps of our HMAs this way.

I just wanted to give you sort of an overview of the data I am going to be showing you how it's displayed now so you can sort of compare that to what we're doing with this new interactive mapping tool.

This tool will live on our website.

It was just sort of hot off the presses, just got completed and released for external users this week.

So we'll work next week on putting it up on our website and start rolling it out on our social media accounts.

Essentially what you can do with this map, there's several different uses, the first being if you want to find information on an HMA, you can come here and either search for the HMA or if you know where it's at you can browse and locate the HMA like Palomino buttes, for example, where the board was just at two days ago.

You click on the map, and it brings up some sort of high-level information first so you can see the name of the HMA, AML, horse population, the most recent estimates, which were March 1st, 2015 for now, and as well we've included the population as a proportion of the AML.

So you can see where the population is in relation to the AML.

We're going to start incorporating -- I should mention that this map, even though it's released for external users, it's still going to be a work in progress that we're continuously updating and adding features to.

For now, if you want to, for example, see pictures of the HMA or read a description of the HMA, we include a link in this sort of pop-up window here that takes you right to the page where you can find that on our current website.

So if you go click on that you can look at information of that HMA.

>> Awesome.

Jason, if I want to take a trip and look at some wild horses I can go to this and get a really good idea of how to get there and what I can expect to see when I get there --

>> That's what we're working to.

>> F. WOEHL: That's awesome.

>> Every HMA does not have a description yet on our website.

We fully intend to have those descriptions up by the time our new website launches.

So we're in the process of collecting that information right now but we do have a lot of descriptions for current HMAs on this map right now.

So there are other functions of this map.

So you can see here right now we're looking at the layer that shows all of our HMAs in black outlines.

You can do that, the same thing, for herd areas, if you just click a box.

It will populate the map with the herd areas.

And we have similar information -- if a -- since HAs aren't managed for horses or burros, there won't be an AML but we have population numbers in here.

We thought it was important to show horses and burros that are in HAs and not just HMAs because they do exist out there.

Some other helpful information this map provides, you can -- one of our main goals was to sort of show our population -- overpopulation in HMAs in relation to other data, for example, if I turn on this layer, you'll see we have the same HMAs as you've already seen before, but they're on a color ramp.

This is showing what the population is in relation to the AML as you can see we have the ramp here at the -- if it's yellow it's 101 to 300% over AML, orange, darker orange, red, so.

>> F. WOEHL: Jason, Steven has a question.

>> STEVEN YARDLEY: The difference between an HMA and HA, the HA aren't supposed to be horses on them at all but there are horses?

And so that's why there is no Appropriate Management Level incorporated with that because it would technically be zero, correct?

>> Correct.

>> STEVEN YARDLEY: Thank you.

>> So you can see -- this layer, this data, shows our HMAs in their population relation to their AML and we have incorporated other outside data, for example, the U.S. monitor, we can pull in data from their GIS database and it will populate on our map and you can sort of see where there's drought and where we have overpopulation in our HMA and compare the relationship between the two.

In addition we have a layer for wildland fires if there's a fire going on, or if there are many fires during fire season there will be more on here.

But you can sort of see how those are in relation to our HMAs.

>> F. WOEHL: I think I saw a minute ago a drought monitor.

>> Yes, the drought monitor is the layer currently active.

You can see the red, dark red, the orange and the yellow.

I think one of the coolest, most useful function of this map is going to be our adoption locator tool.

We have incorporated Zip code search with this map so you can actually come to this -- to our website load up this map, and instead of going to our adoption schedule and trying to find which one would be closest to you, you can go ahead and just put in a Zip code.

For example, if I put in Zip code near Reno, it will pull up not only our facilities that are nearby, our adoption facilities, so you can see Palomino Valley and northern Nevada correctional center in Carson city, but any off-site adoption events that we might be hosting within whatever radius of miles that you indicate in the search.

For example, this is 50 miles within that Zip code.

You can see we have Palomino Valley, we have northern Nevada correctional center an EMM coming up and several adoption events at the Carson city prison.

Of course, you can also browse for -- you can also browse for different adoption locations.

If you don't want to use a Zip code search you can actually just pan over and I'll show you in a second when this map loads up that the red stars are our off-site adoption events throughout the year and the black stars are adoption facilities.

For example, if you wanted to go to an adoption event, let's just take Cheyenne frontier days, for example, you click on the star, it brings up the event date, the address.

You can click on the website to get more information.

It will take you to the website.

Currently takes us to our adoption schedule but it will take you to our website for the -- that will give you directions and whatnot.

You can actually click the view details button and it will give you phone number and a flyer if there has been one developed yet, as well as indicating if this is an Internet -- a place where you can pick up an Internet -- a horse you've adopted over the Internet.

I think that's what I wanted to show with this map.

We've really built it to be sort of a one-stop shop.

I have showed you the tables that are currently how we display our information.

I think this is going to be a much more interactive to for people to learn about our HMAs, learn about the animals, find an adoption center near them, pick up an animal.

Like I said we're going to be continuously improving this, adding more features, unifying it more -- beautifying it, giving it a more visually appealing skin on it, and I think we're really excited with what we can do with this tool.

>> F. WOEHL: I know you have been working on this a couple years because I remember -- this is really interesting.

This is good.

This ought to do a really good job of spreading the information out there.

>> I think that the Zip code search itself is going to be really helpful tool for folks to use.

>> F. WOHL: Anybody on the board have any questions or comments?

>> I would make the find adoption locator possibly bigger or maybe stand out more to where whenever somebody is exploring a site, you know, because that's what we want them to do, is adopt, and make it come up very frequently.

If they are looking for it, it's just in your face, simple to find.

>> F. WOHL: You need to realize to echo that, that makes good sense, because a lot of times when I go to a website I'm not computer literate, I'm kind of illiterate, and so I have a hard time navigating through that stuff there.

If it's right there big and bold, you know --

>> We'll make it -- it will make it stand out for more, sure.

>> Thanks for all the hard work, Jason.

It looks like an excellent, excellent tool.

So thank you.

>> We're really thankful for our team -- we have a National Operations Center who has been spending lots of time getting this tested and getting all the technical behind the scenes data sorted out.

So it's in a group effort, and I think it's really going to turn out to be a nice product.

>> STEVEN YARDLEY: Thanks to all of you, then.

>> A quick question on the map, is it going to be cell phone compatible?

>> That's a good question.

I do not know the answer to that.

I will definitely find out.

I know our website -- BLM is going to be relaunching their website -- our website this year that's going to be mobile friendly.

And so it would stand to reason this should be mobile friendly as well.

>> Is it would also be interesting -- I don't know how much more work it would be, while they're compiling all the data, to possibly make an app for somebody driving through or wherever they are to pull up an HMA and see a little bit about it, just an idea.

>> Absolutely.

Good idea.

>> F. WOHL: Julie is afraid to say anything but she says she didn't see anything on there about sage-grouse.

>> That's a good point.

We're continuously looking to improve this.

We'll definitely look to see what kind of data for sage-grouse we can pull in and maybe have that as another layer here.

>> JULIE WEIKEL: I know within BLM they have those layered maps that have the different priority areas already.

So maybe it's easy to incorporate that.

>> It could be as easy as just pulling in the data that's already sitting there.

>> F. WOHL: And since that is a focal point for -- if someone coming out here, well, I need to see that, too, if I'm going to look at wild horses, and that's --

>> Absolutely.

That's a great idea.

>> F. WOHL: Anybody else?

Thank you, Jason.

>> Thank you.

>> F. WOHL: Good job.

Good job.

Now we're going to have Karlee Yurek, and she is from the Eastern States where I'm from and I'm proud and honored to have them talk us to, because in the Eastern States we love mustangs and she is going to talk to us this morning about some of the things that they are doing to increase adoptions.

Carly?

>> Thank you.

Just to quickly introduce myself, my name is Karlee Yurek Branch Chief for the community and natural resources in the Eastern States office, and in the absence of a wild horse and burro Program Lead for the State Office I am also acting in that role.

I want to talk to you today a little bit about the program within the Eastern States office.

The Eastern States office is very diverse and wide ranging area.

We're spread across 31 different states.

That's about 66% of the U.S. population and about 40% of the U.S. land base.

We have two district offices.

There's one up in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, that's the northeastern states District Office, and one down in Jackson, Mississippi, which is the southeastern states District Office.

Then our State Office is located in Washington D.C.

Last September the advisory board made a recommendation to the Eastern States office, and the recommendation was for the Eastern States office to work with the advisory board in order to develop a comprehensive adoption program, and it includes -- and this dovetails with the work that Holly and her private care team are working on.

We're just one piece of this.

But incentivized adoptions, more pickup places, specifically storefronts in the Eastern States area, and training facilities in the East such as the mantle Ranch model.

We've had two meetings with advisory board members since then, Fred in particular, and we've talked about further detail into what this recommendation contains, and we have been working toward trying to meet some of these suggestions within the recommendations.

And to do that, we have -- we are continuing with a robust satellite adoption program.

We have over 20 events this year.

We are updating the Internet adoption website.

We're piloting the trainer ambassador pilot program that Holly talked about earlier before lunch.

We're increasing the number of storefronts in cooperation with MSHA, and we're adding a regular adoption by appointment day at the Ewing, Illinois facility.

So just to talk briefly about each of these.

Our satellite adoptions as I said before, we have over 20 this year.

Some of them are, in fact, Mustang Makeovers that we're working with MHS and we're working with them to help get more animals out so that we can have horses that have been gentled already.

We are also taking and using data to figure out where are the good places that we need to go. So when we go to a certain place, what makes it a good adoption event, and what is the data showing us?

And we're looking at it both in terms of numbers and also looking at it geospatially.

The example on the right of the screen is a map, and it's just an example of what we're doing, taking a look at the adopters by Zip code.

And we will continue to do that to figure out how we can work most efficiently and get the greatest numbers of horses placed into private care through satellite adoptions.

As I mentioned before, we are also opening the Ewing holding facility for regular adoption days. We just placed a permanent employee, moved them over to the Ewing facility so they were be there on a regular basis, and if folks would like to come by and see the horses and adopt, then that is available to them now, which it was not previously.

We also will continue to do approximately once a month satellite adoptions at the Ewing facility.

We are also getting ready to send out a request for proposals for a facility in the southeast that is not on the street yet, but when that goes out, then I'm sure that will be spread far and wide because this will be a facility located around the Jackson area and will be a wonderful layover point for horses to rest prior to go going to satellite adoptions.

And we're working to improve the Internet adoption site, and there are a few reasons that we're working to improve the Internet adoption site.

From 1998 to 2014 there has been an upward trend in both the number of animals offered on the Internet adoption site and the number of animals adopted from the Internet adoption site.

>> F. WOHL: Carly, concerning the Internet adoption, there's a lot of conversation in the horse community about better pictures of these horses.

What are we doing to kind of meet that demand?

The reason why I ask that, I've had several people contact me and said they would volunteer to go and take pictures, and that's being done in had some places.

I mean, we have great horse people, horse specialists there that take care of the horses and all that, but some of them are not very good picture takers, photographers I think the correct word, but they're not really -- they can get a picture of a horse, but standing wrong where its head looks longer than the legs.

You know what I'm saying.

>> I know exactly what you're saying.

We were very successful in February we actually posted a bunch of videos and that was done entirely with the help of a volunteer who went out and talk all of the videos and then posted them to YouTube.

So we are considering doing a webinar to show people how to do that.

Because it is something that -- I am a data person.

I don't have the data to see if there is an actual trend to know that having a video is what gets a horse adopted out because I only have one data point right now, but I think that it does certainly make the Internet adoption site more approachable and absolutely, positively more in line with what people expect when they get on the Internet now as opposed to when they got on the Internet back in 1998.

The largest push that we're doing right now is we will be revising, not adding to, but revising

completely the Internet adoption site to be more in line with what you see on the Internet now. We're in the very early stages.

We're working on requirements at this point.

But the idea is to have the new site have the same type of look and feel as the new BLM site, which will be mobile accessible, may include some sort of geospatial component, possibly just linking to what Jason is already working on, but also be searchable.

So improve not only the user experience but also the back end, the work that needs to be done behind the scenes in order to process the applications and get the horses posted to the Internet website.

>> F. WOHL: I know that the Eastern States used to be the primary person for all Internet adoptions.

Is it still that way?

>> Yes, we have one person on staff who is entirely dedicated to supporting the Internet adoption website.

>> STEVEN YARDLEY: And the Internet website creation, is that in house, Department of the Interior, or in the BLM, is that BLM staff creating that, or is that a contracted job?

>> Right now we're working with our National Operations Center.

Most likely they will have some contract that goes out in order to do that.

We haven't quite gotten to that part of the process yet.

Right now we're just figuring out what are the things that we need in order to write that request for proposals and the statement of work that would go along with it.

>> BEN MASTERS: I think that's fantastic.

I think it's a great idea.

And to make it mobile friendly, to make it where people can look through it, look at beautiful pictures, and then also be able to share it, you know, like link it to Facebook and be like, hey, Joe, check out this horse, let's get it.

I think it's awesome.

>> I might have to adopt a horse off of that.

>> Great.

We would love to have you.

>> Or like 300.

>> 300 horses?

I hope you have a big backyard.

>> Four.

I'm sorry.

[laughter]

>> So we are also -- as I said previously -- working with Holly and her team on the trainer ambassador pilot program which will, we hope, bring more trainers on board with the wild horse and burro program and offer more trained animals in the Eastern States area because we've noticed that folks in Eastern States really want to have a horse that is not entirely wild. So having a horse that's gentled increases the likelihood of the horse being adopted.

Having a horse that could be -- could come in and already have some training, not just be gentled, would also be a big plus and allow us to place more animals into private care and allow a better consumer experience as well as a better experience for the horse.

>> STEVEN YARDLEY: A quick question on the tack program, why is it limited to east of the Mississippi?

>> We have limited to east of the Mississippi because it's a pilot.

We will do the pilot, figure out what is working and what is not working, and then go back and make the determination if we would like to expand it to the west, and then if there are any changes we need to make in order to make the program be more effective, what would we need to do in order to do that.

And we're also working with the Mustang heritage foundation to increase the number of storefronts in Eastern States.

We already have, I believe, three that are in the Eastern States area and we'll continue to work with MHS to find tip trainers who are qualified.

I believe they have already put out a solicitation to their tip trainers to find new people who would like to be involved in this program.

But that should help us to get some horses in places where there aren't currently horses or we don't have satellite adoptions already scheduled.

So --

>> F. WOHL: Can you back that picture up just a minute?

>> So that is one of our wild horse and burro specialists.

She is taking the tag off one of the mustangs.

>> F. WOHL: So that's a stock that -- before -- we're just figuring --

>> The horses in the --

>> F. WOHL: It looks like she's taught that horse how to sit and -- either that or it's climbing a fence.

>> She did not have enough time to teach the horse how to sit, however, I wouldn't put it past her.

