

National Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board Meeting
Arlington, VA
October 13 and 14, 2011

Board Members Present: Robin Lohnes; Dr. Boyd Spratling; Janet Jankura; Tim Harvey; Paul Durbin; Dr. Robert Bray; Jim Stephenson; and Julie Gleason. Board Member Absent: Gary Zakotnik. Bureau of Land Management (BLM): Bob Abbey, BLM Director; Ed Roberson, Associate Director, Renewable Resources and Planning; Joan Guilfoyle, Division Chief, Sharon Kipping; Holle Hooks; Toni Topps; Zachery Reichold; Sally Spencer; Dean Bolstad; Lili Thomas; and Ramona DeLorme. Eastern States Office: John Lyon, Director; Marie Stewart, Associate State Director; Karen Malloy. USDA, APHIS: Dr. Al Kane. USDA, U.S. Forest Service: Barry Imler. Robin Roberts, Facilitator, RESOLVE CO.

Thursday, October 13, 2011

Robin Lohnes opened the meeting at 8:03 a.m. Each of the Board members introduced themselves to the public. There were three new advisory board members in attendance: Julie Gleason (Public Interest – Equine Behavior); James Stephenson (National Resources Management); and Dr. Robert E. Bray (Wild Horse and Burro Research). Ed Roberson introduced the BLM and USDA staff in attendance.

Director's Remarks

Bob Abbey spoke about the tremendous credibility the Board has with everyone in the BLM. He thanked the Board for all their skills and experience in helping the program manage viable wild horses and burros on public lands. The Board has provided beneficial recommendations to the BLM throughout the years and the BLM welcomes additional comments and recommendations in the future.

A new Wild Horse and Burro strategy is under review and will be released to the public when finalized. The new strategy emphasizes population growth-suppression techniques; promotes public- private eco-sanctuaries to provide opportunities for local ecotourism and care for wild horses removed from Western public rangelands; seeks to boost adoptions by making more trained wild horses available to the public; and establishes a comprehensive animal welfare program. The BLM will implement this strategy unless otherwise directed by Congress.

The BLM has contracted the National Academy of Science (NAS) to help find the best management practices to promote healthy, viable wild horses and burros on public lands. NAS will identify research needs pertaining to census, population growth rates, setting appropriate management levels to name a few. Their work will add to the BLM's knowledge and credibility and help the BLM earn the trust of the public.

The removals of wild horses will be aimed at Catch, Treat, and Release (CTR) gathers for the primary purpose of applying population growth suppression methods. At this time the program

has two techniques for counting wild horses and burros: mark-resight and simultaneous double count.

Director Abbey stated that the BLM does not inflate the number of wild horses on the range and has not inflated the number of wild horses on the range as alleged by some of the BLM critics who contend this supposed inflation is part of a conspiratorial effort by the BLM to manage for extinction. There is no conspiracy. The future success of wild horse and burro management hinges on the BLM's ability to curb population growth and reduce the number of animals that go into long-term holding. There is no other way to put the Wild Horse and Burro Program on a cost-effective, sustainable track. The BLM will not see any funding increases from Congress. The BLM is implementing a new way to do business and to earn the public's trust. Director Abbey thanked Robin for her long term service with the Board and for her passion and willingness to assist the public.

Eastern States Welcome and Report

Dr. John Lyon, Eastern States Office (ESO) State Director, welcomed the Advisory Board. He noted that he has been with the BLM for the last four months. Dr. Lyon introduced the Eastern States staff.

Karen Malloy stated that the ESO deals mostly with the adoption side of the Wild Horse and Burro program. The holding facility in Piney Woods, MS, which has been expanded to hold 100 to 200 animals, now serves as a distribution center. Other ESO duties include compliance checks, home inspections, and issuing of titles. There are five staff members in the Milwaukee Field Office, three staff members in the Jackson Field Office, and two staff members in the Springfield, VA Office. Volunteers are used to help with the adoptions. This year they have had 25 to 30 adoption events. The ESO adopted 1,000 horses at 27 events in fiscal year 2011. These numbers included 270 animals adopted through the Mustang Heritage Foundation Mustang Makeover events.

There was an adoption held in Lorton, VA this past weekend. The BLM did not adopt as many horses as hoped for due to the depressed horse market yet there were a lot of people showing up because of the marketing efforts. Karen noted that the month of October is not the most favorable month to adopt in the Eastern States.

Introduction of New Division Chief

Ed Roberson introduced Joan Guilfoyle, the new Wild Horse and Burro Program Division Chief. He stated that he was looking to Joan to help the BLM with a new way to do business in the future. Joan will be working on building trust and transparency and reaching out to the public to get feedback that sometimes was over looked because the program was consumed with doing business "as usual". Joan is good with communications skills and has a history of working with public issues. She has worked in a variety of government agencies. Joan has been on the job for two months and within that time she has been out in the field attending two gathers and an equine conference. The BLM had the challenge of finding someone uniquely qualified to take the program to a new level and using new ideas to improve how things are done. Building trust and transparency is the key, while reaching out to the public to get feedback.

Joan Guilfoyle stated that she is aware that there is a lot of public interest in this program and she will be immediately focused on how many horses are on the range; the NAS study; and filling a new position of the Research Committee Coordinator. The BLM is moving forward with the Comprehensive Animal Welfare Program which looks at the treatment of animals from range to facilities to titling. The BLM is committed to providing the best possible care for the animals. A full time National Animal Welfare Coordinator will be hired in FY2012. There will be a stronger emphasis on positive dialog with people who want to work with the program. Joan wants to work with the Board to be more involved in the program and to actively seek out groups who are willing to cooperate with the program and mission. The frequency of the Board meetings will be dependent on the budget.

Joan mentioned that in August 2011 Utah BLM law enforcement pulled over a vehicle containing wild horses that they suspected the owners had ill intent for the horses. The BLM confiscated the horses. This case is active and she noted that people who violate the federal law will be prosecuted.

Robin thanked Director Abbey for his earlier remarks. She also thanked the BLM for putting the meeting together. She introduced the facilitator, Robin Roberts, from RESOLVE CO. Mr. Roberts put flip charts around the room with headers of the agenda and gave the public post-it notes for them to write the comments they would like to discuss after the meeting during the round table. He reminded the public to sign up for the spoken public comment period.

March 10-11, 2011 Minutes

The March 10-11, 2011, Advisory Board Minutes were approved.

