

ROUGHLY EDITED TRANSCRIPT

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
WILD HORSE & BURRO ADVISORY BOARD
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>> KATHY LIBBY: So am I on?

Am I on?

Am I on?

Am I on?

Hello, everybody.

Hello!

Hello, everybody.

I just want to let you know you've got about two more minutes to chitchat and then we'll be Livestreaming, okay?

>> FRED WOEHL: Good afternoon, everybody.

First off, I would like to apologize for my voice this morning.

I'm kind of under the weather.

I don't feel bad.

I may look bad, but I'm just not being able to talk real well.

First thing I would like to do is welcome everybody.

I'm glad everybody is here as I always do, in every meeting, I would like every veteran in the room to please stand up.

And if the rest of you will stand up, we will say 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 you all very much for that.

We live in a great country and I don't ever like to forget that.

First matter, I would like to do I would like to go around the front table and everybody introduce themselves so y'all know who they are, and we'll start over here with Mr. John Falen.

>> JOHN FALEN: Yes, I'm John Falen from Nevada.

I represent the livestock industry on this board.

>> RICK DANVIR: I live in Casper, Wyoming, and I represent wildlife management.

>> JUNE SEWING: I'm from Utah and I represent wild horse advocacy.

>> JULIE WEIKEL: Julie Weikel, I live at Narrows, Oregon, and I'm the veterinarian on the board.

>> MIKE TUPPER: Mike Tupper, I live in Washington, D.C., and I'm the deputy assistant director for resources and planning.

Pleasure to be here.

>> FRED WOEHLE: I'm Fred Woehl, from Harrison, Arkansas, and I represent public interest, equine behavior and I'm the board chair.

>> DR. SUE McDONNELL: I'm Sue McDonnell from West Chester, Pennsylvania and I represent wild horse burrow and research.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Tim Harvey, humane advocacy, from New Hampshire and Florida.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: My name is Cope.

>> JENNIFER SALL: My name is Jen Sall and I live in Lander, Wyoming and represent public interest.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: I'm Dean Bolstad, I'm the acting Wild Horse and Burro Division Chief.

>> FRED WOEHL: Thank you all very much.

The first order of business I would like to do I would like to have Ms. Kathy to come and explain the rules of the room.

This will tell you what you can do and what you can't do and give you a lot of good information.

Ms. Kathy.

>> KATHY LIBBY: You will review the agenda and then the rules of the room.

>> FRED WOEHL: All right.

Good.

>> KATHY LIBBY: Welcome, everybody, I'm Kathy Libby, I'm here to help you have a successful, effective, meeting with a lot of dialogue, a lot of listening, at least as much listening as talking and so we welcome you all very much.

We particularly also welcome the people who are watching us on Livestream, at [BLM.gov/live](https://www.blm.gov/live).

And at that link, you will find the Livestream and the agenda, and most of the attachments that will be shown in the meeting.

A few of them were not available to be posted.

We know the greatest part of our audience does join us on Livestream.

So we welcome you and hope you can find everything.

So just briefly, the agenda from today, we will adjourn at 5:00.

We will begin with an intro from Mike Tupper, who is the federal designated officer for the board.

And then Pat Williams and Steve Tryon will talk about the Oklahoma and the New Mexico wild horse and burro.

Oklahoma probably larger than just the horses but for New Mexico the wild horse and burros program.

We will see slides about each of those.

This is primarily a board meeting, to which the public is invited to view, to listen, and a lot of it is boardy business.

The first part being the minutes from the previous board meeting will be approved.

And then Sarah Bohl will go over the standard operating procedures relative to the board.

Dean Bolstad, the acting division chief for wild horse and burros, each meeting the board provides very specific recommendations to the program, and Dean will be reviewing the responses to the particular recommendations from the last meeting.

He will then give us an update on the wild horse and burros program itself.

At that point, we will take a short break at 3:00.

We will take 15 minutes and we always like to reconvene when we stated.

We ask you to come back timely.

We will have a budget update at 3:15.

We will have a slide show on monitoring animal use in riparian habitat.

We will have a slide show on that, and then Paul Griffith, our research coordinator will give us a summary of the USDA thermal profile assessment, and the UC Davis shade preference study, I think a lot of you are familiar with the shade study.

Holle' Hooks will come back again then and talk about the off-range program, and, again, we will adjourn at five.

Sorry.

So tomorrow, we are going from 8 to 5:00.

The most important piece of that, of course, is your public comment period, which will start at 10:30.

If you do wish to make a comment, please sign up by 10:00 tomorrow morning at the desk right inside.

Prior to, that Barry Imler will give us a Forest Service update and another update from Paul Griffin and the on range update will be given to us by Bryan Fuell of the BLM, again public comment from 10:30 to noon.

We will take lunch and then in the afternoon, if you are looking at the printed agenda, the last two sections actually will be combined.

That is the formal dialogue between the board members.

They have the working groups.

They will be reporting out on where they are, and providing specific recommendations and discussing those recommendations.

So we hope you stay with us for that as well.

Phew!

Okay.

I will turn it over to Mike Tupper.

Oh, I will give it back to Fred.

>> FRED WOEHL: Thank you, Ms. Kathy, and I would like to introduce Mike Tupper.

(Laughter).

>> MIKE TUPPER: All right.

Thank you.

Again, my name is Mike Tupper.

I'm really, really a pleasure to be here.

Thanks everybody who showed up and the folks who are watching online.

It's great to be around such passionate folks, as I am one as well.

I thought I would start with about five or six topics that I'm sure folks have heard something about and some of these topics we will discuss more at length in the festivities here.

But I just wanted to give you an overview of some of the things making news, you know, east of here.

Tom Davis, Scott City, FOIAs, gathers, sage brush focal areas and some outreach efforts that the program is doing.

So Tom Davis.

I'm sure some folks, if not everybody, has heard of him.

It's an ongoing investigation, and I talked to law enforcement and lawyers who said, we are still waiting to hear what the OIG has to say.

When OIG gives us a report, they will post it online and it will become public.

At that point, we will answer it.

But right now, I don't have any further information about what's going on, what OIG is finding with Tom Davis.

I think it's fairly imminent, but some of these things just say a long time.

So we will keep you posted and I'm sure, like you said, it will be posted online and you will be able to keep me posted as well.

Scott City.

About 1500 horses were shipped because we had no other options.

The place where they were staying no longer wanted to keep horses.

We were forced to move them.

Over the course of about four months, we shipped -- over the course of a month or so, we shipped all of those horses and about 120 died fairly quickly.

Tragedy.

Maybe we weren't as prepared as we should have been.

I don't know.

I wasn't in the program at the time, but I know since that time, we have taken it very seriously, and we could stabilize the situation and have had weekly veterinarian visits and in the last -- since June 14th, of last year, 160 horses have passed away at Scott City.

I want to touch on this one, because it's -- it's just interesting.

Donated shade structures helped the BLM in any form is welcomed and we are willing and excited to work with lots of folks.

There are some folks in this audience that I have been talking to on a semi-regular basis since five and a half months ago when I first got this job.

One of the things that happens is when the BLM has somebody give us a gift, it's not as simple as -- this is an agency of 10,000 people, with 245 million surface acres to manage and 700 million subsurface acres.

We don't respond quickly.

So when somebody says we don't want to argue with you any more, we want to work with you and give you a gift, it takes us a while to spin and react to that.

Unfortunately in this case, we reacted so slowly that the individual, the group that was going to donate the shade structures said, you know what, you are taking too long.

We still want to pursue working with anyone who wants to work with us and my promise is we will get better as we get more and more folks who want to work with us.

So -- and some of the folks, particularly in the front row right there, I have been chatting with on a semi-regular basis.

Thanks for coming.

Gathers.

One of the things that -- this has made the news in a couple of different places.

We have planned gathers.

I don't know if you have heard of this bird called greater sage grouse.

It's a big deal in the western US, ten states have greater sage grouse in them and the Fish & Wildlife Service is trying to decide whether to list that bird as an endangered species.

One of the efforts that the BLM is taking -- and we will get into this later because I don't want to spend too much time on the science piece of it, but there's a -- the heart of the best sage grouse territory has a designation of a sage grouse focal area and the BLM has committed in the sage grouse focal areas to gather horses down to low AML over the next five years and I won't get these numbers exactly right.

I believe that's about 22 HMAs and probably 5 million acres.

1 million of that is considered sage grouse focal area.

So that's one portion of the gathers that we are doing and we are planning for.

Another portion of the gathers that we do are emergencies and nuance and things that go wrong across this great country.

And two of them that are happening right now, one of them was due to the Soda Fire in Idaho.

And when the Soda Fire broke out it burned two HMAs completely, 100% gone and one HMA, 30% of it.

So we are doing an emergency gather there because the horses need to be taken care of.

That one happens quickly.

It's not predictable, and it makes news.

You can see it, right?

Firefighters and big plumes of smoke always attract attention.

There's another one occurring in Southern Nevada right now, that's attracting attention and it's a slow, grinding one.

It's occurring because we have 179 herd management areas.

We have thousands of horses and we have very few people.

I'm appealing to everybody here who is passionate about wild horses to help us, because we cannot be everywhere.

That particular place, Cold Springs is being gathered because the horses are in very, very poor body conditions and we are moving them gently and the town folks are coming out and helping us lead them.

They are practically loading themselves because they want water and hay.

The reason that one is getting gathered, it was in the very, very similar state to some HMAs we were watching over in central California, and what happened there was we were almost ready to pull the trigger and go get 'em because they were in deteriorating body condition and we got three days of rain.

And three days of rain in the right place at the right time can make a difference filling up water holes and growing chow.

And so we had -- we got to take those off the table and leave them in place.

So as I'm saying, what I want to iterate here is if you have information that you think we need to know, pick up the phone or call Dean, actually.

(Laughter)

But I want to say that we're serious about wild horses and burros just as you are and we can't be everywhere at the same place at the same time.

Oh, you know, what, I will end with this one.

This one, I will finish up.

So outreach.

When -- this is my second one of these gatherings.

My first one I was a grisled veteran of three weeks and now I'm a grisled veteran of five and a half months.

And so once again, it's a pleasure to be here.

I really, really enjoy these.

I get to hang out with a bunch of great folks and get to meet folks.

The first one I came to, I met with some of the folks and they said they were wild horse and burro advocates and I said good, so am I!

We started a dialogue over the course of the last few months and some folks sent some good suggestions on things we can take a look at.

I asked for five and we got three.

Two of them I don't think we can do, but one holds some promise and we are taking a look at it.

Dean is helping and so is a bunch.

Crew is helping us.

So once again, if you have solutions and you want to -- you want us to be aware of them, literally, you really can just pick up the phone, Dean's phone.

But that's not enough.

Right?

Outreach to you, this sounds crazy, but it's actually really simple, because everybody in this room is really keen on this issue.

What Dean and I have been doing is doing outreach to the House and the senate and OMB.

Because as people change jobs up on the Hill, we feel like it's in our best interest and the horses' best interest if we get up there and tell them how the program runs.

Now, our affairs staff don't like it because it makes more work for them, but they go.

But people are getting to be better informed about the issue of wild horse and burros and I will say it's a great credit to Dean and his crew who put the information together and we traipse up there and have these two-hour chats about wild horses and burros.

So with that, that's the news from Washington, D.C.

>> FRED WOEHL: Mike, thank you very much.

Next order of business is the welcome and introduction to Oklahoma by Mr. Steve Tryon.

I met Steve yesterday, the first time, and he looks a lot different today than he did

yesterday.

(Laughter).

>> STEVE TRYON: Well, greetings, everybody, and welcome to Oklahoma, if you are traveling from out of state.

Welcome to the Oklahoma City area.

And board members, it was a pleasure getting to look at some horses with you yesterday at Pauls Valley and the long-term pasture that you had a look at.

I want to give an introduction both to the part of the country that you are in now, and also to the multiple use mandate that we have and how we carry it out in the three states covered by my field office which is Texas, Oklahoma and Kansas, for the wild horse and burro management program is a big part of that and you will hear from Pat Williams in a minute.

He's one of our excellent managers, but I want to tell you about some of our other programs as well besides the wild horse and burro.

I would like to recognize Crystal Calen and Meredith Keite.

It's the excellent crew of people and they were supported by Pat Hoffman and Gary Hughes and a couple of other folks in the field right now.

So kudos to them.

The Oklahoma field office, you will find has some similarities in its management structure to the eastern states of the BLM, and the board met in Columbus, Ohio, back in April and you heard from some of the representatives there.

We have a lot in common with them and I have a slide in a couple of minutes on public land states versus private land states and the differences and the challenges that that poses.

Our office manages about 100,000 acres of surface land that's original public domain.

So it goes back to the Louisiana Purchase.

Our real tie is to the 7.5 million acres of other federal lands in the three states managed by the wildlife refuge system or the National Park Service or the US Forest Service and also to split state lands where the private surface is over top of federal minerals.

We also represent roughly half a million acres of American Indian properties which are

allotted lands.

They are for the most part not reservation lands.

So this is not like the Navajo Reservation in northwestern New Mexico or other reservations that you might be familiar with.

These lands were allotted to American Indian family owners as they enrolled into the Dawes Act.

We are working in what seems like almost a private land situation, but the lands are held in trust, and we are the mineral manager for tens of thousands of American Indians in this part of the country.

In addition to Wild Horse and Burro Program, we manage an active oil and gas program.

That's both federal properties and American Indian property.

There's a lot of coal in the eastern part of Oklahoma, which is federal coal.

There are sand and gravel operations all up and down the river beds of the state of Oklahoma, because many of the river beds are owned by Indian tribes and so they are developed for sand, gravel, aggregate.

We have a realty program, which is not large but real important and it involves leasing an patent under the public purposes act and rights of way and most recently we issued a color of title patent to a Texas landowner, who had originally filed his request back in the 1980s, and it got hung up in litigation and, boy, did the stuff hit the fan last spring with the Red River which separates Oklahoma and Texas.

We discovered at that point that we had an active request for color of title and just three weeks ago we issued a patent on that.

That was a success story.

That's part of our realty program.

We have a handful of grazing allotments.

So we do a little bit of grazing and also recreation as well.

So let's dive down a little bit into the state that you are visiting right now.

Welcome to Oklahoma.

It is the most Indian of the United States, and that's reflected all over the place in the names that you see, the place names, the street names, the town names, the, you know, ancient and historic references all over the place but it's also on our license plate.

The common license, okla and homa being for red people.

And then each one of the 42 federally recognized tribes has its own governance and as a result, they issue their own license plates.

As you go around the state, you will see them and that's kind of interesting to keep track of our history that way.

If you look at the so-called reservation boundaries, you will see an awful lot of the state of Oklahoma is claimed as a reservation.

For the most part, those are jurisdictional boundaries.

They don't act, like I was saying before, like a reservation where non-Indians are maybe not welcome.

They -- you don't even know sometimes that you have passed a reservation boundary, but you see most of the state of Oklahoma is subscribed in some kind of a reservation boundary, and then there are four tribes up in the northeast part of Kansas and that goes over into Nebraska and the Alabama-Coushatta and the eastern part of Texas and we act as the fiduciary responsible for all of those tribes.

Our economy is based on energy.

Did you know that Texas and Oklahoma are two of the top three wind states in the country?

So Texas, I think, is now number one.

California number two, Oklahoma and Kansas after that.

So we are three of the top four in wind production.

If you haven't been out in the panhandle recently, you will be astonished when you go out in either the panhandle of Texas or Oklahoma or western Kansas.

It is awash in wind farms.

And in some parts of Kansas, you will actually find that human population is declining but wind farms are taking their place and that's a whole reality interesting issue as to what's going on in modern agriculture and what is going on as some of our aquifers are

depleted.

We are under 4 million in this state in terms of human population.

A little more than half of that lives in the two major metro areas, Oklahoma City and Tulsa.

Median household income a little bit lower than the national average.

Our unemployment rate for several years now has been less than the national average, although with oil hovering around \$40 and gas at \$3 an mcf, there have been layoffs throughout the energy sector.

And so the first part is exploration and product, that's the first thing you cut back on.

Oil field services, all of those companies in the state have taken a big hit.

But we're a resilient people and resilient economy, and you look around you and some of these big buildings that are within a quarter mile of here did not exist ten years ago.

So there's actually a lot of economic activity that's taking place in the state of Oklahoma.

We'll see there was a bust in the 1980s and it had a major effect and there was something of an Exodus of people from the state.

So we'll see if the price of oil and gas stays down, what the effect ends up being one or two year period.

Right now, we continue to have a lower unemployment rate than the rest of the country.

Some icons.

We are proud of all of these people.

And so the cowboys of Oklahoma State, the Thunder whose arena is just a couple of blocks from here.

The OU Sooners.

That's our governor, Mary Fallin, and Elizabeth Warren, the US senator from Massachusetts.

She's an Okie.

And very famous United States Senator and then we have lots of athletes, Troy Aikman,

Jim Thorpe, and Willy Guthrie, and Carrie Underwood, Toby Keith and we have not updated this photo.

What is wrong with that?

I haven't animated it to split it apart, but Blake continues to be an Oklahoman.

Miranda got Nashville.

(Laughter)

So, let's see, do we have one in here -- did we skip one?

Oh, no, that's right.

This is just a graphic of public versus private.

It actually isn't a map showing that we don't have a presence here.

What it really is a map showing that to do any work successfully on the site level or the active scale, you have to have active states.

All through the plains of this country, there's tight working relationships between state governments, private sector and NGOs and the state government.

We call the shots around here, I mean, look how much of that state pie is eaten up by that red sly.

And Texas, Oklahoma, and Kansas, we can't do anything if it's not on a collaborative basis.

That's an interesting graphic.

Our employees are currently transitioning from the two main offices in Oklahoma City and Tulsa to everybody being in Oklahoma City.

As you might guess, that's a little bit painful on some of the people involved, but to date, all of the movement has been as jobs became available, we are backfilling them in Oklahoma City, but at some point in the future, the Tulsa office of the BLM will be closed and we will all be collocated here and that's also together with Holle' Hooks and some of her staff who are Washington office employees and we have got some people out of our state office.

We'll all be one happy family in the same building here in the state capital in Oklahoma City.

Just some ideas about where the Bureau as a whole.

I want to leave most of the horse program to Pat Williams to discuss and our contributions to it.

I look at the modern BLM and it's modernizing.

It's changing pretty rapidly and how we approach issues.

I don't think this is really unique to this administration.

It's something that this administration is fully behind but I think it has some sustainability in this, in terms of how the BLM is going to go forward into the 21st century.

In the 20th century, BLM is extremely decentralized.

Most of the organizational power lay with your field managers or district managers to make decisions at the site level, or at the field office level, and it was on things like energy and mineral development, citing rights of way and livestock grazing, timber and wood products.

We were basically an agency that issued permits to do things.

And so the line officer authority was critical in all of that.

As we move forward into the 21st century, we are starting to think a lot more in terms of landscape level analysis, whether that's assessments or conservation and development strategies, our land use planning process is morphing.

We are incorporating things called ecoregional assessments into our land use planning process.

Our projects and permits can be a larger scale and we have the virtuous circle of monitoring and adaptive management and then you start all over again.

One of the things that's become really obvious to the whole Department of the Interior is you can't have agencies thinking in terms of just my little acre that I manage.

It is my acre in association with this other association's acre, in association with this state agency acre in association with private lands that are around it, even we think about this in the middle of the country all the time.

If you didn't have the nature conservancy or Ted Turner or some others that are operating at scale or the conservation reserve that is managed by the USDA, you

wouldn't deliver conservation, just flat out.

It won't be brought to you by the 100,000 acres of public land that the BLM manages or the other larger landscapes that other managers are bringing to the table.

It's all of this stuff in negotiation with each other.

It has to include partnerships.

Some examples nationally of where we are looking on these regional scales, you've got the western solar energy plan which made possible the siting of multiple solar farms.

They are not environmentally benign.

They have their own environmental consequences.

But the planning effort resulted in siting in a way that had the minimum impact from putting the big solar plants out this the sage grouse.

Let me go back a couple.

Sage grouse seems to be eating up the oxygen for, like, 80% of Mike Tupper's universe, at least.

Our Washington office is consumed with sage grouse and the implication of listing a species across that vast area of the interior west that we are looking at there.

That's where the Endangered Species Act comes into landscape level analysis and the individual species ends up driving habitat improvements on a really large scale.

Our renewable energy conservation plans and then the so-called WOPR, Western Oregon Plan Revisions.

That's one of the many byproducts, let's say of our concern about the sage grouse is conservation banking.

So we are doing that in the Plains area with lesser prairie chicken, with the American burying beetle, but in Nevada, there's a developing credit system for where project work may take place as mitigation for an impact that occurs somewhere else.

That is going to become, I think the norm in the BLM as we move forward.

Endangered Species Act somewhat drives it, so that's a Nevada example.

I will give you a more local example.

The southern plains ecoregional assess which is a group I'm the chair of, even though it's largely the private land states, it has state government involvement and NGO involvement.

There are also groups called the joint venturers, which are all about waterfowl and birds.

There are the landscape cooperation cooperatives and the climate centers, all of these groups are trying to find ways to play well together.

Some of the science that comes out of this can help with large scale project siting, like transmission lines or mitigation strategies or conservation banking.

One more slide.

If we look at ESA, the American burying beetle, it's still listed, but there's some information that it may be eligible for delisting at some point and then the lesser prairie chicken habitat, it's huge, occupying parts of five entire states.

It's a chicken.

So it has a lot in common with the sage grouse.

You may not hear as much about resource conflict because there is less public land, but the strategies developed to protect the prairie chicken were enormous and this was a five-state plan that was issued a couple of years ago, and the conservation efforts that have gone on in just last 12 months, there have been \$46 million contributed by industry to give themselves a reasonable certainty that their actions can go forward, whether that's pipelines or oil and gas well pads or wind development.

So that's \$46 million that will go into conservation actions, it starts to sound like sage grouse just a little bit.

Something like 11 million acres of land has been given certainty of development.

And I learned just as I was coming to this meeting, that the US Judge Robert Junell, of Texas, threw out the lesser prairie chicken listing yesterday.

That's some real news.

I don't know anything other than a newspaper article at this point, but what the response of the Fish & Wildlife Service will be, whether they will appeal and so on, but a really interesting part and eventually this gets back to horses, is that Fish and Wildlife Service was apparently have said not given enough consideration to all of the pending conservation actions that have been promised by the \$46 million in conservation and

mitigation fees that was yet to come which sounds like what Mr. Tupper and others are dealing with on sage grouse where there are many pending actions such as wild horse and burro gathers.

As far as the intersection with the wild horse and burro, that's more of a seed for the advisory board's thoughts.

As BLM becomes more of a landscape level planning and execution, we're not going to stop permitting, of course.

But we're trying to think of science at these different scales.

Are there any effects at all on the Wild Horse and Burro Program?

We talked about the sage grouse.

What happens when vegetation moves?

What happens when water moves?

What happens in relation to herd management?

That are some of the questions that some of the groups I sit on their boards, should that be asked in relation to horses.

For instance, in our three states, precipitation is moving.

It's on a gradient.

It is moving away from the southwest and up to the northeast.

So northern Kansas on the east side is becoming wetter, as is Nebraska, and southwest Texas is drying up, and becoming hotter.

What are the implications of that for our private land ranching and, you know, do you apply that same kind of thinking to the public lands and the range where our horses are located?

We did some modeling, specifically for the horse program out of our office, and my state director, Jesse Juane gave us a challenge, can you think of this spatially.

Scale it up.

A couple of our staff looked at what would quote/unquote habitat be for horses where we wanted to find new opportunities for long-term pasture contracts?

And we looked at soils.

So that's SSURGO data sets nor those who follow databases that comes out of NRC, precip, aquifers and land cover.

And then there was a weighting that took place within the model.

So to kind of cut to the chase here, after running a bunch of numbers and crunching it a bunch of different times and making some implicit assumptions about what is good habitat for horses and what isn't, if you look at the slide on the right, the really darkest counties have been punched out to show, well, if you accounted for all of those variables, here's where we should have opportunities for long-term pasture contracts.

Look at the next slide, after having finished that, I asked the staffer to say, where do the existing long-term pastures hole and all of them were in a really dark county.

And the sweet spot is up there on the Kansas/Oklahoma border where there's a lot of rainfall and tall grass and really wonderful conditions for the horses.

It turned out there was possibly another sweet spot down in southeast Texas where we don't have any existing long-term pasture or short-term contracts.

We will zero in on that.

That part of Texas, it has a number of conservation-type properties around it.

They may be held in public ownership or private ownership for conservation purposes.

There's possibly an untapped resource in that part of our three-state area, where we could be putting horses and whether it's an ecosanctuary or long-term pasture contract or some amalgam of the two, we haven't gone there.

There was one of the properties that the Washington office evaluated, I want to say it was near Plano.

Holle'?

Plano, Texas?

That has a lot of great potential to it, or Scott would remember also.

So Texas may be part of the solution for excess horses in the on-range side of the equation.

As well, Nebraska.

So we were wanting to go back and add Nebraska into that data set and see what we come up with.

So that's a lot of stuff not exactly what you expected to hear at the wild horse and burro.

We do everything from NEPA compliance, and horse adoptions and Crystal, if you see her in action, she's great with the kids and doing youth events and outreach.

We have a great relationship with the Hutchison Prison.

I will show you just generally our adoptions.

Oh, NEPA, there's no decision in the BLM that involves possible surface disturbance that doesn't have a NEPA document.

So this was an example of a long-term contract, with NEPA adequacy and EAs for other actions.

Those dots are sort of spread all over the board and they include state of New Mexico.

So our staff has responsibility for New Mexico, for just the horse program, and that's where we rotate our satellite adoptions.

Pat will say a little bit more about that.

Look at our adoption trends.

Can you believe we adopted more than 1200 head back until 2002?

That's pretty unbelievable.

The decline isn't a reflection on our lack of trying, right?

The decline has to do with economic factors and possibly the saturation of the adoption market, Pat will say more about that in a minute.

Our compliance basically follows the adoptions.

So an adoption begets a compliance action and possibly multiples of them as we work to make sure that the animals under happy homes and then just look at the color.

Most of our adoptions under Texas.

So most of our compliance is in Texas.

These are the two states Oklahoma and Texas where the bulk of the long-term pastures are located.

We are still at about 30,000 head.

I think if we had more money in the entire national program, we would have more than 30,000.

So money is the limitation here.

But that's just in our two states and you can see what started out in 1998 has now become a very, very large part of what we bring to the table and the Wild Horse and Burro Program.

And specifically, we have 30,506 head currently in Oklahoma and Kansas in long-term pastures here, which puts us nearly at capacity.

We are about 1,000 head under capacity and those are current numbers.

Going forward, hiring is difficult in all of the BLM offices, including in the horse program.

There are limitations on travel, overtime, awards.

We are managing around those things, but just to make you aware that they are there are a little bit of headwinds that we deal with and sequestration causes some uncertainty and continuing resolutions are always difficult.

We have trouble issuing large contracts which we are under continuing resolution.

So any you hear, over the federal government is on the CR, it has an impact when you are trying to manage at the local level.

And ESA is a big deal.

So welcome to the advisory board members.

Thanks for visiting Oklahoma.

>> FRED WOEHL: Okay.]

Do any of the board members have questions for Steve?

>> KATHIE LIBBY: We may want to go ahead with Pat who will give us the New Mexico

wild horse and burros programs update and Pat, we saved you all of ten minutes but I will give you 15.

>> FRED WOEHL: Thank you, Steve, for doing that.

That was really good.

>> Yes, it was.

Very informative.

>> FRED WOEHL: Pat looks a lot different than he did too.

You clean up pretty good.

>> PAT WILLIAMS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Once again, welcome to Oklahoma City.

I want to thank the board for stopping by Pauls Valley yesterday and also stopping by the Davis offerings pasture.

I certainly enjoyed talking to y'all yesterday.

Again, my name is Pat Williams.

I'm the you wild horse and burros state lead for the New Mexico region.

I want to take the opportunity to give a brief overview of our operation here in Oklahoma.

Again, the New Mexico region consists of Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas, and New Mexico.

Besides myself there are six full-time wild horse and burro specialists.