>> F. WOHL: Is that in Milwaukee?

>> Yes, that is one of our Milwaukee crew.

>> F. WOHL: It begins with a K.

>> Kristin.

>> F. WOHL: She's a sharp young lady.

She can train -- I don't mean to interrupt but she's sharp.

>> The horses aren't sitting.

The horse has popped up.

>> F. WOHL: If she had enough time she could teach it to sit, I guarantee you.

She's a sharp girl.

>> And this next picture is Arlington national cemetery.

There are a number of wild horse and burros that were trained and actually that is what they do, they pull the carriages and the honor guard.

So they're out there at Arlington national cemetery, when you go to Arlington national cemetery they're there, and you can see wild horses in action.

In conclusion, I just want to say that with such a large area to cover, it is very important for Eastern States to continue to work with our partners and to continue to work with volunteers in order to meet the needs of people who want to adopt in the area.

We don't have any range, so we are pretty focused on adoptions, but I look forward to working

with you all in the future.

>> F. WOEHLE: Thank you.

We'll have some questions, I'm sure.

But from my part, let me encourage the BLM in the Eastern States to continue to working with this board.

Jen and I serve on that committee and the reason she wasn't on the last couple calls is because she was unable to because she was out hiking in the woods or something.

I don't really -- but, anyway, I encourage you all to do this because we have a lot of interest in this, a lot of interest in this, and it's a passion of mine is stuff like this.

That's why I'm interested in this.

Board, do you have anything for her?

>> I have a question.

>> J. SEWING: Thanks horses like you are using in Arlington cemetery is there some way they can be identified as wild horses for the people who just visit there?

>> F. WOEHLE: They're branded, aren't they?

>> They do have freeze marks.

>> J. SEWING: But that's not something ordinary lay people can identify with.

I think it would be a good promotion kind of thing for people to know that this is what can happen when you adopt a horse.

I don't know how you could do that, but --

>> We can certainly look into it.

>> F. WOEHLE: Well, Julie just said you could keep their tags on.

>> JULIE WEIKEL: Tail tags.

>> F. WOEHLE: June, that's a great idea.

When I was there at Arlington, there was lots of people, they were -- that's a very honored place for a lot of people, it is for me, but there was a lot of interest with those, with the horses, almost equal to if not a little bit more than everything else that was going on.

I don't care where you are, if you're sitting on a horse in the middle of a bunch of people, they're going to be gathered towards that horse, and to be able to show that this is a wild horse.

I use that a lot.

This is a wild horse.

Oh, no, it's not.

Well, it is, too.

See this brand?

That's what this means.

That's a great idea.

>> I guess they could always carry a sign.

>> F. WOEHLE: I actually think somewhere in there is a placard or something that says these are American mustangs, but that's really good, or they could have some brochures or something. Great.

>> [inaudible]

>> On their haul tar.

>> F. WOEHLE: There you go.

Or the breast collar.

>> I think at this point the board needs to remember, too, 30,000 feet, not --

[laughter]

>> Oh, Lord, help us.

>> F. WOHL: To explain that to our television audience, I have been on Steven all day to let him understand that we're flying at 30,000 feet.

We can't get really down into the nuts and bolts, and then I just did.

I stand corrected.

Thank you, Steven.

Anything else for Miss Karlee.

Thank you very much.

You've done a good job.

Thank you for making the long trip out here.

I know it was long because I had to make the same trip.

>> Thank you all for having me.

>> F. WOHL: According to my schedule, it's lunchtime.

So we're going to -- oh, no, never mind.

We will now hear from Miss Rebecca Moore, who is going to talk to us about the ecosystem services.

We're going to find out what that means.

>> You sure are.

I'm Rebecca Moore, Senior economist with BLM's Washington Office.

I am here to talk to you about ecosystem services.

I am here for informational reasons.

Ecosystem services is something the BLM is thinking about, and a lot of other natural resource people involved with natural resources are thinking a lot about.

At BLM we are just starting to think about how ecosystem services relates to horses and burros.

So we're here as sort of here is the first pass at it.

We might come back at you later in another meeting with some more information.

Just to start off, ecosystems services might be a familiar concept to some of you.

It might be a brand-new concept for some of you.

I want to get us all hopefully on the same page to start off and then provide just a couple examples of what BLM is doing with ecosystem services and initial thoughts on what that might have to do with horse and burro management.

A quick example, ecosystem services are all of the things that nature provides that are of direct benefit to humans.

We think about rangelands.

Rangelands provide a lot of benefits.

This isn't news to anyone.

Rangelands in the ecological process that happens on rangelands provide game species and fish for hunting and fishing, it's recreational opportunities, it's habitat for endangered and threatened and others species of interest, climate control benefits.

There's cultural and heritage values, educational values.

There's a whole bunch of values that people get from rangeland or public lands or the

environment in general.

Those are what a bunch of people have started calling ecosystem services.

So we don't have to use the term ecosystem services, but it's a nice bucket to put all this stuff in.

It's all the things people value that are provided by the environment.

Those are ecosystem services.

You might notice some of these services, these values people get, you have sort of direct interaction with the resource to receive those values.

If you're going hunting, you are interacting with the resource and getting that value there.

If you're -- hunting or recreation or a lot of other things.

If you're -- talking about forest land, if you want the timber benefits, you have to go interact with the trees to get the timber benefits.

But there are other values we get that you don't have to interact with the resource directly.

You might live downstream from a river and you get water -- from a wetland and you get water quality benefits.

You don't have to go to the rangeland to get the climate benefits.

The natural open space provides.

You might have to -- for some you have direct interaction for other values you don't have interaction.

You don't necessarily have to have interaction at all.

Existence value is a value people get from public lands and other things.

Knowing that some of these resources exist and they might continue to exist in the future, that's a very legitimate value people get from our resources and it's important.

You'll also notice that some of these ecosystem services, some of the values that people get, are values that -- for a lot of different reasons we're able to realize by going and making economic sort of market decisions.

So there are some market commodities, whether it's energy or raw materials.

Those are good things for a lot of reasons.

There are markets where we can buy and sell them.

They have what we call market value.

There's other values that we get from the public lands that aren't market goods.

They don't necessarily have the market value.

They have value, what we call nonmarket value.

So it's just -- it's the same, it's value.

We -- because of the way our economic structures are set up and way decisions get made there is not a market in which you go and buy clean air or clean water or the existence value of certain species.

But we still value them and they still count.

We talk about this big umbrella of ecosystem services.

It's all the values people care about.

That's just -- hopefully now you have a better sense of what I'm saying.

It's a value, the many, many different values people get from our ecosystems.

One way that people will start to sometimes talk about ecosystems is they put these in categories.

We can talk about the provisioning services.

Providing of goods and commodities.

We can talk about regulating services.

These are sort of environmental processes that regulate things, whether it's clean air, clean water, climate control, erosion control, pollination.

A lot of these ecological processes are valuable whether they're market value or not.

They're valuable to humans.

We can talk about supporting in habitat services.

These are things like sort of primary production, soil formation.

Often these are sort of inputs to other ecosystem services.

These are things that have to happen in order for us to have the habitat for -- for endangered species or other services to happen.

And we have sort of a bucket called cultural services.

This is where we would put all the things like recreation benefits and [indiscernible] values and aesthetic values and existence values.

It's more driven by sort of human interactions or preferences and how they relate to the environment itself.

These buckets aren't sort of hard, fast this kind of value goes in this bucket but just a way people have started talking about the different services.

In many ways to show the breadth of what we're talking about.

Within Federal resource management, the concept of ecosystem services, and all of these diverse values that we get, it's not new.

The term ecosystem services is fairly new.

There is a lot of interest across a lot of different agencies, including top leadership.

Our partner organizations and stakeholder groups, many of them are very familiar with the language of ecosystem services and the concepts that are being conveyed when we talk about ecosystem services.

So we're getting a lot of interest from certain groups to be more consider other, more explicit in our consideration of these factors.

There is a lot of scientific research in the academic literature, the concept of ecosystem services shows up probably back in the '70s, but there's been a lot of research to date, there is a lot of active research going on.

It's certainly not a done science.

We don't know exactly how to do a lot of the things we want to do, but there is a solid foundation on scientific principles on which to talk about both how are these ecosystem services produced, like what -- we know a lot about the water cycle and carbon cycle and wildlife biology and all the biophysical stuff that has to happen.

We also need to know about how these services are valued, how people make trade-offs or values of one service versus another or all of them together.

So there is a lot of strong science on which to base conversations.

And it is certainly starting to show up in regulation and policy.

The 2012 Forest Service planning rule that was mentioned earlier this morning explicitly mentions ecosystem services and approach that can be taken by Land Use Planning.

In 2013 there was an update to the principles, requirements and guidelines for Federal water

investments.

And that update pretty broadly now includes ecosystems -- or consideration of ecosystem services and their values whenever Federal agencies are making large both planning and investment decisions related to water, and that includes our Land Use Plans.

Most recently in 2015, just last fall, there was a memo that was put out by the Office of Management and Budget, the White House council on environmental quality, and the office of science and technology policy specifically on the use of ecosystem services and Federal resource management, and in part this memo directs agencies to develop and institutionalize policies to promote consideration of ecosystem services where appropriate and practicable in planning, investment and regulatory context.

Again ecosystem services, that's just the values that we get from our plans, but this memo is directing all agencies to again be more explicit in their consideration of these -- in the breadth of decisions, whether it's planning or regulation.

Luckily BLM has been working in the realm of ecosystem services for a while, since about 2008 we started doing some pilot studies realizing that this concept of ecosystem services while not totally brand-new it fits well in with the multiple use mission that is BLM, but from a practical standpoint, what would it mean to be more inclusive or more explicit in our consideration in our decision-making and our planning and just generally in the actions we take as an agency. So we've done a couple pilot studies just to sort of test out some tools, see what the range of tools are, those have been going on.

There is a really great resource, the Federal resource management and ecosystem services guidebook.

It's an online guidebook, and the link is there in the slides.

This was an effort led by some folks at the Nicholas institute at Duke university that had a lot of contributions from multiple Federal agencies and provides a nice overview of what ecosystems services are, how they are being used in agencies, what the challenges are.

We're currently developing some guidance for our planners and our decision-makers testing out some new tools, and we have future plans, very preliminary thoughts, to do some additional demonstration projects, basically a couple of NEPA or planning actions where there's actual decision-making happening, what would it make to use some of these tools and incorporate some of these principles into that process.

So that's why we are.

You might be wondering what this has to do with horses and burros at this point.

In the process of thinking broadly across the agency about ecosystem services, and some of the conversations we've had it came up, this might be a useful concept for when we're talking about horses and burro management.

So we started thinking what are the advantages?

If we go back to sort of the example of the different ecosystem services we can get from rangelands, again, using those buckets of provisioning services, cultural services, regulating and supporting, and thinking about all of the different things, particularly rangelands, looking specifically at that land cover type for now -- or land use type, if we think about provisioning services, some of the examples that come to mind are fairly obvious.

We have the range provides forage, it provides provisioning service forage for grazers.

It provides game species, as I said.

But it also provides horses and burros for all these off range activities we've been hearing about all day.

It provides animals for adoption.

It provides animals for border patrol.

It provides animals for a lot of different uses.

That's a provisioning service.

That's an ecoservice, a value that should be considered.

With cultural services, on-range animals provide viewing opportunities.

There's values associated with viewing of wild horses and burros.

Aesthetic, spiritual, cultural, heritage.

There's all kinds of values there that are very much directly dependent on wild horse and burro on-range population.

There's also those same kinds of values for threatened and endangered species, other species of interest, right, then the recreation values for hunting and fishing.

Then all of these other services that come, too, but if we look at what that list is, the rangeland provides a lot of ecosystem services that are directly dependent on our management of horse and burros, both on range and off range.

And again, this isn't nothing new.

It's very much in line with BLM as a multiple use agency.

We have a lot of different uses that we manage for.

So what's different here?

In some cases not.

In some cases in practice we're very good at incorporating all these different kinds of values in our decision-making.

But there's two key principles I think of when ecosystem services we sometimes do but don't always do.

I think if we could focus on those it might make a difference.

The first key principle of an ecosystem service approach or of using ecosystem services in decision-making is that you have to connect biophysical to social.

Right?

So you have to connect the biophysical characteristics of a landscape, whatever we know about species population or rangeland health or all of those statistics, we can't just stop there and say that vegetative cover is of whatever quality.

Right?

We have to make that connection to it's of a quality that is useful or valued to our -- for humans because of X, Y or Z.

You have to make that connection from the biophysical to the social.

We do that sometimes.

We don't always do that as well as I think we could.

And sometimes it helps advance the conversation a little bit if we put things in the terms of what people value.

The second key principle is that -- and I alluded to this earlier, an ecosystem service approach includes both market commodities and nonmarket values.

So those things you can buy and sell in a market value.

Those are values that count.

And so are the things that don't have market value, whether it's existence value, aesthetic value, spiritual value, recreation values, value of air quality, water quality.

All of those must be considered in a true ecosystem service approach.

Sort of putting it all on the same playing field in some respects.

With those principles in mind I wanted to just quickly give two examples of some ways that concepts have come into BLM and these are not horse and burro specific.

One of them -- you might be aware the BLM has been thinking a lot about sage-grouse lately. So we have -- the agency has undergone a significant planning effort looking at updating -- there's 15 subregional EISs that are essentially motivated by trying to preserve sage-grouse habitat.

It's not just about protecting a bird.

We realize here's a map of all the priority and general habitat.

There's a lot of land that's being preserved, and there's going to be a lot of other benefits, ecosystem service benefits, to those actions we're taking with sage-grouse.

Well, it might be useful, the conversation went, to be able to think a bit more rigorously about what those benefits are and communicate some of those benefits we call them, we're not just protecting the bird, protecting other stuff, too, talk more rigorously about those benefits.

We just contracted a study.

The report is not quite ready for release yet.

They took an ecosystem service approach and first went through and inventoried what are all the ecosystem services that might benefit from the actions we're proposing to do.

This is a fairly standard list.

I have mentioned them so far.

These are the things that might benefit.

And then they went through those different subregional EISs and said here is a bunch of management actions being considered.

We had the proposed actions they were looking at, not the final ones.

So there were six management actions that were evaluated in this project, fire management, veg treatment, actions related to minerals, locatable and saleable minerals.

So these were actions that were going to be taken.

One. First steps was for each of those actions to go through and figure out how those actions are going to affect ecosystem services.

So again let's connect the biophysical, in this case start with management actions, is going to biochange land cover types, is the approach taken here, by reducing [indiscernible] and invasive species.

That's going to change ecosystem function, which is then going to affect like erosion control and climate regulation.

They did this for each of the services just to see what the pathway of influence.

And what happens is it becomes very apparent and we all kind of know this, but it's kind of fun to see it in a diagram, one action is going to affect a whole bunch of different services a whole bunch of different values and it's all very much interconnected.