Advisory Board's Charter and By Laws

Sharon Kipping discussed the Advisory Board's Charter and By Laws. The Charter will expire July 22, 2012, and she will be starting the process to get it re-established. The Charter needs to follow GSA guidelines. The current By Laws and Standard Operating Procedures that the Board follows can be amended by the board and the BLM during renewal. The Bylaws do not have to be signed by the Secretary. Sharon will start working on the new Charter in December 2011. Robin asked about Board subcommittees. Ed Roberson noted that the Director expects full use and participation of this Board which includes workgroups.

Sharon reported that the BLM has received 27 nominations for the public interest position; 9 nominations for the veterinary position; and 7 nominations for the wild horse and burro advocate position. It will take several months for the nominations to be selected and appointed by the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture.

Sharon will create a set of bios of the Board members to share with each other and to post on the BLM website. Sharon will ask the Board to review the bios before they are posted.

BLM Response to Recommendations

Dean Bolstad presented the BLM's responses to the Board's recommendations.

1. Recommend the following edits to the Wild Horse and Burro Strategy:

Sustainable Herds Goal:

The Advisory Board recommends that this be included at the end of the Goal for Sustainable Herds: in balance with society's ability to absorb the excess annual increase.

Manage wild horse and burro (WH&B) populations on public lands so that healthy rangelands and animals are maintained in a thriving natural ecological balance with other multiple uses in balance with society's ability to absorb the excess annual increase.

Objective 1; Action 1: Beginning in FY 2012 through FY 2014, remove an estimated 7,600 excess animals per year to temporarily hold population size at approximately 32,000 to 36,000 animals on the range. Prioritize gathers in areas where overpopulation most threatens land health, animal welfare, and public health and safety.

The Advisory Board Recommends the Secretary follow the mandate for multiple uses under law for healthy rangelands and with regard to budget constraints, the Secretary should include contingency budget adjustments as part of the strategy in order to attain healthy rangelands.

Objective 1; Action 2: Change wording to read:
Continue adjustments to AML through the land use planning process.

Objective 2; Use a wide range of fertility control and other population control measures to slow herd growth rates and better align the number of excess WH&B which need to be removed with the number of animals that can be placed in private care.

The Advisory Board recommends that the BLM assure continued ongoing research to measure the effectiveness, safety, and impacts of treatments on herd dynamics.

Objective 3; Action 2; Change wording to read:
Identify opportunities to mitigate impacts between WH&B and other authorized activities on public lands.

Objective 4; Action 1; Change wording to read:
Implement bait and water trapping gather techniques wherever possible to preserve band integrity.

Ecotourism

The Advisory Board recommends that the BLM promote ecotourism where appropriate, and in ways that are not invasive to the WH&Bs.

Pastures and Partnership Sanctuaries Goal: Change wording to read:

Long-term goal is to reduce the need for placement of unadoptable WH&Bs and in the interim, provide for sustainable long-term care of excess, unadopted WH&Bs in the most cost-effective manner in long term pastures or partnership sanctuaries.

Place Excess Animals in Private Care

Objective 1; Action 4: Change wording to read:

Encourage and consider more store fronts (privatized adoption facilities that can offer untrained and/or trained wild horses for adoption for the BLM such as fostering volunteers, Trainer Incentive Program trainers, and others).

Objective 2; Action 5; Add:

Consider semi-privatization of the adoption program for underperforming in-house adoptions.

Animal Welfare Goal: Change wording to read:

Use a progressive approach to implement a Comprehensive Animal Welfare Program (CAWP). Develop and implement a CAWP to ensure the well-being of animals at gathers, in facilities, and on the range along with healthy ecosystems. The CAWP will bring together a progression of new components such as education for employees, volunteers, and contractors; an ongoing, internal animal welfare assessment program; and periodic external reviews of our animal care and handling. Conduct the CAWP with complete transparency.

Copy and paste Objective 5; Action 3: from Sustainable Herds into this section. Add new Action.

Objective 1; Action 8: Monitor body condition and forage and water availability to evaluate herd health. When conditions require, take appropriate action to protect the health of wild horses and burros and the land they depend on for habitat.

Objective 3; Change wording to read:

Provide a continuing education program on animal care and handling for employees, volunteers, and contractors with an emphasis on natural horsemanship.

Science and Research:

Objective 1; Action 1: Change wording to read:

Continue research on fertility control and other topics.

Objective 2; Add new action

Objective 2; Action 4: Review the science behind rangeland monitoring and AML development.

Public Outreach Goal: Change wording to read:

Utilize effective communications to build the public's confidence and trust for the BLM's management of the WH&B Program with increased transparency.

The Advisory Board recommends that the BLM include a robust communication plan with the public on the strategy and on ongoing WH&B program efforts.

Objective 2; Action 3: Change wording to read:

Update Website information on a regular basis, including updated videos and photographs of all phases of BLM's WH&B handling and management.

Objective 3; Action 2: Host an annual or periodic media and public tour of wild horses in long-term pastures.

The Advisory Board recommends that the BLM look at the possibility of having public access to long-term holding facilities.

Change Objective 3; Action 2 to Action 3.

New Objective 3; Action 2: Include communications section to include internal communications such as DOI/BLM consistency and coordination.

Umbrella Recommendation for the Strategy:

Provide transparency in the public comment and response process - Provide a feedback loop – summarizing what was heard and how the comments were addressed.

BLM's Response: The BLM is considering the comments from the Advisory Board along with all other comments received on the Proposed Strategy. The BLM will post the Strategy at www.blm.gov once it has been accepted by Congress.

2. The National Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board recommends the BLM fully fund the Mustang Heritage Foundation (MHF).

BLM's Response: The BLM accepts this recommendation to fully fund the MHF to adopt the number of horses upon which the BLM and the MHF agree. The partnership between the BLM and the MHF benefits the horses and the taxpayers. In 2012, the MHF is funded to adopted 2,000 animals. As it is with all agreements, this agreement is subject to funding and to constraints by Continuing Resolutions.

3. The National Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board recommends the BLM compile the Fiscal Year annual report on injuries and mortalities associated with gathers, transportation, short- and long-term holding, and adoption option.

BLM's Response: The BLM accepts this recommendation. The BLM will begin annual reporting of mortalities, including a breakout showing those caused by acute injury. This report will include mortalities that occur at gathers, while horses are in transit or at short-term holding or long-term pasture facilities and adoption events. The data will be extracted from the Wild Horse and Burro Program Information System (WHBPS) and from the current gather reports supplied to the National Program Office following each gather. The data will be cross classified by State and the location at which the death occurred (gather, in-transit, short-term holding, long-term holding, adoption).

4. The National Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board recommends the Secretary consider including members on the National Advisory Board as liaisons to the strategy implementation.

BLM's Response: The BLM is seeking guidance and direction on this recommendation under Federal Advisory Committee Act.