We have two here in the Oklahoma City office.

We have two full-time employees at the Pauls Valley facility and we have two employees based out of Decatur, Texas.

We currently have two vacancies one being a wild horse and burro specialist here in the Oklahoma City office and we also have a vacant wild horse and burro facility manager out of El Dorado, Kansas.

Most of our work that we do does relate to off-range issues.

Thank you.

But we do have two herd management areas in New Mexico, the Bordo Atravesado.

High end of AML is 60 head and has a current population of 75 head.

The last time we do anything off of the Bordo was back in 2012.

We did that by way of water trapping.

The other herd management area is the Jarita Mesa near Farmington, New Mexico.

It's right there on the Colorado border.

It's approximately 8,000 acres and it adjoined the Forest Service, Jicarilla wild horse, and they make up the Jicarilla.

The high end is 128, and we have a current population of 420.

Since 2013, there have been 166 head removed off the JMA by means of bait trapping and we did recently conduct aerial census on the Jicarilla JMA and that was conducted last April.

Our target numbers for each jurisdiction are released at the beginning of fiscal year.

They are basically a representation of the summation of the program elements that is expected to be completed by the end of fiscal year.

The adoption target is 350 head for this year.

We are currently at 291 head.

We have three scheduled events yet coming up in September and we will exceed that target.

The compliance target is 550 and the reason that that compliant number is higher than the adoption target number is that we are making a push to close out older adopted files, that is adopted animals that were adopted two or three, four years ago that for whatever reason were never titled.

So we are making a push to get them closed out.

Animal feed days, 337625, if you divide that number by 365, that will give you the average number of animals that we are expected to maintain throughout the year at the Hutchinson and the Pauls Valley facilities.

As I mentioned before, recently concluded a census operation on the Jicarilla and through coordination with the USGS, namely Paul Griffith, who was instrumental in organizing the entire event, that was concluded at the end of April of this year.

Our adoptions scheduled for 2015, as you can see, the majority of our adoptions are held in Texas.

We generally start in the far south in January and work our way north throughout the year.

The blue dot in Kansas represents the Hutchinson correctional facility, and the public can adopt year round by appointment and they also hold an annual open house event at the facility.

The blue dot represents the Pauls Valley facility and we hold monthly adoptions at the Pauls Valley facility.

I would like to touch on what's involved in logistics as far as putting on an adoption event and a satellite location.

We are continually looking for new areas to hold adoption events, and once we identify an area and focus on a site on where to have it, we run into a lot of constraints in terms of what had the facilities often allow or not allow us to do.

Some of those barriers include the -- they often don't want us feeding on the arena floor.

They often don't want us housing animals on the arena floor for two or three days and price.

A lot of venues that we try to book are simply too expensive.

We generally try to find an indoor or covered arena to mitigate the effects of any adverse weather conditions that we might have, and once we do find a facility that's willing to accommodate us, first we need to advertise and I will get into that a little bit later.

We need to prepare the animals.

Most of the animals that we take to our adoption events come out of the Pauls Valley or of the Hutchinson correctional facility.

We need to make sure that they are current on their vaccinations and Coggins and their feet under good shape.

We need to coordinate with any state veterinarians to make sure that there's no animal

transportation restrictions.

We need to ensure that our interstate transportation documents are in order, if we are going to a brand state, we need to coordinate with state brand inspectors.

And after that, we need to obviously contract a truck to haul our animals and aside from animal transportation, we are completely self-contained.

We generally take an office trailer, a 36-foot stock trailer that we carry additional adoption animals and 32-foot flat bed that we take our fences.

We take about 40 head to our adoption events.

The marketing is the greatest portion.

Poor marketing is sure to debilitate it.

We are very fortunate in that we have an outstanding public affairs officer in our office, and we have a staff that's well versed in public relations.

Some of our print ads or paid advertising include advertising in various periodicals, radio spots, the PAO, and wild horse and burro staff send out fliers and they send out press -- excuse me, press releases and conduct TV, radio, and newspaper interviews, whether it be by phone or in person.

In this day of social media age, we do take advantage of the Internet as well, in terms of Twitter and Facebook accounts and we send out mast eblasts.

We mail out flyers and put up signs when we get to a venue and we participate and have the space at various trade shows and expos throughout the year.

Now, the ultimate responsibility for animals on off-range pastures is with the Washington, D.C., office of off-range branch.

Monitoring range conditions, conducting inventory and animal health assessments along with APHIS field veterinarians, providing NEPA analysis on all new bids and as well as rebids, supporting public affairs and assisting with any removals that might happen at the off range pastures.

And earlier, I did mention we have a vacant wild horse burro facility manager position to be based in El Dorado, Kansas.

That position will be responsible for project inspector duties at all off-range pastures in Oklahoma and Kansas.

We should have that filled within the next 30 or 60 days.

The selection has been made.

2014, BLM entered into an assistance agreement with the Moudy Ranch, which is located north of Coalgate, Oklahoma.

It's comprised of 4,000 acres of wooded hills and open acres.

1300 of those acres are dedicated to 155 wild horses.

They have two guest lodges that can accommodate up to 35 people.

They have dining and kitchen facilities that can accommodate large groups and special events.

Earlier this summer, as part of the celebrate America's mustang campaign, they held a full marathon, half marathon, 5k and 10k run at the ranch and they attracted, I think it was over 250 contestants, literally all over the United States and as far away as Scotland.

And since they have opened, they have had several group and individual tours and had wedding parties out there and that kind of thing.

Since most of you visited the Pauls Valley facility yesterday, you are all at least somewhat acquainted with the facility.

We are very proud of it in that it is a unique facility.

It sets in a pasture.

It's comprised of 12 improved Bermuda grass pastures spanning over 400 acres.

It averages 550 to 600 head, and it does serve as a rest facility for horses coming from the West.

They also have tours and serves as a return location for wild horse and burros that for some ready reason, whatever it may be, the adopter decides they don't want them or can't find another person to take them.

It serves as a pickup location as well for Internet adoptions, and, of course, as I mentioned earlier, we have monthly adoptions there.

The Hutchinson correctional Facility they average 350 head and have capacity to hold up to 500 head.

They have two full-time Kansas correctional employees, there one being the program manager and the other being the training manager.

They employ six to eight inmate trainers and another six to seven inmate employees that are responsible for the feeding and the maintenance.

They do put up the majority of their own hay.

So they employ another three to four seasonal employees as well.

When Hutchinson correctional facility trainers pull out a horse for training, it's obviously taken from the pool of horses that are held there at the facility.

And once they enter training, they are scored on a point system through all phases of the training.

And they may -- they must meet that minimum criteria before they are considered trained.

Besides the department of corrections property, they also have access to a nearby state park and they have several miles of trails, sand dunes, water crossings.

They often have cattle at the facility where they are able to sort, track, rope and basically get a horse to watch a cow.

And they also have a border collie on the facility.

They get those horses accustomed to being around dogs and that's especially important for the border patrol horses.

Hutchinson Correctional Facility has adopted 65 head to the Border Patrol in 2011.

That makes up one-quarter of all Border Patrol officers adopted.

They take precedence over all other horses in the training program, usually the Border Patrol will contact the Hutchinson Correctional Facility when they need some more mounts.

Hutchinson will pull aside horses already in the training program or they will go back and grab a new horse and start him from scratch.

Once a horse is tabbed as being a Border Patrol prospect, the Border Patrol does have first dibs at those horses.

Hutchinson correctional Facility has adopted to centers in Texas and far away as Southern California.

This graph shows the trend for animal feed days at both the Hutchinson and the Pauls Valley facilities.

The purple represents the Pauls Valley facility and the orange represents the Hutchinson facility and for 2015, we do still have a month to go.

So this is basically the same graph, but gives you a clear picture of each number of horses housed at the facility.

My eyesight is, 2006 to 2009, and it represents an influx of foals weaned off of in-range pasture and the spike in 2010, represents facility expansion.

The Oklahoma field office has a substantial involvement with the Mustang Heritage Foundation.

The Pauls Valley facility serves as a pickup location for animals involved Mustang Heritage Foundation events, as well as animals in the trainer incentive program and serves as a return location for those animals.

The Oklahoma field office staff approve all applications that come through the Mustang Heritage Foundation events, as well as in the adoption applications that come in through the trainer incentive program.

They support the Mustang Heritage Foundation, marketing efforts, attend all Mustang Heritage Foundation events in our region and handle all compliance-related issues and we also provide support to two trainer incentive programs.

I guess they are called store front locations.

Sorry.

It left my mind.

One located north of Houston and the other is located in northwest New Mexico.

Throughout the year, we do attend various equine-related expos, fairs and trade shows.

We host an annual wild horse and burro show in conjunction with the schedule of horse and burro event and support local volunteer groups.

Our partnerships include but are certainly not limited to Mustang Heritage Foundation, Border Patrol, Hutchinson Correctional Facility and USGS and I think it's important to

touch on our relationship with APHIS as well.

Dr. Kane has been a key resource for offering guidance for animal health-related issues and APHIS also participates in events in conjunction with gathers and also with off range pasture inspections.

We offer education opportunity for youth, and take one of our saddle horses and conduct interactive presentations at schools, camps and other events.

We organize tours and adoption events at the Pauls Valley facility.

We work with a local high school where special needs students prepare adoption packets for us and we participate with Mustang Heritage Camp Wildfire.

What Camp Wildfire is, it's a day camp that provides a -- an exciting opportunity for youth to learn more about wild horse and burros and land stewardship.

And depending on funding in previous years we also hired a summer intern as well.

Meredith Keat, one of our wild horse and burros specialist is spearheading a youth trail challenge.

Basically for youth 18 and younger, they will select a yearling and take it home for 90 days, train it and at the end of though 90 days they will compete in an in-hand trail challenge.

After that's over, they adopt the horses out by way of competitive bid.

Anything over \$25 is retained by the trainer, and we also reimburse them for feed days.

The Midwest mustang and burro saddle club is a wonderful volunteer group that we are associated with in northeast Kansas.

They have been in existence for 22 years.

They do so much for us as far as promotion.

They have been in several parades and carry wild horse and burro banners.

They put on gentling demonstrations and workshops.

They ride their adopted animals in parades, like I said carrying banners.

They attend expos and compete with their adopted animals, support media outreach, and they foster and find new adopters as well.

If we have time, Kathy, I would like to take time to watch a short video that Crystal Cowen put together for us.

It's about two or three minutes.

>> KATHY LIBBY: Let me defer to the share.

We are about ten minutes behind.

>> FRED WOEHL: That's fine.

Before we -- we would like to see the video.

I have a question for you, Pat, if you would.

Could you explain more about these store fronts that you mentioned, one in Houston and -- because that's a major interest of the board.

>> PAT WILLIAMS: Okay.

The store front Kali can touch on it.

It's through the mustang trainer incentive program.

They have to keep ten head on hand at all times and open year round for adoption.

They get the horse -- there's certain criteria, pick up feet, load, and this type of thing, but the criteria for a store front is they must maintain ten head at all times.

>> FRED WOEHL: And are they required to go pick up those horses or do y'all take them to them?

>> PAT WILLIAMS: They are required, bust we have -- I won't say necessarily taking horses to them, but if we are in an area for an adoption event, and we have horses left over, they are certainly welcome to come pick those up.

Yeah.

>> FRED WOEHL: Thank you very much.

>> PAT WILLIAMS: Thank you.

>> FRED WOEHL: Does anybody else have questions for Pat before we go on?

>> KATHY LIBBY: Would you like to see it?

>> PAT WILLIAMS: This is a photograph montage of the events and the program.

(Showing video).

>> PAT WILLIAMS: Does the board have any further questions?

>> FRED WOEHL: We thank you for this, and it's very rewarding to us to see such a good program using the youth and the horses and getting them together and we appreciate it very much.

>> PAT WILLIAMS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

>> KATHY LIBBY: Mr. Chairman, would you like me to review the rules of room at this time?

>> FRED WOEHL: I greatly would, thank you.

>> KATHY LIBBY: So when you come together with a family gathering of your closest and some of your distant relatives, if you are going to spend a couple of days together, it's probably good to get some guidelines clear right from start.

So that's what we are going to do.

As you know, this is really designed as a board meeting, so that this section of the room is set aside for the board business, and presenters and even our public commenters will kind of sit themselves here.

So a lot of time, the board is speaking to themselves, and we are all privileged to be able to listen in on all of that, but not participating fully during this session.

So that's what some of these rules are about.

So with your indulgence.

Rules of room for the public, seating is available, obviously.

If you want to stand, go ahead and stand down the back where you are not obstructing anybody's views and we also have the -- you know, the Livestream going on.

So we don't want people sitting in front of the camera, or the whole world will be watching you, instead of the board members.

So unless you are sitting up for public comment at this table, you are going to be seated

or standing in the back.

Under no circumstances will speakers or attendees approach the dais at any time without the chairperson's consent.

And if there is media, official media in the room, we welcome you.

There is a space set aside for cameras and for the media, just behind the welcome table.

That is also true for some of you who have tripods or something with your cameras.

So you can feel free to stand up back there.

That way you get to get what you want and we don't have to look through your tripods.

No attendees will be able to put microphones or cameras in the space set aside for the board meeting.

So that's everything behind here.

So state seated or standing in the back and it will be helpful.

Attendees will show respect for one another and speakers and the board members.

Part of that includes using cell phones and just kind of chatting during the meeting.

If you need to chat, go outside and come back in.

If anyone does disrupt -- and we are very serious about this if anyone disrupts the meeting, you will be asked to leave or escorted out the door.

Those wishing to address board will sign in at the welcome table by 10:00 tomorrow morning and those of you who are frequent visitors know that we have a certain amount of time set aside.

We take the number of people wishing to speak, we divide it by the minutes set aside to speak and that's how many minutes you are left and you are always terribly cooperative.

Sign up if you want to speak, and we'll get everybody in.

Attendees wishing to provide handouts to the board, just leave them on the welcoming table.

Don't hand them to the board members directly.

We will get them distributed.

Within the room itself, we are not allowing display cards, placards or any other items that will obscure the view and/or disrupt the meeting.

So if you have placards and stuff, find some place outside to use them as people walking in and out might see them.

When you are speaking during the public comment period, the board will not respond, will not interact with you.

Do not misunderstand, that doesn't mean they disagree with you.

It doesn't mean they agree with you.

It just means that is the time set aside for public comment, and we are not going to take away that time by having an interaction from the board members using public comment time.

So don't misunderstand.

We care very much about your comments.

We are just not going to enter into a dialogue.

The Chair does reserve the right if some factual inaccuracies are stated during the public comment, we might take a moment afterwards to correct those inaccuracies or provide not facts that were provided.

We want to make sure that people have the right information available to them.

That's what we are and we just commit ourselves and hopefully you will commit yourselves to maintain these rules as we go through the next day and a half, and, again, welcome.

Mr. Chair.

>> FRED WOEHL: Thank you.

The next order of business, I'm sure every board member has had an opportunity to review the minutes from the last meeting.

Is there any discussion or questions or comments made about the minutes from the last meeting?

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: Yes, Chairman.

On page 11, at the top of the page, it says in the minutes that in my report about the Sheldon spay project, that it decreased the foaling rate to 28%.

The correct report is that it decreased the foaling rate from 18% in 2008, to 6% in 2013.

And I have no idea where the number 28 came from in our minutes.

From 18% in 2008, to 6% in 2013.

>> FRED WOEHL: All right.

Does anybody else have any additions being changes, modifications they wish to make?

If not, we will show these minutes corrected as has been recommended or stated, and I ask for a motion.

>> So moved.

>> FRED WOEHL: We have a motion on the floor.

A second?

We got a second.

All those in favor say aye.

[Chorus of ayes]

The minutes have been approved with those additions and corrections.

All right.

At this time, we are getting pretty much getting back on track as far as timewise.

I want to point out real quick that the board is not married to this agenda, as far as time.

If there's anything that the board member wants to ask or any of the people doing anything, please feel free to ask.

This is our board meeting and we are here to gather information and so we are not married no this timetable, but I understand we need to try to be as close to it as we can, and I appreciate that.

But we will hear from Ms. Sarah Bohl, if we can get her, Ms. Kathy.

>> SARAH BOHL: Good afternoon, this is Sarah Bohl on the line.

>> FRED WOEHL: Good afternoon, Sarah how are you doing?

>> SARAH BOHL: I'm doing well.

Can you hear me okay?

>> FRED WOEHL: We can hear you fine.

We wish you were here, but we know you have other things to do.

Thank you for taking the time to join us.

>> SARAH BOHL: Thank you.

I start by addressing the charter.

I wanted to let the board know that I added language to the charter defining a quorum and I submitted that to the department in June.

The language that I added we discussed the need for it at the last board meeting.

It's a simple statement in the charter that says, a quorum of board members must be present to constitute an official board meeting of the board.

For the purposes of this board, it's defined six of nine board members thus representing two-thirds of the nine categories of interest that comprise the board.

The department let me know that there's a lot of other charters ahead of me in line.

So this change will be made but since our charter doesn't expire until July of 2016, we're behind some other charters, but that change is in the works.

>> FRED WOEHL: Okay.

That's good.

That makes a lot of sense, as we talked.

>> SARAH BOHL: Great.

The second short item I have is on the standard operating procedures.

What I have done there is added a brief explanation of the rule of the vice chair into the standard operating procedures.

And while I was at it, I just made some minor edits to make language consistent around the title of chair, et cetera, and just tidied up a few other things.

These changes, the only substantive change, again, is the adding the brief explanation of the role of the vice chair but all the changes are in tract changes in the document in your binder and I would ask the board to look at them at your leisure and at some point advise me if you would like those changes to be made or not.

>> FRED WOEHLE: Okay.

All right.

Does anybody have any questions for Sarah while she's on the line?

Sarah, everybody is shaking their head no.

So --

>> SARAH BOHL: All right.

Well, thank you for your time.

>> FRED WOEHLE: Thank you very much.

>> SARAH BOHL: Bye-bye.

>> FRED WOEHLE: Bye.

Moving right along.

I guess it's time for Mr. Dean to take over, and we'll talk about the recommendations that we made at the last board and the BLM answer to them.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: Thank you, Chairman Fred.

With your permission, I would like to identify some BLM staff that's here from the Washington office staff team.

>> FRED WOEHLE: That would be very good.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: You got to meet the New Mexico team and I want you to meet the Washington team as well.

So Ms. Holle' Hooks is our off-range branch chief stationed here in Oklahoma City.

Holle'.

Thank you.

She will be speaking to you later this afternoon.

Bryan Fuell is on-range branch chief stationed in Reno.

Scott Fleur, a wild horse specialist.

Scott, thank you.

Mr. Michael Reiland is our new budget analyst, taken over behind Holle', who used to be our budget person, budget lady as she would say.

So Mr. Paul Griffin from fort Collins, Colorado, is our research lead coordinator, and he as well will present tomorrow.

Mr. Jason Lutterman, is stationed in Reno.

And Kathy, I promise, I will follow the rules because I understand this meeting is being webcast, streamed live internationally and just in case my grandson is watching, I would not want to disappoint him.

So I promise to follow the rules.

The good team that is assisting with our broadcast is Debbie Collins, stationed here in Oklahoma, back there monitoring and probably typing in words that we are all speaking here, Kim Menning from our Denver office, Terry Loftus and also helping at the table with Jason is Leticia Culvert and one last Washington office employee, Kimmie Ismail is our contract specialist, a brand new one who will be helping pane assisting with our long-term off range pasture contracts.

And also our good friends from the Forest Service, Barry Imler and Allen Rolle where are you fellows at?

You will be chatting with us tomorrow as well.

So along with our good New Mexico team, that's our great Washington office team.

So thank you, Chairman Fred and I will get right with the program.

>> FRED WOEHLE: Dean, one thing I would like to advise you of, just so you know when you give your BLM answer to the recommendations that was made, we have a board member that's going to ask some questions maybe, if you don't cover it well enough.

I just wanted to let you know.

(Laughter).

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: Well, I will look forward to it, and I'm sure we will have discussion.

Over the last day, and being around you folks, we have chatted about several of these recommendations and if we could go back and do a redo, I think we would expand them.

I think in a couple of cases, we might have misunderstood the board's recommendation, and perhaps in one case, maybe we both missed the mark insofar as what I think was really intended and desired and the goal to get to.

So I will get with the program here, and I'm not sure I can read fast enough to go through 15 recommendations and BLM's response to stay within Kathy's time line.

So I'm glad we don't have to stay with the exact time frames.

>> FRED WOEHLE: We are good.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: All right.

Recommendation number one of 15.

BLM should consider having the wild horse and burro division chief have an optional location in the West based on the preference of the selectee and the program needs.

So I think the suggestion from the board was to gain access to the very best candidates to lead this program, that we consider a duty station in the West.

So the BLM unfortunately does not accept this recommendation.

The 2014 reorganization of the Wild Horse and Burro Program created the on range branch chief, that's based in Nevada, with a staff there.

And as well, I misread that, an on range branch chief based in Nevada and off-range branch chief based in Oklahoma.

These provide leadership presence in the West and a close connection with the field.

An important aspect of the Wild Horse and Burro Program division chief role is to work with BLM leadership and Congress and not in Washington -- and not stated here also with Congress on key decisions with senior leadership, while maintaining a close connection with the field.

So we feel that it's extremely important that the leadership of this program be in Washington, D.C.

It doesn't mean that he or she will be disconnected from the field, but it is so important to be in D.C.

A little historical perspective on that, back in the mid-90s, the entire Wild Horse and Burro Program staff was in Reno, Nevada.

There was a crisis that happened that was a national related Mark Mendoza's article in the AP, and Congress and became very interested in it and there were no Wild Horse and Burro Program staff immediately available to address their interest in the subject.

So for those reasons, we feel it's very important to maintain our leadership duty station here in D.C.

Okay.

So glad to answer questions on that.

>> FRED WOEHL: I don't think there is any.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: Okay.

Thank you.

So recommendation number two.

BLM should assess horses to predict adoption potential (By qualified trainers who may be volunteers), with the aim of moving horses expeditiously to long-term situations.

And I'm going to expand on this one beyond what's written.

BLM's response is the BLM accepts the recommendation to assess horses to predict adoption potential.

Implementation may entail additional training for BLM staff who currently select horses for adoptions.

It may determine what assistance the board could help provide to develop a third-party resource.

So my additional comment, Terry, on this subject is a think we all agree that we need to tend the very best horses to our adoption events and put them in front of the public.

Those that have good confirmation, those that have good dispositions as best we can determine, and those that are desirable for adoption for a number of reasons that we know from historical experience, that adopters desire.

So I think the board's assessment of this is that our BLM specialist, perhaps in your minds, not all, but some, don't have the experience to pick these kind of April malls.

I take difference with that, and maybe yesterday your experience at Pauls Valley you met Gary and Pat.

Those kind of people are professional horsemen.

They know their horses!

And they are around the horses in our facilities on a daily basis.

I would submit you to that there's no one other than those folks, along with other horse trainers and people with good savvy about horses that can pick ember.

Where we missed the mark here is BLM's policy.

In the past, it has been our practice -- I said policy.

It's not written, but it's been our practice that we advance horses through the system.

They get to our mid-continental facility, in Elm Creek, Nebraska, and those are the first ones to move on.

Meanwhile, we might have other more desirable horses behind them.

So I don't think it's the inability of our staff to assess good horses and potential for adoption, but maybe something else that we need to change up insofar as our policies and how we advance these horses and ship them and present them.

So that's not what we wrote in the response, but I think I would like a little reconsideration of that one and if we need to discuss this I would like to do that.

>> FRED WOEHL: Okay.

Mr. Tim is going to take that one.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Yeah, just, you know, one of the problems that has been voiced on numerous occasions is high recidivism rate on some of the horses that go out into the adoption program, and in many conversations that I have had with different people, I agree with you that there's some real good horsemen in the BLM.

You know I agree with you on that.

But I have also had some experiences where I have been told things like they basically, they got to put 34 horses on the trailer.

First 34 horses they can round up and put on the trailer are the ones that are going.

The intention, I think, with this is not to be critical of the BLM's horsemanship skills.

It's simply to try to determine, like the horses being shipped east.

If the determination is made whether the horses have good potential as an adoption prospect, the earlier that's done, the better, and I think there's a triage system, perhaps that would make that determination a lot earlier in the process.

So that horses that are earmarked to be good adoption prospects that have got the temperament and the willingness to be interested in human activity and, you know, it would make a good prospect, that those horses are prioritized in the system from day one or as early as possible and that perhaps that they be handled in the different manner as -- as good prospects from day one, and are then it's more of a streamlined process to get them into adoption processes, whether through the TIF program, the satellite adoptions, whatever.

But it wasn't meant to be a criticism of the -- it was definitely -- it is a criticism in a little way, but it's constructive criticism.

It's not meant to denigrate the horsemanship skills of the people in this program.

You are one of them.

So I think that's where the board was coming from on that, and also that because of some of the limited manpower constraints within the BLM, that going outside the BLM for volunteers wasn't that you needed somebody with more expertise.

Maybe you needed more bodies to help out.

That's where we are coming from.

It's not a condemnation in any way, shape, form or matter.

It's a few more boots in the ground to get the job done.

It's a surge.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: All right.

That's a great clarification.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Yeah.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: And some historical perspective.

I think sometimes the first 34 go on the truck.

That's kind of what happened.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: I don't think that's the norm.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: We need to change that up.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: I just think that the board felt -- I mean when we discussed it, the earlier the determination can be made that a horse is either a good adoption prospect or not, you know, if you get a horse that's really wild -- I had a couple myself.

You know, I had one that as you know, I ended up taking to Black Hills wild horse sanctuary that he was such a wild guy, there was no way he would ever be safe to be around for anybody but me.

But a horse like that, you know, he's a candidate right off the bat for long-term pasture.

If that's the direction he has to go in.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: And that's another policy that we need to change up.

It used to be that what we shipped to long-term holding were the six and older.

We didn't mess with the younger ones.

They were considered all adoptable, however --

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: They are not.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: There are a few candidates that we all probably recognize, hmm?

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Yes.

So I think that's part of this process is that also you don't need the three strike a horse to get it in a long-term or whatever that process has to be.

If there's a good professional determination made that a horse is not going to be as safe as possible partner or potential partner.

There's no guarantees but you can tell.

You have a horse that's as wild as a zebra, you don't want it to go out to a satellite adoption or something, you know?

>> FRED WOEHL: Right very good.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: All right.

So I think we have clarification on that and with the additional entries into the minutes, then I think we have a path forward for this recommendation.

>> FRED WOEHL: Good deal.

Good deal.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: I appreciate the additional discussion.

Recommendation number three, BLM should continue to develop and implement programs like America's Mustang, I think the missing word is campaign which provides factual information to the American public.

BLM's response is that BLM accepts this recommendation and thanks the board for recognizing the value of the campaigns like America's Mustang.

And I think Holle' is going to provide some additional information and results about the program that we had during the past few months.

>> FRED WOEHL: Rick would like to make a comment about that.

>> RICK DANVIR: Yes, I just wanted to -- I had an opportunity to participate with some of the BLM employees, including Holle' and Debbie, and Kali Sublett on interacting and present the public with some information.

I wanted to let you guys know, it's a very good program, that based on the comments and the feedback and the questions, that came from the public, I thought it was a great

opportunity to help, you know, share knowledge, and let some people know, in areas, you know, particularly -- in this case, it was St. Louis.

People that may not have the opportunity to go out and really see what's going on in some of the western HMAs.

I thought the staff did a great job and mustang heritage did a great job and it's definitely worth pursuing, continuing.

>> FRED WOEHL: Thank you, Rick.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: Thank you, Rick and we already plan to kick off next year's program as well and Holle' will get into those details.

Recommendation number 4.

BLM should increase dedicated funding for developing new methods of population growth suppression and for methods currently available.

All forms of population control should be considered for utilization.

BLM's response is the BLM accepts the recommendation.

The BLM is investing and eight university led research projects that will receive up to \$4 million in total funding to develop new tools and improve current methods to humanely control the population growth of wild horse and burro herds, including contraception and more effective temporary contraceptive vaccines.

I led out a key word.