There are things like the process diagram and you can make them fancier with boxes and arrows, that bring that point home.

That's important.

It can be really useful to conversations about complex management decisions.

So they went through this process for each of the actions and I know you can't read this slide, you're not supposed to, but the big picture is what I'm trying to get across.

What we have here in the rows are the different services, the different values we get, and across the columns are the different management actions that might be taken.

In theory you could think we went through and said each of the management actions may or may not affect each of these values.

What I want to point out here is that the darkest cells there that are sort of in the middle column, top half of the diagram, that combination is the oil and gas related actions and specifically the regulating services.

There was enough literature, we were relying on previously published literature to do the evaluation piece, there was enough literature out there and research that had been done we were able to estimate in monetary terms what the value would be from these proposed actions on those services.

That's one tiny sliver of the whole sort of landscape that we were looking at.

So for all of these other connections we have a very -- more rigorous than we used to, a qualitative discussion of how the actions are going to affect or projected to affect the different values.

Again it's not all about the stuff -- like turning everything into a dollar value sometimes when we start talking about different values, sometimes people get concerned.

It's not about that.

Where it's useful, there are lots of tools we have that are well established for estimating monetary values, where it's useful.

It's not always useful.

And even where we can't, where we can only monetize some, we still get a useful conversation out of it because we now have a structure in which to think about how these management actions are affecting lots of different values.

We have gone through that process of connecting with those box and arrow diagrams how this action is going to change the whole web of things.

And it puts us in a much stronger position.

The second real quick example is from western Oregon, the western Oregon RMP, Resource Management Plan, and one of the questions that was asked in the process of developing the RMP, specifically in the socioeconomic section of the plan, is how was the different alternatives proposed affect the supply, demand and value of different goods and services.

And the goods and services they considered are things like timber, grazing, minerals, storage -- there's no horses and burros here.

These aren't -- this isn't presented as an ecosystem service assessment.

But essentially that's what they're doing.

They are looking at what are the different values.

This isn't an exhaustive list but it's what was important to the planning area.

They're saying, okay, how are the different alternatives going to affect the different values we got on the land?

In the end this is a table again, big picture, don't worry about the details, because you can't

read them, this is a table taken from the draft RMP, and it's the same kind of idea. Those different values are in those rows and the alternatives are the different columns and it's trying to describe and summarize a lot of the analysis as well as possible how the alternatives are going to affect the values we get from the land. It summarizes the many different values we get, and I think that's what's useful in an ecosystem service approach.

That's just a couple examples.

This one I included because it is an example from an actual decisional document.

It doesn't -- again, it's really getting at those same ideas.

So where does that leave us?

As I've said we're just starting to think about how ecosystem services might play a role in management action decisions.

Some things we're thinking about, we could possibly begin using the concepts, if not the language explicitly, but the concepts more frequently in communications both internally and sort of with the public, just general communications.

We can think about how we might use it during public engagement opportunities.

I have seen tools like those box and arrows, that process diagram, be very helpful in talking with the public in getting at a sense of what the many different values are and helping everybody understand how a single management action can affect a lot of different things.

So I've seen very good examples of that.

That's one approach we could take.

We're also considering maybe develop -- maybe developing a pilot project specific to a NEPA action that's horse and burro management specific and how might ecosystem services -- the frameworks and tools and concepts make that process better, if it could, and sort of pilot it and see how it goes.

In the broader picture of -- we're planning a couple pilots across the agency.

This might be one.

If we were to do that, where we're at now is we would like more time to think about it before we come to you with a proposal for what we would actually propose to do.

What we wanted to do today was set the stage and here's a concept.

Again, some of you might be quite familiar with the concept.

It might be new to others.

It's something that I think a lot of groups and organizations are starting to think about.

I think it could be a useful tool for horse and burro management.

With that I will take any questions.

>> F. WOEHL: Oh, yeah.

Obviously the ecosystem services has been a big plan of the 2012 planning rule and been heavily involved.

Two horrendously important factors I didn't hear were desired conditions and Adaptive Management.

Without those you don't know where you're going.

The first thing it has to be established, and socioeconomic concerns are a big part, but so is water quality, as we come down to some of the carbon sequestration that's getting to be another larger deal all the time, implementation of the cohesive strategy because fire is such a

big factor on these.

The huge effort is up front with the assessment and the development of the desired conditions. Hopefully within the range of natural resource -- or natural -- the NRV.

I can't remember now.

Historic value.

Historic or natural range of valuations.

The problem I have with this, and we've looked at this real heavily, we established the desired condition, then the whole Adaptive Management cycle is to analyze and monitor the progress of the proposed action on how that helps to either reach or preserve those desired conditions, and if that's failing, then we have to modify many approach with a constant cycle of implementation, monitoring, assessment and possible changing of that, of the action.

My question is, particularly when we're into some of these HMAs that have 800 or a thousand percent over AML, and you can't change that, how do you use Adaptive Management in order to attain desired condition and use the ecosystem services as a guide when you're helpless at bringing those numbers down?

>> Good question.

Ecosystem services isn't -- it's not the cure-all.

It certainly isn't going to help you out if you have no decision space which is essentially the situation you're describing.

Understand the ecosystem services and how they're affecting isn't going to help you because you still can't make a decision.

I think in some respects there's different ways that ecosystem services can be useful.

It could be useful in describing -- if you have the initial conversation in describing your desired conditions in terms of ecosystem services I think can that avoid sometimes, sometimes it can avoid having conflicting mutually exclusive desired conditions.

Not always.

But if it's done well, it can.

I think that might be a useful piece of where this could come with horse and burro management, as if we're up front with this is everything we would like, but the ecosystem isn't capable of producing all of these things we like all at the same time, well, then how might we want to make some trade-offs?

What is a trade-off?

What is the possible decision space we have?

I think it could be useful there, even if the desired conditions aren't defined in terms of ecosystem services it can still be useful on the -- in the analytical end in sort of rethinking what the values lost are.

>> R. COPE: I'm not discounting the value, but I think it's absolutely vital that it's up there right up front when you are trying to establish cooperatively and collaboratively the desired conditions you want and then you -- I think we should try to implement Adaptive Management as part of that within the RMP.

The problem I see coming, because what we're seeing in Nevada, when you know what the desired conditions are and what they would like to be, but you can't get there.

>> Deschutes National Forest is an example the Forest Service used where they used ecoservice in the initial process and it's one of the examples done well that we would like to learn from in

terms of getting that initial conversation right up front.

>> I want to thank you.

I think this is the sort of thing that can go over people's heads initially but I see this as a huge educational piece at the beginning of these collaborative processes, for example, because when a whole bunch of people with different views of what public lands should or shouldn't provide, if they can kind of be assisted in understanding how huge this is and all the different stakeholders that they don't usually perceive, I see this as a giant education piece, and I can't talk the language nearly the way Cope does, but thinking about an issue that we have in eastern Oregon right now, when I look at this analysis what you have for the west side, I think -- I so wish that piece existed in MALHEUR county about the public lands because it would help people get into the same room and really get to work to protect what they have out there.

>> Thank you.

>> I just feel like with this that there are a lot of subjective values placed on different things. If we went through the entire room and gave them a list of resources that we gathered from the ecosystem, everyone is going to have different values placed on that.

Who determines what the value is, and who's to say they're not just as right as the next person is concerning what those values are.

I think sometimes it makes something that's supposed to be subjective and scientific, it makes it a little too -- it opens it up to something that's supposed to be objective and makes it more subjective.

I would simply like to see the sound, tried, proven range management science applied to situations, and I think it's tried and true and we know it's there and it's -- in a lot of situations, being blatantly ignored for whatever reason.

>> I think to answer the first question, in terms of who -- sort of who says whose values count it's a good question.

It's a common one.

In economics the theory goes that no one understands -- no one can tell you what your values are.

Right?

The way I value something is certainly different than what how other people would value it. I'm the best determinant of what my values -- what values, what trade-offs I would make.

So everyone values count.

So the methods that exist to get at some of what I think you're referring to as the more subjective pieces, existence value, the aesthetic value, of particularly these nonmarket, even nonuse values, there are sound ways of eliciting that information from people and there are not so sound ways of eliciting that information from people and I have seen good examples and bad examples.

But there are -- the methods development started back in the 1950s, really, and so the research on how to elicit values from people is pretty good.

It's not perfect.

There are things we can improve on.

But it's not quite as wishy-washy as just go ask people what they think about things.

There are ways we ask the question that are more useful.

In many respects we're asking people not how much do you value this, but what trade-offs

would you make?

Do you value this enough to give up this?

So we're getting at the trade-offs.

You're absolutely right that everyone is going to make different trade-offs and that's the reality.

That's kind of why we're interesting people, it's because we have different value sets.

How we reconcile competing values is a challenge, is an ongoing challenge, I think from a science perspective, maybe the first step is to describe the competing values and say this is what -- how different people would make the decision, and then it becomes a management and policy decision to actually make decisions.

But the first step is to understand what the values are, and I think we're working on a few research projects to help us do a better job of that.

>> F. WOHL: A quick follow-up.

>> R. COPE: Some of the things we think are subjective are actually quite quantifiable.

When we start talking about water quality, that's this ambiguous, oh, gee, let's make this wonderful water quality benefit but we can measure downstream turbidity.

We talk about clean air and the, oh, Jeep, what does that mean?

We can measure particulate matter downstream, what kind of groundcover we have and how much dust is in the air.

There's a whole lot of these things that seem like they're really just a pie in the sky, gee is a feel-good item.

We can measure them.

Those things actually count as ecosystem services.

>> Add to that you might also be familiar with studies that have looked at, say, how housing prices in the urban areas and market value of a house in one location versus another that might have to do with the scenic view that's available at one house.

That difference in market value, if you control for all the other things like bedrooms and bathrooms and whatnot, if there is a premium there for a scenic view, well, that's a value that is one of ecosystem service values.

Other studies look at recreation decisions.

If I'm willing to travel further to get to a better fishing spot.

So there's a lot of stuff that is quantifiable.

>> R. COPE: Labor force numbers, school enrollment.

There's a whole lot of things.

Per capita income.

There's a lot of factors you can measure.

>> STEVEN YARDLEY: I guess my frustration is that there's a lot of sound scientific range science data that's been tried and proven trial after trial after trial and we know what needs to be done.

We know about timing.

We know about intensity.

We know about duration.

And it's all being ignored because we're way over AML, and we don't have any way to take care of it at this point in time.

So until you get that figured out, then a lot of this stuff becomes somewhat irrelevant, not that

it's irrelevant, but we need to get back to basics before we start getting out on a limb, I guess.
>> It's possible by taking an ecosystem service approach we're going to connect the rangeland that is well established more to the values that people get from the land.

The problem -- one of the problems might be that that connection is not being made for everybody yet.

There are some people that certainly understand how the rangelands affect the values people get from land but there are other people that maybe that connection from the biophysical to the social isn't quite there yet, and if we're more explicit then perhaps we could make better use of the rangelands that are available.

>> F. WOHL: Thank you, Rebecca.

It's very interesting.

It really is.

I think it has a lot of potential to help.

I really do.

I appreciate you taking the time to come and talk to us about it.

>> Thank you.

>> F. WOHL: Kathy?

What I would like to do is I would like to take about five minutes to name the people on the working groups so that they would know -- at home since that wasn't in there and then I would like to break at that time, and then come back, and that way we don't have to break in the middle of our discussions, if that's okay with you.

Also --

>> [inaudible]

>> F. WOHL: We may.

But if we do, they can do, and then just FYI, when we get called back together, I'm going to yield my chair to the co-chair, and she'll be the one that will be co-chairing the discussion.

Okay?

So just to remind everybody, these are the working groups so you all will know it.

On the increasing adoption Working Group it's -- Ben is the chair of that.

It's begin, Ginger, and me on that one.

On the ecosanctuary, it's June is the chair, Steven and Ben.

>> And Ginger.

>> F. WOHL: No, Ginger asked --

>> Oh --

>>

>> F. WOHL: -- to be off.

That's why I'm reading the brand-new one.

>> [inaudible]

>> F. WOHL: That's why I'm reading it.

This is the change that we have made.

So everything else out the window.

Now I've lost my train of thought.

My train has come unwound.

>> Resources.

>> F. WOHL: Resources.

Lord, I hate doing this, too.

Steven, you're the chair of this.

I'm just picking on you.

>> [inaudible]

>> STEVEN YARDLEY: He said he needed tide it.

Julie, Jen and been on that committee.

Public comment, it's Ginger is the chair of that, Ginger, June and me.

On volunteers, Julie is the chair of it.

It's June, Cope, Steven, and I'm just going to hang around that.

One.

Population growth suppression, sue you are the chair of that with Ginger, Julie and Cope.

Herd area repopulation, Ginger is the chair, June, Sue and Ben.

The comprehensive animal welfare program is Cope is the chair, Julie, Sue and me.

Did I cover everything?

I kind of got confused, but I guess I did.

Didn't I?

Public comment.

Jen is the chair of that.

>> R. COPE: You are going to email this out for those of us who didn't get the notes down --

>> F. WOHL: I emailed them earlier and the only change in the email out is Ginger wanted off ecosanctuary and I took her off.

I put her on increasing adoptions because that's where she wanted.

I moved Steven down to volunteers.

>> J. SEWING: Who is on the ecosanctuary?

Me and Ben?

>> F. WOHL: You, Steven and Ben.

You, Steven and Ben.

Just three people.

Unless -- is there anybody else who would like to be on ecosanctuary.

Yes?

Jen said she would like to be on that.

So you have Jen.

I better add that or I'll forget.

All right.

Let's take a break.

Kathy, I've got 2:15.

Pardon?

So do you.

So we'll be back at 2:30.

Thank you.

[brief recess]

>> Ladies and gentlemen, we will be starting in 60 seconds.

>> F. WOHL: We're going to come back together where's Dr. Weikel?

I have been asked to do something that I enjoy doing.

I'm going to recite a short poem and then yield my chair to the co-chair to finish out some of the board's work.

The early predawn silence is like music to the ears of the rested and contented who take the time to hear.

I have missed that predawn silence and I found if I'm a track, the world says, I must follow, but I shall have it back for once again I have horses to fill my spirit's hole.

Dear God, o, how I've missed them and how they make me whole.

That's how I feel about the wild Mustang.

Thank you all very much.

Sue?

>> S. McDONNELL: The way we'll work this is we'll go through the various working groups and the chair of the Working Group will -- I'm hand over for you to lead that discussion.

We'll try to -- we'll work with Kathy.

Kathy will help us, and if you can see it right here on the screen in front of us will be her editable draft of what we say.

Let's start with -- June, did you say ecosanctuary was -- we weren't --

>> J. SEWING: I just found out that the ecosanctuary committee has been disbanded.

>> S. McDONNELL: Okay.

We'll cross it off.

Fred, did you have something to say?

