

## Comprehensive Animal Welfare Program Team Assessment Report

July 18, 2025

**Gather Name:** Adobe Town Wild Horse Gather

**State:** Wyoming

**District/Field Office:** High Desert District/Rawlins Field Office

**Incident Commander:** Ben Smith

**Lead COR:** Eddie Vandenburg

**Gather Method:** Helicopter Drive Trapping

**CAWP Assessment Team Members:** Jerrie Bertola, Ben Noyes, and Ruth Thompson

**Assessment Dates:** July 17-18, 2025

**Total Number of CAWP Gather Standards:** 206

**Number of Applicable CAWP Gather Standards:** 181

**Compliance with Applicable CAWP Standards:** 177

**Compliance with Applicable CAWP Standards:** 169/181 = 93%

**Understanding Assessments:** The Comprehensive Animal Welfare Program aims to promote the welfare of wild horses and burros during management activities while minimizing stress and ensuring humane care, handling and treatment. CAWP assessments evaluate compliance with standards during the activities taking place at the time of the assessment. This framework helps ensure a clear and unbiased evaluation of events or actions as they occur. Here are some key points:

- **Holistic Approach:** Assessments reflect the entirety of the activity, not targeting individuals or specific groups.
- **Time-Specific:** The evaluation focuses solely on the observed circumstances during the assessment period.
- **Limitations:** Previous or subsequent events are not accounted for, meaning the assessment is a standalone observation.

**Conditions found to be in non-compliance with the CAWP Standards for Wild Horse and Burro Gatherers:**

### Trap Site

#### Wild Horse Care

##### **Standard**

**III.B.3.a** Dependent foals or weak/debilitated animals must be separated from other WH&Bs at the trap site to avoid injuries during transportation to the temporary holding facility. Separation of dependent foals from mares must not exceed four hours unless the Lead COR/COR/PI authorizes a longer time or a decision is made to wean the foals.

**Non-Compliance:** Dependent foals that were not old enough to wean were kept separated from mares for longer than four hours.

## **Handling Aids Used at Temporary Holding**

### **Standard**

- IV.C.1** Handling aids such as flags and shaker paddles must be the primary tools for driving and moving WH&Bs during handling and transport procedures. Contact of the flag or paddle end of primary handling aids with a WH&B is allowed. Ropes looped around the hindquarters may be used from horseback or on foot to assist in moving an animal forward or during loading.

**Non-Compliance:** Flags and shaker paddles were the primary tools used for moving horses; however, the use of the flags and especially the shaker paddles became excessive, including repeated use in the animals' faces.

## **Transportation Vehicles**

### **Standard**

- V.B.4** All gates and doors must open and close easily and be able to be secured in a closed position.

**Non-Compliance:** A gate within the stock trailer did not open easily and required multiple people to operate.

### **Standard**

- V.B.10** Partition gates in transport vehicles should be used to distribute the load into compartments during travel.

**Non-Compliance:** Partition gates were not used when transporting wild horses from the trap.

## **Temporary Holding Corral**

## **Wild Horse Care Feeding and Watering**

### **Standard**

- III.B.1.c.** Good quality hay must be fed at a minimum rate of 20 pounds per 1000 pound adult animal per day, adjusted accordingly for larger or smaller horses, burros and foals.

**Non-Compliance:** Good-quality hay was provided; however, not at a rate sufficient to meet the target of 20 pounds per 1000-pound adult animal, even when adjusted for the smaller size of the adult wild horses.

### **Standard**

- III.B.1.c.ii** Hay placement must allow all WH&Bs to eat simultaneously.

**Non-Compliance:** The placement of hay was not distributed so that all animals could eat simultaneously.

## **Wild Horse Care**

### **Standard**

- III.B.4.b** Foals must be reunited with their mares/jennies at the temporary holding facility within four hours of capture unless the Lead COR/COR/PI authorizes a longer time or foals are old enough to be weaned during the gather.

**Non-Compliance:** Foals not old enough to be weaned were not reunited with their mares at the temporary holding facility within four hours.

## **Handling Aids Used at Temporary Holding**

### **Standard**

- IV.C.1** Handling aids such as flags and shaker paddles must be the primary tools for driving and moving WH&Bs during handling and transport procedures. Contact of the flag or paddle end of primary handling aids with a WH&B is allowed. Ropes looped around the hindquarters may be used from horseback or on foot to assist in moving an animal forward or during loading.

**Non-Compliance:** Flags and shaker paddles were the primary tools used for moving horses; however, the use of the flags and especially the shaker paddles became excessive, including repeated use in the animals' faces.

## **Transportation**

### **Transportation Care During Transport Procedures**

#### **Standard**

- V.C.3.** Trailers must be loaded using the minimum space allowance in all compartments as follows:
- a. 12 square feet per adult horse.
  - b. 6.0 square feet per dependent horse foal.
  - c. 8.0 square feet per adult burro.
  - d. 4.0 square feet per dependent burro foal.

**Non-Compliance:** Dependent horse foals were loaded in a manner that didn't allow for a minimum of 6 square feet per dependent foal.

### **Transportation General**

#### **Standard**

- V.A.2** WH&Bs identified for removal should be shipped from the temporary holding facility to a BLM facility within 48 hours.

**Non-compliance:** No animals were shipped from the temporary holding facility to a BLM off-range corral occurred until the fourth day of the gather.

#### **Standard**

- V.A.3** Shipping should occur in the following order of priority; 1) debilitated animals, 2) pairs, 3) weanlings, 4) dry mares and 5) studs.

**Non-Compliance:** Shipping priority was not followed, as dry mares were shipped earlier than prescribed due to the initial sorting of mares at the temporary holding corral.

#### **Handling Aids Used Loading at Temporary Holding**

##### **Standard**

**IV.C.1** Handling aids such as flags and shaker paddles must be the primary tools for driving and moving WH&Bs during handling and transport procedures. Contact of the flag or paddle end of primary handling aids with a WH&B is allowed. Ropes looped around the hindquarters may be used from horseback or on foot to assist in moving an animal forward or during loading.

**Non-Compliance:** Flags and shaker paddles were the primary tools used for moving horses; however, the use of the flags and especially the shaker paddles became excessive, including repeated use in the animals' faces.

**Table 1: Overall Summary Rating Adobe Town Wild Horse Gather**

|                          | <b>Total Numbers</b> | <b>Percent Compliant</b> | <b>Rating</b> |
|--------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|---------------|
| <b>Trap Site</b>         | 65/69                | 94%                      | Good          |
| <b>Temporary Holding</b> | 65/69                | 94%                      | Good          |
| <b>Transportation</b>    | 39/43                | 91%                      | Good          |
| <b>Gather Compliance</b> | 169/181              | 93%                      | Good          |

**Final CAWP Assessment Rating:** Good. 93% of applicable CAWP standards were met overall. Possible ratings for CAWP Assessments are 96-100% Excellent, 86-95% Good, 70-85% Complies, and 0-69% Failure to Comply.