Including permanent contraception, along with more effective temporary contraceptive vaccines.

Additionally, through its partnership with the United States geological survey, the BLM has initiated four studies in soliciting studies for nine new projects that will develop new tools.

Eight of these studies are aimed at evaluating temporary and permanent contraception.

These projects will receive up to \$7 million in funding.

Questions?

Discussion on that response?

>> FRED WOEHL: Julie and Sue will take that one.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: We appreciate the topic, but I do have a question.

We had some discussion among ourselves about the adequacy of the dollar amounts.

But when I look at the budget and I realize we are going to have a budget presentation yet today, but when I look at the budget, where will I find that 4 and \$7 million reflected?

Because I see an item of implementing NAS recommendations and this is partially tied to that.

But it's not nearly equivalent to that number.

So I guess my question is, in this -- in this affirmation of some 4 million in funding, plus another 7 million in future projects, where is that reflected in the budget?

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: What tab is the budget under?

Is it number five?

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: I'm looking at one of the handouts.

We just got it as this meeting opened up.

It's the second page with the sorell bay and black and white horse up.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: So I will Holle' to come up to answer the question.

>> MIKE TUPPER: I can start this.

Neil, the director of the BLM, went to the other programs and said, give me the money.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: The other programs?

>> MIKE TUPPER: Wild horse and burro is one of 80 and Neil was so interested in these research projects that we took the money from other programs.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: Oh, well.

Okay.

(Laughter).

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: That's part of the answer.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: We think it's pretty important too.

>> FRED WOEHL: And Neil is --

>> MIKE TUPPER: He's director of the BLM.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: That's part of the answer and Holle' will have more of the answer.

5 million of this 11 million was funded in fiscal '14.

We put it into an interagency agreement with USGS.

So you won't see it on the '15 expenditures we do want to look at the expenditures.

So 5 million from '14, and the remainder of it, accepting 5 million that Mike just mentioned so there's only about 1 to 2 million coming out of this fiscal '15 budget that you see here and there's no specific piece of the buy that's called research, because that's probably coming out of which element of this pie chart, Holle', please?

>> HOLLE' HOOKS: For FY 2015.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: Thank you for that clarification.

One additional point about Recommendation 4.

First part is dedicating funding to solving these major problems.

Built it's also about methods currently available.

In other words, the board was asking the BLM to move ahead with some of the things we already have.

It's fine to be looking for new methods and permanent contraception that has no side effects and all of those wonderful things that we hope we have as tools in our tool box some day.

But part of this recommendation was about going ahead with the tools that we do have today and I just wanted to make that point.

It's two pieces.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: Okay.

Maybe we did not address that but part of my update for the board is going to address

the importance of us moving forward as quickly as we can, as quickly as our planning and land use plans allow, as quickly as -- I will get into that later, if that's already.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: Great.

Great.

We are looking forward to that.

>> FRED WOEHL: Thank you, Julie.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: All right.

Let's move on to recommendation number 5, BLM is encouraged to proceed with the current wild horse and burro environmental impact statement.

The BLM is considering a programmatic impact statement and appreciates the board's support.

And I think is there going to be questions?

>> FRED WOEHL: There will not be a question but this is something that's very important to this board.

And I'm not going to take anything away from Ms. Julie because they wanted to address this issue.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: Just that this board continues to support the programmatic EIS, and we heard you loud and clear when you explain the political process and we appreciate that, but if it's helpful at all, this board is unanimous in its support for programmatic EIS.

>> FRED WOEHL: Do you hear that, Mr. Tupper?

>> MIKE TUPPER: I do.

I do.

(Laughter)

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: Okay.

Let's move to Recommendation 6.

BLM should encourage state, county and local governments and agencies to participate

as cooperative agencies in all NEPA processes.

The BLM accepts this recommendation.

This is current BLM policy and is consistent with the BLM 2012 desk guide for cooperating agency relationships.

The BLM may make additional efforts for enhanced coordination for all NEPA processes related to the Wild Horse and Burro Program to gain the benefit of on-the-ground jurisdictional knowledge and special expertise from state wildlife agencies and municipal governments that are cooperating agencies.

Further, the programmatic environmental impact statement would include extensive outreach in consultation with all interested publics, including the cooperating agencies.

>> FRED WOEHL: You have done a good job.

No comments or questions.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: It's a very long comment and paragraph.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: Actually, I do have a comment on that.

As the recovering county commissioner, I would like to draw on my experience as an elected official, I have heard from too many county officials that the BLM policy may not be filtering all the way down to the field office level, and there are some offices, I think, who aren't that trusting, aren't that really enthusiastic to work with county governments.

I have think it should be made known loud and clear that NEPA, not only allows but requires local government to be admitted as a cooperating agency in any of these NEPA processes.

And that the MOUs do not necessarily require involvement from the county on a level it can not afford.

So I think it needs to be made clear to all of these field office people that it does not mean that they can't participate as a cooperating agency, but it can be written in a manner that it allows the resources that the county has available.

While it's BLM policy and I worked with Cynthia Moses and Ed for years on this and we are developing a government guide for the planning process.

I think that type of thing needs to be out there just to make sure that both elected officials and BLM personnel are acutely aware of just how important it is that the local government be involved in that process all the way through.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: We in the Wild Horse and Burro Program are very, very, very wear of the interest in county government in the management of wild horse and burros.

Nevada, Utah, have been loud and clear about their interest.

Thanks, Cope, for the additions on that.

Recommendation number 7.

And I know we are going to have discussion on this one.

(Laughter)

Recommendation is: BLM should develop a training module program to allow all qualified adopters to be an asset to the BLM Wild Horse and Burro Program.

For example, BLM should consider training volunteers to assist in range monitoring through site-specific photography, a/k/a citizen science.

So I think BLM kind of misunderstood what the board was saying here, and I think we might kind of have a redo through our additional discussion here, but BLM's written recommendation was BLM does not accept the recommendation to develop one specific training module for volunteers.

Given the variation in duties undertaken by volunteers, a single training module would not meet our needs.

Training will, however, continue to be provided by the officer, staff supervising the volunteers.

The BLM will continue to encourage the field to make maximum use of volunteers, including citizen science opportunities.

Volunteers are a valued resource and contributed 115,000 hours of service to the program in 2013.

I couldn't find the end of that.

So I think we thought you were saying one training course and we're thinking one training course?

One size does not fit all!

There are many different places and situations where volunteers are put to work and

utilized and valued, but one training course isn't going to one size fit all.

So that was a part of why we didn't accept this recommendation.

I dread in our conversation this morning at breakfast, you kind of explained what the board had in mind when they were thinking of a training course.

So perhaps that's part of your comment and discussion on this.

>> FRED WOEHL: Well, Cope has more about that.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I serve on the Forest Service committee and implementation of the 2012 planning rule in which adaptive management is really the keystone the plan and the implementation.

I'm really encouraged to see the BLM referring to adaptive management now in this as well, but the most important and the most difficult part of that whole adaptive management process is not so much first defining the desired conditions and then placing the plan in place, in order to achieve those, but then the key is to monitor that and to establish the trends and are you or are you not reaching those desired conditions and if not, how do you get there?

Monitoring is intense in that incredibly important and very much budget limited.

We are finding this especially true in forest grounds, as we try to indicate and work toward that adaptive management and I think we are going to see the same thing on the HMAs that the BLM is going to be hamstrung by not having the budget and the manpower to do the monitoring necessary.

That can be the actual count for the number of critters out, there the riparian, and stubble height in various areas.

It will take a lot of work and I think the BLM will not have the manpower to do it.

We have several of the land grant universities already working towards establishing programs so we can train permittees and other interested parties to go out and establish methods to use, photographic effort to actually document what's on the ground and that's the type of thing that we are looking for in that area.

It doesn't mean a single module.

But we need to have the ability to train these people, probably borrowing and stealing is the proper way to do it, the least plagiarizing some of the programs that are already coming out of the universities.

At the same time, we can do similar things on the volunteers as far as the adoption work goes and the public relations, the dissemination of information.

So we weren't looking at one single training module, but we are looking at the variability of recruiting interested parties and effective parties who can assist the BLM fill in some of the manpower gaps but we need to have some standards but we can't have a single program because there's simply too much variation from one to another as far as where does the need occur and how can volunteers.

>> MIKE TUPPER: I request a redo.

We were talking past each other on the question and the answer, because the citizen science piece, it's -- we got to work together, and so let us have a shot at working this out.

(Off microphone comment).

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: And honestly, we should rewrite the recommendation in a way that makes that clear.

>> FRED WOEHL: Okay we will redo it in this meeting.

In this meeting, we will --

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: Fair enough.

And I appreciate that.

>> FRED WOEHL: Just before you go on, I'm going to let Ms. Kathy know that we are going to continue with Dean's response when he finishes up, we will take our break at that point.

Thank you.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: Recommendation 8, BLM in conjunction with other federal agencies should explore the possibility of establishing collaborative groups regarding the management of specific herd management areas.

BLM's response, the BLM accepts this recommendation.

This type of collaboration can be beneficial to the BLM and involves interested publics and wild horse management.

Currently Idaho, Colorado, Montana, Oregon, are involved with collaborative partners to

assist with herd management area management.

Wild Horse and Burro Program will continue to encourage collaboration with interested groups by offering support to state and district offices with opportunities for collaborative management of herd management areas.

So under Tupper's -- Mike's leadership, we call him Tup, Tupper in the office.

Under his leadership and direction, of five and half months tenure here, he has been very active in engaging with various and different NGOs.

If you want to help us, we are taking you seriously.

Under that guidance, I have been in touch with a couple of different groups, and we are trying to identify herd management areas.

I put out a call to the field and I do have some herd management areas that have been nominated and the NGOs are volunteering to stand up volunteers and groups to assist BLM.

It may be fertility control.

It may be something else.

It's primarily centered around PZP, one of the tools that we do have at our fingertips and if there's places where we can stand up some of those communicate-based programs, we need to do it, because it's low cost and effective.

That's our response and aim in regards to that.

>> FRED WOEHL: That's very good.

This is of great interest to the board.

There's not enough people to go around.

We have all of these things that we are doing and use of volunteers and NGOs and people like that is really beneficial to everything, especially to the horses.

Mr. Cope would like to take a shot at this too.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: One expansion I would really like to make on this, I want to be certain that we're, A, not talking about the BLM resource advisory committees.

And, B, we are not talking about the BLM working with individual NGOs.

I would really like to see the BLM follow the Forest Service model and work along the Clearwater Basin collaborative or the Hawaiian basin, places where we don't have a single governmental agency consulting with a group but instead we have that entity, being the BLM being one of the people at the table, not necessarily the lead.

That way you can include the Forest Service.

You can include the state fish and game departments.

You can include US Fish and Wildlife, and the model that we have used and I have been involved in one of those over the decade.

We are finding we actually get things done and people quit fighting.

If you get at the table and find the common ground and realize where you are moving forward and doing this not necessarily as a government-run organization, so you have the federal agencies and the local agencies and the state agencies in addition to local conservation groups and local agencies and bring them all together rather than have a limited participation, that model, I think is much more effective if we can expand on it and there are a lot of examples out there that can be used.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: Cope, you are not just talking about one little aim of some collaborative effort, like PZP treatment, you are talking about a diverse group sitting down and talking about how we are going to manage the herd management area.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: Those are the places where you can develop collaboratively conditions and methods of adaptive management that result in agency instead of litigation.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: All right.

I think we might want to talk to you a little bit more about Forest Service model.

Of course, our Forest Service partners could share that as well, but you have seen it employed in a different perspective.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: I have seen it actually work.

It's amazing.

>> FRED WOEHL: We are trying to keep our focus up here and not get down in the weeds.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: I appreciate it.

That's helpful.

Cope brings some experience I don't have.

>> MIKE TUPPER: We will work with you on it.

We will pick some places that we think we have some good partnerships already and maybe we can double or triple them up.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: Okay.

Recommendation number 9, BLM should explore more modern behavior modification and least stressed methods, such as enticement and positive reinforcement methods of gathering, refinement and increased use of water and bait trapping methods where they can be effective.

BLM response, BLM accepts the recommendation and is examining options for developing and trialing, piloting might be a better word, such methods.

So I think Dr. Sue is aware and maybe you would want to add to this but we've had some conference calls with Sarah Lowe, who I understand is one of your students and she's in the audience today.

Hello, Sarah.

Sarah assisted to gathering up free ranging horses in Hawaii.

And had some interesting experiences and applications as to how they done that.

So we are interested in learning more about that.

I thought it was kind of -- wow, I don't really think this is true, but there's some experience out there that says we ought to look into it.

Sue, would you comment?

>> DR. SUE McDONNELL: I want to thank you for your open acceptance of this suggestion, and look forward to working on it.

I would just add one thing.

I think in translation, these two A and B examples seem to focus on gathering itself.

In the recommendation, we meant to include handling of the horses, not only during the

gather, but from the gather off in any of the off-range, as well as returning them to the range.

This -- part of the impetus for this was going forward with population growth suppression methods that require multiple gathers.

It would be very valuable to handle the animals in the least confrontational way with the least fear methods of moving them, so that when we need to gather them again, that they will be more amenable to human contact was the point of that.

But all we would have to do is, A, add handling to the end of that phrase to include -- when you were accepting it, were you considering all handling or just gathering?

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: Well, I think we thought that the intent from the board was to look at different ways to gather the animals or capture them for potential treatments, and release back and handling, I don't think we recognized, that but kind and gentle and least pressure that's effective to get the job done ought to be our mantra and it's kind of intent of our comprehensive animal welfare plan standards for gathers.

So we can read that into it too.

Thanks for heading that.

>> DR. SUE McDONNELL: Okay.

Thank you.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: Okay.

Recommendation number 11.

10.

I'm trying to get through this.

Number 10.

BLM should pilot reintroducing a non-reproductive herd into a HMA.

And partner with National Mustang Association or other recognized group for this.

I promise, I didn't try to skip ahead of this.

Okay?

(Laughter)

Because I know this is kind.

A sensitive -- release BLM's response, the way it's written will kind of -- probably be uncomfortable for some.

So BLM's response to this is BLM does not accept this recommendation.

I'm going to add some more to what's written here.

Okay?

The change from herd area to herd management area for the reintroduction of wild horses and burros requires a land use plan decision and cannot be conducted as a pilot.

The recommendation was a pilot.

So we see that this can't just be a pilot.

It's either you do it or you don't.

It's a land use plan decision to manage for horses or it's not.

So there's no pilot to it.

Maybe we focused on that word too much.

Moving on here in the recommendation now, as it's written, reintroduction of horses or burros into HAs and zeroed out HMAs is considered as part of land use plan updates.

It should be noted that there are very few opportunities where it would be appropriate to reintroduce animals into the her area and added complication is the recent sage grouse conservation and we probably should have added drought.

So let me expand a bit.

Reasons certain areas are not managed for horses and burros are still the decision until otherwise determined to be different.

Part of the recommendation here was partnering with the national mustang heritage association, the mustang association, to pilot or do something different.

There's an awareness of an area in Utah that's missing a critical habitat component, that

being water.

So the thought from the National Mustang Association was, what if we develop water?

BLM would you consider putting horses back there?

And the answer is yes.

And something's got to be different.

You've got to have water.

So until the water is there, no decision to put them back, but if we have some agreement and Utah management embraces this through a hand use plan decision change, then horses can be repatriated and put back there.

But you needed to change it up and figure out the deficiencies that were there.

If nothing has changed, then it's not appropriate to put horses and burros back and there's a long list of reasons.

There's one for every single HMA.

They are summarized on our national wild horse and burro website for those who want to know why we are not doing this and if you want details and specifics on any individual herd area, we have those documented as well.

>> FRED WOEHL: Okay.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: Further discussion?

Well, Sue with help from Tim wants to ask a few questions about this.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: Sure.

>> FRED WOEHL: June and Tim would like to talk about this.

>> JUNE SEWING: Thank you.

This is kind of what has been discussed and it's come up in other things is that the way this recommendation was written was probably not the intent I -- it was my recommendation.

I don't think I ever thought TV as a pilot program because to me, it seems that pilot means that we're going to see if this works and then we are going to do, it but I didn't

really mean it that way.

I meant it exactly the way that Dean was explaining it.

If there are areas that were zeroed out, it's just to examine those reasons and see if there's been any changes.

Sometimes it's lack of forage.

If they have not been used for, you know, ten years, the forage may be there again.

And if the horses were better managed, maybe when they were there, that it might not get into that condition again or water, or whatever the reason is, if there could be some changes made and that would be why an area could be introduced with a non-reproductive herd.

I don't have a problem with what Dean is saying.

There again, I think it's a matter of semantics in the way the recommendation was made.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: Okay.

Thank you, June.

There's and recurring for the public to engage in the reevaluation.

There's a life term of 10 to 15 years.

>> JUNE SEWING: I understand that.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: I'm perhaps clarifying this for the audience as well.

There's a recurring opportunity to reevaluate those.

You could approach the local offices and say, hey, we would like to do this.

Let's talk about it and they could consider doing an environmental assessment to make a land use plan amendment, if it's a very narrow focus kind of thing, whether or not they would entertain that, I don't know, but it's possible to do.

>> JUNE SEWING: And that's what I really thought about it and I did not think about it as going to be a big national program or something like that.

So --

>> FRED WOEHL: Tim, do you have anything to add?

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: This goes back to recommendation that we put on the table a couple of years, that was accepted by the BLM to essentially do the same thing.

It was worded a little different.

And that goes back to 2010, I think it was, that I had made a proposal to Don Glenn about this.

I don't know if you remember that.

But -- and it was just what you were saying is to -- I mean, we are not looking to amass and go out and repopulate the areas.

I think what we are looking -- I think the intension here is to review some areas if there's a possibility of one or two areas that we could put a non-repurposing herd out there so that we don't have to deal with gathering them, and, you know, all of that management end of that part.

Getting the horses, especially emptying horses out of short-term holding.

Instead of paying somebody to feed the horses if they could get turned back out, it would be a pretty nice way for them to be.

Does that sum it up pretty good, folks?

>> FRED WOEHL: Yes, you did a good job.

Thank you, Tim.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: That would make good business sense.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: And it's also an opportunity for the BLM that if there's something like what June has spoke up, like her organization would be willing to do, make a modification or participate in the process to make the area so you could put horses in.

It's also an opportunity for some advocacy groups and interested groups to get involved with the, you know, volunteerism of monitoring or whatever may be needed.

So --

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: Thanks for clarifying.

Number 11.

Five more to go.

BLM should provide updates to the advisory board on progress of USGS research studies to the wild horse and burro prior to each meeting.

The BLM accepts this recommendation.

I think this is pretty much a standing agenda item and we are not only interested on updating you on USGS studies but also on the university studies as we have progress reports that can be shared.

>> FRED WOEHL: The only thing we would like to reinforce is the word "prior."

It doesn't do us much good to get these the day before or the day of the meeting.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: And we were cognizant of that.

We did not provide you this time very much advanced stuff, because it was exactly what was posted open our website and it was exactly what we had to give you a month ago is what we discussed on our monthly call update.

>> FRED WOEHL: Okay.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: And it was only about four days ago that Dr. Paul Griffin had late, breaking new about four research studies with the universities that have been awarded and I apologize, but that's the reason you got your updates about two days ago, or maybe even yesterday or the day before via email.

>> FRED WOEHL: Okay.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: By the end of this fiscal year, we will know which university grants have been issued and Dr. Griffin can keep you updated and we will give you information before the next meeting on a more timely basis.

>> FRED WOEHL: Good.

Good.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: As well as updates on our monthly calls.

Recommendation 12, BLM should provide funding to allow board members to attend, assist in and obtain firsthand knowledge of the various components of the Wild Horse and Burro Program.

The BLM response is: BLM accepts this recommendation to enable the BLM to seek input from the board on specific matters, and to provide the board with firsthand information on these matters, the BLM may periodically fund board travel to BLM offices, field events, field locations or events.

Such travel will be approved by the division chief in cases where benefits of travel, justify the expenditure.

Travel approval is contingent on availability of travel funds from the Washington office travel ceiling, and the operating budget for the advisory board, and will take into account other travel needs for the remainder of the fiscal year.

The BLM may suggest travel to the board chair for members based on desired -- on the desired area of expertise.

Board chair in consultation with the board may also suggest travel to the BLM.

Requests can be made by the board or the BLM as the need is identified or as a package of request or preferable at the beginning of fiscal year.

So that's a very long way of saying let's begin this fiscal year with the board identifying what their interest in travel is and then we'll add our knowledge of what's coming up to what we think could be a benefit and let's make a plan.

Agree on it, and we'll take we have the budget or we don't, and then if it changes throughout the fiscal year, we can be a little bit adaptable.

Okay?

>> FRED WOEHL: Sounds great.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: Great.

Recommendation 13.

BLM should provide a detailed report at the next advisory board meeting on herd management area population levels, their effects on greater sage grouse and the wild horse and burros related strategies being used to address these effects.

BLM should prioritize herd management areas in greater sage grouse priority habitat that are over AML for gathers.

BLM's response, the BLM accepts this recommendation.

This report will be included in the next agenda for the next board meeting.

And when you hear the word on-range report, Bryan Fuell will provide the requested information.

>> FRED WOEHL: Rick would like to talk about this for just a minute.

>> RICK DANVIR: Thank you.

I think we can just wait and see what the report is.

>> FRED WOEHL: Rick does not want to talk about it.

>> RICK DANVIR: Appreciate this.

(Laughter)

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: So I think you have Bryan's PowerPoint.

So if you want an advance, there's one or two slides in there, that will give you some data about how many herd management areas, of what kinds of sage grouse habitats in them and also information about current wild horse and burros levels.

So you can preview that before Bryan's presentation tomorrow and prepare any questions in your mind that you might have.

>> RICK DANVIR: Yeah.

You know, I mean, frankly, my -- you know, what I was trying to do is -- was to get us to try to focus on those areas and bring them back to AML, but let's wait and see what your plans are and then we can discuss if we need to.

Thanks.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: You're welcome.

Recommendation 14.

Two more.

Wild horse and burro advisory board meet in April, August and December, a minimum of three times if possible.

BLM does not accept the recommendation.

Designated federal official will hold two meetings per year and hold any additional

meetings on an as-needed, in cases where the needs of the agency would be served by holding an additional meeting.

BLM is happy to adjust the timing of the two annual meetings, for example, so they are held six months apart.

So we're thinking two meetings a year we need to build, but let's expand those meetings to three days instead of two as this meeting is.

We have even had some one-day meetings in the past.

The past experience was four a year are really too many.

Sometimes three a year is appropriate, depending on the circumstances, but we have kind of adjusted as a baseline to two per year.

So glad to hear any discussion or --

>> FRED WOEHL: Well, our thinking behind this was as the population growth thing keeps growing to keep us in the loop and to help everything, us being routed to date on -- I mean, phone calls are great.

Don't misunderstood us.

We like those monthly phone calls but it's nothing like sitting down face to face or really understanding this.

And where we're comfortable with two meetings a year, as long as it's understood that we're here and, you know, we really want to help and we have a -- a cohesive group that really is working hard to make the things better for the -- the resource, for the horses and for everything, and we just want to be utilized to the best that we can be used.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: Thank you, Fred.

That's our aim and we will work hard during our monthly calls to provide you updates and additional information and don't hesitate to make requests about what you would like to discuss on those monthly calls.

Just for clarification, just because we have monthly calls, we are not having board meetings.

You are not delivering and deciding things, it's updates and information to keep you informed so that when we do have these two meetings a year, that it will maximize your production.

>> FRED WOEHL: Vex so.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: You being on board and up to date on what is going on in the Wild Horse and Burro Program.

Final recommendation, BLM should arrange for regular board meetings of three days, first of which will be dedicated to allowing working groups an opportunity for face-to-face interaction.

I guess I jumped ahead of that in my last answer.

BLM's response is the BLM agrees to hold regular board meetings of up to three days to allow time for the board working groups to meet.

The length will be determined by how much time the working groups request for their meetings and by the agenda items identified for the formal board meeting.

This way meeting length will be determined by specific needs and can be flexible.

>> FRED WOEHL: I would like to say that this is the first time we have done that, and it has really worked extremely well.

What y'all -- do you think it has?

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: I felt like the last day and a half was incredibly value.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Yes.

Yes.

>> FRED WOEHL: And as way board, we appreciate the BLM allowing us to do that.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: Well, it's based on the experience that's necessary for you to have facetime with each other to deliberate in your working groups so you can come together here and have an efficient meeting and be informed on the issues.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: I think it will make the meetings themselves more efficient, because the working groups can kind of hash stuff out and then the working groups can present a more thought out process to the other board members in the open meeting and I think it's a lot easier.

I think we will be able to make better recommendations and recommendations that I think will be more helpful to you guys and easier to understand and utilize.

I think the process which we have done this time, which we have never done before, was

reviewing with a feedback session on the recommendations of the previous meeting to clarify things and to kind of follow up on them is also a real valuable process and that was our fearless leader who came up with that idea.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: It was a good one.

You can make sausage in your little work groups and then bring the recommendation to the whole board.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: We have a short period -- a short window to get a lot done in.

>> MIKE TUPPER: One other item, when we separate and go our separate ways, it's really useful to get back in the same habits but when you get together with the group and you see everybody really is working hard, to similar ends, it helps break the walls down and eases the communication and the tension that can form when you get emails and phone calls that don't make perfect sense to you.

>> FRED WOEHL: Thank you.

Thank you.

And Ms. Kathy is giving me a dirty look.

So it's time to take break.

>> KATHY LIBBY: I just do want to encourage you, so we are going to take a break.

We are behind.

So during the break we are going to talk about how we are going to catch up.

And -- but I very much encourage the board to be back and seated at 3:30.

I know that doesn't give you time to interact the way you would like to but that's our option.

>> FRED WOEHL: We've got to be back at 3:30.

>> KATHY LIBBY: See you all in 15.

(break).

>> FRED WOEHL: If we can get everybody seated.

If we can get everybody seated, please.

Give me some power!

Can we get everybody please seated, the board members please return to their seats.

The next order of business we have is we are going to hear from Dean Bolstad and an update on the BLM program.

You are up again, Dean.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: Thank you, chairman.

I'm glad I don't have to read this, thank goodness and I will be more succinct and try to catch you up on the agenda.

So what I would like to do is cover two different things.

One is our issues and challenges.

I have two of those.

The most important things.

And then I want to talk about our priorities along with some of the accomplishments we have made over the past months.

So challenge and issue number one is that as population grows, suppression control.

I think the board is aware in March of 2015, we reported a population of 58,000 animals which was an increase over the 2014 level of 49,000.

An 18% increase.

And the foals have been born this spring.

There are probably 68,000 horses on the range, compared to our AML level of 26,000.

That's two and a half times the number that we have for a target to manage for.

Two and a half times over our target management level.

That's an issue considering drought and some of the emerging developing situations big issue for the bureau.

Large scale removals are not possible.

The removals need to be limited to those that can be put in private care.

Number two issue and challenge is to substantially reduce holding costs this year's adoption numbers are up.

Our BLM team and our partners have done a great job, but our numbers are still nominal, down around 2500, add in a few sales, maybe 2750.

Okay.

Some priorities and accomplishments for the program.

We talked about research enough and Paul Griffin will get another update.

We talked about the university studies.

We will get into the details, the USGS studies and get into the details, but a significant development over the last few months is we have stood back up our research advisory team.

So we just don't have a research coordinator overseeing the research, we had an advisory team and one embedded member is Dr. Sue McDonnell.

Okay.

That's the first priority for us, is to continue that research and get it done.

Number two, implementation of population growth suppression methods.

This is for you, Julie.

And the whole board for that matter.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: It's for all the range.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: It's for the horses and the range.

So initially, we intend to implement population growth suppression methods through research files and pilot programs.

Later, broader scale application when methods are proven and we have the NEPA and planning decisions in place to support that.

Programmatic environmental impact statement will likely be part of that NEPA analysis.

This is important here.

I want to emphasize this.

BLM's long-term goal and best outcome would be long acting vaccines.

One intermuscular injection, boom, and that's it.