5. The National Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board recommends the Secretary review all public comments prior to finalizing the strategy and taking it to Congress.

BLM's Response: The BLM accepts this recommendation. The BLM received approximately 9,000 comment letters and e-mails on the BLM's Wild Horse and Burro Strategy Development document. The comment period was open from June 3 to September 3, 2010. All comments were reviewed and were instrumental in identifying issues and improving the BLM's strategy.

A detailed Proposed Strategy was then posted on the BLM website on February 28, 2011. The public was invited to review and provide comments to the BLM on this strategy through March 30, 2011. The BLM received about 43,000 comments. The majority of comments concerned the Sustainable Herd Section of the Proposed Strategy. All comments were reviewed in preparing the current draft of the Wild Horse and Burro Strategy, which will be submitted to Congress as part of a Report to Congress. The BLM plans to post on the BLM website the approximately 43,000 comments from the February 24-March 30, 2011 public comment period, once the Strategy has been given to Congress.

6. The National Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board recommends the BLM adopt a scientific integrity plan.

BLM's Response: The BLM accepts this recommendation. However, as the Department of Interior already has a Department Manual (Part 305 Chapter 3) in place that outlines the scientific integrity policy, no bureau level action is needed. In addition, the BLM has designated Heidi Hadley as the Scientific Integrity Officer.

7. The National Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board recommends the BLM develop a centralized process for volunteer offers, tracking and responding; and recommends a centralized specific mechanism for contacts.

BLM's Response: The BLM does not accept this recommendation due to the existence of a centralized database and system/program for volunteering with federal land management agencies that includes the BLM, and a lack of internal capacity to track individual requests. Opportunities to volunteer with BLM are posted at the national website www.volunteer.gov, which is linked to www.blm.gov. Outstanding volunteers and their contributions are highlighted through a variety of award and recognition programs sponsored by the agencies.

Discussions ensued pertaining to the responses.

Recommendation 2 - the Board was concerned if there would be money available to fund the MHF due to the continuing resolution. The BLM assured the Board that the MHF will be funded. Janet Jankura asked if the MHF would be funded in 2013. Dean stated that MHF's Assistance Agreement expires in 2012 and the BLM will need to issue a new Request for Proposals.

Recommendation 3 - Robin asked if the first Fiscal Year annual report on injuries and mortalities associated with gathers, transportation, short- and long-term holding, and adoptions report will be for 2011 and when the report will be completed. Dean stated that the report will be for FY 2011 and it should be completed early in 2012.

Recommendation 4 - Robin noted that the Board needs to appoint or ask the Board to volunteer to be liaisons for the implementation of the Strategy. Joan explained that there is guidance regarding Board members being on subcommittees.

Recommendation 6 - Robin asked for information on the BLM's Scientific Integrity Officer. Ed Roberson stated that Heidi Hadley is the BLM's Scientific Integrity Officer. She will be working with the program and interfacing with the Research Committee. Robin noted that Dr. Bray will be the liaison with the Research Committee.

Recommendation 7 - Robin mentioned that the intent of this recommendation is to help potential volunteers connect with the appropriate BLM staff. The Board sees a need for a personal contact for the volunteers. Tim Harvey noted that he has had several conversations from the public about the frustration of offering to help but getting no response from the BLM. Janet suggested that the Volunteer Officer develop a form that volunteers can fill out and the field office can view to see if they can be used. Also, there needs to be a systematic way to track and monitor people who want to volunteer.

Dean noted that Director Abbey recently issued a Challenge to expand volunteer engagement in monitoring, inventory, restoration, and related activities in Wild Horse and Burro Herd Management Areas (HMA). Projects addressing land health within an HMA will be eligible for support funding of up to \$25,000 per field office if selected for implementation. This Challenge is seen as a beginning to get the public more involved with the program.

Budget Update:

Holle Hooks presented the Budget Update. She noted that in FY2011 program costs were \$75,912 million with total holding costs (including obligations and actual expenditures) making up of 61% of the budget; gathers/removals costs were 11% of budget; and adoption costs were 10% of budget. Robin asked why there was an increase in herd management cost since last March. Holle stated that the budget presented in March showed the planned costs and today she was presenting the actual costs. Robin asked for breakdown costs on research and fertility control. Holle stated work breakdown cost structures were created in FY2011 to identify research and fertility costs as used by the program. Dr. Boyd Spratling noticed that there was an increase in the short-term holding cost of \$3 million. Holle noted that there was a delay in contracting for long-term holding due to the FY2011 Continuing Resolution and more horses had to be held in short-term holding

The WHB program has requested \$75 million for FY2012. Congress has not passed a budget for FY2012 yet so the program will be working under a Continuing Resolution until November 18, 2011.

Holle noted that the program has new performance measures and program elements to help track the costs better in FY 2012. The performance measures are 1: Wild Horse and Burro Management Areas: Cumulative of number of Herd Management Areas (HMAs) achieving appropriate management levels. And 2: Cumulative number of Herd Management Areas (HMAs) treated or where population suppression techniques were conducted.

The program elements for FY2012 are:

DI: Plan for Herd Management (#)
 HG: Adopt Wild Horses & Burros (# of animals)
 HH: Long Term Hold WH&B (# of animal days)
 HI: Prepare/Hold Wild Horses & Burros (# of animal days)
 JJ: Gather/Remove Wild Horses & Burros (# of animals gathered)
 KF: Gather/Treat Wild Horses & Burros (# of animals gathered for the primary purpose of treatment with population growth suppression techniques)
 KG: Population Growth Suppression (# of animals treated)
 MC: Conduct Census WH&B areas (#)
 MP: Monitor WH&B Herd Management Areas (#)
 NK: Conduct WH&B Compliance Inspections (# of animals)

Janet asked if the money for Eco-Sanctuaries will be paid out of the long-term holding funds. Holle noted that the BLM has set aside \$3 million for eco-sanctuaries and/or new long-term holding pasture facilities.

Robin asked if there were any HMA's that have not set Appropriate Management Level (AML) or still have estimated AMLs? Dean stated that there was one HMA in Arizona and there was a small BLM HMA with a larger Forest Service complex that the Forest Service has the lead on. Robin asked that the BLM research why all AMLs have not been set.

Gathers, Population Growth Suppression and Management, and Facilities

Lili Thomas reported that in FY 2011 there were 10,576 horses and 132 burros gathered and 8,308 horses and 131 burros removed. There were 466 mares treated with fertility control during the CTR gathers and 368 mares treated during AML gathers. Lili stated that from FY2004 to FY2011 there have been 3,671 mares treated with fertility control in 95 HMAs. In FY2012, the goal is to treat 1,200 mares with fertility control. The BLM will also use other methods for population growth suppression.