>> J. SEWING: Just told me that it was because there were two committees, there was an ecosanctuary from the board and very similar one to the BLM and at the meeting I guess last time decided to discontinue the one on the board because it was pretty much the same as the one on the other one.

>> That's right, we did.

>> S. McDONNELL: Anyway, that's it.

Great.

Good job.

How about Ginger with repopulation.

Are you the chair?

>> GINGER KATHRENS: I am the chair.

>> S. McDONNELL: Did your Working Group have anything to discuss or to -- any recommendations?

>> GINGER KATHRENS: No, we haven't even discussed anything.

>> S. McDONNELL: Okay.

>> R. COPE: What have you been doing?

>> GINGER KATHRENS: Trying to keep you in mine.

It's a full-time job.

>> S. McDONNELL: I think there has to be an analysis.

I did have a conversation with one of the people in the audience who does recall the conversation I had with the Secretary -- or Director Abbey some years ago there were some lands that were available.

What we need to do is identify those lands in an orderly fashion and see how -- what we can do

to try to repopulate some of the -- what, 24 million acres that's been taken away from wild horse use and see if there are any of those lands still available and appropriate.

I know on a lot of the lands the horses no longer on, -- 19 herds don't have any.

Dean indicated that's because there's a lack of water but there are ways to create water sources.

Sometimes I know in the Pryors they did a great job of creating water sources with water catchments, and it wasn't inexpensive, but they've worked to spread the use of the animals so that in areas that are intensely used they're not as intensely used because you can -- they have water out where they didn't, they have forage.

So I think there are some creative solutions maybe that we can use to improve the ranges enough that we could repopulate those ranges likely with horses out of short-term holding. Those animals would already be geldings, so it could be gelding and mares that this they wouldn't be reproducing herds, but certainly if they are in short term holding their existence could be vastly improved by being out and free.

So that's kind of the goal of what we're after, and no, we don't have any suggestions beyond that.

>> S. McDONNELL: I don't know -- did you have something to say, June in.

>> J. SEWING: Yeah.

Because we haven't had a time to discuss this, Ginger.

I'm very glad to hear what you're saying because that's long been a goal of mine to do some of those, and with your permission, I guess as the chair, I have been talking to Gus Warr in Utah and there is one area there that may be available for that, and they are receptive to that.

So I will continue to do that if that's okay with you.

>> GINGER KATHRENS: Absolutely.

We'll talk.

And who else is on that committee?

>> J. SEWING: --

>> I am.

>> S. McDONNELL: Oh and Ben.

I think we still have available, don't we, Fred, a conference call number for our working groups. So before our next meeting we can certainly -- you can work together information and we can get together.

>> GINGER KATHRENS: I would like to do that.

I think -- several times.

We need to do it quickly and then have some chores and assignments and so forth but that sounds good, June.

Gus is very good to work with and Utah I think is a pretty progressive state.

They are embarking on a very successful on the range management in the herd area outside Salt Lake City, and a young woman who is the wild horse and burro person does it herself, and this can work.

Well, I'll let it go for this but I have more to say on the topic of on the range management if I might later.

>> S. McDONNELL: Okay.

How about resources, Steven?

>> STEVEN YARDLEY: We met together as a board, and Ben and Jen and Julie discussed -- had some discussion as to some problems faced with resource management and kind of shared some of those frustrations today.

One recommendation that Ben really brought up that we all felt like was a good idea was having a type of emergency program in place so that when and if -- ultimately when a crisis such as a drought or a fire comes into play that we can have the resources and the means set aside so that we can take care of the rangeland and the horses on it.

Is there anything you would add to that, Ben?

>> BEN MASTERS: There is.

I typed it out.

We recommend to the board to create a crisis emergency plan in the case of a severe drought or natural disaster that necessitates the removal of either over 1,000 horses or over the amount in which the BLM can board in short term holding facilities.

We recommend that this crisis situation is either quantified by a range condition or by average body score or both, and the reason why we were concerned about it is looking at pictures of the Las Vegas horses last year where they had extremely low body condition to the point where they had to euthanize a bunch of horses.

You know, that happened in an area with about 400 horses, and what's scary to me if that happens in an area or a combination of areas where it was, you know, 4,000 horses, and to my knowledge, I don't believe that the BLM has an emergency or crisis plan of that magnitude, but I do believe that that is a possibility.

Yes, do you want me to reread what I wrote down?

>> Did someone want to speak?

>> F. WOEHL: I have a question.

>> S. McDONNELL: Okay, Fred.

>> F. WOEHL: Ben, are you referring to a nationwide, statewide or area-wide plan?

>> BEN MASTERS: It would probably be localized, but say that this happened in Nevada, where there was an area with 6,000 horses, whether it was in one HMA or HMAs or 20 HMAs and you had extremely poor body condition and it became a true crisis, I hope this never happens, but if it did happen, I think it would be good to have an emergency plan to obtain more funding to find emergency short-term pens, to find veterinarians that could help, and just have it on the radar in case a severe emergency like that ever occurs.

Hopefully it won't.

Would you like me to read that so you can type it?

Okay.

Recommend to the board to create a crisis emergency plan in the case of a severe drought or natural disaster that necessitates the removal of either over 1,000 horses or over the amount in which the BLM can board in short-term holding facilities.

We recommend that this crisis situation is quantified by either a range condition or average body score of the horses.

>> Condition score --

>> Body condition score.

>> Okay.

>> S. McDONNELL: Mr. Chairman, in our last meeting we drafted these and then we went back

over them at the end.

Is that how you would like to proceed so we do kind of a quick rough draft now, look at all of them and then go back --

>> F. WOEHL: And give us time to think about, and we also, if there was somebody in the audience that could answer some of this, we use them, too.

>> S. McDONNELL: Okay.

>> F. WOEHL: Like Brian would be --

>> JULIE WEIKEL: I would think with respect to this question we might want to hear from Brian, and I don't know if that we want to do that now or in the discussion part.

>> R. COPE: Could you reread the entire recommendation, please, Kathy?

>> I'll read what I got anyway.

I changed a few things based on a question and answer.

Recommend the BLM create local crisis/emergency plans in case of severe drought or natural disaster that necessitates removal of either over a thousand horses or over the amount BLM can hold in short-term holding facilities.

Recommend that the situation is quantified by range condition or average body score or both.

>> R. COPE: That's not two separate recommendations, those.

Those would be --

>> It's all part of one.

>> BEN MASTERS: Same recommendation.

I don't think that it would be local.

I think it would be more national just because there would have to be reallocation of funds on a national -- or possibly even agency level.

>> That's what you originally said when a question was asked.

I thought it came out local.

So my apologies.

>> Also I would mention a body condition score, we want to put the word condition in there.

And then in parentheses behind it put BCS.

Because this is common standard language when talking about horses and horse condition, and we just want that to be kind of part of our communications abilities so that we're clear that we're talking about the national standard scale 1 to 9 kind of thing.

>> While we're on it, Julie, did you want to -- did you have a question for Brian?

>> JULIE WEIKEL: No, my quest is that program-wide, because they have to think about these kinds of things as they build their management plans that they might inform us about how feasible this might be or how you would -- we frequently mention this thing about how every state is running a different wild horse and burro program and what happens when you need to bridge those states and, hence, to the realization that if we have something of this magnitude it's almost surely multi-state.

So how do we do that -- we just had a situation kind of like this in that soda fire, Idaho and Oregon, and that's why we need to hear from them.

They've had to think about this.

I think.

>> As chairman of the resource board, could I invite both Brian and Jared to come up and kind of maybe address that, if you guys could?

>> Thanks, Kathy.

>> STEVEN YARDLEY: Is there any type of a -- this emergency/crisis in place now within the BLM?

>> All right.

As I mentioned, yes, my experience was with Nevada.

Nevada two years ago went through a process where each district developed drought plans.

They were also very specifically connected.

They were all similar to each other.

Triggers, et cetera.

What they were land management documents that would be -- in the case -- these things happening, then this plan goes in effect.

If these drought scenarios occur, the plan goes in effect.

It had triggers, et cetera.

It did not identify what would be -- what would happen to the horses if we triggered that there was a need for removal or something because of drought.

Does that make sense?

The elements of determining a need to remove is what they would do.

There was no plan what would happen to them after they were removed is what I'm saying.

>> STEVEN YARDLEY: It sounds like that might be something that would be worth leaving the recommendation in place for.

Was there anything else that the board -- as board chairman, I would -- for the resource, I invite Jared, and maybe you could both chip in on this, and I'd like everyone in the audience to -- this is happening and you need to be aware of it.

In some of these areas where there's 500-plus percentage of AML on these lands, and I'd like for you guys to talk about what happens to the rangeland and what the effects of that are and how we reverse those effects.

>> We're building recommendations here.

>> Well, you're out of line, though --

>> F. WOHL: Know --

>> STEVEN YARDLEY: This goes along with building recommendations.

We got to hear from someone so we can build some recommendations from the information they present.

Is that all right by the --

>> I think probably what Fred is trying to indicate is that the process typically is that at this point the board would have thought through and maybe not completely but thought through some ideas they want to bring forward and start to collectively craft um some recommendations to the BLM.

Once those are put on the table -- and they are informed as they can at this time.

Normally you would have had a couple of months to think through some stuff, get some information for your committee so that the kind of information you're asking them now to share is normally done either during the formal part of the meeting or in between meetings when you are working -- when --

>> STEVEN YARDLEY: Isn't it standard -- isn't it standard among boards like this to call in key witnesses to gather information to help them make recommendations that are sound?

>> KATHIE LIBBY: That's kind of what we have been doing for a day and a half is what I'm suggesting to you.

It's not, in our situation anyway, it is not standardly done at this point in time.

I don't know.

So it might be helpful to get what kind of recommendations -- different groups have on the table, and as you said before, and then go back and take a look and see how much time you have to collect additional information.

That might work, Steve.

>> S. McDONNELL: Thanks, Kathy.

Julie?

>> JULIE WEIKEL: Just with respect to the actual wording of this proposal, I want to look at that word quantify.

The situation should be quantify.

When you use that word that way do you mean identified by?

In other words, we say we have "X" number of acres in this type of condition or "X" number of horses in this body condition score?

Is that what you mean by that word quantified?

Do we mean identified?

>> I mean identified.

>> JULIE WEIKEL: I like that.

>> BEN MASTERS: You is some type of numerical indication.

>> JULIE WEIKEL: Defined by.

Okay.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: The words are quant that I had by range condition -- you can have poor range conditions and you still haven't had cross add threshold where horses are beginning to decline and baud -- in body condition for whatever reason.

Sometimes you have very good body condition horses and maybe even have good range condition horses but the limiting factor is water.

So the terminology I have been using when you have an emergency situation is that, the horses are impaired, without necessary -- imperiled without necessarily describing the reason.

I think that's what you're trying to get to.

>> STEVEN YARDLEY: Does that sound good to the board?

I think that might be better language than what --

>> BEN MASTERS: Can imperiled be defined, though, or sit up to the -- sit up to the judge who is reading it?

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: Imperiled, when I say that, I mean their well-being is immediately threatened for some reason.

Could be no water.

Burns district told us about no water.

They had to haul them -- some horses were lost because they were out of water.

That's pretty black and white, clean.

And if the emergency plan isn't in place and implementable tomorrow, you're not going to save horses.

If it's a matter of forage and declining horses, some are going to be in bad body condition.

Others are not.

The foals go first, the mares second, stallions last.

So body condition of some, not necessarily all, but imperiled, that communicates you got a crisis on your hands.

Horses are going to die if you don't act.

Anyway, a suggestion for you to consider that might be more clear terminology.

>> STEVEN YARDLEY: Is there anything else to the board that we want to discuss on the --

>> Why don't you read that recommendation.

>> STEVEN YARDLEY: So the recommendation as it reads for those who can't see from the audience, it says that the board recommends the BLM create a crisis/emergency plan in case of severe drought or natural disaster that necessitates removal of either over 1,000 horses or over the amount BLM can hold in a short-term holding facilities.

The situation would be triggered by BLM determination that animals are "imperiled."

I think that sounds good.

And if -- we'll send the time over to the next.

>> [inaudible]

>> R. COPE: Resource management on the board, I would like this subgroup to at least either include me or at least keep me apprised of issues being addressed and actions being considered.

>> STEVEN YARDLEY: And could we make the request as a board to have him placed on -- I would like you to be on the board --

>> R. COPE: That's chairman's privilege to do that if he wishes.

>> STEVEN YARDLEY: If you wish.

All right.

>> S. McDONNELL: Fred, did you want to comment?

>> F. WOEHL: I'm -- it sounds great to me.

The only comment I would have is -- actually -- and it's for Bryan or Dean.

What are your thoughts on the benefits of this?

Is this something that BLM needs or should think about, in your opinion, or --

[laughter]

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: So the answer is yes.

We are already thinking about it.

In fact, there's going to be a discussion next week when I get back with the Deputy Director.

Yes.

>> R. COPE: Outstanding.

>> Fred, did you have any comment on putting Cope on this?

>> F. WOEHL: As far as I'm concerned -- I think we can have up to five.

So I actually forgot that --

>> Only four.

>> F. WOEHL: That means -- what I will do, is since I added Jen to another committee, I take her off and put Cope in her place.

Okay.

Cope and I -- I will do apologize.

I forgot that you were resources.

>> R. COPE: That's twice today I have been nice to you.

>> KATHIE LIBBY: Board members, another request has been made for you to be conscious of using your mics.

I know you probably feel like you're speaking loud enough, and some of you are, but make sure you're right into them.

>> STEVEN YARDLEY: On that note, wave your hands back there, I don't know your names, guy with the mic, if we need to talk to you, does everybody know we need to talk to him?

So the audience can hear.

Otherwise your mic will more than likely be turned off.

At least mine always is.

>> So we're all set then, Steven.

We'll go over these one more time at the end of the day.

Thanks very much.

Let's duty comprehensive animal welfare plan, and, Cope, you're the chair.

>> R. COPE: Thank you, sue.

Again, I would like to thank our chairman for actually distributing copies of the CAWP about an hour-and-a-half ago so we now have them for review.

However --

>> F. WOEHL: I point out that I emailed them to everybody three weeks ago.

>> R. COPE: But I didn't have them printed.

I do now.

Anyhow, we're intending to review these.

I understand they were probably gone through four or five years ago, but my experience with documents like this is it's a good idea to look back every three or four years because every once in a while you find something you read and you say, oh, my God, does it really say that?

Just in case something like that jumps out I think it would be a good idea for us to review them, see if there's something there that no longer applies because situations have changed or because there was something there that really isn't consistent with what we wanted but it slipped through the cracks and got there anyway.

In all probability there will be very few, if any changes, that we'll recommend to be made but we would like to make it -- look it over and make sure it still suits the current needs and pass on any changes we recommend should they occur.

I'd like to give us until at least the next conference call in May to just review it on our own and then at the next conference call schedule a call our Working Group to get together on to see if we have any recommendations and changes.

If that's suits the rest of the group that would be my recommendation at this point.