In the absence of the technology and those kind of vaccines, surgical, spay/neuter methods are the only options that we have available currently, and that we hope to further develop.

Number three, out of eight that I have to present tip collaboration with partners to implement fertility control programs.

Both the cloud foundation and the humane society have asked for herd management where they can launch PZP treatment programs through darting from the ground or to further that further than we have been doing through bait and water trapping.

I mentioned to you, we are looking for those HMAs.

This is new and significant as well.

We are currently collaborating with the humane society of the United States to finalize a pilot project and feasibility study for burro PZP treatments in the field in Arizona.

The aim is a combination of darting and bait water trapping.

We have not undertaken this type of thing for burros before.

We are looking at whether or not that's feasible to do it.

Some say that burros are a lot smarter than horses and if they get a darted once, you are not ever going to do it again.

So we are going to find out about that.

And HSUS and the Bureau of Land Management hopes we can be successful in that.

Stay tuned.

Number four, wild horse and burros and sage grouse habitat.

It's important to achieve AML in sage brush focal areas and that's our bureau's top

priorities Bryan Fuell will tell you of our plans for that.

Number five, behavior desire to strengthen existing partnerships and provide more trained animals and assist to move as many as we can in the good homes and the private care.

So there's a little bit more to this than I just said.

It's not only providing trained animals because that seems to be the most that are in demand.

Those animals get in good homes and stay in good homes, but we also need to stand up a better network for distribution and have more storefronts, especially in our eastern states region.

And the Washington office is collaborating with our eastern states team to do exactly that.

There's a way to go get, yet, but we are working on it.

I wanted to tell you it is a priority for us.

So number six, continue to secure less expensive pasture space and reduce the numbers in the corrals.

Thus reduce the holding costs.

Maximize the adoptions and try to get less expensive and desirable pasture space.

We would rather have the animals in pastures than in corrals.

Number seven, continue implementation and development of our comprehensive animal welfare program.

We have new helicopter contracts, and now we have in those contracts our gather standards as far as our comprehensive animal welfare program.

There are stipulations in there about handling.

There's stipulation in there about the use of handling aids.

There's stipulations in there about gathering practices and it's been a long time coming but with couldn't implement before because those specifications needed to be part of our helicopter contracts.

We have issued three new contracts to three helicopter companies.

The reason we did that, three contractors competing for ex-individual job or more competition and better prices for the bureau.

It also gives us greater flexibility and we have contingency in the event that one company is unable to continue doing business with us.

In regards to comprehensive animal welfare program, we have completed the gather part of it, and we'll be working to further implement how we are going to assess our adherence to those standards and the third leg of it was education.

We do have a training course now that's online, and available and live, for our BLM employees that oversee gathers and it's all required of our contractors to take that.

So beyond the gather, comprehensive animal welfare program, soon, you as a board will see our draft of our standards for operating off-range corrals or standard operating procedures.

So you have a working group.

It's a BLM formed working group.

I don't remember the members, but we will soon, in the upcoming months, be sending you our draft standards.

We have been working with UC Davis, the animal welfare experts there to assist us in that.

So expect that and that's the extent of my update, although -- no, I've got one more.

Population survey, that continues to be a priority for the Bureau.

We have been using the methods for the ex -- exclusively for the past two years.

And next year, we will complete the other leg of it and have these new surveys conducted in every HMA.

So that was the finding of NAS report, that we were under counting, and they recommended that we use these USGS developed methods and we have been.

So I would be glad to answer any questions.

Those are the priorities as I see them for the program in the upcoming months and years.

>> FRED WOEHL: I don't have a question, but I have a comment and a pat on the back for you.

It's exciting for me to see you use NGOs like the HSUS and The Cloud foundation to do some of this population growth suppression and use as many assets as we can to get a control on these numbers.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: Well, they have challenged us and indicated that they think more of it can be done.

So we have accepted the challenge and we're going to find out through their assistance as to whether or not it can be expanded.

>> FRED WOEHL: Great news.

Anybody else have any comments, questions or concerns?

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Just on the comprehensive animal welfare stuff, I was on that BLM forum for you.

I know one of the difficulties in the past which you couldn't do contract modifications, to initiate some of that stuff, it took a while until contracts expired.

So you just said the new contracts will incorporate all the new handling requirements that are going out now, right?

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: Minor correction.

Not will, already have.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Already have.

Okay.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: They contain those standards and there's specifications for performance.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: And there's three contractors that are -- have been awarded or will be or are in consideration?

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: There are three helicopter contracts that have been awarded and are available to do work at this moment.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Okay.

Are any of those three the one, the Sun J.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: Two of them are the same and one is Sun J and the third brand new one is Samson.

Samson livestock I think is their name.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: The only other question I have at this moment is as far as compliance with the new regulations, what are BLM's thoughts or procedures going to be to enforce compliance with these guys?

Is there going to be a dedicated compliance officer of the new regulations at the gather?

What are you going to do?

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: So the specifications are in the contract and I guess I wouldn't go so far as to call them regulations.

That's almost an order of law.

But there are specifications for performance and our CORs, our contracting officers are required to enforce it.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: So the COR is responsible for making sure that --

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: That's correct.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: I want to make sure that somebody is being tasked with the --

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: We have a COR on every job, all the time.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: I understand a COR is there every time, but I just want to -- I just want to make sure that there's a priority from my standpoint, my viewpoint on this whole thing.

I would like to know that because you are making changes, people are resistant to change.

Make sure that the handling practices that are better for the horses are making sure that they are happy in that way.

That's my concern.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: Well, there's probably going to be a little bit of a learning curve

here, the contractors to get used to it, and BLM staff to get used to the 20 page double space, you recall the other was instruction memorandum with 24 points in it.

We have 20 pages that are double spaced and granted, they are not just jam packed, there but it's much more expensive than previous policy.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Thank you, chair.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: Thank you, chair.

>> FRED WOEHL: Thank you, dean.

>> KATHY LIBBY: In conferring with the BLM staff, I would like to suggest the following changes to the order of the agenda at this point.

And to comply as much as we can with truth in advertising, it is now 3:45, so we would like to start now with what is scheduled as the 3:50 presentation, which is the research summary followed by the off-range update and at that point, we will go back to what was originally scheduled for 3:30, which is the monitoring methods.

And we will close with that, which means we will do the budget update tomorrow.

Because I think we can fit all of that in without squeezing too tightly.

So if that's acceptable to you, then I have one more comment, first of all, is that acceptable to you, that order?

>> FRED WOEHL: Yes, ma'am.

That meets our approval.

>> KATHY LIBBY: Great.

The other comment I want to make, and I'm looking at the people in the room now.

Earlier we had said that to sign up for comment we would cut that off at 10:00 tomorrow.

I am advised that the federal register notice actually said 10:15.

We clearly want to comply with that.

So we should have given ourselves more time to do the numbers but anyway, if you -- you have until 10:15 tomorrow to comment during the public comment period.

Thank you.

>> PAUL GRIFFIN: I'm Paul Griffin.

I will be presenting on behalf of myself and also Dr. Kane, Al Kane.

I think that all the members of the board are aware of the APHIS BLM partnership for wild horse and burros, and the ongoing partnership since 1999.

I wanted to acknowledge the importance to BLM of this partnership and providing veterinary expertise on range and gathers at facilities at adoption and sales events and also in giving us advice and formulating research and policy, such as what I will be discussing right now.

So today -- and I should also explain that for the previous seven years I was a USGS employee, including a year and a half of working on aerial survey for the wild horse and burros and I'm now working as a BLM employee as a research coordinator.

So to date, I would like to briefly discuss two shade related projects.

They were commissioned in 2013, when BLM recognized the need to have a little more scientific research related to horses use of shade and their thermal needs, and, of course, this is in the context of BLM's goal to make management -- management decisions in light of the results of scientific research as much as possible.

And that's motivation for all the studies I will review tomorrow as well.

But these two shade projects that I will talk about briefly today, I talked with the chairman during the break and we agreed that many or all of the board members have seen the methods that were going to be used so I will blaze through those a little quickly so that I can get to the results more quickly.

But the two projects are first, what I'm calling the shade research project, led by the UC Davis, Drs. Holcomb and Stull and second a thermal profile assessment led by the USDA APHIS system Dr. Langmann and Wineland.

So if I could briefly review what the shade study led by UC Davis was about.

The goal is an observational study to quantify shade use preferences.

And to characterize the use of shade by captive horses at the Palomino Valley Center in Nevada.

Specifically to examine their use of shade in corrals, where they had their choice of using shade or standing in the sunshine.

And this is what in wildlife terms we would call a use versus availability study.

They also measured UV radiation.

So briefly, essentially, groups of mares were held in pens.

The pens had some 13 -- 16-foot by 30-foot overhead shade canopies that cut off 99% of solar radiation.

And mares were placed in pens for five days but then they were moved to another pen that was identical.

It's kind of a ten-day trial, and they had four groups of these mares.

So overall, 32 horses.

And they used time lapse photography that took a picture every ten seconds and then they reviewed those photographs to look at whether each horse in -- that was studied was in the sunshine or in the shade, and at the same time, they used those photographs to characterize how much the pen was in the sunshine and how much was in the shade, because, of course that changed over the course of the day.

Then based on those photos, they recorded how long each horse tended to stand in the shade, versus the sun, and how long -- how long -- what they called individual bouts of time were of using the shade.

And then they -- their measure for shade preference was the percent of the time used -- that each horse used the shade, minus the percent of -- or in contrast to the percent of the corral that was shaded in every given hour.

And I also want to mention that these horses were fed once a day at 7:30 a.m.

The feed was provided in the sunshine -- in a sunny corner of the pen and water was also in a different sunny corner the pen.

So after talking about this, I remember we talked about this at an advisory board meeting a year and a half ago.

So here are some results.

The upshot is that the horses in this study on average used the shade on average about 26% of the time and that represents a preference of about 11% greater than the amount of shade that was available in their pens.

The average length of time that they used shade, that each horse used shade on

average was 108 minutes not counting the night time hours.

And the average bout of each use in the shade was 6 minutes but with a wide range, from anywhere from just, you know, less than a minute to 90 minutes, and the average number of bouts was 17 times a day, but, again, with a very wide range.

They also -- they measured UV radiation.

I don't have anything in your slides about this, but over the whole study, the -- they put little ultraviolet dosimeters on the halters.

They indicated it was 1.5, whereas an UV index for an unshaded area was 3.4.

So these horses are certainly choosing to use shade when it's available in these corrals.

So what the authors concluded from their study was that when it's available, the horses did prefer and made use of shade.

They preferred it by the quantitative measure of how much time they spent in the shade compared to how much of the -- each corral was actually shaded.

They used shade frequently.

So they didn't just camp out under the shade all day.

But -- and they also made use of that shade for short periods of time, and walked around the rest of the corral as well.

And based on this, they -- one of their conclusions was that they made the suggestion that compromised horses, horses whose health is compromised in some way, may make use of shade more than healthy horses, although that wasn't a specific aspect of the study.

You know, of course the main result, though, is that it's not all that surprising, that when it was available, these horses, in small groups, made use of shade more than -- more than it was available.

Which indicates some degree of preference.

That -- okay.

Now I will talk about the second study, unless you have specific questions about the first one here.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: I just have one question if you don't mind.

Remind me how they accounted for the fact that the water and the feed were in the sunny areas.

>> PAUL GRIFFIN: I don't think there was a specific accounting for that.

I think they designed it to put in the sunshine probably so that this wouldn't be an attraction to the shade.

You know, if they had fed in the shade, then it would have been difficult to say whether the shade use was due to spending time feeding or watering, as opposed to actively just using the shade.

But you could turn it on its head and say some of that use of sunny areas was required because that's where the water was or that's where the food was.

So --

>> DR. SUE McDONNELL: And horses that are only fed once a day will spend a lot of time in the feeding area in anticipation of feeding time would be my concern that would underestimate the time that they would spend in the shade.

>> PAUL GRIFFIN: It's quite possible.

>> DR. SUE McDONNELL: If therm fed throughout the day.

>> PAUL GRIFFIN: That's quite possible.

We have also -- several of us who have looked at these results have wondered and I don't dwell on it in this presentation, but the greatest preference, the time of day that they had the greatest preferential use of the shade was the morning period and that was not the time of day when it is hottest.

But there may be some interaction that the authors didn't clearly spell out between feeding hour, being so early -- 7:30, really before these observations were made and then subsequent use of that shady area in the morning.

>> DR. SUE McDONNELL: Right.

And the explanation that just comes to mind is that they now have their belly full, and they can rest and they would prefer to rest in the shade.

But, again, you know, just speculating but I don't -- I don't think we can conclude if that wasn't accounted for, that these numbers would represent reality.

>> PAUL GRIFFIN: That's right.

I also don't think that -- and there was no specific recommendation that horse use of shade will always be greater in the morning.]

That could be completely idiosyncratic to this study.

So the second study that I would like to discuss was led by the USDA, the Department of Agriculture APHIS program, and their objective was to use thermal balance equations to quantify heat gain to an animal, from external sources.

This happened in July.

And they tried to answer the question, can these horses and burros compensate for thermal stress, which they kind of referred to as temperatures outside and heat gain outside of the thermally neutral zone for horses and burros.

And they compensate for that by sweating.

They had a goal of quantifying what -- how many gallons of sweat would be required to offset the heat gain from these various sources.

The researcher who led the study, you can see actually, I think both of them in the bottom left picture there, and the lead researcher's expertise is doing this kind of work for USDA in zoos, checking for -- that the facilities also aren't causing a heat stress to the animals in those captive situations.

So they used a number of measures to quantify these things.

I think that you have seen some of this discussion before in previous meetings.

They measured the temperature of the animal.

They estimated how much metabolic heat that was being produced.

They measured how much heat could have been absorbed.

They characterized differences in black, bay, and lighter colored horses and because that would have an effect on their -- the absorbence of the heat.

They calculated solar heat gain and heat gain from the surroundings, just radiating back up to the animal.

And here's some imagery of measures that they took using a thermal imager and then they quantified the heat across the body of the animal in these lines.

Kind of little mini transects of heat on the body.

And they measured solar radiation in the surrounding areas and on the animals themselves.

So on the right-hand pair of pictures you can see the contrast that they are making in how much heat is potentially absorbed by a dark colored animal, compared to a white or light colored animal.

Okay.

So still on the methods but I'm trying to go quickly here that the gist of it was here it's shown as a black cloud.

It's somewhat of a black box, but essentially you have these inputs of heat sources internal and exterior, and the heat loss is largely compensated or done through sweating.

So if you are -- the idea of this cartoon at the top of the slide is that if you are outside of the thermally neutral zone, which based on some literature that the author referenced is between an exterior temperature of 41 degrees and 77 degrees.

If you are outside of that thermally neutral zone, you will have to compensate by sweating to get evaporative cooling or shivering if it's colder than that, other or activities to raise the metabolic heat.

And just on that last slide, I just wanted to point out that from the literature, the -- kind of maximum amount of sweating for horses was about 3 gallons per hour.

That's potential.

So the results were -- this study was done in July, July 22nd through 24th, and it was hot!

And it happens -- it was done at a time of year when it's hot just north of Reno and it's dry.

Next slide, please.

And so the results were that it was hot.

There was -- there was not much variation in those three days, and -- so there was a lot of potential heat gain to the animals coming from the sunshine, and also reflective heat off the surfaces of the ground near the animals.

And the temperature of the air.

The authors calculated that heat coming in and they calculated that the horses and the burros would have needed to sweat 1.3 to 1.4 gallons of sweat per hour for the hottest periods of the day.

And they concluded that this was well below the maximum sweat weight -- sweat rate reported in the literature.

And so they concluded that the horses and the burros in this study did compensate for those periods of time, when the exterior temperature was above the -- what they called the critical temperature of 77 degrees by sweating.

So sweating in these circumstances was an effective way for these horses to cool themselves.

So they made some specific conclusions, namely that in this study, under these conditions, the sweat was effective.

The horses and burros sweated efficiently.

These were all out in the full sunshine and even being in the full sunshine, these horses and burros didn't experience thermal stress.

They -- and they found that, to quote them, as long as food and water with adequate trace minerals are available, the horses and burros do not appear to require shade to cope with high temperatures and solar radiation for this area.

Their recommendation, actually, still on the back -- go back one.

That the horses and burros did not appear to require shade in that environment.

As long as, you know, I want to emphasize, as long as there's adequate food, water and trace minerals, think of it as electrolytes available to them.

Because it does take energy and water to sweat that much.

So the take home messages that we in the program have taken from these two studies are that, yes, small groups of wild horse mares if they are in pens will use shade if it's provided to them.

Second, that shade use may not necessarily be most common during the hottest part of the day but, again, as Sue pointed out that may be idiosyncratic to this study or some parts of design here.

The UC Davis authors suggested that compromised animals may use and benefit from shade more than fit, healthy animals, although that was not studied, it's a very reasonable reference.

Even without shade, this was based on the APHIS studies, the animals at Palomino valley Center could compensate for heat gain by sweating, even under very hot, sunny conditions.

And finally, that although wild horses -- and this ties into the policy, more policy-related discussions that I think Holle' wants to talk about.

Although wild horse and burros may have a preference for shade during some type of shade, shade is not required for their well being.

That's the upset that the UC Davis study quantified that horses have a preference for use of shade.

But the APHIS study found that that even under the exact -- well, same place, almost the same time, the horses are not -- those horses that are healthy have adequate feed and water and electrolytes do not need shade for their well being.

So also Dr. Kane wanted to add and point out that in his experience, that across the BLM facilities, there's no pattern of horses overheating and experiencing intolerable levels of stress, as long as they are provided adequate food and water and these trace minerals, as long as they are at rest.

Now -- and the being at rest is an important consideration.

I think we were talking yesterday at Pauls Valley with Pat and Gary about how they wouldn't -- they wouldn't do a number of activities with the horses in the heat of day.

I think they had do some gelding in the cool of the day the previous day.

That would cause a lot of internal metabolic heat and that's something to avoid in the hot day.

Are there -- so are there any questions about these two studies?

And the decisions the program is making based on them?

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: One question, on the 41-degree lower critical temperature, that could be important to range management.

Do you have a graph or an estimate for each degree Fahrenheit you drop below 41?

Is there excess energy in the ration needed to maintain body heat and how rapidly does that go up?

>> PAUL GRIFFIN: Does neighbor want to respond to Dr. Cope's question?

The 41 degrees and the 77 degrees, those were just from the literature from -- in the APHIS report.

I mean, we heard yesterday that they will throw out some extra grass if it's cold, but I'm not sure there's guidelines for that in the holding facilities.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: I was thinking of applying how can you maintain the numbers, when you drop how low.

It makes a difference in feed available and how they can maintain.

If you have an increased need to maintain body heat at a given point.

>> PAUL GRIFFIN: Is your question related to on range to maintain AML?

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: Absolutely.

>> PAUL GRIFFIN: Hopefully it's for the need of forage for all the horses allocated in that place, based on those critical times of year, like winter.

>> FRED WOEHL: Thank you very much.

>> PAUL GRIFFIN: Thank you.

>> FRED WOEHL: We will proceed straight into Ms. Holle' Hooks.

>> HOLLE' HOOKS: Good afternoon, chairman.

Thank you for coming to Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, which is any home.

I'm just going to be very brief.

I have been coached that we're behind time, so -- so I'm going to be presenting the off-range ranch update, I'm Holle' Hooks, the branch chief.

I am talk a little bit about that.

I'm just going to kind of follow up with what Dr. Griffin was discussing regarding the BLM's minimum requirement that we had a discussion about, based on the study, and the concerns about providing shade at some of the off-range corrals.

So basically, the BLM has taken a position on the program and issued interim guidance out to the field that states that the minimum requirement for shade and shelter at off-range corrals would consist of providing it for animals that are in sick pens or compromised animals.

So would be any injured or weak animals and the facility managers and authorized personnel would have the authority to make additional shade or shelter available as needed for their particular region or function of the facility.

And when I say function of the facility, we are looking at whether or not it's a maintenance facility versus a preparation facility and whether that would make a difference.

This -- sorry.

I wish I had the clicker.

Okay.

So this guidance is still be discussed and issued through the CAWP, instructional memorandum that's being developed for off-range corrals.

Were there any questions before I move on?

So in addition to requirements for providing shade and shelter at off-range corrals we have been having discussion and we will continue our discussion regarding shade or shelter for adopters or animals placed into private care and right now, our -- our requirements right now are a minimum -- our minimum requirements are a structure that has two sides and a roof.

And in looking at that versus what we actually are providing more animals at off-range corrals, it really does depend what region that adopter lives in.

It may not be needed -- it may not be a one size fits all, which I think was the previous policy, to try and mitigate some of the effects of inclement weather for animals that were adopted.

So we are reviewing that policy.

But right now our qualification standards that we are looking at is that shelter in the Code of Federal Regulations does state that shelter shall be made available to mitigate the effects of inclement weather and temperature extremes and the authorized officer does have the authority to require additional shelter in that region.

So we are reviewing and I hope to have an update for you by the next board meeting on where we stand on that.

Any questions?

Okay.

In addition to making that change, of course, that probably would be a manual handbook revision, as well as issuing official policy on that.

The off-range range space, we closed an off-range solicitation.

I would like to talk to the awards made on the 24 off-range corrals proposals that were submitted before.

We did afford four facilities, which there was one in Bruno, Idaho, that would hold about 2,000 animals, in united, Fallon, which is in Nevada and has just increased their current capacity and then Ewing, a facility in Illinois, which is 250 animals.

All of those do total 3100 additional off-range corral spaces.

You can see that there's a facility information update behind, I believe, tab number nine that does reflect some of these facilities.

It will not reflect all of them, as once they are awarded, the person who maintains our facility reports she will add them there, once the official awards are made.

We also had a solicitation last year for off-range pasture proposals and at the time of the last meeting, the TPEC was still reviewing and we were making a.

Those have been completed and we have made three awards and that's about 1200 planned spaces.

We are still working on those but they are in the states of Oklahoma, Utah, and Wyoming.

Right now Utah and Wyoming's environmental assessments are near completion and we hope to complete them sometime in July of some sort, but the Oklahoma one, which was the one we attended yesterday in Davis, Oklahoma, as you can see has already started to receive animals.

We are also delivering animals to the new ecosanctuaries.

The one in Oklahoma has already received animals.

They were delivered earlier this spring, and the ecosanctuary in Wyoming will be receiving animals shortly and it's a total of additional spaces of about 250 animals.

In April, when we had our previous meeting, the offeror off-range pasture solicitation did close on June 2nd and we received 12 proposals and we were hoping that those proposals would have a capacity of about 4200.

Of course, those are still under review and the TPEC is still -- is still working on them.

Site visits will be conducted later in the fall.

We are looking forward to -- we are looking forward to gaining some additional spaces, especially to account for the potential off-range pasture loss that we may have, that totals about 3750, and we would be looking at losing potentially 2750 from Oklahoma, and space from about 1,000 in South Dakota.

Now, there would be a little bit of a budget impact because as we lose off-range pasture space if we don't acquire additional off-range pasture space, that means those animals would be moving to off-range corrals which could be a larger budget impact.

I also just wanted to mention that there is an off-range pasture fact sheet which is one of the things that we discussed about yesterday, regarding the solicitations and what changed from how we were marketing one solicitation from this past off-range solicitation where we felt we did reach more individuals.

So the next slide you will see is the solicitation process that Scott went over yesterday when we were having some discussion.

I wanted to present it and just kind of go through it or answer any questions that you may have regarding solicitation process.

It is pretty much the same for any time we are going into having any type of request for proposals or it's similar to the request for applications as well, and once the solicitation is created, it's opened, it's closed, and we make an award.

It does take about a year as you all heard yesterday and you can see here.

So I will say any questions.

I hate to go over it again since we already reviewed it.

Do you have any questions?

So Dean spoke to you earlier today regarding the celebration of the America's mustang campaign, and it was pretty amazing.

This campaign focused on your land, your horse and it was in partnership with the Mustang Heritage Foundation and the original concept was very small and was just, let's find a way to educate the public, and it really just -- it really did explode, I would say.

It reached -- the outreach was amazing, and the information that we were able to provide, not only through the events that took place, but Rick mentioned a workshop and that workshop had BLM people available to not only present information, both on range and off range, but we were also available for conversation, and in attendance with Gus Ward who is the Utah state lead and he and Rick did a really fantastic job of painting a picture for people who are in St. Louis, Missouri, or anywhere in the -- in the northeast that would not have any idea on some of the challenges that the program has with the range lands.

Why we are moving the animals at all?

Why are animals here?

Why are we asking you to do this?

How can you be a part of that?

That was a really good message.

The campaign began, as you all know in FY2015 and we basically wanted to inform the public that it's also their responsibility to help maintain and manage the rangeland, that they too were Americans and it becomes your responsibility, as well as the BLM's.

How can you help and how can you be engaged that.

Was a hard fact for some of the people who do not live west.

They were having a hard time, how can I get engaged?

And the 8664 mustangs number, the national information call center received several calls from people out east who had heard about the mustangs campaign who had been a part of any of the events that were also taking place and they said, I want to be involved.

How can I help?

And it was a really good outreach effort.

We also focused on the impacts on the ecosystem, as well as the land uses, and even though many people thought that this was an adoption campaign, away for us to find

new ways adopt animals, I think once people actually went to the website attended the events and read the literature, it's not just an adoption campaign but an education effort.

You notice in your books there's kind of a results summary that the Mustang Heritage Foundation put together.

Feel free to browse through it.

Not while I'm presenting but later.

It does go over some of the successes that you will see.

The campaign development happened between October and April.

The campaign then launched.

We had several events throughout 11 states.

There were 226,000 web page views and I will tell you why that's significant.

Just Monday, I was listening to KOCO which satellite channel 5 local news and they were celebrating 250,000 web page views and I mean, they were excited.

They had new commercials about it, so I thought 226,000 is amazing between this small time frame, from October to April and I think they have been building for years, for 250,000.

So it was very exciting.

The press release posted to over 220 websites, with 20.5 million audience reach.

20.5 million audience reach!

That's huge.

That's like Michael Jackson status some of sort.

It was huge.

There was also Facebook, about 775 likes, and 88 national online media hits.

So this was a huge success in my eyes.

I teased Debbie and Kali both, that we need a kiss-o-meter some of sort, that we could calculate the number of times a little girl or a little boy or a little person, who had never

seen a horse actually got to touch one.

So it was very exciting event.

So here you will see some scenes from a few of the events, I mean just a few.

The first one that you will see is located at our Mowdy Ranch, ecosanctuary.

It's the first mustang marathon.

There was never one before it was the first mustang marathon that took place.

There were 250 runners that took place and participated in either the marathon, the half marathon, the 10k or the 5k.

And we were there on site.

The next picture to the right is a public tour.

It's a public tour of one of our off range pastures and we had about 156 people that were in attendance.

We chartered buses and had some additional public affairs staff that were there to answer any questions and also talk with them from the start of when the animals are on range to when they are off range, and how they are arrived to the pasture, and why it's necessary that we move animals at all.

We also had an adopter who presented at a campaign -- presented a campaign in the Idaho parade, which is the picture you will see below.

And to the right, the bottom right picture, you will see is a Utah trail ride on the sulfur herd management area which was in coordination with one of the groups this in Utah.

It was a really good -- it was a really good event.

Looking at the success of the American mustang campaign, once it gets down to the nitty-gritty, we really do want to have an opportunity to place more animals into private care.

And if you look under tab 10, you notice that we have placed over 2500 animals into private care this year as of August 28th.

And this is more than about 783 animals that were placed from this time last year.

So we're on a good road to exceed but as Dean stated earlier -- as Dean stated, it

doesn't really -- 2500, yes, that's a great number but it really doesn't hit the mark.

It's not as many as we need and it's not the silver bullet.

We need a new plan.

We continue to reach out to partners and our existing -- some of our existing partners that distribute to the total number of 3500 or the mustang heritage foundation where it's an agree.

That we have with them, and they placed over 700 animals.

We also have training programs with about 400 or so, and also USUS, and their partners who have assisted us in placing over 250 animals through a memorandum of understanding.

The bottom line is that BLM is looking at offering more trained animals.