There was discussion about fertility control treatments. Lili noted that Nevada is being innovative with population growth suppression treatments and plans to treat mares with PZP and return geldings to the HMA. This will reduce the number of horses that need to be removed. This gather will not achieve AML, however if the BLM goes back to this HMA in two years AML should be reached. Dr. Spratling asked if gelding horses and returning them to the HMA has actually shown any effect on population growth suppression. Lili noted that gelding stallions does not suppress the population growth unless you remove a percentage of mares. The BLM is watching a herd in Oregon that has geldings. Robin asked how the BLM determines what

stallions are to be gelded. Lili noted that Standard Operation Procedures are for stallions around eight years old to be gelded and returned to the range. Tim Harvey asked if gelding was being done in the field. Lili said yes and Tim noted that he was concerned about complications due to cutting horses and turning them out so soon. He suggested the BLM use chemical vasectomy instead of gelding. Dr. Al Kane explained that a vasectomy made a viral stallion infertile, but still hormonal. If a stallion is still hormonal, there will be social conflict and more problems especially around limited water sources. While acknowledging that some geldings may still exhibit some stallion like behavior, it is generally believed that geldings should reduce social conflicts on the range. Dr. Spratling supported Dr. Kane's explanation of why the BLM chose gelding instead of chemical vasectomy.

Robin asked if there were any repercussions to the adoption program due to the increase in the number of mares removed. Lili stated that most of the trainers prefer geldings to mares. Lili noted that in the Environmental Assessment of each gather, the BLM outlines plans on treating mares with PZP, gelding and range of ages to be gelded, etc. Robin asked if there were any standard operation policies that were developed this year. Lili will get the information for the board.

Facility Report

Lili Thomas provided an update on short-term corral facilities and long-term pasture facilities. On September 19, there were 11,233 horses and 629 burros in short-term corral facilities that have a total capacity of 17,300 animals. There were 30,012 horses in long-term pasture facilities that have a total capacity of 32,374.

Robin had asked at the last Board meeting if the estimated post gather population number column could be added to the gather schedule. Lili noted that the post gather population information is in the annual HMA report and will not be put on the gather schedule as it is tentative and used to schedule the gathers.

Robin also asked if any long-term pasture contracts were coming to a close or renewal. Lili stated that one was being renewed this year.

Adoptions and Sales

Sally Spencer reported on the adoption and sale programs. As of September 30, 2011, there were 2,888 animals adopted and 867 animals sold for FY2011. The program has an adoption goal of 4,200 animals in FY2012: 2,200 adopted by the BLM and 2,000 adopted through Mustang Heritage Foundation Events.

The Board had questions about the sale of horses. Sally noted that the BLM is reviewing the sale application with law enforcement. Tim Harvey asked about the horses sold in Michigan. Sally noted that the horses were in good condition when they were sold. Once a horse is sold, they are no longer protected under the law. The BLM cannot do compliance checks on sold animals. Tim noted that he gets a lot of e-mails referring to sold animals and that something needs to be done to make sure the horses are being kept in good condition. Robin asked if there a

mechanism in place within the law that allows the BLM to take sale horses back. Tim said that it does not make sense to sell large groups of horses when you do not know what the people are going to do with them. He asked if there was something in the Bill of Sale that would address the care of the animal. Another suggestion was for the BLM to inform local animal control of the sale of sale authority animals.

Janet Jankura asked how adoption success is shared with other states. Sally noted that the lines of communication between each state are open and information is shared through monthly state lead calls and press releases. One model may not work for every geographical area. The BLM Washington Office provides money to the states to promote adoptions. Sally stated that the BLM trains 500-600 animals per year. The BLM is trying to get more prisons involved with training horses, but BLM cannot pay for the infrastructure.

Robin asked if the people who work in the WHB Information Center can put volunteers in contact with a person in a BLM office. Sally noted that the Information Center sends the State Leads information on people interested in volunteering, but the needs of the BLM need to be matched to the volunteer. The Board suggested that the BLM State Offices post what they need volunteers to do on the website. Sally noted that information is currently posted on the National Wild Horse and Burro website under "Get Involved". Robin suggested this might be a potential subcommittee work to streamline and make more user-friendly. Sally spoke about the "Directors Challenge" with the purpose of expanding volunteer's engagement in monitoring, inventory, restoration, and related activities in Wild Horse and Burro Herd Management Areas (HMA).

Sally noted that the 40th anniversary for the Wild Horse and Burro Act is December 15, 2011. The program is working with the BLM Environmental Education Program on web-based activities.

Mustang Heritage Foundation

Ed Roberson spoke about the Mustang Heritage Foundation's (MHF) successful adoptions and about the recent DVD that explains selecting a horse, loading, and basic training by three renowned horse trainers.

Patti Colbert introduced Paula Carr, MHF President; John Fallon, MHF Board member; Kali Sublett, MHF Director of Operations; and Randi Blasienz, Youth Director/Event Manager. Kali and Randi updated the Board on MHF activities. The MHF is committed to assisting in creating a more marketable product through improving selection and expanded and enhanced training programs for critical mustang age groups. In FY2011 there were six Extreme Mustang Makeover events in five states. The Trainer Incentive Program continued to find good homes for mustangs. The Youth Employment Program (YEP) pays young adults ages 15-24 to increase their knowledge of the history and plight of the American Mustang and share this knowledge with others through an awareness campaign. There have been more than 200 youth working in the program. One of the YEP programs is Camp Wildfire for youth ages 9 and older where campers learn about stewardship of the land and protection of the wild horse through exciting and interactive activities. In FY2011 camps were held at the National Cowgirl Hall of Fame and Museum, the Cowboy Hall of Fame and Museum, and the Panhandle Plains Museum. The MHF

continues to increase their partners and supporters. Julie Gleason thanked the MHF for all their hard work.

USDA, Forest Service

Barry Imler, USDA, Forest Service, reported that in September 2011 a new five-year Interagency Agreement was signed with the BLM. The USFS is planning to remove 1,284 horses and 45 burros in FY2012. There are six territories with planned gathers and three territories that adjoin BLM complex gathers. The USFS is waiting for a formal research proposal from the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) regarding a 3-5 year study of a remotely delivered one-treatment porcine zona pellucida (PZP) immunocontraceptive vaccine at Jarita Mesa Wild Horse Territory on the Carson National Forest in New Mexico. Barry also updated the Board on the USFS litigation.

Tom Frolli was hired as the Inter-Regional Program Coordinator, Wild Horse and Burro Management. He is located in Nevada at the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest Supervisor's Office.

Old Business

Robin asked about the list of items requested from the March 2011 meeting.