>> Cope, I am owe that committee, too --

>> Are we all supposed to have this --

>> No, I sent it to all the -- I sent it to all the current members when I got it.

You have been -- I will send it to you.

I will send it to you.

I promise.

>> Thank you.

>> I promise.

Can you pass mine down to her?

Cope, this is a final draft.

I don't know -- they're kind of holding off doing a final decision until they get this back from us, our opinion on it.

So why don't we have a conference call next week.

We can read it on the flight home and you all, we can have a conference call, we can talk about it --

>> R. COPE: In that coined of time frame --

>> F. WOEHL: We can let Dean know what we think.

I don't want to be the holdup for something like this.

>> R. COPE: Works for me.

>> S. McDONNELL: Thank you, Dr. Cope.

Ben, are you ready to talk about the adoption Working Group?

>> BEN MASTERS: I am.

I have adopted a handful of horses.

So I was very pleased to get the chairman's position of the adoption committee and I think I have some good ideas.

You know, I think if we can get more horses out of short-term holding we will just have so much more leeway with the budget to put it into PVC programs, put it into adoptions.

So I've spent the past few days, really the past few weeks, reaching out to the trainers that I know, to the organizations that do adoptions that I know such as the Mustang heritage foundation, and trying to figure out what are the limiting variables that aren't allowing more horses to get adopted.

Some of it is location.

But a big one that I kept coming up with is the adoption process and the paperwork that is needed for that is very prohibitive for trainers and the horses that have the most demand right now are horses that are saddle broke.

So my recommendation to the BLM is to make more riding desirable horses sale eligible to be given to the Mustang heritage foundation and other partner organizations to help them get more horses into private care because they are easier to -- for trainers to give to private individuals.

>> F. WOEHL: Ben, I'm on this committee with you.

I refer back to number 19, our recommendation last year that recommended BLM work with board members to develop a comprehensive adoption --

>> KATHIE LIBBY: Fred, could you speak into the microphone, please.

>> F. WOEHL: From last year or last board meeting, recommend BLM work with board members to adopt a comprehensive adoption program utilizing the following, incentivized adoptions shall more pick-up places, storefronts in the east, training facilities in the east and along those lines. Is that something of what you're referring to or do you want something beyond that?

>> BEN MASTERS: I think those are great.

I just think that if we can get those partners sale eligible horses rather than ones that have to go through the adoption paperwork process we're going to get more horses passed into private care.

>> I'm a little confused because last night we actually developed two very specific proposals along these lines, one of which we called the trust the trainer pilot program and one we called

the Mustang mentoring pilot program.

Is that not what we're doing here?

>> I can also give those recommendations, but after talking to Dean and after talking to Callie it would be possible that the Mustang heritage foundation would do a better job of advertising those horses than the BLM would straight to consumer and that they would take over that role of the trusted trainer.

And just for clarification, what we were providing with the trusted trainer program is a trainer that meets the eligibility to acquire sale-eligible horses so that they could train them and then pass them on to -- or sell them to private individuals.

>> What is the requirements to make a horse sale eligible?

Democrat Dean, I think that one goes to you.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: The current policy, eligible is define booted eye a horse or burro offered three times unsuccessfully, no matter its age, and any animal older than 10 years old is sale eligible.

And BLM has defined what an adoption offering entails.

So I may have to call on Holly and Debbie to help me out, but as I recall, an Internet -- being on the Internet adoption is one offering, or one kind of event.

An event at a corral or an event at a satellite adoption.

Those three different kinds of adoptions would constitute one offering, if not adopted at one, then being offered a second time in any of those three venues would offer a second time.

A third time unsuccessful.

A third time then it becomes sale eligible.

And those are discretionary policy decisions that we've made that could be modified, but that's what the policy currently defines.

>> BEN MASTERS: So, Dean, is my recommendation possible to get more desirable sale eligible horses for adoption groups such as the Mustang heritage foundation to use -- to pass into private care?

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: Probably if we offered more -- as an example, if we put more horses more frequently in the Internet adoptions and they're not adopted and we keep doing that, then they would become sale eligible.

Or we could change the definition of an adoption event or an offering, offered for adoption, that would be less restrictive, like this is an extreme example, you could say an adoption event at a facility, 100 animals are available, day one is offering, day two is an offering, day three is an offering, or you could say offered for adoption for three months in a row that it's available. That could be an offering once a month, second month a second time, third month, a third time.

You could define it in many different ways but I think what you're inferring is that sale-eligible animals might be more desirable to those that want to train them, those entrepreneurs, is kind of the tone of the conversation I was hearing last night.

>> BEN MASTERS: Undoubtedly it is for trainers.

You know, a big -- you know, we're in the horse business, and these trainers are training mustangs to sell them to consumers that for the vast majority of them want a well-broke, saddle-trained horse and whenever you add on the stipulation that come and by this horse from me, but by the way it's also owned by the government the next six months, it's a big

detractment whenever they are offering them up for sale, and if they were -- and the fallback on it is the Mustang heritage foundation or these adoption organizations that we've partnered with have their reputation on the line in order to find trainers that aren't people that are purchasing these horses or getting the horses for less than good reasons.

>> Dean is our SA horses still limited to four a year unless the Deputy Director signs off on it?

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: That's correct.

No one buys more than four every six months, not per year, unless approved by the Assistant Director, such as Christa.

But it can be done, and we have done it.

Humane Society as an example.

>> And Miss June?

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: And Miss June.

>> J. SEWING: What?

Adopt more than four horses.

I have 20.

Ben, take a look at the language, because I didn't capture it right.

>> R. COPE: I'd like to kind of make the first line a bit more readable to say something on the order that BLM make more sale eligible horses that are desirable for riding, or something -- right now it says more riding desirable horses sale eligible, which gets me confused by the time I get there.

>> Just make more sale eligible horses available for Mustang heritage or something along those lines.

>> Was the idea in that, Ben, that those horses would be kind of free evaluated -- pre-evaluated to be optimum horses for riding prospects?

>> BEN MASTERS: Yes.

>> Then we need --

>> F. WOEHL: We need --

>> R. COPE: Eligible horses that are what exactly?

>> BEN MASTERS: The term we were using earlier was riding desirable.

>> F. WOEHL: Selected for their riding potential?

Would that --

>> Or excellent potential riding horses, mounts, whatever.

>> F. WOEHL: That's kind of in the eye of the beholder.

>> J. SEWING: Well, but if they are pre-evaluated to go to the Mustang heritage foundation, wouldn't they want to be sound and have certain characteristics so would it increase their adoptability.

>> Last night we didn't concentrate so much on preselection as we did -- remember, this is a pilot program, at least when we were talking about it then, so we were talking a single trainer and making sure he had an adequate number from which to choose.

So last night we weren't talking so much about preselection on the part of the BLM as we were about making sure that a guy had a lot of horses to choose from.

>> F. WOEHL: Well, I really think -- I think Ben has changed the concept to make it more available that he -- in further discussions he determined that it was a little unhandy and unwieldy the way that we talked about it last night.

>> BEN MASTERS: The reason why I like using the Mustang heritage foundation or a partner adoption organization is that the contract process to get horses from the BLM is fairly cumbersome, from what I've been told, whereas the Mustang heritage foundation, they already have that system in place, and they already have all the trainers in place.

So I think that they would be a good organization to partner with this.

And, you know, they already have some sales eligible horses that they are using in like the Mustang magic, and after talking to Callie, you know, it just makes it easier to work with sales eligible horses because you can transfer the title.

It's your horse, congratulations, you just took home a great horse.

Rather than, you know, in six months you have to take it to a vet and you have to do this and this and this, and add a lot of processes.

>> F. WOHL: I like that right there, the way that reads.

>> J. SEWING: You're about to get some input.

>> Hello?

I was just coming down for a point of clarification, just -- Debbie and I were talking to vet out exactly maybe where we were headed.

And so as far as application, whether you adopt the animal or sell it, there is still paperwork, whether you go through a partner organization or directly BLM.

There still is a paperwork.

We still approve all adoption applications and all sale applications.

So whether it's through a partner organization or you communicate directly with BLM, that step is still there.

I just wanted to clarify that.

>> F. WOHL: On an NSA horse, do they still have to fill out the application, diagram of the pens and all this or is there --

>> Uh-huh because there's a sales application.

>> F. WOHL: But it's simplified.

I mean, it's --

>> Yes.

>> Okay.

>> One page versus two.

>> BEN MASTERS: So one of the most successful programs that we have getting horses adopted into the public is the trainer incentive program and from the TIP trainers I have talked to they would much prefer to apply to the Mustang heritage foundation to become an eligible trainer and then to get title to that horse and then be able to sell that titled horse in the general marketplace rather than getting a horse and then selling it as a horse that's still owned by the government to private individuals.

>> F. WOHL: Ben, I hate to disagree with you, but I'm a TIP trainer and I visit with lots of TIP trainers, and a TIP horse is just basically started.

You can pick up its feet.

It can load in a trailer.

It can do that.

And they get \$800 for that.

In my neck of the woods, you can buy a really good roping horse for \$800.

And so I don't think in -- where I'm at, in my general area, our TIP trainers would want to do that.

They're getting more money for just basically getting groundwork on a horse than they would taking it on through saddle.

And so, I mean, I'm not disagreeing with what you're saying, but I hate for you to use the TIP trainers as a general rule.

I don't think --

>> BEN MASTERS: The TIP trainers that I talked to.

>> So I guess what I would like for some clarification is that I think what I'm hearing you say is that TIP trainers, that you've spoken with, would prefer to work their paperwork through the Mustang heritage foundation and receive an animal that is -- either has a bill of sale or a title, is that correct?

>> BEN MASTERS: Correct.

>> So in that aspect, that would mean the Mustang heritage foundation or partner organization would either be the person adopting the animal or they would be the entity purchasing the animal.

>> BEN MASTERS: Correct.

>> And in our experience with some of the partner organizations the way the sale eligibility or sale authority horses have worked some of the [indiscernible] has not been that the Mustang heritage foundation purchased those animals.

The purchase happens once the event is taking place, not prior to.

And so when animals are purchased through the BLM, immediate ownership is taken over.

BLM would not hold them in the corral until the TIP trainer came to pick them up or was ready to whatever.

It's an immediate transfer of animal and ownership that takes place.

As well as the adoption program.

Mustang heritage foundation or other entities have not been entities that adopt animals immediately.

They normally have programs in which they offer animals available for adoption and they have a body of people that are interested, customers that are there that would be adopting the animal.

So I think if we're talking about reducing them on a -- the amount of paperwork I think we need to understand the paperwork still exists, one, and whether the trainers prefer to receive animals through the Mustang heritage foundation it would be almost just as easy.

There's no rules about any trainer contacting BLM to come and purchase animals that would be available that are sale eligible now, to purchase those animals, train them, and then sell them.

>> BEN MASTERS: Right.

But there's not riding desirable horses that are sales eligible.

>> That's true.

That's something we're working on.

We have been working the kinks and the issues that are happening with making more animals sale eligible.

>> BEN MASTERS: So that is my recommendation, is to make more riding desirable horses sales eligible.

That way trainers can get those horses and not have the cumbersome adoption paperwork taking them into the markets.

>> So the riding desirable, I guess by that definition we would have to identify what that would mean?

>> BEN MASTERS: Four to six years old, four to eight years old, maybe even three to eight years old, horses that you can adopt, you can spend 100 days on, get them saddle broke, and then sell for three to \$5,000.

>> I think that's a program that we could probably figure out a way to work through and make some animals eligible.

I just am concerned that what maybe you consider riding desirable may not be what Dean considers riding desirable, and if BLM are the people who are making that determination, it may not still meet your needs.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: Ben is there more to it than just making sale eligible animals available? That's kind of easy for us to do --

>> I wouldn't say easy.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: It can be done.

>> I mean, we have some challenges right now, but that is our goal, is to make more animals --

>> BEN MASTERS: I want to make more sale-eligible -- I want to make more horses sales eligible to trusted trainers.

I don't want to just say like, hey, everybody, here's a bunch of horses, come and get them. But I think that there are probably somewhere between 200 and 600 really good wild horse trainers in the United States that devote a lot of time to doing it, and they have to make a living, and it would be beneficial for us to make it easy for those trainers to get sales eligible horses because we trust them and because it would really help them train more horses and get them into private hands.

So that's my intent.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: So it sounds like a program you're promoting for Mustang heritage foundation to develop that would vet trainers who would do special things.

It's not something BLM would administer but BLM's part would be part would be to provide sale eligible animals.

>> F. WOHL: I'm sitting here and I agree with the concept, I honestly do, I really, really do, but I'm also thinking about what happened this year when BLM and the budget proposed that they make it easier for the border patrol to get horses, and other government agencies like the Forest Service get horses to use, and the flak that become of that because of that -- I think we might be opening ourself up for some of the same, making more horses sale eligible.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: I'll let you look at Ben when you make that comment, not me.

>> F. WOHL: I don't know if you were aware or not, but the Bureau of Land Management wanted to be able to transfer horses to other government agencies, like the border patrol, like the Forest Service, like the Park Service to use in their -- and --

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: So let --

>> F. WOHL: BLM received a lot of flak on that because it was not --

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: The concern that Fred is trying to convey is that BLM proposed to Congress, they gave authority for direct transfer for animals to other Federal, state and local agencies for use as work animals.

There was concern that animals could be laundered by the states to go down the road to slaughter rather than our intent for them to be used as work animals, that there needed to be a safety net so that kind of thing wouldn't happen to the animals.

So we thought it was kind of a low risk, good intentional thing to streamline the process for other agencies to get the animals, but Fred is, I think, trying to shed light that making more sale eligible animals comes with some risk, but last night you had thoughts on that as well.

>> BEN MASTERS: I mean, the risk -- yeah, there's risk.

Adoptions are also going way down and we have to do something new and different.

It's definitely not perfect, but I'm just trying to think how can we get horses into trusted trainers' hands and get them into private care, and this is the feedback I've gotten, is that if they had more sales eligible horses that were riding desirable they would get more horses and train them and sell them to private individuals.

I don't really know where to go with this right now.

>> F. WOHL: Ben, don't take this as criticism.

I like the concept.

I think we need to get as many horses as we can out and all that.

I have been doing this a little bit longer and the flak that you would -- SA horses receive lots of attention.

And we need to have -- be able to do something to ensure those horses will not end up anywhere, because all it would take is one of these horses to be found on a truck to Canada or Mexico and everybody would have a major black eye.

>> And I think, Fred, last night that was where a lot of conversation went to the concept of piloting the trusted trainer program for one individual or one or two trusted trainers with sale eligible horses, up to 10 or 20 of them, was the conversation last night, in it being a pilot program to better inform how -- what safety nets in the future would be built into sale eligible horses and training and the concept of getting more trained riding -- rideable horses out in the marketplace as well as letting that money go directly into the pocket of the trainer.

Was the idea of piloting it to develop the safety net and everything.