We are seeing an increase in the trained animal placement over the untrained animal placement, and so we are looking at additional opportunities to provide more trained animals into private care or for private care.

One of them is an RFA that we have right now for burro training assistance.

If you are an organization that's interested in providing trained burros to your outreach, and audience, then that's great.

We are looking for you, the RFA closes on September 8th.

We will see how that goes.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: How many of those 2500 in private care, are we paying to feed?

>> HOLLE' HOOKS: The 2500?

Once they go into private care, they were adopted.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: So those are all adopted.

They are not going into long-term pastures.

>> HOLLE' HOOKS: No, sir.

Yes, they are autopsy adopted.

What are the off-range goals.

Currently we have the three ecosanctuary agreements that I mentioned and we are looking at reviewing some of those -- existing agreements and also preparing ourselves for another RFA to acquire some additional ecosanctuaries that include an adoption component, and education component, ecotourism and also public outreach.

That's something that we really need.

In addition to that, part of the NAS implementation did request some -- some development, whether or not, or some study that did state whether or not there was an actual demand for animals to be adopted and what were those demand factors?

Is it the animal characteristics?

Is it the process that you all have this is the paperwork too long?

Does it take too long to get title?

Is the geographic locations, are the animals being offered in places where people want to go?

Is it an external economic condition?

Is it the full rate that's gotten too high?

Is it the hay rate?

What is the problem?

Or what are the challenges that we are facing and how can we change that pattern and offer animals where people want them?

So we are looking at -- so we are looking at the socioeconomic demand study and right now, Debbie Collins who is a part of off-range staff is conducting a review and they have also hired a contractor.

So we are hoping to have results sometime next fiscal year to be able to implement and execute into our program.

So the next slide you will see is a new effort that we have on trying to increase and reach people.

This is a marketing ad layout.

You heard Pat Williams earlier speak about the marketing efforts and that if we don't do them at all, that will for sure not having people attending adoption events.

Just because we are marketing doesn't guarantee a placement into private care what it does do is if you can start reaching people, through different avenues, than the news, the press releases and the newspaper ads, the radio interviews and Debbie has really been working with the marketing group that has worked with our America's Mustang campaign to look at new ways to market the program.

More to come on that.

We will see if it's a success.

The next picture is also an example of an ad layout, one.

New ad layouts that we will be using for FY '16.

And that's it.

Any questions?

>> FRED WOEHL: Does the board have any questions for Ms. Hooks?

Thank you, Holle'.

>> HOLLE' HOOKS: Thank you.

>> Good luck!

>> FRED WOEHL: She's leaving.

Not only was Rick involved with this America's Mustang.

I was involved at the beginning of it and went to an event in Benton, Arkansas.

It was incredible the amount of responses this program generated.

It was very, very well planned and promoted and it was a real good job.

I was impressed.

Scott?

>> SCOTT FLUER: Okay.

Can everybody hear me okay?

I'm going to stand up and move around a little bit.

I have been sitting a while and I'm kind of a -- I've got to move.

Last year the board -- I appreciate the board and the chairman having me come back and talk about monitoring and monitoring riparian areas.

Last year you were on a tour in Wyoming.

We spent a good day out there in central Wyoming looking at a lot of rangeland issues and I was asked by some board members if I would present sort of our findings of what -- what we started was a pilot project or innovative approach to monitoring using trail cameras.

And, you know, for years, we typically -- the range staff, the horse staff, the wild loof staff collect utilization data, stubble height, condition and trend.

We do cooperative monitoring with the permittees, and we thought, well, with this new technology and this new innovative way of maybe collecting information of what's going on out on the range, and especially in our riparian areas, where the riparian areas take in less than 1% of the surface acres, they are highly sought after.

They are -- they produce high-quality forage, high-quality water, and we know that a lot of animals utilize these areas, but what we don't know is how often are the animals there?

What are they doing?

What time of day?

So we set out to try and answer that question, and, again, this is just a pilot project.

It's all about healthy rangelands, multiple use, different -- different uses on the range, livestock grazing.

I want to share with the board and some of you the results and of the photos that we found.

So next slide, we will go ahead and start.

Some of these photos were really interesting that we found out this on the ground.

When you are not out there between, you know -- we're out there between 8 and 5:00 during the day typically but what goes on out there in the evenings, you know, when you are just not quite sure.

Next slide.

I will tell you about Fred in the suit.

Anyway, this is west central Wyoming and Dean mentioned, currently, I'm on detail with the Washington office, working on off-range pastures and my detail ends here soon in October, but I'm a field specialist, a wild horse specialist in central Wyoming.

I manage seven out of 16.

This is where we initiated the pilot project to look at the results of riparian areas.

Next slide.

I had a great monitoring team.

We have focused the years 2013 and 2014 9-there on the range.

I led the team, of course, as the wild horse and burro specialist.

This all came about, I might add to the wildlife folks and the livestock folks and we said, what is really going on out there?

We were able to obtain some money to hire two fantastic seasonals.

I told them I would say that because they want a job.

But these folks did a great job out there on the range.

They spent a lot of hours and they also looked at a lot of photographs, which we'll talk about in a minute.

Next slide.

So the purpose of the monitoring was to evaluate monitoring to evaluate the animal species which species were using these areas and when were they there and when were they doing.

The next slide.

The data was collected through the use of six trail, five were a Bushnell and one was a

Reconyx.

We captured a photograph every 15 minutes between the hours of 4 a.m. and 10 p.m. and we set up a motion sensor so anything that entered lens view, the camera snapped two photos.

You ask why maybe we took two photos every time, it was to determine what was that animal really doing, if they were walking, if they were grazing.

So the two photographs were able to discern what they were doing.

These memory cards, of course, and we used two external hard drives because I was told by IT, you can't put all of this stuff on the computer.

And we had over 32,000 photographs that we actually looked at and cataloged in this study in 2014.

A lot of information.

The example log we used, we set up in Excel.

We recorded date, the animal, the activity of the animal, the time of day, and then also we linked it to a photograph so you could actually go click on that in Excel.

It would take you to the photograph so you could see what was going on.

Next slide.

Now, this is really important here, is the definitions of what was going on.

We said, okay, with grazing, the animal is standing in an upright position, basically, you know, or with a head down, chewing or obviously grazing.

Traveling, the animal appears to be moving through the area, with the intent of move.

, entering or leaving.

Loafing, the animal is exhibiting lateral or external recumbency or standing upright or resting.

And then we have other, you know was the animal fighting, nursing, drinking, what was that animal doing?

And then, of course, we have photographs that were unknown, that we just couldn't tell what was actually happening.

Next slide.

We broke our time periods down into four categories, mainly related to temperature, but also total darkness and we said the morning hours were cool, from 4 a.m. to 10 a.m.

That was the cool part of the day.

From 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. was the hot part of the day and then evening, we had cooling starting to occur and most of these cameras were set between 6,000 and 7,000 feet in elevation but we had cooling occurring at 5:00 until 10:00 in the evening and then total darkness 10:00 until 4 a.m.

The next slide.

We have already discussed the importance of riparian area.

A lot of the animals here, wild horses and sage grouse.

We will share with you two cameras.

This is the Muskrat basin herd manage.

250 wild horses that's the AML.

We set these cameras up on public land.

The blue being state of Wyoming land.

The white being deeded land.

And we went ahead and focused on the public land on the BLM.

Next slide.

This is a few from camera one.

This is Long Creek.

Again, a depression area where water accumulates, and comes the riparian area this was a small meandering stream through here.

The vegetation is Nebraska sedge brush and Baltic sage, and it's a sage brush upland and this is set um for the months of June and July and we'll go to the next slide.

So what did we find?

Well, in the month of June, we took 3700 photographs and we look at -- we look at the animals in these photographs and if we look at the month of June, 55% of the photos were cattle use.

If we look at 31% of the photos horse use, and wildlife, we had 3%.

And 10% of the photographs in June had nothing in them.

So they were just empty.

And it kind of goes to show you that, you know, animals, including, you know, all species as well as people even, like to go to these areas.

It's a place to socialize, I think, and congregate.

Next slide.

So let's take a look at horse activity of those photographs.

If we look at June photos, we had 1100 photos of horses.

What were those horses actually doing out there?

Well, it appears to me about 80% of the time, they were grazing.

And that's what we found with -- in this camera site.

We look at 7% of the time in June, they were actually loafing.

They were resting.

They are just kind of being there.

And then 6% of the time, they were traveling through the area, that we determined looking at the photographs.

And then July, very similar pattern on the pie chart.

Next slide.

As far as cattle, very similar to horses.

We had 2,000 photographs of cattle.

About 70% of the time, the cattle were crazing in the riparian area.

About 30% of the time, 25 to 30% of the time, they were loafing.

So a little more loafing going on than what the horses were doing, but still using that area, I think, as a social meeting place, if you will, a place of change from the sedge brush step, and then traveling, they appeared to travel 2 to 5% of the time.

Next slide.

Now, this is interesting as far as wildlife activity.

The wildlife traveled for the most part, but they did graze.

We only had 100 photos in June.

About 55% of the time they were actually grazing in the riparian area.

What this tells me is the animals, the wildlife tended to use these riparian areas as traveling corridors, if you will.

They tended to move through and not spend a lot of time there.

They did loaf a little bit in June, 6%, a little higher loafing in July, with 15%.

So just kind of interesting information.

Next slide.

Unknown activity in June, we had 48 photographs that we couldn't ascertain what was going on out of -- I think we had -- what did we have, 3700 photos.

Okay, next slide.

Now, this is something really interesting and we will see it between the two cameras here in a minute.

Early morning hours, remember, 4 a.m. to 10 a.m.

We have not a whole lot of animal activity.

We have horses in blue, cattle in yellow here and wildlife in red.

A little higher activity with the wildlife in the early morning hours.

As the day progresses, the temperatures heat up, we see a lot more horses and cattle showing up.

Wildlife in red there starts to drop off.

As the evening begins cool, all the animals tended to disperse and start moving out of the riparian area.

And by night time, we have a little bit of wildlife activity, but basically the horses and the cattle are completely for most part gone out of the area.

And we move into July, a very similar pattern, a little hotter temperatures.

So we have a little bit more activity going on midday, but, again, a very similar kind of curve, if you will.

By night time, those animals are gone and left the riparian area.

Next slide.

We also measured stubble height in these areas.

We measured Nebraska sedge and sage, I think we can do a better job of tying in more frequently read utilization data with the camera and that's something that we need to work on.

But we did collect that data.

A brief analysis, the majority of the animals spend the bulk of the time between 10:00 in the morning and 5:00 in the evening.

Primary activity of all animals, horses, cattle and wildlife was crazing.

Cattle spent a large portion of their day grazing and loafing, and the horses rarely stayed longer than a few hours.

The wildlife only stayed about 15 to 30 minutes.

The animals were segregated.

The cattle would water and leave and then a group of horses would come in or a group of antelope.

They tended to stay amongst themselves and take turns moving in and out of the area.

Next slide.

Some of the photos we captured this would be livestock grazing here.

This is unknown activity.

I have think I know what they are doing, but, again, we have more livestock grazing occurring in this period here.

Next slide.

Horse activity, if you notice, cattle moved out of this slide.

The horses had moved in.

We have a few cattle in here.

Horses resting, horses traveling through.

If you look at these two bottom pictures, this is the idea of the two photographs simultaneously at once this was photo one and one second later this was photo two and you can see we ascertained here that they were basically frolicking or, you know, whatever they are doing there.

Okay.

Early morning hours, nothing.

Nothing is going on here.

Here we are midday at 1:00 in the afternoon, horses, horses coming in to water.

Now this photo, I found really interesting.

This is at 9:30 at night.

The horses out grazing.

For the most part, I have always kind of figured animals went and bedded down like cattle and elk and such.

These horses are up moving in here and grazing this area right here, 9:30 at night.

I thought that was interesting.

This is a photo of a coyote 12:00 noon and he's laying right in the creek bottom.

He has water flowing around him.

He's laying in the stream bed himself, cooling himself.

Next slide.

So let's move to Happy Springs Reservoir.

The Crooks Mountain HMA.

It's pretty high elevation, 6,000 to 7,000 feet.

This was state of Wyoming land and here's Crooks Mountain right through here.

Next slide.

Now, this is a reservoir that's fed by a spring and so you have -- you have kind of a mix, a complex of riparian, as well as some adjacent vegetation that's induced a little bit by the reservoir.

Animal activity, really interesting.

In June, we had virtually half the time, half the photos, no animals in the know toes.

In June we had a high number of wildlife showing up.

I will show you why, I think I know why.

If we look at horse activity.

We had 120 photos of horses had June, roughly 75% of those photographs showed them grazing.

12% loafing, 7% traveling through the area.

Next slide.

Cattle, if we look at the month of June, we only had 300 photos, about twice as many photos of cattle than horses but for the most part, they loaf.

They really didn't spend much time grazing.

They spent a little bit more time traveling through or resting.

I suspect that maybe the breeze off the reservoir and the coolness, maybe that is why they were there.

It's hard to say.

But, again, not a whole lot of, you know, grazing going on in this area.

Next slide.

Wildlife, in July, we had a lot of traveling wildlife going through and quite a bit of loafing.

Unknown activity was fairly high in June.

But we have 581 photographs of wildlife that we determined or wildlife related.

Next slide.

And we only had two photographs that were unknown that we couldn't ascertain what was going on or what -- if anything was happening.

Again being time of day.

Now, this is sort of interesting compared to our last graph slide that we looked at.

Again, animals in the early morning hours are here.

As the day heats up, we see more animals in here.

Now, if you take a look at horses in blue, not much activity happening in the morning or even the midday.

The cattle tend to pick up which is kind of a given.

But then we look at horses as the evening starts to cool, we see more horses showing up and then by night time, the horses are there and everything else is left.

Again, I'm wondering -- I just didn't realize that horses were that active in the night time or the darkness hours.

Again, in July, very similar pattern.

The wildlife and the cattle tended to leave.

We saw more horse activity in the evening and then into the darkness.

Next slide.

Again, we collected stubble heights at this location, using a stubble light collective monitoring form to work with the permittees on for our data.

Just a brief analysis, horses were seen traveling or grazing and cattle tended to loaf a little longer here.

Wildlife came in for water occasionally and ducks frequented the area and then tended to leave after a while.

Next slide.

Here's our little culprit on wildlife, I think.

I think the camera is set near a ground squirrel hole.

So every time he popped up, he triggered it.

Here he is grazing but anyway, you can kind of get an idea and we'll go to the next one.

Here we have two studs that are fighting right here.

This is at 8:30 at night.

We have a calf here bedded down, resting.

We have an antelope, I'm going to guess is grazing based on her stance, the way she's standing.

And then here at 9:30 at night we have horses grazing.

Here's one, two, three and four horses and the flash of the camera going off.

Next slide.

You can't see these but these are three bull elk and, again, this is about 7:30 in the evening and there's three six-point bulls right there.

We also have sage grouse coming in at 3:00 in the afternoon for water.

We have a song bird and then we have cattle loafing and a set of legs of a calf, I'm going to guess.

So what's interesting is the camera tells us a lot of what's happening.

Granted we are only restricted to the view of the lens, but it's a fantastic tool to take and to utilize to try and figure out what is actually happening out there on the range while we are not out there as humans.

Next slide.

Our overall obstacles encountered, basically it was hard to tell if an animal left the area or left the frame.

They may have stepped out of the frame.

Topography sometimes made things difficult.

Judging animal activity sometimes was a challenge.

Animals blocking the view like those legs we just saw, sometimes hard to count animals and then my seasonals were saying, you know, it just took a lot of time to catalog 32,000 photographs and create these formulas in Excel to analyze the data.

Recommendations, include a temperature log with the camera.

I think that's a good idea just to determine how hot it is outside or cool, and what's going on.

Place cameras within the same week as possible and earlier in the summer.

The challenge with seasonals is they get out of the school in May, end of May, beginning of June and then they are back in school in August.

So it's really tough to hang on to them.

The other thing is duct tape got Tom Hanks off the island and I thought that would work, but in the Wyoming wind and weather, it just flat deteriorated and what I mean there is you had to anchor those cameras somehow and you didn't dare put a post in and put the camera on there because an animal would rub that, whether it's a horse rubbing its butt or a cow rubbing its neck.

So we tried to anchor them down low in the sedge brush or in a cut bank or an existing fence that may be near the area but you just didn't want them to know that the camera was there like that one with the nostrils.

And I guess final conclusions, again, this is just a pilot project.

Overall, we observed cattle frequented the riparian areas the most.

They grazed and loafed in the area for extended periods of time.

Horses with also graze and loaf in the area, and wildlife spent very little time in those areas.

So for us, this is a tool.

It's a tool that needs to be refined a lot more.

I would like to work with Paul on this, on research sometime and develop, you know, an even -- you know, kind of fine tune it and make it more concrete, but it sure gives us an idea of what's actually happening.

We know animals frequent these riparian areas.

We just didn't really know exactly what all did they do out there.

So for us, it's a guide.

It gives us a guideline to fine tune management on the range and we'll see what the future brings.

That's all I have.

Thanks for letting me speak and share this information with you.

>> FRED WOEHL: Thank you, Scott.

>> KATHY LIBBY: Questions, comments?

>> FRED WOEHL: Are we through?

>> KATHY LIBBY: We are through.

>> FRED WOEHL: For the day?

>> KATHY LIBBY: Yes, we are through agenda-wise, yes.

>> FRED WOEHL: Okay.

Very interesting day.

Does any of the board have any comments before we adjourn for the evening?

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: I realized Scott stepped back but I have a quick question about that information on this particular camera, that you shared with us, the camera number 4 in the riparian area.

And the fact that the horses exhibited quite a bit of evening activity.

Do you think that has any kind of -- do you think that has anything that we maybe need to take to our survey efforts?

Because you think that evening activity is specific to the fact that it was a riparian zone, or just horse activity in general being out and about?

>> SCOTT FLUER: Well, I think the riparian zone is the attractant.

It's less than 1% and provides water and forage, all areas use riparian areas.

You know, I think that it would be interesting to maybe work with Paul, our researcher to try and tie in to just see, you know, what exactly is going on there as far as, you know, the frequency and especially the nighttime use.

That's what really amazed me.

I was actually baffled by that.

I have think things all settle down in the dark, and I found that interesting.

So I don't really know how to explain that or answer that, but it's a start, and I would sure like to see something like this continue in not only our office but in other offices.

I think each area offers uniqueness about it, and this is just a way to monitor some of that.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Yes, Scott, my experience, my horses are turned out on a large piece of property and I find my horses to spend a good part of the night grazing.

They are up and about and moving around a lot at night and, you know, that's even New Hampshire where it's cool.

I think it was note worthy that the cattle were lingering in the riparian areas a lot longer than the horses.

That's note worthy because there's been a lot of times that the horses are blamed for the damage in the riparian areas from their traffic there and when we were out there visiting,

I kind of noted that.

And the other thing is those really super heavy duty zip ties work great for putting game cameras on stuff, instead of duck tape.

I have use those for my game cameras at home.

>> SCOTT FLUER: And something I should clarify.

We didn't have equal numbers of horses, cattle and wildlife.

It varies.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: No, I'm just talking about the lingering time was -- it was just enlightening, you know, and -- but did the cameras have an infrared mode?

>> SCOTT FLUER: No, they didn't but they flashes.

So we were able to take a photograph.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: I found -- I use game cameras to monitor activity at my place, and I switched over to cameras with infrared modes and they are not terribly expensive anymore, and I got a much greater amount of recording nighttime regarding with the infrared mode because what triggers it instead of motion, the infrared of a heated body coming into the zone and in the cool of night, it was really very effective.

>> And it would be interesting too to find out having a camera out there year round, where you had wildlife year round, horses year round.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Yeah.

>> SCOTT FLUER: Permitted livestock grazing, to see what goes on in the winter, versus the fall, spring and summer and this was a narrow window of June and July.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: It's interesting and the data is provocative.

>> SCOTT FLUER: It is.

It's a start.

>> FRED WOEHLE: Sue, do you have something?

>> DR. SUE McDONNELL: Although, it's really hard to unearth these observations, there has been a smattering of literature on what horses do 24 hours a day and your findings are consistent with those crazy researchers who stayed out all night in various

parts of the world, and your seasonal thoughts about looking into this season is very important, because it seems like there's a regular 24-hour rhythm that's very dependent on the seasons.

So in the winter, when it's cold, they may be doing more quiet -- staying more sheltered at night and then more active in the better weather to be out in the open.

>> Absolutely.

>> DR. SUE McDONNELL: There's many factors including the shelter and the wind direction and the temperature, and that sort of thing, but I will -- actually on our website, we have a -- a group of hard to find old references.

A lot of the work was done back in the '70s.

And it was in doctoral dissertations and master's thesis, that didn't really get all the details in the published scientific reports but it's this in the species and I can get you that.

I think your students will really enjoy it.

>> SCOTT FLUER: That would be great.

I might add too, there's a student at university of Idaho Moscow that actually she's working, I think Dr. Launchbaugh, in the range science department there and she's doing a similar study.

We have been talking over the phone.

She's working on her master's right now, using trail camera work in the Chalice area.

So I'm interested to visit with her and see what her results are the next couple of years too.

>> DR. SUE McDONNELL: Thank you.

>> One little bit.

There's another published report out of Utah on Department of Defense land that was done by Dr. Larson at BYU.

There's a little difference to it in that they were no cattle.

So it's just horses and wildlife and it was mostly point source kind of water sources, springs and troughs, you know.

You start putting awful these together and I think we can pretty well define, you know, what is going on with these wild horses and if there's issues and what they are and solutions.

>> SCOTT FLUER: Right.

No.

No.

It's great information, but it is very time consuming if you can imagine 32,000 photographs, wondering what's going on.

So thank you very much.

>> FRED WOEHL: Thank you again, Scott.

On behalf of the board, I would like to thank everybody for giving us their views and their information today.

It was very good.

I was impressed with the behavior of the board.

Nobody got out of line or anything like that.

So I'm calling this meeting adjourned for the day.

And we'll see you again at 8:00 in the morning.

(End of meeting)

ROUGHLY EDITED TRANSCRIPT

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
WILD HORSE & BURRO ADVISORY BOARD
OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLAHOMA
SEPTEMBER 3, 2015
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>> KATHY LIBBY: Hello.

So, folks, um, we need to get started, but we're going to be about another two minutes while we get everybody, but I want to give you the alert that two minutes we are going to start.

>> FRED WOEHL: Good morning, everybody.

8:00.

It's time to start.

It's not 8:00?

My watch says it's 8:00.

Good morning.

I hope everybody had a good evening last night and they are ready for a very productive day of talking about a national treasure, something that's very near and dear to everybody's heart, and that is the beautiful wild mustang.

I would like Ms. Kathy, if she would, to go over the rules of the room, just to be sure everybody is clear.

Everybody understands what is expected of them, and how we are going to proceed this morning.

Ms. Kathy?

>> KATHY LIBBY: Good morning.

Good morning, or shall I say, Howdy!

Welcome again to everyone online.

And for those of us in the room, two things, again, on the public comment -- first of all, on the agenda, thank you for bearing with us yesterday because we made some agenda changes.

The only thing that we will shift today, the budget update that we didn't do yesterday will be done right after lunch.

We will put the budget right after lunch, before the working group report outs.

So I won't go through the agenda so much with you.

For those of us in the room, sign-up for public comment will run until 10:15 today.

I understand we have about 15 people signs up thus far; is that correct?

So we'll do the math and see how much time we have for everyone.

Again, terms of the room this is basically, except for the public comment period, this is basically a board meeting.

We do ask that everybody stay, either seated or standing in the designated places available to you, the cameras and everything stay with you, and in their designated spaces, but no microphones or other equipment be up in this front area, that we do show mutual respect and that includes treating our cell phones and our conversations with each other gently.

There are no placards, banners, et cetera, allowed in the meeting room.

If you do have handouts just leave them with the representatives at the door.

No one is to approach the dais.

No one is to approach the board.

You will sit right where Barry is sitting right now when you do your public comments.

Other than, that you are in the space that's made available to you.

If we have any issues with people not being able to follow these rules, you will be asked to leave or you will be escorted out.

So stick with us, and turning it back to you, Fred.

>> FRED WOEHL: Thank you, Ms. Kathy.

We appreciate it very much.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: Mr. Chairman, point of order, please.

The discussions and the way we wanted to modify the working group reports and the discussion of recommendations, I would move to amend the agenda to combine the items at 1:15 and 2:45 so they run concurrently.

>> JUNE SEWING: I second it.

>> FRED WOEHL: Anybody object?

Thank you, Mr. Cope, or Cope.

We are very pleased, board to have one of our partners, a person I call a friend, a USDA cohort for the Forest Service.

Barry, tell us a little bit about what's going on.

>> BARRY IMLER: Okay.

Well, first off, good morning.

It's a pleasure seeing most of you this morning and last evening.

I joined the evening with you.

I believe I already -- just for the sake of real quick reminder, I'm a national program manager with the Washington office of the Forest Service and the rangeland management vegetation ecology staff area, and the wild horse and burros program is part of my portfolio.

This is not something I do full-time normally.

I will start out we have some recent personnel changes related to the program.

I believe most of you have met Allen Rolley.

He wasn't here yesterday when he was introduced.

Our new director for rangeland management and vegetation ecology.

Allen joined us at about the same time that Mr. Tupper joined you folks.

So we have some additional shared interests or timelines.

Most of you know Tom Crowley.

He is a wild horse and burro specialist for a couple of years.

Tom has moved on to a different position, as of a couple of months ago, he's now a regional program manager, dealing with the entire range program, including horses for the state of California, our Pacific Southwest Region.

We are looking, and we are looking forward to fill the wild horse and burro position.

Tom will provide technical support to help them implement the program, implement national policy, manage the horses as necessary, and this individual is also going to be working closely with those of us charged with managing the program on a national level so that we can maintain and guarantee some consistency across the country on how we operate this program.

Some notes at the national level, just a reminder, that the forest service stopped placing horses in long-term holding facilities in October of 2014.

Our proposed budget, requested budget for 2016 does include funding the reimbursed BLM for costs associated with excess animals that are already in their holding facilities.

We'll see how that makes it through the budget process.

As an agency, we don't believe it would be appropriate, in addition to the legal requirements for us to expect BLM to fund our program, or our operations.

As part of an old lands approach, you know, we are interested in discussing multiple agency participation in research activities regarding wild horse and burro management.

We are thinking possibly beyond just the BLM and the Forest Service.

There are some other agencies out there, and tribal entities that have horses that they manage as if they were wild animals.

It's possible that we have quite a lot of overlap and interest, and perhaps we should work together on some of these issues.

And we do recognize a need to work with BLM at the national level regarding management strategies that the field units can implement for joint management areas.

We know this is an issue.

We know some recent changes in our operational policy, our direction is causing a lot of concern, causing a lot of headaches.

We understand that.

We also understand it will take a little bit of time for us to work out some ideas at the national level on how to make it happen and then we'll have to try to get the local communities to follow through on those ideas.

There's been a lot of talk regarding some collaborative efforts, or the need for collaborative efforts, including at this board meeting.

You know, just kind of an update on some of the things that have been going on since the last board meeting with the Forest Service.

Some of our local services have entered into some discussions with tribal, state and local officials where there are wild horse and burro issues that affect either neighboring or overlapping jurisdictions.

We have at least one forest -- the one I can never remember the name, the Ochoco in Oregon that has entered into a collaborative agreement to address planning and management of their wild horse and burro territory.

This is a recent agreement.

I was hoping to have a copy of it printed out to provide you to folks.

I couldn't find it in time.

If of our forest and districts have initiated or expanded relationships with local advocacy groups.

I will touch on that a little bit more in a few minutes.

The idea is that it's a recognition of the fact that we are not going to be able to find homes for all the animals that probably need to come off the lands.

We do not have the staffing.

We don't have the bodies, or necessarily the funding to do all the things that need to happen on the range, as far as on range management, and we know there are people out there who are interested in working with the animals.

We know there are people interested in working with us and we would like to expand the opportunities to cooperate with those groups.

We also recognize the need to initiate and expand relationships at the national level with some of the advocacy groups.