1. Future BLM practices on forage allocations have changed over past years; define an AUM; define how allocations are made. Robin asked that the BLM define AUMs and how allocations are made. This will be presented at the next meeting.
2. The Board requested Dean email the budget slides and gathers slides to the advisory board members. The slides are posted at blm.gov. A link will be sent to the Board.
3. The Board requested the BLM provide information on cost of adoptions per head by different programs (inmate program, Mustang Heritage Foundation, etc.). It is difficult to separate the cost of adoption for the MHF and the BLM. The MHF amounts do not include the assistance that the BLM provides the MHF and the BLM is unable to separate the costs of BLM prison adoptions, facility adoptions.
4. How does BLM review the results of their in-house adoptions in order to determine what they want to do/or go forward with in the future? Adoption locations are determined through market research and advertisement interest. The WHB Information Center keeps track of the city and states of people who call in for information. The program has found that there is more of a demand for trained wild horses than for untrained wild horses. The program will be reconstituting an adoption team that will evaluate adoption trends and policy.

Wild Horse and Burro Program's Strategy

Dean Bolstad gave an overview of the Wild Horse and Burro Program's Strategy. He described the strategy development process and the seven elements of reform. Those elements include

Sustainable Herds/Population Growth Suppression; Science and Research; Eco-Sanctuaries; Animal Welfare Program; Increase Adoptions; Program Transparency/Public outreach; and Ecotourism.

Robin asked about the 38,500 estimated populations from February 2011 that the Director said BLM is going to maintain and not to allow it to increase for the next 2 or 3 years. Does this mean that removals would maintain the current population more or less? Dean stated that the population number is an approximation and that the removal of 7,600 animals annually along with population growth suppression would maintain this number of animals on the range.

Tim asked how much PZP costs to treat mares and will the cost go down if more mares are treated? Dean responded that it costs \$310 per dose and it is more or less effective for 2 years. The cost will not go down. The Humane Society of the US (HSUS) has a cooperative research effort with the BLM to develop a dart that can treat the horses. At the Sand Wash HMA in Colorado, the HSUS was able to dart most of the mares; however when the HSUS went to the Cedar Mountain HMA in Utah they were unable to dart any mares. To get two years of efficacy from PZP22, the mares need to be treated between November and February.

Robin asked how managers within the BLM will be held accountable for meeting the 2,000 head goal for fertility treatment. Dean explained that everyone is committed to population growth suppression, but animals need to be successfully captured. Dr. Spratling noted that litigation problems can bring gathers to an end or bring delays. Dean stated that the gather contractors have a start and end date in their task orders for each gather. Ed Roberson said that before the BLM receives a budget each fiscal year, the agency has to provide planned accomplishments. The BLM is balancing a lot of concerns, interest, and obligations and will continue to learn and look for solutions through our research committee.

Robin asked if the BLM has money for the Comprehensive Animal Welfare Plan and the potential research coordinator position. She noted that these are very important to the strategy. Dean explained that the program has funding for the strategy through FY2012. Joan stated that there is a core team of people who have already started on the Comprehensive Animal Welfare Plan.

Pertaining to public outreach/transparency, Janet Jankura encouraged BLM to post and publish anything pertaining to the WHB program; not just gather or adoption information but real time information as things are available.

Paul Durbin asked if the Wild Horse and Burro program consults with State Wildlife Agencies. Dean stated that the BLM consults with different agencies and public comments are received through Environmental Assessments and Land Use Plans.

Public Comments began at 3:00 p.m.

Eco-Sanctuaries

Zach Reichold reported on the Eco-Sanctuaries. On March 15, 2011, the BLM went out with two solicitations: one for private lands only and the other for public/private lands. The

solicitation were sent out for 60 days and extended for another 30 days. An eco-sanctuary is defined as a place of safety providing a natural and healthy habitat for excess wild horses where they will be properly cared for, yet allowed to roam freely. It offers the public the opportunity of engaging with wild horses through public outreach including adoption and training opportunities, and the creation of economic opportunities for local communities. A committee reviewed the proposals. Zach is not able to give out information pertaining to the various proposals until they are awarded. He stated that NEPA will address environmental impacts, solicit public comments and determine the appropriate environmental evaluation process.

Expectation Between BLM and Advisory Board

Joan Guilfoyle spoke about the expectations between the Advisory Board and the BLM. She would like to find ways for the Board to assist BLM. Robin stated the program might want to start with the Director's comments this morning about how he wants the Board to continue giving advice and being an integral part of the Program.

The BLM invites the Board to help on volunteer issues. The needs should be based on BLM's mission and needs with on-the-ground help with resource issues and uses; public education needs; and identifying areas volunteers are needed. The program needs a plan that would dovetail with the BLM needs.

The Board asked what the difference is between a liaison and a subcommittee. Joan explained a subcommittee cannot act except inside a public meeting. A liaison is one who attends meetings and reports back to the Board so they may make recommendations.

Dr. Bray was selected for the Wild Horse and Burro Research position and will attend Research Committee meetings and report back to the Board. Robin encouraged Dr. Bray to maintain the liaison role by getting involved with the NAS study and the Research Committee. Ed Roberson stated that scientific/research components are what we need skilled board members to work on; then bring the discussions back to the Board for recommendations. Julie Gleason, Tim Harvey and Paul Durbin volunteered to serve as a workgroup for volunteers.

The BLM does not have a point person on outreach communication however there is a documentary in the development stage. Joan would like a formative evaluation and suggested that the Board members review the documentary

Dr. Spratling and Janet Jankura volunteered to serve as liaisons to the implementation of the strategy.

Meeting adjourned at 5:14 p.m.

Friday, October 14, 2011

Robin Lohnes opened the meeting at 8:04 a.m. Each of the Board members introduced themselves to the public.

Litigation

Dean Bolstad discussed current litigation. He noted that most gathers had been litigated and referred the Board to an insert in their notebook that contained the following information.

In California, In Defense of Animals brought suit seeking to enjoin BLM's gather of excess wild horses from the Twin Peaks HMA in Northeastern California and challenging the legality of placing wild horses in long-term holding. The District Court denied the request for injunction. Plaintiffs appealed this denial to the Ninth Circuit, however the Ninth Circuit denied plaintiffs' request for an emergency injunction. The wild horse gather operations began on Wednesday, August 11, 2010 and ended on September 23, 2010. Plaintiffs did not withdraw their appeal from the denial of the injunction after hearing oral argument on that appeal, on August 15, 2011, the Ninth Circuit dismissed that appeal as moot. The District Court denied the United States' motion to dismiss this litigation as moot and the parties will be briefing the merits of the case.