>> STEVEN YARDLEY: Why don't we leave the recommendation as it stands and move forward with it.

See where the BLM takes it.

They might not even accept the recommendation.

But at least from our point as a board, we can give them that recommendation.

>> BEN MASTERS: So you're saying to make the recommendation of recommend that BLM make it easier for trusted trainers or the Mustang heritage foundation or other government organizations to acquire sales eligible and riding desirable horses and just leave it at that?

>> STEVEN YARDLEY: Well, you can add the rest of it -- I'm just saying make the whole recommendation if you want and see what the BLM decides on it.

I don't care, but I think we're getting caught up in the thick and thin of things.

I think if we give the BLM that recommendation we can include all the language as it's revised right now and if they want to go forward with it, realizing it isn't perfect, and there are certain risks, they can, and if they feel like it's not worthy of their time or they feel like it's not, they can always turn down our recommendation.

>> Ben, I like the sentence you just threw out there that was all encompassing and for the BLM

to run with.

>> R. COPE: You're saying just that first sentence?

Not the 1, 2, 3 and 4?

>> BEN MASTERS: Yes.

>> R. COPE: I like that.

I could vote for that.

>> I think that's a really good idea, and BLM will be cautious enough to put the necessary restraints brackets around it, I'm sure.

>> R. COPE: Good job.

>> KATHIE LIBBY: When I count to 3 it's getting deleted.

>> R. COPE: Delete it.

Bring it back.

>> KATHIE LIBBY: I can do that.

>> Now Fred is going to want to know how you do that.

What do you think, Ben?

>> BEN MASTERS: I think that -- can we improve upon that, Dean, or is that good?

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: Holly and I like it.

We like the latitude.

I think there's even room here perhaps to incorporate an incentive pilot in this.

There was some discussion last night that really sounded kind of good that would incorporate a safety net and also some incentive opportunity.

Ben, I don't know if I said anything that stomped on your recommendation.

I hope not.

Because I really appreciate the creativity.

>> BEN MASTERS: That's just one sentence.

It's not that creative.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: Well, you'll let us be creative with it, then.

>> R. COPE: But how we ended up with that one sentence --

>> BEN MASTERS: Also from the other adoption side, and I don't know if this is a recommendation or not, it seems like you guys have some great ideas on how to get more horses adopted and taken to the East and getting markets are fair will be untapped and making it cool to adopt a Mustang, and I recommend you all stay the course.

>> R. COPE: I hate to put this out without having the board be able to review it but this is a result of what we talked about at lunch from what -- who -- Lori told us yesterday try this on for size here, Kathy.

The board supports efforts by BLM to engage professional marketers to identify and attract appropriate population segments to increase -- in order to increase Mustang adoptions.

I think that's pretty much what we talked about at noon as far as not necessarily going anywhere in particular but it looks like the BLM's already moving in that direction from what Kristin was saying.

That's why I didn't put it as a recommendation, but instead just of a statement of support that the board believes the BLM is on the right direct to engage and eventually hire a professional marketer to identify the demographics and gee graphics where adoptions could be increased.

>> Since not everyone had the opportunity to be in that conversation, what I shared with the

board is there is a strong commitment on the part of our BLM leadership to look at modernizing how the BLM provides information to the public both in transparency and ease of use. You've heard folks refer to new website design.

That's part of it.

Interactive maps.

We're going that way as well.

And this certainly fits in with how do we provide a professional, high quality, consistent messaging and branding for wild horses and burros throughout country, and I left it up to the board to decide how they wanted to recommend that we do it, but we welcome them expressing the outcome that they wanted us to have in terms of delivery of information and making people aware of an excited about the opportunity to either interact with, enjoy or eventually have a companion of a wild horse and burro.

>> R. COPE: Good.

>> I've got one.

It's one that we talked about last night called Mustang mentoring.

This is where -- I'll need board help.

We had lots of stuff we talked about last night.

But you have a recognized trainer, don't necessarily have to be a big name trainer, it just has to be someone that has the expertise to train horses and people, and you start with a short-term holding.

This would be on site with BLM.

And up to 10 people would show up.

They would pick out their horse, and they would stay two weeks, and in this two-week period that trainer there on site would help these folks train their horse to a minimum of TIP standards, along with this training aspect there would be an education part of it, too, where these people -- while we're doing it in short-term holding, I hate to pick on Burns but it would be an ideal place for this.

They could tour some HMAs, see some of the work that goes on, see what happens on the range when you have too many horses, and understanding that part, and then at the end of two weeks, they take a horse home that they could be proud of, and they might even be able to tour the HMA where the horse comes from.

Because one of the things I've noticed about adopters is they have -- just like Ginger has had input with the Pryor Mountain horses, the tigers is the same way.

There's a lot of folks that love horses from specific HMAs.

I know I have a paisley desert horse from Oregon that it just tickles me when I'm up here and I can go through the paisley desert.

So I think this is something that would work very well, not only would we train horses and get horses out of short-term holding, but we would develop a cadre of people that when they went home they would have some knowledge that they could share with others, not only about horse training, but on the Mustang story.

Does that make sense to everybody?

So you all need to help me write it.

>> STEVEN YARDLEY: Is Dean on --

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: Thank you.

A question, Fred.

Is this a program that you're thinking BLM would support financially in whole or part, or is it we would provide a convenient yule for an entrepreneur to charge customers, so to speak --

>> F. WOEHL: Dean, I'm looking at this as a pilot program.

As a matter of fact, I even offered to the board that I would volunteer to come and do the first one.

The 10 people that would come would pay their own way.

They would pay their own room and board while they were here.

And then they would pay \$125 to adopt a horse, and we would have it right there, and, you know, I think it would be a good thing.

It's one of those things that in any pilot there's going to be some problems and all this, but I think it would be good.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: So, Fred, this is the second time you've volunteered.

You keep raising your hand you're going to have a full-time job all year long instead of being retired.

>> F. WOEHL: Dean, being the chair of this board is a full-time job.

And it's just gotten worse with the addition of Ben and Steven.

Young men are just hard to herd.

Ginger is all right.

She responds to a cattle prod very well, but Ben and Steven just --

>> JULIE WEIKEL: That.

>> GINGER KATHRENS: That didn't even sound good.

>> F. WOEHL: Ginger, did you have a comment?

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: Fred --

>> F. WOEHL: I read that.

I read that.

I'm sorry.

I apologize.

>> I would just try to help clarify this.

We were talking about the demographic of women, you know, 45 to 55, who would really like to adopt a Mustang, but they really need some help getting started, some help picking the horse out, and this is an effort -- it doesn't have to be that demographic, but that's kind of who we expect to respond to this, and it's -- it might be something that has some potential.

>> I also see a lot of potential for fathers, mothers and their children and say, let's learn how to train a wild horse together.

>> F. WOEHL: We've talked about this quite a bit, the trainer could come in earlier and have a pen full he could sort through and do his own choosing of what and then he could try to match up horse with the people and all this, and it was asked, what happens if they don't get along very well.

Well, a good trainer is going to know that in a day or two, and if it is, chunk him out and get another horse.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: I like it.

>> A little bit ago Fred asked for help with the language.

Do you want to try to --

>> F. WOEHL: Create and pilot a Mustang mentoring program consisting of a two-week training in a short-term -- at a short-term holding facility for up to -- more than 10 is too hard to manage.

And the standard would be minimum TIP training.

I'm -- I am anticipating in this that in a two-week period of time you might be able to get 50% of them saddle started, in a two-week period of time, if you worked with them.

>> 10 horses and 10 people, right?

>> F. WOEHL: Yep.

With a minimum standard?

>> KATHIE LIBBY: That's what I was trying to get --

>> F. WOEHL: I'm adding a lot.

All right.

BLM create and pilot a Mustang mentoring program consisting of a two-week on-site training at a short-term holding facility for up to 10 horses and 10 people with a minimum standard of TIP training.

>> KATHIE LIBBY: How about 10 adopters?

>> F. WOEHL: There you go.

I like that.

Mom and daughter or father and son or mom and son.

Father-daughter.

I like that.

What do you all think?

>> It's good.

>> I think it's brilliant, Fred.

>> I second what Ben said.

>> Ben, any other brilliant ideas?

>> BEN MASTERS: No other brilliant ideas.

Can't top Fred.

>> And all your co-workers agree?

Everybody set?

Okay.

Ginger, would you be up for talking about the volunteer Working Group?

>> GINGER KATHRENS: Am I the chair of that?

>> I think I'm the chair.

>> Julie are you?

>> JULIE WEIKEL: We haven't really -- did we really talk about something we could submit?

New no.

>> I think it's June, Jen -- it can't be this many.

What I have June, Jen, Cope, Fred and Steve --

>> F. WOEHL: Nope.

Fred is off.

Fred is off.

And Cope and Jen switched.

>> STEVEN YARDLEY: Am I on?

>> F. WOEHL: No, Steven is off of it.

>> Okay.

It's me, June and Jen --

>> F. WOEHL:, Steven is on there.

I'm sorry.

>> So I'm not on there?

>> No.

>> F. WOEHL: No --

>> Okay.

That's clear.

I do have an idea for -- I mean, we have been working on a Volunteer Program at the foundation for some time on a -- kind of a volunteer handbook for on the range management support of BLM.

We're in the process of creating that and Sandra Sulley was work wing why with Sarah Bowles before she left and they were both excited about it.

I don't know whether we're at a stage where it's ready for some kind of a formal recommendation.

The concept is to help and assist with on the range management, and that would include identification of bands, letting the horses see the people, the people would be benign enough that they would get someone -- don't -- I can barely keep my train of thought without you doing that.

[inaudible]

>> BEN MASTERS: I was listening, Ginger.

>> GINGER KATHRENS: Thank God somebody was.

This is serious now.

>> F. WOEHL: I know.

>> GINGER KATHRENS: It's to have volunteers that would be in the relative areas of the HMAs that are targeted for on the range management with the goal of -- that natural mortality and reproduction would be equal over time through the application of PZP, either as a darting program or as a bait and trap darting program, and these volunteers would be trained in darting and or not, but they would assist, and you can't just do on the range management by waltzing into a range and doing it.

You have to first do identification.

And so people would go out on the range and try to identify the bands that are present.

They would do up their charts, which we have available for them.

They would identify the band stallions, the mares as best they can.

They would try to focus on the use of the range, where they are and when.

All their markings would be written down, photographs if possible, and then they would work with -- closely with the BLM wild horse and burro specialist for that herd and would assist them in doing what that wild horse and burro specialist most needed.

Volunteers have been used in the Pryors, Jared is well aware of that, and pretty effectively, and first and foremost in many of the herds they're not used to seeing people, and if they see people as benign in their universe and not hurting them but just kind of sitting around and watching, then they quickly can be habituated to human presence, and that helps a lot in both

the identification process, the subsequent darting, or even bait trapping using portable panels and food.

And so that with a would be the goal of that on the range volunteer management.

>> F. WOHL: Ginger, Sarah's involvement with that was a direct result of a board recommendation that was made that reads: develop --

>> I am prepared to --

>> F. WOHL: I'm sorry.

I'm sorry.

>> So it already exists.

So make a fool --

>> Number 10 from last year we recommended that the BLM develop strategies to training more qualified volunteers to support wild horse and burro activities off range and on range, and then in BLM's response they add lot of the language that you're talking about field coordination and that sort of thing.

>> GINGER KATHRENS: I did read this, but I did think that this was a lot more of a detailed and focused kind of program and so it's a little bit different.

And they only said they accept the recommendation, will work to identify a strategy and process, and that's what Sarah and Sandra were trying to work on.

>> JULIE WEIKEL: Right.

Dean, when he lost most of his staff, shared with us that this is something that he couldn't move to the top of the list but that they certainly accepted it and they were going to be working on it.

But if we want to try to pin him down a little bit, we could do that.

But I was prepared that the committee would just reiterate support for number 10 from last year and urge BLM to expedite that strategy as soon as possible.

>> GINGER KATHRENS: I think I just wanted to put a little bit more flesh on the bones, and I thought that might help to clarify a little bit with some detail.

>> BEN MASTERS: I spent a couple weeks earlier this year with a PZP darting program and got to see firsthand what Ginger is talking about, and I second, quadruple to the 10th agree with her that this is the future, and I think that to put it into the words, I think that possibly encouraging state and local BLM offices to embrace volunteer organizations to document wild horses, help them create a sustainable management plan and allow the volunteers the freedom to implement a PZP sustainable management plan.

Was that kind of what you were going for, Ginger?

>> GINGER KATHRENS: Yep.

That was well done.

>> BEN MASTERS: Thanks.

Yeah -- the herd I was able to go to, and the herd I'm talking about, is the Spring Creek basin herd in southwest Colorado.

It's not a big herd.

But 10 years ago the gal there named T.J. Holmes, she literally couldn't walk up to any of the horses, and over a period of time that really wasn't that much time, the horses became accustomed to her and she was able to walk in within 40 yards and apply the PZP dart.

So I also totally agree that it is very possible to accustom the horses to a human presence, and

that's actually necessary for these type of management plans.

>> GINGER KATHRENS: Yeah, the herd that comes to mind is the one that Dean and I have spoken about at Stuart creek in Wyoming and another one that comes to mind in Colorado, three of the four Colorado herds are managed in this way, and the fourth is the [indiscernible] Douglas and I think they are looking for directions, volunteers and help in doing that that in herd in Colorado.

>> We're going to need some assistance to capture the recommendation that you --

>> GINGER KATHRENS: I would like to move that.

>> BEN MASTERS: encourage state and local BLM offices to embrace volunteer organizations to document wild horses with photography, create -- work with the local office to create a sustainable management plan involving for the present PZP --

>> Sustainable what plan?

>> BEN MASTERS: Management plan.

And to allow the volunteers the freedom to implement the sustainable management plan involving PZP.

And even if this Herd Management Area where this is occurring is way over AML and they are going to do a gather, I think opening up --

>> I think it is.

It was a really rough winter.

It wouldn't be volunteer organizations.

I would -- you don't have to be a member of an organization to help with this.

Just volunteers.

And we wouldn't want to be in charge of this.

We couldn't be in charge of this, I don't believe.

The BLM would have to -- we would have to take a lead from BLM in this.

I mean, we're willing to, but I don't think -- I don't know that that would be acceptable to a lot. Offices.

I would think they would want to have some control over us.

Don't you think?

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: Certainly.

I think it starts with the kind of discussions you had with Wyoming and eventually the discussions with the specialists escalated to management and then on up to the State Director and there was an endorsement of a concept and willingness to try it on and work together in a place that it's not been done before, and you guys are all encouraging more of that.

That's the concept here.

>> Correct.

>> F. WOHL: Read it out loud.

The first one says urge BLM to institute volunteer strategy as soon as possible.

And we could reference recommendation number 10 from 2015 if we want to.