You know, Dean and I discussed -- recently discussed the Cloud Foundation, HSUS proposal, and the joint management areas that might work, might be a good choice.

Tom, I want to thank you for our offer to try to connect volunteers with individual territories.

At Tim's request, I provided all the local district offices where we have wild horse and burros so that we can -- as people, you know, approach him looking for people to reach out, he has the name or the contact person to make those connections.

And as I was writing this I remembered that I need to respond to a similar request from Ginger regarding Cloud Foundation.

>> She's not here today.

>> BARRY IMLER: I noticed.

I will try to get that information to you.

I'm sorry, Kathy, I was not supposed to address the audience.

So where are we looking for help?

A couple of different areas, mostly -- I will focus at the local level, because ultimately that's where the management occurs and the issues are addressed and that's where we need to take some action and do -- and manage the animals properly.

I will start with planning.

The on-range management, as well as the off-range management, you know, we need help figuring out how we are going to manage the herds, how we are going to manage the landscape in which they are living.

You know, are there -- are we going to use PZP?

Are we going to use -- are we going to try some other treatment?

Are we going to leave the animals alone?

Are we going to need to remove some?

These are questions that need to be answered at the local level on each territory.

As part of our adaptive management strategy that we need to be implementing on these -- on the on-range part, we've come to -- we came to kind of a startling conclusion or whatever within the last few weeks.

We, unlike BLM, which I believe has some kind of a -- I'm not sure what you call categorical exclusion, from NEPA, you have the ability to respond quickly to a developing emergency situation.

We apparently do not have that authority.

So as part of our adaptive management strategy on the territory management plans, you know, our folks got to figure out, okay, if these types of potential emergencies occur, what are the possible ways we can respond?

We need to cover that up front.

If we cover it up front as part of our NEPA, analysis, we should be able to respond to emergency situations such as fire, health issues for the animals, whatever that should happen to develop on the range.

Off-range portions or planning in our territory management plans is a new area for us.

For about 30 years, most of our folks -- you know, most of our territories, we didn't worry about off range.

We had too many animals, call up BLM.

They very kindly came out and gathered the animals for us and put them in a holding facility and handled the adoptions, whatever else.

You know, our folks -- as I said earlier, we are not putting animals in BLM facilities.

You know, we have -- this falls into one of the areas where we have some different laws and regulations.

There's some differences in laws and regulations that we operate under.

So our folks are going to have to start -- they are going to have to address as part of the territory management plan, you know, what qualifies as an excess animal?

You know, a decision matrix.

You know, if we are going to be doing PZP, do some type of on-range treatment.

As the animals go through the chute, what determines which animal goes back out and which will be declared excess?

You know, and once we have done that, what are we going to do with the animal?

How are we going to handle, you know, gathering -- well, by that time, we will have gathered the animal.

How are we going to handle where the animal goes, what process we go to help them find a home?

Right now, long-term holding is not an option for us.

We move to implementation of those management plans, as I mentioned earlier, we do not have the staffing.

We do not have the funding to do all of the monitoring that probably is going to need to occur.

We could use help with the monitoring, some of the citizen science I mentioned yesterday, or discussed yesterday.

Management actions, you know, if we are going to use PZP, do some things along that line we definitely help with organizations, local organizations, like Cloud Foundation, help us with implementation and help us do the treatments.

Probably the area we need the most assistance on implementation is the placement of off-range excess animals.

We estimate we probably have three times as many animals out there, nationwide, on average, as our capacity -- as what the lands can handle.

You know, treatments, PZP, population treatment control is not going to address the overpopulation.

We are going to have to remove some of the animals.

We will need help finding homes for them.

And, you know, that item, it leaves me to address some of the questions that came up during the last board meeting.

And, I don't know, we have some folks who are more visual, when it comes to trying to understand things.

Kathy, if you can put that up.

We developed a flow chart recently to show how or what the process is that the Forest Service should be following with -- as far as dealing with excess animals.

Is there any way to show the whole thing at once, Kathy?

I believe each of you have a copy of this.

>> Yes, we have it in front of us, Barry.

>> BARRY IMLER: Okay.

One thing I want to be clear about.

We talk about the process regarding disposition of excess wild horse and burros.

It doesn't address feral, stray or other unauthorized animals.

It's specifically we were to wild horse and burros.

You know, the diamond-shaped areas generally represent a decision point for us as much as possible.

I think every case on this, it's a simple yes or no question.

The rectangular boxes identify a process.

The highlighted areas identify where we really need assistance from anybody who is interested in finding good homes for these animals.

You know, the top triangle or diamond, if you can lower that just a little bit, Kathy.

As in lower the whole -- no, we need to see the top.

We need to see the top move the bar on the right so we can see the top of the diagram.

There we go.

That diamond is the one where we talk about is the animal excess or not?

And I highlighted the notation up in the top corner.

This actually is -- this decision is going to be based on what comes out of the territory management plan, the decision matrix.

You know, are we going to be managing for older animals, younger animals?

Do we need to pull males?

Do we need to pull females?

You know, do we need to pull certain age group?

Those are the type of decisions that should be in the decision matrix.

So when we get to this stage, the animals in the corral, we are running it through the chute, go down through the matrix, is it an excess animal or not, based on that definition and matrix.

If not -- if it needs to be treated, give it whatever treatment necessary and take it back out on the range or take it back out on the territory.

If it does qualify as an excess animal, then we move through the flow chart.

Is the animal, old, sick or lame?

Legal requirements.

And then we get down to the requirement regarding age, you know, is the animal over 10

years of age?

If it is, by statute, we have to move on down through the flow chart into the sale without limitation.

If it's not, then we go into the adoption process.

In this case, it's to the right.

Is the animal adopted?

Well, that's where we need help.

We need to get as many of these animals adopted as possible.

Hopefully the answer is yes and then we continue to the right.

When we get down to the next decision point, was the management agreement, you know, followed?

Can we go ahead and title the answer?

Hopefully the answer is yes.

If it's no, then we go back and we start back through the process again.

If the animal is not adopted, after -- you know, after the third attempt, we move over to the sale without limitation portion of the flow chart again.

We are back over, starting down the left side.

The next -- the next diamond there going down, was the animal sold?

That's very important to us.

We really don't want to go any further down that left side, because the next process is humanely destroying the healthy animal.

We don't want to go there.

We need as much help as possible finding homes, not just the adoption process, but for those animals that we have to sell without limitation, either because it's over ten years of age, that's not discretionary for us, or because, you know, what unpopularity was referred to as three strikes rule a couple of years ago.

Now, sale without limitation.

We are under no obligation to sell those at auction or to the highest bidder.

You know, we will be looking -- we are looking for advocacy groups, individuals, anybody who can help us find homes for these animals.

If you can help us identify, you know, buyers.

If you are willing to take on, you know, purchase some of these animals and help them find homes, great!

Wonderful!

As I mentioned, there is no obligation to sell at auction.

No obligation to sell to the highest bidder.

The price is negotiable.

We are not looking to maximize income.

We fully understand that we will never recover our costs involved in the program, or in gathering this animal and doing the necessary vet treatments and whatever other certifications are necessary.

So don't be concerned that we are going to ask you for some large amount of money or some set price.

That's not a factor at this point.

So I don't know if this helps any.

I don't know if it clarifies anything.

I'm hoping the visual aspect makes it a little bit clear.

I know it helped me a lot as I was putting it together.

It made it a lot easier to explain it to people because I can hand out the chart and talk about what's on the chart.

>> FRED WOHL: Barry, I have one question.

It's kind of a complex question, but the board has talked about this just a little bit, but

it's -- we serve the wild horse and burro program which served the Department of Interior.

We were appointed by both secretaries.

The biggest part of almost all of our recommendations and things we have made is pertaining strictly with the BLM-type horses, right?

Now, the way that you are bringing up what's going on in the Forest Service, is a little bit different than the way that the Bureau handles their horses.

I guess what I'm asking on behalf of the board is why isn't there more of a collaborative partnership with the Forest Service and BLM?

It would seem like just to me, all the recommendations we have made in the past, and plan to make in the future is not going to help or benefit the Forest Service.

>> BARRY IMLER: Fred, I would say that even though the wording, the language used in the recommendations is, you know, BLM -- recommend to BLM this, recommend to BLM that.

We do follow those.

We do read those.

We do follow those.

We do look at, you know, what can we incorporate into our operations, and what doesn't necessarily fit real well with us?

>> FRED WOEHL: Okay.

>> BARRY IMLER: There are a few occasions where we recommended to the BLM and the Forest Service, and those have been some very specific things.

I believe there was one recommendation specific to the Forest Service in the past few years.

>> FRED WOEHL: Okay.

Okay.

>> BARRY IMLER: But generally, even though the recommendations are addressed to the Bureau, we do read them.

We do pay attention to them and we try to adopt as much of that as we can into our programs and our operations.

>> FRED WOEHLE: Okay.

>> JENNIFER SALL: Barry, can you remind me, when you say you are three times over capacity, what number of horses you are talking about?

>> BARRY IMLER: Please accept this as a raw number, because a great many of our territories have not had the AMLs adjusted or analyzed in a number of years and right off the top, I would probably say most of them have probably did not consider sage grouse when the numbers were generated.

We believe we have nationwide -- nationwide we believe the total AML is somewhere around 22 or 2400 head and the last estimate I saw in populations had us somewhere in the neighborhood of 7,000.

And actually, I just had to pull that information as part of a FOIA request, Jennifer, so I can get that to you.

>> JENNIFER SALL: Thank you.

>> BARRY IMLER: I can get you the most accurate we think we have.

>> FRED WOEHLE: Do they still have a preemptive NEPA process?

You said that you -- some of the things you could do, the BLM could do and you couldn't.

And I think that a lot of it has to do with NEPA.

And it's been several years since I have been associated with that, but do they still have that?

>> BARRY IMLER: We have moved from an appeal process on NEPA, to an objection process.

But we still, you know -- basically any action we take on the ground, we have to perform some level of NEPA analysis.

>> FRED WOEHLE: I understand that.

But we used to be able to plan for disaster with a preemptive NEPA.

In other words if something happened, this is -- this is what we are going to do.

You might want to check with BLM on how they go about doing that and just get some help if -- if that is still there, it's been several years since I have been involved in that.

So times change and programs change, but --

>> BARRY IMLER: Well, what we are looking at, Fred, as part of the territory management plan to identify, okay, if we have a fire, if we have this kind of condition regarding lack of forage, whatever, any of these other things that, you know, the BLM might be able to address as emergency or might create something that would resemble an emergency situation, how -- how do we plan -- what are the possibilities?

How do we think we can address that?

The idea is getting that up front in the management plan.

>> FRED WOEHL: Okay.

>> BARRY IMLER: So that we can react quickly if we need to.

>> FRED WOEHL: Anybody else have any comments or questions?

>> RICK DANVIR: I have a comment.

I appreciate you putting this together.

This helps -- to me, it's a nice flow chart.

You can see the logic.

You can see the decision points and, frankly, I appreciate it as -- it looks to me like a well thought out way to approach, you know, dealing with the difficult problem.

And, you know, I think it -- I think there's some good solutions.

The real solutions are on here.

You know, and in a good order.

So --

>> FRED WOEHL: Well, one of the things that has been clear to me in your presentation, and I'm going to just speak bluntly about this is that the number of horses that the Forest Service have pales -- I mean, there's a lot less than what BLM has to manage at this time.

And to just say it bluntly based on what you said, here's an opportunity for some of these groups to put their money where their mouth is and step up and help the Forest Service and get ahead of this curve and maybe they can come up, with your help and all of this a method that the BLM can adopt on a broader scale, and I'm looking at this as an opportunity -- an opportunity to improve and manage this situation, because it's a whole lot easier to manage 5,000 horses which is what you are over AML than to measure 50,000 horses.

And the steps that can be taken to get them back in AML and where they need to be could be something that could be used broad scale.

Julie, did you want to say something?

Well, you leaned up.

Were you just stretching?

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: I was just paying attention.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: So Barry, in the process, any understanding from conversations we had, you are also evaluating -- in the process of doing all of this, you are also taking another look at AML in each one of these territories and reevaluating the appropriateness of the AML number?

>> BARRY IMLER: That would be part of the NEPA process with the territory management plan, yes.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Well, I just think that's really important because we've had many, many conversations about AML up here, and I think at the last meeting we were told that AML is not based on AUMs at all, and I think the intention of it was to be an adaptive process.

So it has to take into consideration climatic changes, drought -- everything from drought to fires, and all of that, and it -- I don't think it was intended to be a static number, correct?

So it --

>> BARRY IMLER: And, Tim, that's one of the reasons I think I mentioned at the last meeting with our new forest planning directives, we put -- we have placed in those directives direction that says that the AML should be part of the territory management plan and not the forest plan.

The forest plans are really difficult to amend, or can be difficult to amend, and can take a long time to amend, whereas the territory management plan is site specific based on the

conditions on the ground and we can work with those a lot more quickly.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Well, I know we keep beating the old drum, but it's the resource, the resource, the resource.

Thanks, Barry.

>> FRED WOEHL: Barry, just a question and Tim brought this -- I mean, to mind, in case of a fire, now, we have been told that AML is set by a committee and they look at it every 10 or 15 years and it's pretty static.

It doesn't change and all of this.

What happens to the AML after a fire?

Is it still what it was or does it -- I mean, I'm just curious.

>> BARRY IMLER: I think that's -- I would suspect there would be some sort of short-term adjustment, but, again, those are the type of things that need to be looked at site by site when they are working on their management plan.

The local folks have the best ideas of what the local conditions are and what the fire history, is what the responses might be.

I'm assuming there will be some flexibility.

>> FRED WOEHL: Okay.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: If I may, Mr. Chair, I would say that the AML would not change with a fire.

If you have invasive, a change in the vegetation and the carrying capacity, I think you change the AML at that point, not immediately post fire until you know the long-term effects.

Is that correct, Barry?

>> BARRY IMLER: I would say that's correct, Cope.

We may take some immediate action regarding animals.

But the AML itself probably -- as Cope said, what are the effects?

>> FRED WOEHL: The reason why I'm asking, it could you have an area that has no grass at all, and still have an AML of 1,000 horses?

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: I think that's happened, because the 300 horses have been moved off.

The AML is still there, because we know the vegetation will grow back.

The question is how much and what kind?

>> RICK DANVIR: And whether you have large grazing animals, that does affect what species come back and what plants come back.

I think you would agree with that.

So that it could be that you could -- if you don't reduce the numbers, at least temporarily, you -- you may inadvertently lower your carrying capacity in the future.

>> FRED WOEHL: Oh, absolutely.

Absolutely.

That's why I'm bringing this up is that the AML is not a very good measure because it can not react quick enough to the current thing on the ground.

>> RICK DANVIR: Yes, it's kind of a long-term target that you are shooting for, but like you say, there's -- there's going to be years where the land can probably support more, because it rained really well, and years where it didn't, you know?

I think that's -- it's a moving -- it's --

>> FRED WOEHL: It's a moving target.

>> RICK DANVIR: Yeah.

>> FRED WOEHL: I think everybody is hung up on that term AML on managing the horses and I don't know how much we need to be hung up on that because it's not a very good scale.

Dean, do you have a comment?

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: In regards to the Idaho situation, where the Soda Fire burned out two HMAs and a third of the other, the Idaho decision is this the two HMAs that are burned out they do not desire and are striving to remove every single horse, and not put any back or consider putting them back for two years.

Rest the land and see how it recovers.

That's what Cope was saying.

>> FRED WOEHL: Right.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: AML remains to be whatever it is, about 50 in each of those areas and otherwise set that remains.

But we plan to have lesser numbers in these kind of cases but the reevaluation will occur eventually and then AML will be set.

It's a target.

>> FRED WOEHL: Okay.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: It's an average, what we think the land can carry over the long term.

Some years may be more productive in forage and some may be less but on the average, we think the target number of animals that the land can support and sustain is this.

>> FRED WOEHL: Okay.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: Or X.

>> FRED WOEHL: Any more questions for Barry or discussion about what we have heard so far?

Thank you Barry.

You have done a good job.

Moving right along, we have Dr. Paul Griffith to speak with us on this morning on the research update from USGS.

>> PAUL GRIFFIN: I was just picking on you a little bit.

Along with some copies of the power point slides that -- you have received, albeit late, later than you would like, a synopsis of the various research projects that I will talk about today.

I really think of them as the alphabet soup of all the different kinds of research that BLM is trying to support and literally is from A to Z and just like any good soup, everything is mixed up in my presentation.

So I can't go from A to Z in order.

So before I begin, yesterday, the question came up what is the budget related to research and so I wanted to kind of answer that now up front of the -- of the projects that I'm going to be presenting today, the -- the budgetary obligation that we are making in this fiscal year for what I'm going to call the RFA proposals and research was \$3,355,000 and then another \$1.5 million are going to be obligated to the USGS research.

And we can talk about it more at length if you like.

I will start by mentioning what Dean mentioned earlier that the research advisory team has been reconstituted and I'm acting as the chair, Bryan Fuell is the cochair.

The other members of the team are Sue McDonnell, and Allen Shepherd, and Dr. Kane from APHIS.

And Dean did talk about this a little bit yesterday, but I wanted to just mention that in addition to reviewing research proposals that come in, both the ones that are solicited by BLM and others that come in to us unsolicited to us from other groups, we have a goal to try to collaborate with field staff and communicate with them about new science that we are learning about.

On proposals we review them.

We communicate with the applicant, and ultimately we make a recommendation to the division chief and any decision about whether BLM should move forward towards the NEPA process on any of these proposals is made by the division chief.

So some years ago, there was a strategic research planning document that was moved forward and that's maybe a little bit out of date.

So just -- at this point, the current research directions that we're trying to follow include population growth suppression methods to reduce the population growth rates on the range.

We would like to improve our ability to understand what our different management actions effect will be on populations.

So we would like to manage the populations better.

We would like to improve in general our understanding of the horse and burro ecology, including what are the movements within an HMA in terms of seasonal and forage use, but also between HMAs.

What are the connections between HMAs and larger scale population connections.

I think in many of our discussions, inside discussions here, I think a lot of us recognize we need to understand what are the meta population of horses, how are they connected?

How much movement is there between those populations?

And a lot of the decisions that we'll make down the road about removals or how many animals are in different HMAs are going to hinge on that.

We don't have specific projects looking at that right now, though.

We are also interested in habitat use effects, the kind of thing that Scott Fleur talked about yesterday.

We would like to continue improving the inventory methods.

We think we have a couple of good methods for horses but particularly for burros we have -- that could be improved.

And we want to improve our understanding the adoption demands and the perceptions of the public at large about the program and about wild horse and burros.

So the first set of studies that I would like to talk about are the studies A through H in the alphabet soup and these are studies that were -- that are coming out of the 2014 announcement, a request for applications about contraception and sterilization.

The BLM received, I believe it was 22 proposals that were reviewed by the national academy of science, and of those, the National Academy of Science made recommendations about what should move forward for consideration for funding and eight applications have then been revised by the applicants and basically considered for funding.

In all of these cases, these are university-led projects.

So it's incumbent on the university to do the animal use and care protocols.

So of those studies, about four of them have been finalized.

Thank you.

And these four are detailed a little bit more in your handout, this synopsis of ongoing research.

They are this -- there are these four projects.

First the Louisiana State University project, this is listed as project H.

It is an \$850,000 project, lasting several years, and the goal is to develop peptides or peptoids, which are kind of synthetic peptides that are conjugated, and it would develop as a contraceptive and they want to develop this as a longer lasting contraceptive, by having these conjugates to a gel that would release over a long period of time.

So the second of the projects is project E, it's led by Colorado State university.

This is a project that costs \$159,700.

This is a project where at the teddy Roosevelt National Park, the researchers have already had a number of horses that were injected by GonaCon which reacts against the HRHR, and GonaCon with one injection has kind of a disappointing effect on -- as a contraceptive.

It doesn't have a high rate of contraception, but what they found by giving two shots of GonaCon, there's a much higher contraceptive rate.

And so this study is aimed at identifying what's the ideal timing of that second shot of GonaCon to achieve high contraceptive effects?

And the horses at Teddy Roosevelt National Park are in many ways very similar to wild horses on the range, except that they do have some more manageable pastures for observation and handling.

So it's kind of an ideal place to do that type of study.

The third one of these studies that has been approved and meaning there is a grant.

It's funded.

It's obligated.

Is also to Colorado State University.

This is for the development of a vaccine sterilant for mares and the rationale behind this vaccine or the development of this vaccine is by giving a shot of a vaccine, it will cause the mares to essentially release all of their eggs at once and stimulate them to becoming to be sterile for the rest of their lives.

This is a longer term project.

This type of vaccine does not exist yet.

So it's certainly a longer term research project and the cost of that study is almost \$800,000.

The fourth of these funded studies is a grant already is led by University of Kentucky and this is a \$391,000 study, which is going to assess a surgical technique, tubal ligation, via colpotomy.

With an incision through the vagina this method will test the use of cable ties to achieve tubal ligation.

The mares that would have this done to them will continue to cycle.

The ovaries will remain intact, but they will be -- if it works -- infertile.

Now, the second set of studies that I want to talk about under this same RFA have not been funded.

They are -- BLM has proposed -- has encouraged the applicant to resubmit their proposals, but we have not yet finalized the grant, and for that reason, I'm going to treat these as we do any applications that are not finalized, that is to say, I'm not going to be sharing who made the application or other conditions of that application.

Very briefly, these projects would include three surgical techniques, minimally invasive tubal ligation, minimally invasive lacer ablation of the oviduct which would kind of achieve tubal ligation, except you achieve by starring the oviduct.

Ovariectomy, via colpotomy.

This has been done in domestic mares and the Sheldon, but this study would quantify those effects of mares in different pregnancy stages.

And then lastly, a study to deliver PZP in a different kind of vehicle that would be a time release vehicle that hopefully could last several years.

As you are all probably aware, that one of the limitations of PZP now is that it doesn't last as long as we would like, the effects are not long lasting.

The next set of studies are led by the -- actually, led by BLM and so this is unusual in the sense that BLM is not a research agency, but these are led by BLM.

They are two socioeconomic studies.

First is we refer to it as the knowledge, values and preferences study and Sarah Bohl made a extensive presentation to you about this in the spring meeting.

I won't go into that much.

Right now their literature review is complete.

At this time, they have they are seeking approval from the office of management and budget to collect information.

Any time you -- any time a government agency seeks to collect information from people, we have to do, I think it is a privacy act notification to get approval for that.

And so the next steps after that approval comes would be going to focal groups and getting more in-depth information from them, from various focal groups about the attitudes that they have about wild horse and burro management and wild horse and burros.

And then based on those focal groups, a contractor will help to design a questionnaire and that will go out to a randomly selected number of Americans in the general public, and then conclusions about what are the public perceptions of wild horse and burros will be based on that wider scale randomized study.

Then the second study which is related to socioeconomics also led by BLM staff, by Debbie Allen here is the demand study.

Holle' Hooks talked about this yesterday.

So I don't want to go into it too much, except to say that -- well, I will leave it at what Holle' said yesterday.

The whole point is no understand better what is it that affects the demand for the animals, the horses and burros.

Okay.

So this is my cue we should switch over to the slide presentation, please, for the USGS-led studies.

These slides -- and these studies are -- I have been asked to represent them for Kate Shaniker, and Sarah King, who you met at Pauls Valley.

These are studies that have been where the BLM has suggested that USGS proposed how they would do these studies in some cases they have already begun.

In other cases, they have been approved by BLM to move forward on the NEPA processing, and on the stages of the NEPA process that would be required for them to happen.

And in other cases, they are just still under development by USGS.

So the first one has the -- the field work has been completed.

This is estimating how many horses there are in a given HMA with fecal DNA.

They completed the field work.

This study included -- so this was done at little Book Cliff in Colorado.

This would be study J in the alphabet soon.

They completed the field work, which included three intensive 10-day sessions, picking up, in each case, about 600 samples.

Those fecal samples, the horse poop, the genetics have been analyzed by the USGS lab, and so this month, they are going to be starting their analysis of the DNA, it relies on a mark recapture framework.

So if an individual was detected in a given month, how many times was it detected?

And from that, what can we say about the probability that a horse that was out there -- that some other horse would have been out there but not detected.

Another thing that -- so there were those three big blitzes of sampling, Dr. King who we met at Pauls Valley, went out every month during the year, and recorded, among other things, the decomposition of known aged dung piles and it's fascinating work, I can assure you.

(Laughter)

But it is important in the -- in this sense.

So what you can see in this slide here is the picture from May, that's a fresh dung pile for those of you who don't know what it is.

And Dr. King would take some of that sample for DNA analysis and also photograph it.

And they would go back a month later June, July, August, and each of those one month later, she would take a sample and send it off for DNA analysis and take a picture.

So what we have got then is from that work, we will find out how old can a sample be to reliably amplify DNA.

And then Sarah is developing this kind of a -- basically a calendar for people in the field so they can take examples of pictures and say to themselves, well, here's a pile of horse poop and it looks like it's too old to amplify based on this study.

So she's going -- she will have recorded what are the attributes of poop piles that you can say, likely to amplify from DNA, or forget about it.

Don't bother collecting it.

Another aspect of this study is looking at what seeds can germinate from wild horse fecal samples and so this is in a green house and for example, what you can see here is tea grass, which has germinated from horse poop samples.

Okay.

So the next study I want to talk about, these are all USGS studies still, developing a suitable radio collar for wild horses and burros.

We had a chance to talk about this at length.

I don't want to go into that too much.

I will go into the results.

I will see which ones are here that Sarah has already gone over with us together.

As you know the collars and tags were deployed this year.

They were monitored weekly for first three months, including behavioral observations.

So Dr. King went out and observed behavior for the first three months, and now they are in the stage where they are going back monthly to check if there's rubbing on the neck, and general condition of the horses, but not the intensive behavioral studies.

Mares and Jennies had no significant rubbing or sores, but the stallions did have some issues.

The next little animation, please.

The stallions had some issues, namely the biggest -- the most concerning one was that in some cases, the collar came up over the ears, which led to some rubbing, but as the -- the main thing is that we are concerned that if the collar gets up over the ears, it

could affect that animal's inability to feed or get water, and there have been cases in other equid studies where animals have died, a collar was found up over its ears and so to avoid the risk of putting out collars that might kill animals, the USGS is going to be concluding that for stallions, they will go with the tail tags.

Maybe the mane tags but the tail tags that we saw are probably the more reliable way to go.

I might be speaking out of turn, the USGS will make their conclusions pretty soon here based on the first few months of results and then we'll expect a more full report after a year of their work.

So if I could have the next slide.

Sarah, just last week, Dr. King finished entering all the behavioral data from the first three months and she did want to -- although this is preliminary, she wanted to share the snapshot of what were the effects of radio collars on burro and horse behavior.

So what you see here is not in color in your handout, but on the screen, you can see that certainly for mares, there was essentially no difference in behaviors between control animals and mares that had collars.

On this slide, there may have been a slight difference in the amount of time spent feeding for burros or stallions that have collars, but Dr. King wanted me to emphasize that these are preliminary and what you are not seeing is the standard errors or the confidence intervals around these measures.

So is the 6 or 7% difference in the amount of time feeding, between collared and controlled stallions biological significant?

I don't know.

That will be significant that they will have to address.

The next study that is -- it would be labeled as study K in your list.

It's the carrying capacity modeling.

And the status of this proposal is that it has been approved by BLM.

This is a -- this is a proposal that is not going to handle any animals.

So there wouldn't be any NEPA process required for this study.

And it would be -- it is meant to be just essentially a computer modeling exercise, using

GIS layers and some known information about wildlife populations, livestock stocking rates, horse stocking rates, and aerial imagery based conclusions about how much forage is available in the study sites where they are going to be doing this model.

I'm not sure which sites those are.

So they are going to begin doing the statistical model this fall.

Okay.

The next few slides, I would like to talk about the SpayVac experiments.

We talked about this at some length in Pauls Valley.

Just to summarize briefly, that there have been two experiments, we called them SpayVac one and two.

In nut shell, SpayVac one was promising and SpayVac two was very disappointing.

So in SpayVac, there were two groups of treated animals, including -- and there was a group of controls.