In Colorado, the Colorado Wild Horse and Burro Coalition filed a Complaint and a motion for preliminary injunction (PI) and temporary restraining order (TRO) alleging the proposed gather to remove all horses in the West Douglas Herd Area would violate the Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act, NEPA, FLPMA and the Information Quality Act (IQA). The motion for PI/TRO was denied due to BLM's postponement of the gather. BLM's answer, administrative record, and motion to dismiss the IQA claim were filed November 9, 2010. The motion to dismiss was denied on June 24, 2011. On November 10, 2010, White River Conservation District, Douglas Creek Conservation District, Colorado Association of Conservation Districts, Colorado Cattleman's Association, Colorado Farm Bureau Federation, Public Lands Council, and four individuals moved to intervene in the case as defendant-interveners aligned with BLM. A ruling on the motion to intervene is pending as a dispute over supplementation of the administrative record. BLM notified the Court on its decision to withdraw the 2010 Gather Plan on February 21, 2011. The court ruled on June 24, 2011 that the case will proceed on the merits of the 2005 RMP amendment, and a briefing schedule is due to the court by July 15, 2011.

In Colorado, Habitat for Horses filed a complaint in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York that alleges BLM's proposed gather of excess wild horses within the North Piceance Herd Area (HA) violates the Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burro Act, the National Environmental Policy Act, the Federal Land Policy Management Act, and the Information Quality Act. The claims are very similar to those made in *Colorado Wild Horse and Burro Coalition, Inc., et al. v. Salazar*, 10 CV 1645 (D.D.C.). On October 14, 2011, Plaintiffs filed a motion for preliminary injunction (PI) and temporary restraining order (TRO) with additional request that the gather in the HA be ceased immediately. After briefing and a hearing, the Court also denied Plaintiffs' motion for PI/TRO. The Court ruled that although they had established irreparable harm, Plaintiffs had not demonstrated a likelihood of success on the merits. BLM's motion to dismiss for mootness and failure to state a claim was filed January 28, 2011 and granted on September 7, 2011.

In Colorado, on September 14, 2011, James Kleinert, Spirit Riders Foundation, and David Glynn filed a complaint based on alleged violations of Wild Horse & Burro Act and NEPA. A motion for temporary restraining order was filed *ex parte* and was denied on September 19, 2011. The

court deemed plaintiff's request for a TRO as a request for a preliminary injunction hearing. The court requested briefing on the issue of standing in connection with plaintiffs' claims no later than September 26, 2011. Note: This gather is complete. David Glynn, a plaintiff cited above, also filed an appeal with IBLA alleging the same violations that are found in the above complaint.

In Montana, litigation by The Cloud Foundation to require the US Forest Service to expand the Pryor Mountain Herd Management Area (Territory) in the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals was dropped by the plaintiff and accepted by the court.

In Montana, on September 2009, the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia denied a Temporary Restraining Order (TRO) request by The Cloud Foundation to stop the Pryor gather. BLM proceeded with the gather and adopted or sold all of the excess wild horses that were gathered. The plaintiff filed an amended complaint concerning the gather and while a ruling was pending the case was re-assigned to a different judge located in Ohio although the case is still technically in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia.

The plaintiff who had previously appealed the Pryor Mountain Wild Horse Range Herd Management Area Plan (HMAP) that was affirmed in January 2010 by IBLA, subsequently filed a second amended complaint (SAC) to the U.S. District Court for the 2009 gather challenging the HMAP and the use of Categorical Exclusions (CX) for adoption events and feeding/care of removed excess wild horses while also litigating the U.S. Forest Service Custer National Forest to expand the Pryor Mountain Herd Management Area (Territory). The gather and first amended complaint were dismissed as moot but the SAC was allowed by the U.S. District Court. The SAC has been argued and a ruling is pending.

In Montana, the IBLA denied the petition for stay and affirmed BLM's decision to apply fertility control through the 2009 HMAP with a tiered EA.

In Nevada, Laura Leigh filed a motion for a Temporary Restraining Order (TRO) and Preliminary Injunction, alleging a violation of her First Amendment rights on the basis that BLM would likely place unreasonable restrictions on her access the Silver King Herd Management area to observe wild horse gather operations. On September 27, 2010, the district court issued an Order denying Plaintiff's request for a TRO. Gather operations began at the Silver King HMA on September 26, 2010 and ended October 13, 2010. Plaintiff voluntarily dismissed this case.

In Nevada, The Cloud Foundation filed a Complaint for Declaratory and Injunctive Relief (06/29/11) and a Motion for Preliminary Injunction (07/07/11) alleging a violation of the Wild and Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act ("WFRHBA") by failing to manage the Triple B, Maverick-Medicine and Antelope Valley Herd Management Areas (hereafter "Triple B HMA" or "HMA") principally for wild horses and burros, and by approving the use of overly invasive management activities for the wild horses in these management areas which go above and beyond the minimum feasible level necessary. Plaintiffs also allege that BLM violated the National Environmental Policy Act's ("NEPA") requirement to fully consider and analyze all reasonable alternatives to the Proposed Action by failing to consider an alternative which would reduce livestock grazing to allocate more resources to wild horses and burros. On July 15, 2011, the district court issued an Order denying Plaintiff's request for the preliminary injunction. On

July 15, 2011, the Plaintiff filed an emergency motion for injunctive relief pending appeal, to halt appellees' round-up of wild horses in the Triple B with the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, which granted the emergency injunction. After the U.S. filed its response to the motion for emergency injunction, on July 19, 2011, the Ninth Circuit issued an order that denied plaintiffs' emergency motion for injunctive relief, and allowed gather operations to begin at the Triple B Complex on July 20, 2011. Gather operations ended August 31, 2011. On September 7, 2011, the Plaintiff filed a Motion to voluntarily dismiss its appeal to the Ninth Circuit from the District Court's denial of its motion for preliminary injunction, and this motion was granted. The parties are waiting on a schedule for briefing on the merits of the case and a case management conference is scheduled for November 1, 2011.

In Nevada, Laura Leigh filed a complaint for declaratory and injunctive relief on the Triple B gather on August 24, 2011, and submitted a motion for an emergency restraining order to stop alleged "inhumane treatment" of wild horses during the Triple B gather by the gather contractor. On August 30, 2011, the District Court judge granted an emergency restraining order to prohibit the use of a helicopter to strike or fly the skid or helicopter dangerously or unreasonably close to the horses during the remaining day for the gather. The gather operations ended on August 31, 2011. The Plaintiff filed an Amended Complaint on September 8, 2011.