The second recommendation Ginger had said, encourage state and local BLM offices to embrace volunteers to document wild horses with photography, work with local office to create a sustainable management plan, and to allow volunteers the freedom to implement this sustainable plan regarding application of PZP.

>> I think that last sentence should be -- last part should be changed.

>> Okay.

>> They're going to work -- and the BLM would work with volunteers in implementation of a sustainable plan regarding -- or using PZP.

Yeah, I would take "freedom" out.

>> Allow --

>> It could be we wouldn't want to limit it to PZP.

It could be that there might be other --

>> The sustainable plan.

A sustainable plan -- should we put the goal down there, that the goal is no removals, the goal is a balance of reproduction and mortality?

>> Isn't that kind of inherent in sustainable?

>> R. COPE: I would think so.

I would sure recommend substituting "ability" for "freedom" and possibly put a comma and "plan" and say "including using PZP."

>> Other reversible --

>> STEVEN YARDLEY: How come this has to be limited to this volunteering using -- with like the dart young or whatever?

Why can't we just --

>> Well, volunteers are not going to fly a helicopter and --

>> STEVEN YARDLEY: I know, but there are a lot of things that the volunteers can do, I'm sure even at this point if someone wanted to go and volunteer --

>> Sure, this is --

>> That's what number 10 is about, was ask BLM to develop a whole -- so that's there.

It's in 10 from last year.

>> STEVEN YARDLEY: Okay.

>> For other purpose -- any and all purposes.

It was meant to include what we just made more specific also.

But, yeah, we weren't trying to limit what volunteers might be used for.

>> STEVEN YARDLEY: I just wondered -- if we've already got it covered and we have all these other things, too, if it's better to just not get too caught up in in how we direct what the volunteers do.

>> So you're saying that we're flying at 30,000 feet?

>> 3,000 feet.

>> R. COPE: I point the here is to make a little extra specification regarding recommendation number 10 and give an example that might be implementable almost immediately without a whole other of effort if I'm reading you right.

Is that where you're coming from Ginger?

>> GINGER KATHRENS: Yeah, we are already developing a handbook to review when whoever the person is going to be now with BLM.

And it is specific to the use of fertility control with the goal of limiting reproduction to mortality rates.

>> Is it on a specific HMA?

>> Well, it would be specific to each HMA in which we were working.

>> Okay.

The only thing I'm -- I'm worried about is every meeting we have, and it's one of them things that I understand, but it seems like we're licking the calf over and over again because every calf we talk about increase the use of volunteers, and I'm one of the biggest ones that do that.

>> Well, this is specific to this, to fertility control.

Is it a heavy calf or a long-horn calf?

>> All I know is he's pretty damn wet.

>> I would suggest the electric prod.

Sue, you're losing control.

>> I had a question about that last line.

Did I hear someone say we want to not have the volunteers themselves implement it or assist with the implementation?

>> They could be the darters, but they would be under the direction of whoever the BLM staff person was that was put in charge of the program.

>> So enable volunteers to assist with implementation or participate in implementation?

>> Yeah, that's good.

>> I don't want to be cumbersome either to this, but should there be something in there, the fact that in order to be a darter you have to be certified?

>> That's part of it.

PZP, because FDA wouldn't touch it, came under EPA's jurisdiction as a pesticide, for lack of anywhere better to do it, therefore anybody administering PZP has to be certified --

>> I realize that but I don't know because it just says suitable planned for the darting or whatever, the PZP.

>> It could be that the person who is darting is the BLM person and we're just --

>> Well --

>> We would be certified --

>> It would be --

>> I wanted to make sure that they understood -- that was understood.

>> All we would have to put is in front of the word volunteers qualified.

The next volunteer.

Right there.

Qualified.

>> Very good.

>> Okay.

Are we okay with volunteers?

Then we'll move to another Working Group.

>> Done with volunteers.

>> Okay.

Great.

Public comment?

>> I'm going to the list the names that I have.

I'm ready to be corrected.

I have Jen as chair, Ginger, June and Fred who has been on the work -- working on public comment.

Let me just say that to us and to anyone listening the reason we're a little confused on this is

because we're all interested in all of these and when we get together we're sometimes separated in little groups --

>> Hey, sue?

Sorry.

We still have an issue with people being -- people being able to hear people.

Part of it is because it's standing in front of you but then -- I'm saying this to everybody.

It's very helpful if we be conscientious about that.

Thank you.

>> S. McDONNELL: I was just saying we all have contributed from time to time.

We have official members that we consult with one another, and so we get confused about who is on which committee.

>> I'm going to back up for a second and then move to public comment.

I know you asked if we were done with volunteers.

I guess the first bullet -- I just want to push -- the board had conversation last night if these speaks to -- what we considered last night in terms of the board's recommendation to implement in full previous recommendations that had been accepted over the last year.

And that being an overarching -- the overarching recommendation of this meeting, and to me the -- and I'm happy to leave it in but the volunteer piece plays into that larger recommendation where we are asking for follow through and follow up on the previous recommendations.

So we have the same thing.

Continue to work --

>> This would be recommendation number 1, Kathy?

>> That's what I was thinking it would be.

>> Because I think we keep touching on it in different ways.

And I think it saves going down rabbit holes.

>> If I may I have this for a summary.

You can put it at the beginning or end, but what I had written earlier is that the board recommends BLM continue to work toward full implementation of previously accepted recommendations just so they don't slip through the cracks.

I didn't know to put that at the beginning or end but I thought it would be a good thing to have in there to say we had 35 accepted recommendations in the last 12 months and we don't want to forget they're there just because they haven't been fully implemented yet.

[Internet connection lost]

>> J. SEWING: -- I don't mean to be demeaning or anything but it appears to me they're not that interested in what's going on, just interested in their own opinion.

Sorry.

>> I have a question about public comment.

So we get some printed in the book, and those are ones that I assume went to Ramona per the way public comments are supposed to get channeled.

Do the public comments that get sent to us as individuals on the board do those become part of the permanent record?

If they weren't sent to Ramona?

Can somebody help answer how this works logistically and where's Debbie?

So sorry -- I think Holly is going to help ups out.

>> Holly is going to try.

The public comments are collected both by Ramona as well as via email, because we have an email -- a special email account for advisory board that we collect the comments and then they are printed, and they are sent to Ramona or we brought some of them with us because they came in after we were leaving and already sent them to the books.

So the ones you all receive do not because we don't have copies of those.

So I guess if we wanted to we would have to get copies of them.

>> I think it's important that we know that, and if -- I don't know how -- how does the board want to handle this?

I think some of those where they've individually put all nine email addresses and so therefore we have seen them but they're not part of the permanent record.

So -- I don't know.

>> When I get one of those and it's got everybody's address on it I forward it on.

>> To Ramona?

>> F. WOEHL: Yes, but if it's addressed to me as an individual I don't.

>> Can I assume all the ones I got that had all the boards email's on there did get to Ramona?

>> Yes, ma'am.

>> Even they weren't in our printed stuff?

>> There is another stack and I guarantee you'll have another stack when you get home.

>> Okay.

>> Then what?

Do we collate them in any way?

Do we summarize what we receive and kind of report somewhere or somehow?

Or do they just go there and -- nothing happens?

>> Dean?

>> The answer is, no, they haven't been collated.

In the Federal Register notice I think we provide a date for which public comments should be sent to Ramona, is that correct?

>> Not directly to Ramona but to the email account.

>> To the email account.

And those are the ones that go in your book if they're received timely.

I've gotten a bunch.

Please give it to the board.

So I have sent that to Fred and I think he has distributed that.

So are they collated and all that?

>> No.

They're provided to you as a board to consider in the manner you choose.

And you have been paying a lot more attention to them with your new committee over the course of the last year and a half.

So, no, they're not collated but you all get to read them.

You're considering right now as you make your recommendations, that's the extent of it.

Currently.

>> So one of the things Debbie was just added is there are two scanned documents of some hard copies that have come in of over 350 public comments that should be emailed to you all.

>> [inaudible]

>> Does that include ones where people spoke here and dropped them off at the back desk.

>> No, those are in addition to.

The ones that people left -- [inaudible] the ones that spoke yesterday and left us hard copies, if they brought nine copies after today's meeting we're going to put those in your books so you can take them with you today.

The ones that did not leave nine copies, they will also go back with us to Oklahoma.

They'll scan those and so you'll probably have three or four documents before it's over with.

>> Okay.

>> From an informational -- ongoing informal knowledge base, it might be interesting to try to in some way put those in topics and see how we're doing and what people are the most concerned with and maybe organize them in some way.

Jen, I don't know, did you ever discuss doing anything like that?

>> Well, this subcommittee is all so new, this information is new to me as well.

>> So we don't know with a we're doing.

>> But I think it's good to track public opinion in some way.

I think it has some value.

I don't know quite how to do it or who would do it or how to do it.

>> No, and we should continue for sure -- maybe we'll talk about it -- we won't take this board's time maybe.

We can converse about how we would like to do that.

>> In the years I have been doing this, there is a thing that runs through it depending on what the current thing is.

Like this time we got a lot about spaying and neutering.

With the deal with Tom Davis some years ago we got a lot of comments on that.

So it's kind of sporadic, and it depends on what the topic of the time is, and the kind of comments that we get.

I don't know if that helps or not.

>> I don't know if this is the appropriate time, but can we make -- could I make a comment on some of the comments I received and kind of my take into it?

>> Before we do that, it's snowing outside.

I'm from Arkansas, and that is incredible.

>> I am surprised you even know what that is, Fred.

>> It's either snowing or there are a bunch of geese flying over.

Go ahead, I'm sorry.

That was just -- that blew me away.

>> I just want to take just a moment because of public comments that I read personally concerning the livestock industry on public ranges, and I know that there are a lot of you that this is a controversial issue.

I don't think a lot of times all the good that is done by people who have grazing allotments on public ranges is recognized.

I cannot tell you the number of range improvements that have been done through pinyon-juniper treatments, through brush treatment, through reseeding, through controlled burns and the application of seedings thereafter, and also water developments that benefit the wildlife, the wild horses and, yes, the livestock.

This rangeland, we cherish it as much as anyone.

It is crucial to the livelihood of those who run on it.

And because of the Taylor Grazing Act, it is part of our heritage as well.

And because of the 1971 wild horse and burro act it is part of the Mustang's heritage.

This rangeland resource that we're talking about is crucial for everyone, especially in the Western United States, and I think we need to do everything in our power to use sound science and the application thereof to manage it so that it will be a viable resource for many generations to come.

And I sincerely hope that it will.

And so thank you for that consideration.

>> Thank you, Steven.

>> To build on that, if I could, something I would like to address to the new members and to the audience that's still here and to all of us as a reminder, it's really easy, and I see this in my positions with the Forest Service, with E that PA, with the wildland fire leadership council, it's so, so easy to narrow your focus when you look at the issue when we really need to view all these issues holistically.

It's not one single factor.

It's not that the cattlemen have too many livestock out there.

It's not that we're not putting enough PZP into the herds.

It's not that the wildlife is bad or climate change has caused it all.

All these factors lead to the problems we're having and the whole focus needs to be the ecosystem itself.

When we look at what's out there and what the range can stand, how we can support all that we need there, be that the flora and fauna, livestock, horses, wildlife, it's all important, and most important to all, we always tend to forget the people that live out there.

We rarely hear the effects on the socioeconomics of the small towns, the range communities or the forest communities.

That tends to be ignored more than any other segment of it.

But the wider we place our viewpoint and the more our focus encompasses all the factors that are vital to the ecosystem itself that encompass all facets of the issue, the better we can work towards solutions.

That's why when I read all the comments, I tend to take that into consideration first.

How narrow is the focus of this comment and how much is this person seeing the overall issue?

So when you're taking that into consideration for your comments, I ask you to remember that the issue is a lot wider than most people realize.

So there.

>> No --

>> Yeah, we were just -- we were just talking about this, and yeah, if we don't have the land and the resource, we don't have anything.

We don't have wild horses.

We don't have any of the wildlife.

I think we have to be fair in the allocation of resources on wild horse herd areas because they're a small component of public lands, but that doesn't mean we shouldn't be fair, and that doesn't mean that as wild horse advocates we shouldn't really focus on the health of the land and all the creatures that live there.

And then on wild horse herd areas I would like to see a bit fairer allocation of resources to them because that's the only homeland they have left.

So -- but thanks, Steven, and I agree with both you and Cope.

>> All finished with public comment?

Fred, do you want to -- the chair to go back through all of them as you did last time or do you want me to?

>> Go ahead.

>> Kathy, take us away.

We need to review them and just agree or not.

>> Can you see that okay?

>> Uh-huh.

>> Number one, ask BLM -- this is our overriding recommendation to start us off.

Ask BLM to continue to work toward full implementation of previously accepted recommendations of the board and that BLM prioritize according to the BLM matrix of meeting AML.

Was that matrix or metrics?

>> Matrix.

>> Matrix of meeting AML.

Everybody good with that?

>> Good job.

>> The next recommendation would have been under resources, number 3.

Recommend BLM create crisis emergency plan in case of severe drought or natural disaster that necessitates removal of either over 1,000 horses or over the amount BLM can hold in short-term holding facilities.

The situation would be triggered by a BLM determination that animals are imperiled.

>> Can I --

>> Amount --

>> Could I change that to say -- I will support it, but could we possibly change that to say the situation would be triggered by a BLM determination that the animals or the rangeland is imperiled?

>> If you -- if we add "or the rangeland" are imperiled, we have thousands and thousands of horses to gather tomorrow.

>> This is true.

>> And what this is a crisis emergency plan due to fire or severe drought, as it says.

>> I didn't see fire in there.

>> Well, natural disaster, isn't that a fire?

>> Okay.

>> There's a whole lot of tornadoes or things --

>> My question for Dean is do you have a definition of imperiled for rangeland?

>> So I think there is one in our handbook but I don't remember exactly what it is. It involves overgrazed ranges that are going to cross a threshold of no return and go to a lower sterile state.

Do we have a definition?

I don't remember.

Bryan, Jared, are you there?

Do you recall what that definition is in our handbook?

We'll have to get back to you, I think, Cope.

>> If we put that phrase "or the rangeland" in there the whole thing becomes meaningless because we have to get started tomorrow morning.

>> That's why I asked Dean what that definition was and if it triggered a removal of animals when you reach that imperiled stage on the rangeland.

>> And if I may interject, when this conversation came up before, I think Dean was explaining, too, both our fire organization and our range under sage-grouse and all of that a lot of the range plans are in place under those programs rather than under wild horse and burro.

So --

>> I think we need to look at Ben's intent for this, right?

>> My intent for this is if we have thousands of horses that are imperiled to the point to where they're looking like they're going to die, you know, that is not a humane way to let horses go.

So that's why I want this crisis emergency plan in place, is to get the horses off the range so that we don't watch them die a terrible death on the range because nobody wants that.

>> Then I think we take "or the rangeland" out.

>> I think we do reading the first sentence because it says that a disaster that necessitates removal of over a thousand horses.