I will just call your attention to group two, which had -- which were treated with 200 micrograms of PZP in a modified Freund's adjuvant and since that, 15% have been infertile since treatment.

And this is going on the fifth year.

So that was -- that was pretty promising and so for that reason, the USGS initiated SpayVac 2, also at Pauls Valley.

This is led by Butch Rolley and got help from -- at Pauls Valley with all the staff there.

So they used a higher dose of SpayVac.

So SpayVac two was increase the dose of was given to the horses.

Again, there were a couple of groups, 30 mares were treated with SpayVac and aqueous emulsion and 400 grams of PZP and twice as much as the SpayVac one trial but they had a very high fertility rate.

So that group of mares was not followed.

The second group of mares was also treated with 400ing micrograms of PZP and modified Freund's adjuvant and as with group one, they didn't show a high titer, and nor

did they have a very good contraceptive result.

So all the mares that were in the SpayVac two experiment, this study is stopped.

They are not being monitored.

They are not being bred anymore in captivity, and it's a disappointing result.

So Dr. Rolley prepared this slide for us.

What can we conclude about SpayVac?

Well, so far the results have been variable.

It's not clear whether that's due to variation in drug quality or individual mare response or both.

It's hard to make conclusions based on the data that were observed.

Mark Fraker and Ursula Bechert have a relationship with Dr. Wagner from Cornell University.

Dr. Wagner is going to be analyzing the serum samples from SpayVac one she will be looking at differences in the antibodies and specification that might explain why some mares were infertile and some were not.

Unfortunately, we don't have the original example of the drugs that were given to the mares in SpayVac one or SpayVac two.]

That would have been interesting to analyze.

The company that made the drug Immunovaccine have indicated that they are not interested in making it anymore, and so Mark Fraker and Dr. Bechert are explore arrangements under which they might take over making the vaccine.

For now SpayVac is unavailable and I think that -- yeah.

Well, the results of this second trial were disappointing and I think that there are a lot of questions that BLM would want to see answered about SpayVac before we initiate another big expensive trial.

The next USGS research proposal is to develop burro population estimation techniques.

That is improved burro population estimation techniques.

This is listed as study O in the list.

This is a proposed -- this is another proposal where it's been approved by BLM but when I say that, what I mean is that it's been approved to move forward to the NEPA process that's required, because this is a study that does involve handling animals.

And so when we were at Pauls Valley, Dean asked the question, what is the utility of having radio collars on burros and this is exactly the study I answered him about.

This is the study where the benefit of having radio collars on burros is that you can improve your estimate of how many burro groups got missed during the flights.

You already have the double observer method where you have a front seat observers and back seat observers and you can contrast.

You can use the data from those two sets of observers to make some conclusions about their relative skill at seeing burro groups.

But if by having burro groups that have radio collars, you can have a known quantity to compare that front seat and that back seat against.

And the known quantity you always find the burros that have the radio collars, as long as they are working.

So this study is planned to begin in September 2015.

Just this week, Utah made a press release about upcoming studies that included this work in Sinbad HMA.

And the work will entail water and bait trapping.

I forget what kind of trapping it's going to be at Sinbad, oh, helicopter to put on radio collars.

Dove tailing with that, the USGS has proposed to also do a study looking at detailed demographic rates in burros, and this would be a study that also would draw on radio collars, but at this time, their proposal is still under review, by the research advisory team.

So I don't have a whole lot of details to share about it, but I will say that most of the studies of burro demography are -- happen in the '70s and '80s, and many of those were based on observations of animals, and didn't use radio collars.

So by having radio collars on animals, as with so many other wildlife studies, the big benefit is that you can repeatedly find individual animals and their groups and then you

can make conclusions about their survival, their foaling rates, their movements in a way that you can't if you are just going out and looking for animals on foot, or without the radio collars.

Again, the next USGS studdie is also proposed and hasn't been approved yet.

So the proposal is in preparation with the university collaborator.

This is developing an intrauterine device, an IUD for mares.

This is building on a previous study where an IUD made of a Silastic elastomer, which I interpret as being a silicon-based polymer, was inserted in mares and had promising results, but the IUD slipped pretty often.

So Steve Germain is leading this study and will be designing IUDs that are specific to mares rather than human IUDs used in -- so this could be a very promising application for contraception.

The next proposal that I wanted to mention is to evaluate the behavior of spayed free roaming mares within a breeding population.

This is another study that's been proposed.

It's in review.

And so we are still reviewing the USGS proposal at this time, but this board has recommended that -- asked that contraceptive methods should focus on mares, and so this is one application where the USGS, if it is approved and goes through the NEPA process and happens will be trying out spayed animals, that is ovariectomized animals.

They are part of the breeding population.

Dr. King and Dr. Shaniker would be leading the project.

Dr. King is a behavioral ecologist.

So a big focus would be looking at what are the behavioral effects on the spayed animals, what are the behavioral effects on the non-spayed animals, and, of course, looking at the demographic rates, the movements of those animals, and this could be an important study.

But I want to mention this is -- emphasize this is for spaying in a breeding population.

As Dr. Weikel knows, there's -- spaying has been used widely in the Sheldon National Wildlife Refuge, so this is kind of an already established method.

The next proposal is one -- this is study N.

This is behavior and ecology of geldings among a breeding herd.

This proposal has been approved by BLM.

So now it's going to be going through the NEPA process before it actually happens in the wild, and this is another study that's related to the Utah press release of this week and the proposed area for work where some portion of the males would be gelded is in Conger H. MA and the plan is for the studdie to begin this month, but -- and Bryan will mention the -- kind of timing of any gathers that might be coming related no this study.

Are there any questions so far author these USGS studies?

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: I have some questions, if we have the time.

>> PAUL GRIFFIN: Are we okay on time?

No.

The sentinel of the free roaming wild horses.

This proposal is in review.

It's not finalized.

The next one is the development of WinEquus II.

This is incorporating information about gelding studies, spay studies, other contraceptive techniques and the big goal is to predict population outcomes of different management scenarios happening in isolation or together.

We know we have a huge number of horses out there.

How are we going to realistically get those down to AML or to a sustainable number for the long run and this type of model would be useful for projecting population changes over time, given certain management applications.

So gathers, contraception, et cetera.

And this is going to be led by the USGS, but with advice from Steve Jenkins who made the original WinEquus model.

The USGS down the road will be proposing a test of the efficacy of different

contraceptives for female burros and that is -- they are still in the development phase for that.

Okay.

That was the last of the USGS studies.

There's one -- the USGS is still under an agreement to provide technical assistance to BLM for aerial surveys and I fulfilled that role at USGS for a year and a half or so, and I'm still filling that role, but the BLM -- I mean, the USGS is going to be hiring somebody to fill in my spot at USGS.

I have been told that that will be in -- by November.

So when that person is hired, I will help train them and go out on flights and get them up to speed and hopefully introduce them to everybody and I'm sure that they will find somebody who can do a great job to keep on providing us with the technical assistance for things like flight line planning, and interacting with the statistician to get analyses done.

If we go back to the other presentation, please.

So this year so far in terms of the aerial surveys, there have been 48HMAs that have been surveyed and another, I believe it's eight herd areas.

There -- there are plans for 25 more HMAs to be surveyed, but the drought and the fire season has certainly gotten in the way of getting staff and helicopters to complete all of those surveys.

So some of those surveys are going to be pushed off into early part of next fiscal year.

It is very likely.

And these are all with the new methods, either the photo mark recite or more of them with the double observer method, though we can quantify how many horses were out, there but not seen.

And also in this fiscal year, there were nine territories, wild horse territories on Forest Service lands that have been surveyed, either as part of a complex or on their own.

And there have been ten data sets that have been analyzed.

Nine have been analyzed, yes.

USGS, that is me at the time, planned all the flight paths for ten out of 13 of the survey

sets.

The other ones were planned by local staff.

In all of these cases, the surveys are following predetermined flight lines so they are repeatable.

And Dr. Bruce Lubo does the analyses on these.

This year so far, the average time from receiving the data to him analyzing the data and getting the results to districts is 80 days which is a little slower than last year.

The one thing I did want to mention, I'm a firm believer in the importance of accurate aerial surveys to give us a measure of how many horses or burros are really out there and that's a good starting point for any set of decisions and it's really essential for adaptive management so that we can use aerial surveys in many cases to monitor what the effect is of our management.

The next slide here is just a map of where we have done surveys.

Since last year -- last February, and we have a color page of this for you also in your handout after the -- I think it was after the synopsis of the research projects.

And, you know, the upshot is that if you look across all of the HMAs that BLM manages and all the territories that Forest Service manages, we -- we are approaching the point where a very large area of them have been surveyed now with aerial survey methods that are modern and repeatable and reliable.

Or at least quantifiable.

And the -- it is a stated goal that we go back and survey every one of these every three years.

So it is the plan that we will try to get to those -- those that haven't been surveyed yet, this coming year, although I won't personally commit to that.

There's still some work to be done on aerial surveys, finalizing some SOPs and designing a relational database to hold all of this data and then importantly for looking ahead to the time when Dr. Lubo might retire, automating these analyses like a statistical program R so it's repeatable and cheaper.

The last slide I have is a reminder that there are other research projects under review or ongoing.

The University of Idaho study, Scott Fleur mentioned yesterday is using

cameras -- camera traps to quantify horse use in riparian areas and drawing on his expertise.

And then we have other proposals under review or revision but we treat them as confidential until they have been approved.

And so I will leave it at that.

Sorry if I took too long.

>> KATHY LIBBY: Mr. Chairman, if I may for just a moment, I know we are being flexible with our schedule, the one hard set piece, obviously is the public comment period at 10:30, and I recommend we do not go for a break any later than five after 10:00 and we have one more presentation.

So in terms of question and answers however you want to manage that, but that -- I think 10:05 is break time, and 10:30 is set.

>> FRED WOEHL: Tim, I believe you had some questions.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Yes, just a couple of questions on the GonaCon, the reapplication, I seem to remember at some point one of the things that was notated in something, God, a couple of years ago that GonaCon on a secondary or I think it was on a secondary application, one of the things was that it was causing permanent sterility.

Is that something that -- is that an accurate -- or is there any validity to that?

>> PAUL GRIFFIN: I'm not prepared to answer that.

I'm not sure, but I can follow up.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: I remember from some of the data that we received through a meeting two or three years ago.

I'm not saying that's positive or negative, but I'm curious.

In some respects that may be beneficial.

>> PAUL GRIFFIN: To my knowledge, the study of Teddy Roosevelt is the only case where GonaCon has been used in mares.

And so -- and only in there for -- I don't know when that study started.

Was it three or four years ago.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: It might have been something furnished outside of BLM.

I'm asking about it.

And I might be -- I might not be right in that recollection.

I am usually somewhat sharp.

>> PAUL GRIFFIN: I'm not sure.

It would be premature to make any conclusions from the Teddy Roosevelt.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: I'm pleased to see some focus on the IUD.

Is there any information on the coil method, the Essure, it's used in humans and it's a simple office application, not considered a surgical procedure, I don't believe, and it's, you know, 15 minute office visit and it's a simple coil insertion.

He called Essure, e-s-s-u-r-e in the human application.

>> PAUL GRIFFIN: I don't know.

I know that one of the reasons that Steve Germain and his colleagues are interested in pursuing this Silastic elastomer is that it has a record of being completely inert.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Yes, I'm very, very much behind that.

I actually use that same exact type of ring in one of the products that I manufacture and one of the reasons we use it is because it doesn't cause a reaction with anything that it touches.

And the only other question I have is a quick one, there was an evaluation in the manure samples, the spreading of invasive species, but are you also looking to see what desirable -- are you recording desirable species?

>> PAUL GRIFFIN: Yes, to my knowledge, they are recording all species that germinate.

>> FRED WOEHL: Dean, did you have a comment?

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: I will pass.

I think Paul answered.

I was going to say GonaCon at Teddy is the only study that I'm aware of that has a

secondary vaccination and I don't think there's any preliminary data available other than that current study.

And I don't think this' any data that's come out that indicates it's a sterilant upon a second vaccination.

That data is not available yet, but we intend through this investigation to see the results of secondary follow-up, booster vaccinations.

And as far as the silicone IUD ring, the reason we are following that up is UC Davis data indicated that that particular IUD was not expelled.

There was some other mechanisms not the one you suggest that we looked into, but at Carson City, all of those IUDs fell out, marbles did, the copper mechanisms did.

The IUD that's being studied is the only one that is indicated that hasn't been expelled.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: And the other thing, it was also an issue of sizing that.

It needed to be sized properly for the mares that they feel -- they thought the efficacy would be greatly increased by sizing it properly, which is what Paul had mentioned about making one specifically for mares, the Silastic ring.

I'm hopeful to see that.

>> FRED WOEHLE: Julie, I will be sure that you get to go.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: Just a very quick question and I'm aiming this at Dean.

With study K, which is about the climate modeling, Dr. Griffin mentioned that he didn't know the site for that study.

Do you know the site for that study?

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: Yes, it's the Black Rock, Winnemucca district.

There's already data that we are sharing with Colorado State or with USGS for that.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: Thank you.

>> FRED WOEHLE: Dr. Sue?

>> DR. SUE McDONNELL: Just a minor clarification.

Paul, did I understand you to say that for the Kentucky cable ties study, that that would

interrupt passage of the egg but it would not interfere with the ovary.

>> PAUL GRIFFIN: I may have, but the ovary would remain.

>> DR. SUE McDONNELL: It's essentially a noninvasive ovariectomy.]

That could be an additional tool in the tool box if that works.

>> PAUL GRIFFIN: Absolutely.

If that works then it would be much less invasive than a full ovariectomy.

>> FRED WOEHL: Cope?

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: One of the things with the public lands, the involvement of the community is the best thing you can have.

And best way to benefit the public lands is to work collaboratively with the residents of the communities and one of the best ways to alienate them is to hit them in the pocketbook.

The socioeconomic studies NEPA and others are pretty long dissociate, and pretty long economic.

Does anyone go out and evaluate not the potential but the actual positive effects on a community for any ecotourism that may happen and likewise the deleterious effects that may happen from resource degradation from over population?

>> PAUL GRIFFIN: Maybe Dean can answer that.

I will mention before he speaks that there will be involvement of a BLM economist, Rebecca Moore on that project.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: I think the bigger, broader picture in answer to your question if we were to undertake the programmatic analysis of various management approaches, there will be a robust economic evaluation of how we manage horses and burros and numbers on the range and various alternatives, not so in the various studies we are undertaking now, but that's a broader analysis.

It could come through our environmental impact study.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: That would be good if they decide to do it.

>> PAUL GRIFFIN: I am go out on a limb and say that tourism is increased by having healthy horse populations rather than emaciated horse populations.

>> FRED WOEHL: Absolutely.

Anybody else?

We need to try to keep on time, but I don't want to cut down any good conversation or discussion.

Okay, Dr. Paul thank you very much.

Very good.

Very good.

Bryan, you are up next and you are under the gun.

Ms. Kathy has said we got to break at 10:05, no later than, and it's now 9:30, 9:31, and so --

>> BRYAN FUELL: So save time, I won't talk about poop.

(Laughter)

Well, thank you for this opportunity to address the board.

I'm Bryan Fuell, the on-range branch chief based out of Reno.

And today, I'm going to cover a few topics FY -- next slide.

The FY '15 population estimates, gather removal and fertility control, the CAWP program, sage grouse and litigation and I will turn the time over to Jason.

He has a little discussion about a GIS mapping project that we are working on.

As mentioned before, AML is on the range is 26,715 animals.

As of March 1st, our estimated population is 58,150, which is up almost 9,000 animals over the 2014 estimate.

I will point out that these numbers are based off March 1st.

So today, you will -- there would be a reproduction component that's added into that, probably in excess of probably 10,000 horses on the range is what I would estimate.

In 2014, FY fiscal year October 1 through September 30th, we removed 1857 animals,

compared to 3289, which is not a -- is an estimate so far, because we have ongoing operations still.

384 animals were treated with PZP and 384 -- in '14, excuse me, and then 466 is estimated for FY '15.

Also I want to point out that we had a gather in Wyoming that went over the fiscal year.

So the numbers reflected in '15 are actually part related to a '14 gather.

So 2500 animals is our average target is what we use -- is what we target.

Just to cover what -- the summer of '15, which is currently ongoing and what has been happening.

The Kiger HMA and the Riddle HMA in Oregon are on the summer/fall gather schedule, as well as West Douglas in Colorado.

Kiger has concluded and Riddle is scheduled to be started Friday, I believe.

Emergency gathers that have arose that -- related to emergency issues this summer, and private lands, the Wood Hills which is an area outside of HMA in Nevada, by Wells, Nevada.

A bunch of animals congregated outside of the HMA on a dry water hole on private property.

The Seaman Range, I think there were 14 head that got in an area outside of any water and that's the photo at the top, where you see that water trapping that the Ely district completed.

Miller Flat was in Caliente.

It was a water issue, where they were breaking down fences to get to water on private property.

Wheeler Pass is in Las Vegas and that's wrapping up.

Those are animals that had a deficiency of forage availability and were in very poor body condition.

And those were bait trapped.

And then Hard Trigger is the one that's ongoing in Idaho which is the Soda Fire.

Hard Trigger has concluded and Sand Basin was minimally successful in removing the animals that they needed to remove and then Black Mountain is currently starting today or tomorrow.

Note that the bottom picture is a picture of the Soda Fire.

Hard Trigger and Sand Basin, 100% of the HMA was covered in the perimeter of the fire, although they acknowledge there are unburned islands within the fire -- inside the fire perimeter and then Black Mountain, as Dean mentioned one-third of the HMA has been burned.

And then also we have ongoing water bait trapping, dealing with burros in a public safety and private lands issue, and I think they are somewhere in the neighborhood of 600 burros that we approved to be removed this summer, fall.

Most of Nevada Magee Mountain, that's by the Sheldon.

That was a private land issue.

Arizona is mostly related to private -- or public safety.

They have animals getting on highways, and California is similar.

And California gathers actually concluded.

That's kind of a highlight of what's going on or been going on in the perimeter.

>> FRED WOHL: Bryan, I understand there were about 110 gathers at Kiger?

Is that about right?

Had you heard?

>> BRYAN FUELL: I believe that the number was somewhere in the neighborhood of 137 gathered.

That's approximate, I think the last report I looked at.

That's kind of '15, what's happening.

'16, looking into what the proposed schedule is, for '16, Beatys Butte, that's a sage grouse habitat HMA that we are proposing to gather.

Oregon will propose to gather this fall, and then as Paul mentioned, Conger, Frisco and Sinbad, in Utah, they are doing their gather and NEPA process and those are potentially

planned to be gathered January, February, for the three of those.

We still have some unknowns for summer of '16.

So we don't have a schedule, but those needs will be based off of research, health and land and then public safety, of course, and then potentially court ordered type gathers.

Questions about the ongoing gather studies.

The comprehensive animal welfare program this is -- we have always had standards for animal care, but this is a program that's being implemented that strengthens those, and further defines those standards and they currently were put into the new helicopter contracts, and we -- so we do have those standards that the contractors will be obligated to follow.

And then I believe they are in your handbook, you should have a copy of those standards and we are requiring the contractors to complete training, all employees will need to -- before we'll gather operations.

So they will be fully aware of what those standards are and our expectations of them, while they gather for us.

And then there's also part of component is a new assessment tool and that will be -- we are planning to implement in FY '16, and that's just a process where we will be evaluating the operations from -- everything from gathering to handling, transportation and to make sure that those standards are being met and give us a tool to assess that.

All right.

Let's talk sage grouse.

The Fish and Wildlife Service by court order is expected to make an announcement by this month in regards to whether or not they are going to list the greater sage grouse.

In that -- it's well known for quite sometime and the Bureaus initiated gather -- excuse me -- planning EISs to change on ground management for sage grouse.

98 -- approximately 98 BLM and Forest Service land use plan amendments were completed and some were actually revisions through a total of 13 EISs.

Basically, the -- in the -- what they have identified -- now that record of decision, the ROD has not been signed.

It's due to be signed this month.

And it identifies sage grouse habitat into four base categories in sage grouse focal area is the first category and that's the highest value, the highest priority, those are intact habitats that are still very good, to good condition and will be prioritized to maintain or improve.

Priority habitat management is excellent, and that's the rest of the habitat that's in good, excellent, to medium to poor conditions and those strategies that will be implemented to improve those habitats.

I want to point out that just because priority habitat means -- could mean also that the bird is there.

It doesn't necessarily mean that it's perfect, great sage grouse habitat.

The fact that the bird is there makes it a habitat as well.

Since the bird is there, they are still priority.

And at the end is the general habitat management areas and that has what I refer to as the outer perimeter, where the birds use and potentially where the bird has been in the past, but may not be now.

And then the last one is the non-habitat.

There are 106 HMAs that contained one or all three of those levels of habitat, and -- next slide.

So here's a map of the sage grouse planning areas.

As you can see, there are several plans and 13 EISs throughout much of the northwest there.

So what's significant to the horse program, as I mentioned, there's 106 HMAs.

There's approximately 21 million acres of public land within those 21 -- or 106, excuse me, HMAs, 21 million acres.

15 million of that is sage grouse habitat.

So the preferred alternative, which outlines for HMA management is that those HMAs in the focal area will be the highest priority and then priority habitat.

So we have 22 habitats that have SFA.

And they have priority habitat and general habitat, but these are the -- these HMAs have

habitat that's very significant for sage grouse.

22 -- or of the 21 million acres, 2 million acres is those 22 HMAs is sage grouse focal area.

Wyoming is a big piece of it.

Southern Oregon, northern Nevada, and California does have a little bit, but those HMAs are actually in Nevada, but they are managed by California and then there's Chalice in Idaho is the one HMA that is in Idaho that actually has focal area.

So under current budget, we are planning to try to reach the AML and the SFAs by 2020.

So that's of those 22 HMAs which some are currently at AML.

So we are looking to prioritize our gather schedules as we can, based off other priorities that come up, public safety, fire, drought, public safety issues, we will try to address those HMAs in those focal areas as our high priorities in the next five years and thus as I mentioned Beatys Butte, that's in sage grouse focal area and so that would be the first HMA that we would look to, to obtain AML in sage grouse habitat.

I wanted to point out that these plans are being put in place are to improve sage brush habitats and so what's good for sage grouse is good for all Flora and fauna.

So we would see a great benefit in management strategies in sage brush habitat for all.

And then I needed to mention a second sage grouse plan that's been undergone.

Some may have heard of this, it's the Bi-state.

This is identified as a subspecies.

It had a planning process similar, that's ahead of the current greater sage grouse, although the record of decision has not been signed.

That is expected to be signed this month also.

Fish and Wildlife Service has already determined that they are not planning to list the Bi-State based off of all of ongoing conservation efforts and the habitat improvements that are rolled out by state and local, and private land also.

It's been very collaborative process, that's shown to have great success.

There are eight HMAs that are within the planning area for Bi-State but although only five of those HMAs actually have habitat.

And I want to point out that in the -- the Bi-State, the distinct population is the term.

They use distinct population segments.

They don't use habitat.

So looking at the five HMAs, they are all BLM managed HMAs.

63,000 acres of that has the habitat for Bi-State.

Currently 922 estimate population which is 640 over appropriate management level.

Also wanted to point out that there are also two Forest Service territories that are within the Bi-State habitat.

And then just you should have in your handouts a listing of the litigation for the last year.

Here's just an oversight.

There are 18 cases where we have been litigated.

There are a number of them dealing with fertility control.

This' a split consensus where fertility control is a viable option.

Cases of alleged violation of the act and NEPA and then eight cases of failure to remove excess wild horse and burros.

That's good.

So questions for me?

>> FRED WOEHL: Anybody?

>> JUNE SEWING: In your population 9,000 excess or more horses than were before, does that include any improvement in the count?

Or is that just --

>> BRYAN FUELL: That's based off the state's reporting to us of their current populations by HMA, but, yes.

>> JUNE SEWING: But you don't know how many of that might be -- maybe Paul can answer that.

I don't know how much of it may be from, you know, the improved counting system.

I can't hear you, I'm sorry.

>> KATHY LIBBY: No, you need to use the microphone.

>> PAUL GRIFFIN: Yes, so in all cases where there has been a new survey, using this new method, since February 14th, that -- that value was used in the states determining what their estimated number of animals was for March 1st.

Also accounting for growth since this time of the survey.

So --

>> JUNE SEWING: So there is really no separation.

You don't know what the difference is?

I'm just --

>> PAUL GRIFFIN: We could parse out if the board would like to know, we could parse out which HMAs had populations where they were directly systemed from surveys, if you would like.

>> JUNE SEWING: Well, I mean, the only thing is I'm wondering how much could be contributed to actual increase by birth.

If the rest of the board is not interested, it's not that important.

I just was curious.

>> FRED WOEHL: I would interested in that.

>> PAUL GRIFFIN: The states always took into account the expected or the projected amount of birth rates when the surveys happened.

>> JUNE SEWING: Thank you.

>> MIKE TUPPER: May I?

I want to say something.

You have been listening to a lot of government bureaucrat speak in bureaucratic-ease and things that we are very familiar with, roll off of our tongue like they are standard

common English and I know they are not.

I wanted to point out something that Bryan said that's really interesting.

One the points Bryan brought up was that the Bi-State population of grouse, the Fish and Wildlife Service determined that it will not be listed and there's no record of decision on that Bi-State population and that's because the feds, the state, private industry and private citizens said let's not let that happen.

Let's work together.

And it's a smaller area, no doubt about it, but it's also something that we should hopefully be paying attention to.

I wanted to point that out.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: Mike, I'm not convinced that that was a political decision rather than a scientific decision.

I'm curious on several things.

I think we need to keep in mind on the sage grouse, it's not whether fish and wildlife, but whether Jocelyn Windmill will rule that they have an adequate mechanism to protect the bird.

On the Chalice HMA, I would like to know how you have 6-inch stubble height when you can't get 6 inches any time.

>> Yes.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: That's what's come out of it, because what happened in Idaho, for some reason the draft EIS had two preferred alternatives which may be a precedent set right there and then when the final came out, they rejected both preferred alternatives and went off in a totally different direction.

We are not real happy.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: I comment I have is in line with what Mike was just saying, I did a little -- I went to the fish and wildlife web pages and most of the states that have sage grouse, there's -- and in every state that I went to, there's open hunting season on the sage grouse.

On every one.

And several of them were touting the fact that the populations are up, I think Utah said

that for the past 15 years, they had a higher count.

I think it might have been Utah.

It might have been Wyoming.

The states are saying that there's plenty of birds and not only that, they each -- every state that has sage grouse has an open hunting season on them.

If they are that endangered, it seems to me they wouldn't be shooting them.

>> FRED WOEHL: I agree with you, Tim, on that part, but whether or not -- the impact that they have on the horses is what we are talking about.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: I realize that.

I'm just saying that's an interest --

>> FRED WOEHL: Comment.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Dichotomy.

They are concerned about the bird's population but there's open hunting season.

>> FRED WOEHL: That week that you and I spent out there, there were sage grouse everywhere.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: We saw sage grouse all over the place when we were out there.

>> FRED WOEHL: I agree.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Fred and I took a little journey on our own, on our own dime last year and went through a lot of HMAs to educate ourselves a little better.

One of the things that hasn't been the subject up here at this table, is the impact of the oil and gas industry on the habitat out there.

I mean, it is really severe in some areas!

And the human activity out in places where there hasn't been -- this wasn't any activity or very little.

I mean, there's, you know, truck traffic, human traffic, wells being dug, open containment of fracking fluids and that kind of stuff, and we saw some -- we were really -- our eyes were opened.

We drove 150 miles on back roads in Wyoming in probably, 120 miles in one day.

We put a lot of miles on.

It was a long day.

We were there from sun up to sun down and at no point could we see probably anything less than four to six well rigs during the entire day.

And that's in an area that not too many years ago, you would have been hard pressed, number one the roads wouldn't have even been there that we were driving on.

>> KATHY LIBBY: Mr. Chairman.

>> FRED WOEHLE: Yes.

>> KATHY LIBBY: We have about 7 to 8 minute presentation that we were going to try to fit in, on a GPS system?