In Nevada, Laura Leigh alleged that the Bureau of Land Management ("BLM") violated the Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act and the First Amendment of the United States Constitution in connection with an ongoing gather of wild horses and burros in the Silver King herd management area, which is located in southern Nevada. Plaintiff sought a preliminary injunction. Ultimately, Plaintiff's motion was denied as moot. Plaintiff is currently appealing this ruling in the Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit.

In Oregon, Loren and Piper Stout filed suit against the US Forest Service alleging failure to comply with the National Forest Management Act and Administrative Procedure Act by allowing excess horses to remain in the Murderers Creek Wild Horse Territory. The requested relief is a Court Order requiring management at the 100 head level identified in the Malheur National Forest Plan. The plaintiffs filed an amended complaint alleging USFS/BLM did not complete an Endangered Species Act (ESA) consultation on the 2007 Territory/ Herd Management Area plan. In December 2010, the BLM was dismissed from this action. In March 2011, the plaintiffs were granted partial summary judgment. The 2007 territory plan was remanded to the Forest Service and consultation was to be initiated within one year. The Malheur NF is currently preparing a biological assessment for Section 7 consultation with National Marine Fisheries Service. In June 2011, the Forest Service declined a proposed settlement agreement of the remaining claims and is on schedule to meet the court order regarding Section 7 Consultation. In September 2011, the plaintiff's motioned for summary judgment on the remaining claims and the suit is ongoing. This motion includes a request to reduce the herd population to 60 head prior to January 31, 2012.

In Oregon, the Burns District received an Appeal of the Stinking Water wild horse gather on July 27, 2010. There was not a petition for stay and horses were gathered in mid-August. The Appeal and Administrative record were sent to IBLA on August 20, 2010. A motion to dismiss was sent on October 20, 2010. IBLA dismissed the case in May 2011. The case was dismissed

because the appellant lacked standing and the appellant did not show why the decision was in error. The main points of the appeal centered on population estimates, genetics, herd viability, fertility control, request for scientific analysis for range conditions, AMLs levels, and cost estimates for the Stinking Water gather.

In Oregon, in July 2011, Craig Downer filed for a TRO on the Kiger/Riddle gather based on genetic viability, violation of the WH&B Act and Congressional intent of the Act. On July 6, 2011, the Judge denied the TRO on failure to comply with rule 65(b) (1) (b) and Rule 65 (c). On July 20, 2011 the Appellant filed an amended complaint Case # 2:11-CV-816-SU with the Cloud Foundation on the basis of not complying with the established BLM gather schedule, genetics and violation of the WH&B Act, inadequate range of alternatives/ NEPA analysis. BLM (US Attorney) filed its answer (Defendants answer to the first complaint) on September 6, 2011. A conference call will occur in the near future to determine the briefing schedule.

In Wyoming, the BLM's decision to cancel two adopter's Private Maintenance and Care Agreement (PMCA) was appealed to the Interior Board of Land Appeals on November 18, 2010. IBLA upheld the Rawlins Field Office decision to cancel both PMCAs.

In Wyoming, the American Wild Horse Preservation Campaign filed a motion for a Temporary Restraining Order (TRO) and Preliminary Injunction against BLM's initial decision to create a non-reproductive herd by spaying mares and gelding stallions. Plaintiff raised issues regarding violations of the Administrative Procedures Act, NEPA and stated that the defendant failed to:

- Provide public an opportunity to comment,
- Consider several major environmental impacts,
- Consider impacts on individual horses and herds' social structures,
- Analyze the impacts of its actions on the genetic viability of the herds, and
- Analyze whether its chosen management approach would actually meet the agency's state objectives.

The Modified Decision of June 22, 2011 to manage for a non-reproductive herd component of geldings along with the removal of excess animals was rescinded and on August 4, 2011, the BLM issued a second Modified Decision Record that changed the course of action to gather, treat and release for altering sex ratios to favor males and treat with fertility control along with the removal of excess animals. The case was dismissed as moot after the gather was completed.

In Wyoming, the Rock Springs Grazing Association filed petition for relief to enforce the judgment and order in the case of Mountain States Legal Foundation and Rock Springs Grazing Association v. Clark, Secretary of Department of the Interior, Civ. No. 79-275, and direct the defendants to remove all of the wild horses that have strayed onto the RSGA lands within the Wyoming Checkerboard. Case is pending.

Janet Jankura asked who pays for the defense of lawsuits against the BLM. Ed stated that the Wild Horse and Burro program pays for lawsuits.

Research Update

Dr. Al Kane, as advisor for the Research Committee, gave an update on research. The population inventory position was created and advertised by the BLM. The BLM received applications from a number of applicants and a selection was made. The applicant declined. The BLM will be re-advertising the position.

Dr. Kane updated the Board regarding the SpayVac project. This collaborative project includes the BLM, USGS, APHIS, Oregon State University (OSU) and TerraMar Environmental Research and involves the five tasks listed below:

Task 1: A demonstration of the safety and mechanism of action of SpayVac has largely been completed.

Task 2: Regulatory approvals - Mark Fraker, and TerraMar Environmental Research have obtained the necessary State and Federal approvals for the use of SpayVac in the current projects. The registration of a product containing the “new active ingredient” PZP is still in the EPA process. This is based on the HSUS’s application for approval of the conventional, one-year, liquid PZP product. Further progress with approval of SpayVac awaits this recognition of PZP by the EPA as an active ingredient.

Task 3: Using Population and Genetic Modeling – The Research Committee has discussed some preliminary results of modeling done by the USGS. The Team made recommendations to move forward with the software previously evaluated (the Vortex Population Viability Analysis package) while refining some of the inputs into the simulations the software will run.

Task 4: Captive Breeding Trial – The trial began on March 30, 2011, at the BLM facility in Pauls Valley, Oklahoma. Thirty mares are being tested in each treatment group and 30 mares in the control group. Twelve stallions are included in the project with one being rotated into each pasture every two weeks followed by a rest period. Monthly blood draws are ongoing to monitor vaccine titer levels and breeding activity is being monitored to ensure that stallions are covering mares. The breeding season will end in October and their first pregnancy test will be done in December 2011.

Task 5: Controlling Population Growth - Evaluation of SpayVac for controlling population growth rates on the range will be considered as results from the captive breeding trials are received.

Dr. Bray asked about the trials pertaining to monitoring for body conditions, conception, and foaling rates in relation to PZP. Dr. Kane remarked that the mares are examined every month by a veterinarian and body condition has been recorded throughout the project. In regard to captive breeding research, the foals that are born stay within the adoption program.

Robin noted that the regulatory process is a source of frustration for her. SpayVac had been tested previously, but that testing was in a limited number of mares (12 mares treated at Carson City by Drs. Killian, Thain, et al.)