So if that's the point, it doesn't matter whether you consider the rangeland imperiled or not.

You're in a situation that a thousand horses have to come off.

>> I think we're --

>> I have one question.

[inaudible]

>> 8 voted yea, one voted no vote, neutral.

>> No, he said he could live with it.

We would consider -- other committees I have at least if there are no absolute thumbs down, that's considered consensus.

>> I'm fine with it.

I guess there's some things I would change but as I stated, but I'm fine with it.

So let the record state.

>> I don't think you need to record so much eight votes or nine votes or whatever.

It's just a consensus was reached.

>> Adoptions.

Recommend that BLM make it easier for trusted trainers or Mustang heritage foundation or other organizations acquire sale-eligible and riding-desirable horses with, parentheses, based on age and adoptability as defining riding desirable.

Okay.

Board supports efforts by BLM to engage professional marketers to identify and attract

appropriate population segments in order to increase Mustang adoptions.

>> Talking about population segments of humans, right?

>> Correct.

>> Is that clear?

>> You could change and make it clearer by changing population to demographic.

>> I would point out that you don't market to mustangs.

I'm a good train but I can't train my Mustang to read.

>> That's usually true, but there are times I would wonder.

>> Appropriate human populations --

>> Just put in demographics, appropriate demographic segments.

>> Is demographic by definition refers to humans.

>> Demo as in demagogue --

>> We need to put -- we need to put [indiscernible] to be politically correct.

>> What?

>> If we have a demo, we have to a republic --

>> Oh, Fred!

>> Next, BLM create and pilot a Mustang mentoring program consisting of a two-week on-site training at a short-term holding facility for up to 10 horses and 10 adopters with a minimum standard of TIP training.

>> Do we need to mention anything in there as my recommendation about the trainer -- I have been thinking about this.

There are several good current BLM employees that could do this.

So I don't want to miss out on that.

I guess, Dean, I'm going to ask you what would be the correct way of doing that, do you think, either/or?

>> Sure, we shouldn't just limit it to outside people.

If we have employees that have the capability to do this, we ought to take advantage of our resources.

>> Okay.

So should we say in there with a qualified trainer or -- or just leave it like that?

You know the intent that we're talking about.

>> Sure.

It's not exclusive.

>> All right.

>> Of BLM as it reads.

>> All right.

>> BLM employees.

>> What's that Ginger?

>> Look at the syntax.

You have adopters with a minimum standard of training.

That doesn't apply to the adopters.

>> Well, it ought to.

I'm sorry.

It's been a long four or five days.

>> Adopters, establishing a minimum standard.

Does that work?

Ginger -- I don't know.

>> Adopter, and then --

>> With a minimum standard of training for the horses equal to --

>> Well, is it the trainer -- what's the goal here?

>> Well -- do we come away with --

>> Well, the goal is that they'll have a start on their horse, and so I was just trying to put a -- my mind just went completely blank -- a standard for them to meet.

To attain a minimum -- to attain a minimum standard?

>> There you go.

>> You got it.

I'm sorry, the only way I passed English was by --

>> Attain, not obtain.

>> There you go.

>> I like it.

>> So it's the horse that is attaining the minimum --

>> Uh-huh.

>> I don't think TIP training applies to the people.

>> Okay.

>> Well --

>> Before I --

>> That is a point, though.

You are training the people to work with the horse.

>> Well, but -- and so they have to -- yeah.

>> Would they think that they would come out of it being a TIP trainer was my --

>> Oh -- well, I'm sure BLM will massage this in such a way --

>> My question is if maybe we're limiting the BLM a little bit on putting all the verbs at the end, if we just have the BLM create and pilot a Mustang mentoring program, period, and then --

>> No, I don't like that.

>> Do you want to leave this in?

>> Yes, just put a period there.

That's good.

>> Like I did?

>> Adopt -- yeah, that's good.

>> One, two, three?

>> One, two, three.

>> Okey-doke.

>> Volunteers.

>> Did we vote on that one?

>> Yes.

>> Urge BLM to institute the volunteer strategy as soon as possible referencing the 2015 recommendation number 10.

Do we have to clarify the month?

Because we had two meetings with recommendations --

>> Owe a.

You can just say September.

>> September 2015.

>> All set with that one?

Thank you.

Encourage state and local BLM offices to embrace volunteers to document wild horses with photography -- oh, document wild horses with photography, work with local offices to create a sustainable management plan, and enable qualified volunteers to participate in the implementation of the sustainable plan, including the use of PZP.

>> Can we add use of PZP and other similar like GonaCon

>> What if we had reversible contraception?

>> I agree.

That's probably why I never made a vet.

Contraceptives.

>> Contraceptives?

>> There you go.

There you go.

>> Okay.

I think this is our final, just a comment to encourage aggressive use of all the tools in the toolbox referencing number 16 of September 2015.

Okey-doke.

Everybody set with our recommendations?

Thank you.

>> Thank you.

>> How many are they?

As I remember last night you all saying we're only going to do three.

>> Then you came up with half of them.

>> You have eight but a couple of them are do what you said you were going to do last year.

>> One of them is none of the above.

>> None of the above?

>> We have a couple of those where there are none.

>> And then the one about encourage BLM to use professional marketers.

So maybe --

>> Did we lose that?

>> No, it's there, isn't it?

>> So this one is new.

These three are new.

>> That's four.

>> Yeah.

This one is new.

>> Five.

>> And that's all.

>> That's not too bad.

>> What happened to that one with the professional marketing?

I never did see it?

>> What happened to the professional marketing?

>> It should have been under adoptions.

>> It was there.

>> Oh, number 2.

There it is.

>> Yep, we're there.

>> Number 2.

>> So five in total are new.

>> We did it.

We kept it to five.

>> Well, thank you, everyone.

I'll turn it back to Fred for another --

>> Thank you, sue.

Before we go too far, I think this is very interesting, we have had over 400-plus viewers on our Livestreaming, and these are from the U.S., Canada, Switzerland, Slovenia -- I don't know where Slovenia is, but that's pretty cool that somebody --

>> I think you're actually talking about Slovenia --

>> Sylvania.

>> S-L-O-V-E-N-I-A.

>> It's between Croatia and Bosnia.

Part of the old Yugoslavia.

>> You had to ask.

>> The bottom line, if you don't know to begin with and someone tells you something, you have to believe it, whether it's true or not.

So I believe you.

Norway.

United Kingdom, which is England, by the way, I do know that.

>> And Wales and Scotland and northern Ireland.

Don't question me --

>> And Mexico.

And we have 31% are new viewers.

I think that's pretty cool.

Sue, I would like to thank you.

You've done an excellent job.

I know we were getting a little stir crazy.

We haven't had much sleep.

But we have -- Kristin, before I close out, would you like to say anything?

>> Thank you, Fred.

I never like to be the one between folks leaving for the end of the day, but there are some things that I do want to share, and, first of all, is that I'm very impressed and grateful by all of the work that the board has done.

You are commitment that you have shown.

Not only these last few days, but also in your lives back home because most of you remain very connected and committed to the welfare and well-being of our rangelands and wild horses and burros.

You've spent some long hours discussing difficult issues and sharing different perspectives and that is the power and the promise of these kinds of advisory boards.

I find that so helpful.

We've been wrestling with what can we do that's new and different and holding that in balance with continuing progress on those things that do work and need to stay on the course on, and finding that difficult balance.

Some of our accomplishments are longer term, and so keeping that in perspective.

I really appreciate our program folks, not only for all that they did to support this meeting and me and all of you, but also their openness and willingness to take fresh looks at the program, be very honest in looking at it and saying this is what's working well, this is what may need some more work, and being very open and receptive to that.

You know, folks have been working on this for different periods of time but some folks have been at it just a little bit of time, like Mr. Bolstad there, and to be continued fresh and continue working on this is just -- I'm very grateful for that.

I also heard so much that resonated with me about partners, volunteers, community engagement.

This is obviously a situation, a program that can't move forward or move in any direction without all of you caring, all of the people in the field caring and working with their public land managers on this issue, and I really was energized by all of that dialogue and the participation from folks in the audience.

Our commitment, my commitment and the commitment of the BLM to you all and the board is to continue provide high quality information and support so that you can do the work that you are doing, because we appreciate so much of what you are doing.

We want to work together with partners, volunteers, stakeholders and the board to implement the recommendations, not only those from last year but the ones we talked about today, and we want to really have that open, transparent accountability.

We want to continue to report out results fully, make sure you understand what we've been able to accomplish, what we haven't yet, and why that is so that we all understand whether it's capacity or process or other challenges that we're still dealing with.

And to close, I just am very happy that people continue to care about their public lands and resources because at the end of the day if we have -- if we're speaking to an empty room, that causes great concern for our wild horses and burros on our public lands.

So the board is providing a great example of engagement as you all, and I want to recognize and thank you for that.

>> Thank you, Kristin.

We really appreciate you coming.

We really to.

Dean, would you like to have a final comment?

>> Yeah, just a couple sincere thank you to all of you, Director Kornze wrote an email earlier in the day asking how it was going and I was able to give him a positive report you're working as a team and engaged and providing us good feedback.

So I will do my very best to act on the highest priority things, recognizing that funding is a limiting resource, and I think we cannot proceed on some of the things as to the degree and extent that that we would desire to do and that you desirous to do that.

So recognizing that limitation and also currently employees to get some of this work done, we're going to have to engage the field to a greater degree and not rely on Washington Office employees, but you have my commitment to do the most we can with what we got to do and we'll keep working on it, and I hope -- I remember one of the public comments, after I had made my remarks, Lisa said something to the fact that got all these goals but the proof is in what you bring home and in accomplishments.

So we got six months, five months until September.

So I hope that we do have more progress to report, but we'll do the best we can.

That's my commitment to you.

So thank you again for your service and look forward to the next meeting.

>> Thank you, Dean.

On behalf of the board, we would like to invite the Director to attend at least a day or two of the next meeting -- it would be really cool if he could go on our field trip with us.

>> Love to.

So we'll see.

His schedule is busy, as you know.

>> I know, but --

>> I guess I threw that in because I remember last board meeting there was kind of a sense of does BLM really care, do you guys listen to this board or not.

Kind of remember that conversation.

So I just threw in the Director email he does care and he is interested.

>> Well, if you would express our invitation to him, and we would love to see him, and he would -- he would have a hoot.

>> He should have as heck would have this time.

>> All right.

Jen, any final words?

>> I'm excited to hear the pieces you point out, both in terms of what is limiting and what you see as opportunity and new and different.

I think the reality that you are in the in this chair and the history you have in a more permanent way makes me hopeful in terms of moving toward your own identified metric for success.

>> Thank you.

Cope?

>> I think I've had my say this afternoon.

Appreciate your help.

>> Ben?

No, I just -- go ahead, Ginger, I'm sorry.

>> Well, we have put in some long hours, and we don't agree on -- as you know, I'm not vociferous in my disagreement but you know how strongly I disagree with some points of view and, yes, I think we can all work together and move forward in a collaborative way for the good of the animals.

>> Thank you.

Ben?

>> I think we should all do a pack trip to get to know each other better.

>> Hey, I'm game.

>> I got a good route picked out.

>> Don't make them invites unless you're serious.

>> That's not an empty invite.

>> All right, brother.

>> I second his motion, but June and I would like to take a four-wheeler.

>> June?

Final words?

>> What happened to Julie and --

>> We're coming this way.

That way it ends up with me so I have the final say.

>> I guess I would just like to reiterate mostly what everybody else has said.

I always appreciate every time that I come to these meetings.

New board members are always exciting and the camaraderie that we have is great.

>> Thank you.

>> And I think Dean is great, too.

>> Steven?

>> I just like to thank Dean and thank the other board members.

We've had a great -- a lot of great discussions.

I just like to encourage everyone who is watching in the audience and who is watching over the Internet to remember and recognize that the rangeland is our priceless resource and we need to manage the horses and all of the other animals on the range to preserve that resource and have it there for future generations and also because of where I sit on the board I would like to tell you that -- of the commitment of the permittees to keep improving the rangelands and to keep doing water developments and keep doing those things that will be beneficial to all of the animals that are on the rangelands, and thank you.

>> I just like us all to note there's a lot of -- there are hundreds, thousands, literally, of staff hours on the part of BLM represented in this room over the past three days, and in addition to at the Field Office, and I think we need to recognize that this is a government agency that does try to reach out and access public opinion, to make sure that the public is informed about their activities, and relative to recent incident here in the United States, a lot of the claims that government agencies are proceeding without public input and without concern about the public is just not true, and the work that goes into something like this board meeting, certainly on the part of the volunteers up here, but there's a lot of staff who donated and provide add lot of support and input, and they're sitting here listening, and they'll attempt to go home and implement the best practices that they know how to do under the constraints, and I think we need to recognize that.

And I want to thank you all for coming to Oregon, because it's been delightful to have the board here in Oregon, and I'm so proud of them.

>> I think the board as a group needs to give Miss Kathy a round of applause because --

[applause]

-- she's done a real good job.

Real good job.

And also crystal, don't forget this, because in this is your envelope to send your bill back.

Okay?

So do that.

As a chairman of such a diverse group it's always stressful for me, especially when you have three new board members show up you don't know how they're going to get along, how they're going to relate, and how things are going to be.

I've always been a glass half full.

I have never been a glass half empty kind of guy.

And I have been so impressed with the three new board members we have.

They are very passionate about what they believe in, they're not afraid of telling us, telling anybody what they feel, how they believe, and I respect that more than they know.

But they're not afraid to compromise for the betterment of everything, and that's what makes this board so good.

We are a cohesive group.

We are -- to be on this board you have to have a type A personality.

I'm honest with you.

Everybody here has a type A personality.

As you can tell when we start doing comments, and we try to be respectful to each other, and I've never, never encountered anybody losing their temper since I have been chair, being unkind to each other, saying something unkind to each other.

They've always been very respectful, and that means a lot.

That means a lot.

And to sit as a chair of a group of this caliber.

Honestly, a lot of these people -- I would say probably all of them, maybe Miss June, they're a lot smarter than I am.

I have to pick on her.

She has picked on me the whole meeting, and I just had to get even.

So, anyway, I'm very, very thankful to have the honor to sit here, and the BLM staff has just been incredible, and I personally again thank the staff here from BLM in Oregon.

They have opened their arms to us.

It's been a great, great time for us here as far as that.

We have learned a lot and got a lot done.

As I finish, we are going to be finishing 10 minutes early, Sue has asked me to share a poem.

>> I was just kidding.

No --

>> Goodness.

>> I love cowboy poetry.

>> You know, I can't explain it.

There are no words, of course to describe that moment in training when you connect with your horse.

It happens in an instant.

Why it sets your mind to reeling.

You either get it or you don't.

It's such an indescribable feeling.

Let's just call it swapping spirits, for there's nothing that compares when you are the horse and the horse is you, and you're breathing the same air.

Thank you all very much.

We're adjourned.

[applause]