Dr. Gus Cothran's comprehensive analysis of genetic diversity among all BLM wild horse herds is expected in FY 2012. Jim Stephenson asked if there were any unique genetics of the herds. Dr. Kane stated that while there are some "Spanish" or New World Iberian genetics in the BLM mustangs, the genetic diversity is generally similar to that which exists within domestic horses. Mr. Stephenson spoke about Gonacon which has been tested and used in deer. Dr. Kane noted that Gonacon is an investigational product for horses and the National Park Service is currently using it in a study at the Theodore Roosevelt National Park in North Dakota.

Comprehensive Animal Welfare Program

Lili Thomas gave an update on the Comprehensive Animal Welfare Program (CAWP). The team is currently comprised of Joe Stratton, Dr. Al Kane and Lili Thomas. The Development of the CAWP is a national effort by the BLM to formalize its animal care program, which currently exists in the form of handbooks, policies, and standard operating procedures. The mission is to create a consistent and humane care program for all wild horses and burros on and off the range. The CAWP is comprehensive in its scope from animals on the range through titling. The team will be identifying those elements of wild horse and burro habitats that are essential for an animals' well-being on the range. They also will be addressing animal care and handling during gathers, throughout short-term holding and long-term pasture facilities, adoption, sales and post-adoptions.

The BLM is moving forward regarding the creation of a full-time National WH&B Animal Welfare Coordinator to provide leadership, guidance, and continuing coordination of CAWP implementation. Formal evaluation processes that involve internal and external reviews will be an integral and ongoing part of the CAWP, including a formal assessment following the first five year cycle of review of all facilities and contractors.

Robin suggested that a member of Board become a liaison to the CAWP. Dr. Bray volunteered to assist in any way he can. Joan stated that the BLM would welcome a liaison to be part of the team.

Robin asked if there were phases to the CAWP. Lili noted that the plan is to get the CAWP finalized by the middle of summer and sent to Washington. The goal would be to have it signed by October 2012. Ed Roberson stated that BLM needs to do this sooner rather than later and to get Board members engaged. Robin noted that the animals' welfare has always been on the Board's mind.

American Association of Equine Practitioners (AAEP) Report

Dr. John Mitchell presented the AAEP Report. He explained that the AAEP is an outside independent group of equine veterinarians. The AAEP group consisted of a ten member team. They completed four trips with three members on each trip. They visited Nevada, Utah, Wyoming, and Oklahoma. Visits were made to four short-term holding facilities, of which seven members attended. Two vets visited a long-term holding facility. Each gather site visit lasted at least five days. Detailed evaluation forms were designed for each of the sites visited. The Final report was released to the BLM in August 2011 and released to the public in September 2011.

The report noted that the care, handling, and management of the horses were appropriate. They were very impressed with the animal handling. The AAEP group did not obtain input from Dr. Kane or any BLM employee until they appeared at the gathers. They observed the chutes for handling, safety, health care, etc. The BLM gave free access to the sites and the group felt that the communications were open to their observations. Dr. Mitchell reflected that the BLM gather contractors and horse specialists were a fine group of people. He noted that the horse specialist expressed a pride of their animals on the range. The AAEP's recommendations are to strengthen the practices currently in place and assist in supporting the handling, health care, and welfare of the horses and burros at the BLM gathers and holding facilities. The following recommendations were made.

Horses on the Range: BLM should utilize the best science available to obtain accurate herd management census information in order to determine the healthy sustainable equid numbers for each area. Also, to prioritize research and application of effective methods to reduce the foaling rate in wild herds.

Wild Horse Gathers: 1) The contract helicopter pilots should always maintain a safe distance between the helicopter and any horses that are being gathered, and between the helicopter and the ground. 2) Capture pens should be constructed so that pen configurations include wider sections instead of narrow lanes for temporary holding of animals that have been capture. 3) The trap should be constructed with solid side panels in the final capture pen to prevent horses from getting their heads or legs outside of the pen. 4) Existing barb wire should be covered to protect the horses.

Short-Term Holding Facilities: 1) In observing the Salt Lake Regional Wild Horse and Burro Center in Herriman, Utah, it was noted that areas of solid footing should always be provided for horses to lie down. The overcrowded and wet muddy conditions throughout the pens were unacceptable. 2) In observing surgical procedures, they recommend making sure castrations at all BLM horse management sites have a uniform surgical anesthesia protocols in place and that this is reviewed with all contract veterinarians. 3) The team observed excessive hoof growth in some horses, and recommended foot trimming schedules customized for each facility. 4) Numbers in facilities should be adjusted as needed seasonally to avoid crowding when extreme weather is expected or present. 5) The BLM and its facility managers should consult with experts on biosecurity and adopt best practices for controlling outbreaks and spread of strangles, and other infectious diseases.

Records: The AAEP was shown the Wild Horse and Burro Program System database that currently tracks the history of all horses in the BLM program. They recommended to include positive or negative trends in the adoption program and socially productive programs like those in place at certain prisons.

Dr. Mitchell noted overall that the BLM has done a good job throughout the years. He noted that the decreasing number of BLM adoptions and the adoption environment is not likely to improve. The task force feels that the control of foaling rates for the wild horses is paramount.

Ed Roberson thanked Dr. Mitchell for AAEP's input and appreciated the evaluation and recommendations.

The Advisory Board discussed the next meeting dates. The Board would like to include field trips on different aspects of the program. One meeting could be in February or March and another meeting could be in July or August. Meeting locations and possible events will be determined.

The meeting adjourned at 12:13 p.m.

Advisory Board Recommendations

1. The National Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board recommends Dr. Bray be appointed liaison to the National Wild Horse Research Advisory Team.
2. The National Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board recommends Janet Jankura be appointed liaison for the implementation of the strategy.
3. The National Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board recommends that Dr. Bray, Tim Harvey, and Robin Lohnes as liaisons to the Comprehensive Animal Welfare Program (CAWP)
4. The National Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board recommends a workgroup to expand the toolbox for population growth suppression and include all alternatives. (Tim Harvey, Boyd Spratling and Robin Lohnes)
5. The National Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board recommends a workgroup to evaluate protocol for optimizing volunteers (Julie Gleason, Tim Harvey, and Paul Durbin)
6. The National Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board recommends promoting the acceleration of SpayVac as appropriate.
7. The National Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board recommends that the BLM post the ongoing status of the implementation of the strategy on the website.
8. The National Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board recommends that the language with regard to sale authority animals include care and sustenance and that local animal control are contacted regarding sale authority animals.
9. The National Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board recommends that the Mustang Heritage Foundation trainers be recognized for their service and contribution to mustang awareness.