GIS system.

I just want to know do you want to wait for that after lunch?

I just because we need to stop it --

>> FRED WOEHLE: How long is it?

>> KATHY LIBBY: We can squeeze it in if we did it right now.

>> FRED WOEHLE: While they are setting up, Julie has a comment.

So if Jason wants to set it up and get ready, then we will do it after Julie does her comment.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: Very briefly, I would just share with you Oregon's Department of Wildlife's answer to why there's a hunting season on the sage grouse in Oregon.

Two SFAs in Oregon.

So it's significant in terms of survival of sage grouse.

At least this is what they say, and I'm only repeating, and I'm not an adequate spokesman for Oregon fish and wildlife.

They say they need the data from hunter collected wings, which they do collect from all the hunters.

When you get a hunting license to hunt sage grouse, you have to agree to turn in the wings and they say they need that data to understand hatch success and the age of the birds.

So I will just share that with the group.

>> FRED WOEHL: Go ahead, Jason.

>> Good morning, everyone.

For those who are not familiar with me, my name is Jason Lutterman, I'm public affairs specialist for the wild horse and burro program.

We have an exciting project that we have been working on for the past couple of months and what it essentially is, is an interactive map that will live on our website and will sort of be like a one stop shop for all the information that you need for an HMA or HA or where you can adopt an animal, as well as we will be pulling in outside information as I will show you throughout the presentation, that will overlay on top of our HMA information and really create this interesting map that folks can use to see the relationships between different types of data that we have with the program.

You can use this feature on our website, like Google maps or map quest.

It will be very user friendly.

You can zoom in and zoom out on the map, pan side to side and whatnot.

But before I start, you just want to relay that this is still in development.

What I will be showing you is a series of screen shots and I do have a live link to the website.

I tried this morning.

The Internet connection here is not the best.

Maybe there's a way we can do a live demonstration at a later day for you all.

What you see here is a bare map of the western United States.

It has no layer.

You have some descriptive text on the left and I will try to describe for the board.

I know this laser pointer doesn't really do much for you, but you can see a line of tool bars, buttons on the tool bar at the top.

So when you click the "show legend" button.

And you can do next slide now.

When you click the "show legend" it shows the available data layers that you can display on the map.

You see it listed here on the left.

In this case we have the horse and burro adoption layer turned on.

All those stars indicate where you can adopt an animal.

There's more specific information about the specific adoption center.

So you can see here it says the name and the location.

And then here where it's zoomed in to Pauls Valley in Oklahoma which you all visited on Tuesday, and if you click the view additional details link in that little pop-up window, you can see that it takes you to the facility website where it has all the different information that you need for that specific facility.

Contact information, hours, as well as directions to the actual facility.

This is a really cool feature where you can search for the nearest adoption facility where you can enter in your ZIP code.

Here we are searching for all adoption facility within 150 miles of Reno, Nevada.

That's another feature of this map, an easier way for potential adopters to find an adoption center that's closer to them that they might not have known about.

For example, here we have the results of a ZIP code search in Reno, Nevada.

It found three adoption centers within 250 miles, Palomino valley, and Litchfield in California and, of course, you can click on the facility website link and it will take you to each of that website, each of those facilities' member sites for more information on how to get in contact with the facility.

Go back one slide.

So now we are back on the map, zoomed out and now we turned on the horse HMA layer.

We have all horse HMAs, they are the little polygons and they are in different colors.

It's on a color ramp which indicates where the population is in relation to AML.

You can see that the green indicates that the HMA is at or below AML.

The yellow indicates that it's 100 to 300% over AML and so on.

And then, of course, the brown that you see here is -- are the areas where they aren't designated for horses, but where horses are present, such as herd areas.

Slide.

You can see here that shows where the same information but for burro HMAs on the same color ramp.

We also have information on herd areas, which will be on the map, and, of course, you know that herd areas are not managed for horses or burros.

So they don't have a corresponding AML.

So instead of having that color ramp correspond to percentage of AML, this color ramp indicates the actual estimated population in that herd area.

You see that the light pink shows that there's 1 to 100 horses in that HA, the dark pink, all the way up to the dark pink, which shows 301 to 426 horses and then the same information for burros HAs, of course.

So if we return to the horse HMA layer, you can explore individual HMAs to get more information about that HMA.

Here we are zoomed into northeast Nevada.

If you click on one of the HMA, you will get a pop-up with summary information.

Go back one, please.

So you can see here the pop-up shows the name of the HMA, the estimated population as well as the percent over AML or if it's at AML.

We have the Spruce Peacock HMA pulled up and you can click on the additional details

and it brings up pretty much all the information you would need to know about that HMA.

It shows the size of the HMA, the last time it was inventoried and the last time was gathered.

So it has pretty much all the information that you would ever need to know about that HMA.

And then if we go to the next slide, another example with Little Book Cliff, and this slide shows you a burro HMA which has pretty much the same information on the left-hand side after you view on that click additional details link.

Okay.

Next, I want to show you some other relevant environmental data that we are pulling into this website this shows you wildfires that you can see.

This is by the type or the cause of the wildfire.

Next slide.

And this is going back three -- five years, the past five years all the different wildfires that have happened.

And then you can actually -- next slide.

You can actually overlay our HMA layer on top of that.

Here we are zoomed into the Soda Fire that recently happened in the last couple of weeks and we are conducting an emergency gather.

You can see the perimeter, actually includes Sands Basin HMA and Hard Trigger HMA and Black Mountain HMA.

You can compare the different data sets that you wouldn't be able to compare before.

And then we have the same thing for the drought information.

If you do one last slide, you can see where we zoom in and overlay the drought information over the HMA and we are zoomed into the Wheeler Pass HMA.

You can see that the Wheeler Pass is experiencing extreme to exceptional drought.

And that's where we are actually conducting another emergency gather as we speak for the Cold Creek horses there.

Like I said this a really interesting map.

It's still under development.

We hope to have it done in the next couple of months and have it on our website for everyone to use.

It's very user friendly and I would invite anybody who has any questions during the break, I would be happy to answer them.

>> FRED WOEHL: Jason, pretty cool!

(Applause)

That is totally awesome!

Any way you can get it done before two months?

>> Jason: We are hoping to.

It's almost done now.

>> FRED WOEHL: That's really a lot of information that can answer a lot of folks' questions.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: And really the information that's on, there you know, people that have issues about transparency, all the information put in there, it will explain so much, the fire, all the overlays you put in, it's brilliant, absolutely brilliant.

Really, really good job.

>> FRED WOEHL: Okay, Ms. Kathy.

>> KATHY LIBBY: So we will take a break.

We are going to reconvene promptly at 10:30 so we can review the rules about the public comment and make sure you have every minute we have available for you.

So come back at 10:30.

(Break)

>> KATHY LIBBY: Hello.

Hello, hello!

Can anybody hear me?

Anybody hear me?

So am I off?

I'm on.

So hello, everybody.

Hello!

Hello, hello!

You got two minutes to get in your seats!

One minute.

>> FRED WOEHL: Board members, if you can take your seat, please.

>> Audience Member: Test.

>> FRED WOEHL: I would like to call the meeting back to order.

This is the time where we have public comments and I would like to turn it over to Ms. Kathy Libby, our facilitator.

>> KATHY LIBBY: Great.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Welcome back, everybody.

So here we go.

A lot of us wait just for this moment.

Actually, we have about an hour and a half.

We have 21 people.

You will each have three minutes a piece.

It takes a few minutes to get up and back and all that kind of stuff.

So three minutes a piece.

I will -- if you are doing your proper indicates, I will indicate -- I will kind of say three names in a row so you will know if you are coming up next.

You will take a seat at this podium, please.

This microphone.

I will be sitting kind of like right over here, and I will give you a signal when you have got one minute left.

So depending on where you are in your comments, you know what to do with that one minute and then there will be an alarm.

I can't play it for you right now, but you will hear it when you hear first person.

That will signal that your time is up, and it is time for you to vacate the seat so that somebody else can take it.

We are getting to know these by heart but I will do it one more time.

You are seated at the podium if you are speaking.

You are seated kind of in the section you are now if you are not speaking.

You are not being disruptive in any way because it really is important that we hear the individual who is speaking.

You are not bringing in placards and displaying them.

Did we decide this is okay?

Yeah.

I knew there were negotiations going on.

Okay.

Thanks for clarifying that for me.

So no placards.

No addressing, physically approaching the board.

We want you all here.

We want to listen to you and we all cooperate that way, it makes it easier for all of us if we encounter something different, you will be asked to leave the room or you will be escorted out.

So we don't really want to go there.

That's not what you are here obviously.

We will start with Lisa Friday.

We are then going to move to -- I have to jiggle my papers, Tammy Pearson.

So Lisa, could we have you start, please?

>> Audience Member: Good morning.

Thank you, sincerely, sincerely, thank you.

Year after year, I sat at each of these meetings and this year seems to be quite different.

The shuffling of some of the deck shares and the capacities shows a great understanding of where we are coming from and I thank you.

The wild horse and burro advisory board provides advice on protection and management of the wild free roaming horses on public lands.

Key words, advisory board.

I'm not sure I understand how this board can advise and protect these horses when four out of the seven proposals being researched at taxpayer expense include sterilization.

Permanent sterilization will continue to undermine the genetic viability.

Please advise the BLM to increase maybe 8,000 doses of PZP instead of 500.

So that it will begin to impact the population.

Do I believe that healthy mustangs should be taken off healthy ranges?

No.

But what else do we have?

PZP may only be the Band-Aid on the carotid, but we have nothing else.

Please advise the BLM to listen to the advocates about adoption.

You may or may not be aware, that 100% of those gathered in the Pryor Mountains were adopted on Wednesday.

100% of all Pryor Mountains coordinated by the followers, by the way, a half a million on Facebook, followers of the Pryor mustangs, some of them even went for up to \$4,000.

It's concerning, poor Deb Allen, has to put up with us, but what's concerning is looking at the adoption website, there's one bidder out there that has a bid on 13 horses, sale authority horses and that's concerning to me.

Please advise the BLM to repatriate 1500 horses each year from short term and return them to the HMAs.

In fact, I would personally pay a grazing fee for at least 300 horses a month.

I personally.

Fred, you said earlier let's have these groups put their money where their mouth is.

If you had any idea how much money I have already spent, you would be amazed.

Thank you, Mr. Tupper.

Thank you so much for the change in leadership.

It is so wonderful to see that you -- that this agency wants to work with us.

It's been over two years since federal officials have investigated Tom Davis.

Mr. -- that's it?

Thank you.

>> KATHY LIBBY: Thank you, Lisa.

Three minutes goes quickly.

Tammy Pearson.

>> Audience Member: Good morning.

I do appreciate the opportunity to meet here.

I represent -- I'm a county commissioner from Beaver County in Utah.

We have several HMAs in our county.

At the time Frisco, the Blonde Wash and different things like that, were especially concerned with the overpopulation and the excess numbers.

We have a serious problem with our drought.

We are in a desert community, the desert country, and the drought and the overpopulation is devastating not only to the range, but the riparians, the springs, and that the majority of the horses.

I myself am a cattle rancher.

The Frisco range is on my allotment.

I originally was supposed to be 15 to 30 head of horses.

They did a gather on us three years ago.

They gathered 180 head.

They treated and released back 50 some odd back to the place.

Our numbers are now -- the AML is supposed to be 60.

We are well over 200.

Well over 200.

I myself spent one day, on the 15th of August, went out and documented on my own range that there was 102 horses outside the HMA.

I didn't even cross the border into the HMA or any of the surrounding areas around the HMA, just one area, and I was at 102 horses, out of 102 horses, there were 18 of this year's foals.

So you know that that's what the population is doing on a regular basis.

Now, in January and February, those horses looked like those horses in Nevada.

They were very poor.

We had two, three years of severe drought.

We had probably six weeks of beautiful rains.

The grass was belly deep on the horses.

It's been beautiful!

The horses are thriving right now.

So I can't even imagine what kind of a crop, foal crop we will have next year.

I appreciate your concern.

I appreciate the focus on getting our numbers down to AMLs.

We need that and that's all we are asking for.

I have nothing against the horses.

The horses are fine with that.

They just need to be managed just like the wildlife and the cattle.

And I appreciate that.

Thank you.

>> KATHY LIBBY: Thank you very much.

Todd King.

>> I'm here representing the Cloud Foundation, I'm the communications director and I would like to thank the advisory board for your time and efforts for this very worthy cause.

I appreciate the opportunity to be here and make some recommendations and suggestions.

And I would also like to thank Mike Tupper and Dean Bolstad for recognizing the Cloud Foundation and I want to mention a couple of other organizations who are in on this with us.

Wild horse freedom federation, and American wild horse preservation campaign.

I appreciate the fact that you are beginning to embrace a spirit of collaboration and partnership with advocates in order to develop and implement effective fertility control programs with the ultimate goal of managing wild horses on the range, eliminating helicopter roundups and doing any kind of roundups with bait trapping.

We look forward to working together.

That being said, on behalf of the Cloud Foundation and our 400,000 followers, I want to make it very clear for the record that sterilization of any horses on the range is totally unacceptable.

Our wild horses must not be scientific experiments.

They are too valuable for that.

Therefore we ask this board to recommend abandoning sterilization studies, abandoning research and implementation of surgical spaying of mares and abandoning the experimental use of GonaCon on our wild horses until its safety can be proven.

Another thing that's come up here today is the sage grouse.

Regarding the comments made about the need to reduce the size of 22 HMAs in the sage grouse focal area, I discussed this with Eric Mulvar, one of our leading authorities.

He's the director of the -- he's the wild earth guardians, director of the sage grouse C campaign.

His comment was this, the problem posed by wild horse and burros to sage grouse is inconsequential as compared to the problem of excessive livestock grazing.

Therefore we ask that the advisory board recommend to the BLM to eliminate or greatly reduce livestock grazing and sage grouse focal areas before ever considering reducing wild horse numbers in those areas.

And just to clarify the three proposals that our groups made, one was an increase of PZP to, 8,000 to 10,000 doses, repatriation of 1500 horses and voluntary buyout of grazing leases and HMAs.

Thank you.

>> KATHY LIBBY: Thank you so much, Paula.

So the next three, just so you know, coming up next is David Miller.

Following David is Brian Flippenstien and following him is Terry O'Brien.

>> Mr. Chairman, board, I just want to express my gratitude for our service as you provide that to this county, or to this country, and to all who are interested in this topic.

Last year, we had the opportunity as a few county commissioners to pursue what turned out to be kind of an answer to a question that we felt needed to be addressed which was the simple fact with overpopulations that were extremely in excess over the AML, we wanted to try to get to the bottom of why this was happening and why there was not the proper funding and whatever it took to do the proper management.

I think we can all agree that there are a lot of ideas on how to address this issue, but the long and the short of it is we need to address this issue.

And we have taken time.

We went to DC.

We spent time with high-ranking officials in the BLM, and we recognized that this is a congressional issue and we are working on some solutions with Congress, and other areas where we can best address this issue.

But first of all, as I look at this I want you to know that there are counties that are extremely interested in managing the wild horse populations, not just because of concerns of the local interest, but also for the health of the range.

And our local general plan directs that our rangelands were managed appropriately to a healthy and balanced status and it's not happening.

And, you know, I personally have been out and I have seen the range in our county, all over, and it's not acceptable.

So the fact is that we know that there's a problem with -- with a lack of management.

We just need to get down, do the work that needs to be done to manage properly.

We do need to have healthy population of horses.

We are comfortable with healthy populations of horses on healthy ranges, but when the range isn't healthy, we cannot continue to -- to pretend that there's a never ending supply of feed for the range to sustain all different animals.

We need to work together.

We want to work together, but once again, I just want to thank all of you for your service and time to speak to these matters.

Thank you.

>> KATHY LIBBY: Thank you so much.

Is Brian Flippenstien coming?

>> Yes, ma'am.

Mr. Chairman and members of board, thank you for hosting this public meeting and for your work on behalf of wild horses.

Perhaps all or most of you have more other full-time jobs given the unpaid status of this service, the headaches you could probably do without.

So thank you for your contribution.

I represent protect the harvest, a nonprofit that advocates for food security on behalf of consumers and the producers the consumers rely upon.

We live in a hungry and troubled world and the challenges of sustainable land and animal management will expand as the world hosts 9 billion people for dinner.

I'm here on behalf of Kevin Borda, who you will hear later, and those like him, struggling to answer consumers' growing demand for safe and affordable protein.

Kevin's painful experience is one that does precious little to discredit the public attitude that the government fails to balance the public interests.

Kevin is being driven off the land by a government that's been bullied into setting enforceable rules for Kevin and ranchers like him at the same time, government waives its own obligation when it comes to horses.

The government should not be exempt from the reasonable limitations it imposes upon its citizens.

Yesterday, BLM reported clearly that over population is a fact by as much as two and a half times the appropriate management level and the US Forest Service reported that they are three times capacity.

The math of this simply means that the current overpopulation will increasingly be bad for the well being of horses, the range, taxpayers, ranchers, and not particularly good for

anything!

Unless shared misery is the goal.

Kevin's story is a heart breaking one for everyone who appreciates those trying to do things right, working hard.

Kevin cares about the land, the cattle, his family, but also the horses who will suffer or perish when there's too many for land to humanely carry.

He's taken personal risk to help horses struggling and close to death.

If he would carry too many animals that the AML permits, he would be told that he's doing bat for cattle and the land and he would be told to reduce it.

The same standards should be done by the government.

Unless there's something dramatic and unforeseeable, the problem will continue to grow.

Further with an overpopulated horses, over regulated ranchers and over grazed rangelands suffering the price.

A balance must be restored.

We are consensual in delay and science, the more we victimize people, land and the very animals we seek to protect.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

>> KATHY LIBBY: Thank you very much, Brian.

Terry O'Brien.

>> First time for me.

I'm a little nervous.

I want to thank the board.

I have been very impressed with your dedication and the comprehensiveness of your view.

I'm sort of a liaison for the Great Unwashed who don't want to side with extremists on either side.

And it's my opinion that the act as it was written is outdated and NAS has given us comprehensive guidelines for the present millennium and there's no point for special interests holding the BLM to antiquated standards.

It's time to move forward.

Yesterday Dr. Cope expressed very progressive ideas about how building coalition among stakeholders works.

This was a discussion about training volunteers in various capacities and although there are specific categories for volunteers on the BLM website, by and large, this is not happening.

The pool of people willing to wait and volunteer, especially in labor intensive positions of data collection, game photo screening, compliance checking, is a huge untapped resource for BLM.

Scott Fleur yesterday stated the difficulty of collecting data outside June through August.

Citizen science can fill that gap.

With all due respect, there are people who know more about the horses and the resource on the HMA than the specialists assigned to them which is understandable due to the sheer man hours involved.

I believe the Fort Lewis field office, for example, has one wild horse and burro specialist for 28 HMAs.

Ms. Hooks work, I loved it, promoting education about wild horses is exemplary, and these efforts could be happening nationwide.

Again, volunteers can be used to fill the man hours BLM claims not to have the staff or the budget for.

There needs to be and there's a demand for a comprehensive database same laws and regulations to what Jason just presented, which was fabulous, of the horses available for adoption, at each facility, easily accessed by public.

The current system is archaic and unfriendly.

The elephant in the room, of course is the numbers issue, and as was mentioned yesterday, we may not love it, but the tool in our current tool box is PZP.

We know it's not permanent.

We know the protocol has to be followed for it to be successful.

Can we do the follow through.

We had a lack of commitment.

In the full comment that you guys will have, I summarized some suggestions from better minds than mine about reducing numbers.

And in order for any of the Wild Horse and Burro Program to work from adoptions to getting horses to AML, there's a huge need for trust to be restored to the stakeholders.

They want two-way communication and accountability, as well as BLM adhering to its own regulations.

I didn't talk fast enough.

Thank you again.

>> KATHY LIBBY: Thank you very much.

The next three commenters are: Mark Whitney, Stephanie Graham, Jillian Lyons.

Can we have Mark?

>> Good morning honorable chair, noble board members.

First of all, I want to thank each and every one of you for your service and what you do to care about this noble cause that we are all here for.

Secondly, I want to thank you for the opportunity to talk before you for a few minutes this morning.

Again, my name is Mark Whitney.

I'm a county commissioner out of Beaver County, Utah, and also serve as the second vice president for the Utah association of counties.

Beaver County encompassed about 2500 square miles.

Very small county, but for Utah, it's one of the bigger ones.

Out of that 2500 square miles, the HMAs, the herd units out there encompassing approximately 1,000 square miles of that in the west desert.

Currently the HMA -- or the AML, I apologize.

I'm a little nervous.

The AML for Utah is approximately 5,000 horses -- excuse me, 1900.

There's roughly 5,000 according to the BLM statistics.

I actually own property out in that herd management area, right in the middle of it.

I have been there since I was a little boy.

I see these horses daily.

I figure that that number is probably 25 to 50% more than what the BLM's count actually is.

Something needs to be done about this.

I'm not against wild horses at all.

But I know that the BLM is hamstrung, unable to do their job.

We live in a blaming society.

We try to blame a gun rather than the individual who is responsible for it or a fork, instead of the person who is eating it.

Congress is this people.

They pass the blame down to BLM, but yet they don't give them the resources, the budget and the money to do it.

We need to change that.

I don't think there's a person in this room that does not have the same core values in protecting these animals.

I as an elected official am famous for bringing people together to cooperate, collaborate and coordinate.

I think we can do this.

It's how we come to that.

We want no protect these animals, but we've got to do it in a sustaining manner.

With the money that we are spending to keep these housed in these pens, \$50,000 a head over the lifetime of these horses, imagine if we took that money, went out on the ranges and done more seedings and railings and more bull hogging to create more habitat for this animals, wildlife, cattle, horses, if there's a way to increase AM L., that's a way to do it.

Invasive species of juniper needs to be knocked down and we could sustain a whole lot more.

Thank you.

>> KATHY LIBBY: Thank you, sir.

Stephanie.

Stephanie Graham.

Going once.

Going twice.

Okay.

How about Jillian Lyons.

Oh!

Actually, you are correct.

You said no.

Okay.

How about Keith Norris.

Come on up.

And just so you know, the next three names will be Marla Peak, Ramona Morrison.

I will do those two and let Keith speak now.

>> All right.

Very good.

Good morning.

I appreciate the opportunity here to present testimony to you as she said, my name is Keith Norris.

I'm the director of the government affairs and partnership for the wildlife society.

The wildlife society is wildlife biologists and managers and my job is to make sure that policies and practices empower and enable those wildlife professionals in managing and conserving wildlife populations in a science-based manner.

The management of wild horse and burros is certainly a top priority for our organization.

For several reasons, primarily because it does impact the health of wildlife populations and their habitats as evidenced by some of the discussions regarding sage grouse earlier today.

We don't believe that science-based management and conservation of this population is being achieved, though, several of the research proposals that have been discussed are promising.

I also have the privilege of sharing the national horse and burro rangeland management coalition.

This is a diverse partnership of 14 national organizations that span from wildlife sportsman, livestock and land conservation organizations, and our primary concern in this coalition is rangeland health.

We are very concerned with the impact that overpopulated horses and burros are having on the health of the rangelands.

We recognize that every activity under the multiple use mandate of the BLM and the Forest Service requires healthy rangelands.

The wildlife, the livestock and the recreation and the horses themselves requires these healthy rangelands.

I have submitted written testimony to you, which I believe you have a paper copy in front of you from both the wildlife society and the coalition and that's similar to the testimony you received from us in April.

The reason is that the situation remains the same.

It's continually worsening, the wild horse and burros populations continue to grow with limited management actions.

We all recognize that horses and burros must be managed and they must be managed on the range to achieve the thriving balance as required by the act.

We have another 7500 or so, are 7,000 or so on Forest Service lands.

There's been a lot of debate about the AML and frankly, I don't know if the AML and the specific number of the AML is all that important at this point because we are nowhere near achieving it and we are nowhere near achieving any specific number, no matter where it's set.

I think what's important is that we need to demonstrate that we need to manage these populations to achieve any number that we set and then we can talk about what the appropriate AML would be.

The result of the unmanaged population is evident in the herd in the Southern Nevada right now.

This herd management area has more than six times as many horses as what's been estimated it can sustain.

As a result the horses are starving and in the rangelands are also suffering.

This situation was 100% preventable.

We could prevent this situation with the tools that are available to the BLM and to the Forest Service right now.

So I encourage you to make strong recommendations to the BLM and the Forest Service to make sure that we improve rangeland health for the of good everything.

Thank you.

>> KATHY LIBBY: Thank you very much, Keith.

Marla Peaks.

As you get ready, we will have Ramona Morrison and then Alley Hendry.

>> Good morning advisory board members, thank you for the opportunity to be here this morning.

I'm Marla Peak, the director of regulatory affairs for the Oklahoma Farm Bureau.

We are a general farm organization, with about 100,000 member families.

We are the voice of agriculture in Oklahoma.

We represent farmers and ranchers with operations of all sizes to raise a wide variety of crops and livestock.

Almost all of Oklahoma is in private property with 92% of that being in agricultural land.

For a true grass roots organization, with members in all of Oklahoma's 77 counties.

We derive our policy positions directly from our members.

Oklahoma Farm Bureau is associated with the American Farm Bureau Federation, the nation's largest farm bureau association.

Representing virtually every commodity in every state of the nation as well as Puerto Rico.

American Farm Bureau represented nearly 6 million member families.

Although Oklahoma is not a public land state, we nevertheless have an interest in how the federal government, particularly the BLM manages the lands entrusted to its maintenance.

That interest extends from the Red River Valley to the public grazing lands of the western states.

It is our understanding there is an overpopulation of wild horse and burros on public lands causing great economic harm to those livestock producers with grazing leases.

In addition to damaging public lands themselves.

We note that livestock production creates an economic benefit to rural communities and rural families.

We proudly note that livestock production creates that economic benefit as mentioned previously.

Whereas allowing for ongoing degradation of public lands due to the overpopulation of wild horses and burros, that provides no economic benefit to anyone, our farm bureau policy supports using any humane method of removing excess wild horse and burros from the range.

Additionally, our policy states once horses and burros have been held in government captivity for more than six months and are deemed to be unsuitable for adoption, they be euthanized.

Indefinitely warehousing horses and burros fails to comply with the intent of the wild and free roaming horse burro act.

Thank you for your attention.

>> KATHY LIBBY: Thank you very much, Marla.

And now we have Ramona Morrison.

>> Thank you very much.

My name is Ramona Hage Morrison.

I'm from Reno, Nevada.

My family has a ranch in central Nevada.

I also serve as a consultant to ranchers to document historic vested water rights for western ranches, as well as rights -- historic rights on these ranches that dated back to the last century, and the century before that and have been protected by every land law passed by Congress since that time.

I also serve as a director on the Nevada board of agriculture.

I want to concur with some of the folks that have spoken before, representing agriculture.

So I won't go over the issues that they talked about.

I want to focus on the BLM management of this program in response to the claims that the livestock industry is not regulated.

The wild horse is virtually the only large animal on federal land whose numbers are not strictly controlled.

Contrary to the wild horse and burro act, livestock are strictly regulated by the terms and the conditions of the grazing permit and permitted numbers in the West and in Nevada specifically are probably a quarter of grazing preference numbers.

In fact, the BLM and US Forest Service go so far to enforce these grazing programs and

these grazing permits that they have conducted numerous -- in Nevada, numerous paramilitary raids on ranches in Nevada including on the western -- are the former chief of the western Shoshoni nation, on two old Indian ladies, the Dann sisters and numerous other ranchers, including my own family.

These raids are in essence, civil asset forfeitures without due process of law.

These ranchers and their livelihood have been hauled off in cattle trucks without ever having a day in court prior to that action.

The BLM goes so far to enforce the grazing frames that they have spent a reported \$2 million, thank you, on the raid on the Bundy ranch surrounding that ranch with 200 snipers fully prepared to carry Clive Bundy out in a body bag then use guns and force in what is in essence a bill collection dispute.

These heavy handed tactics nearly precipitated a massacre in Bunkerville.

At the same time, while they were arguing that they were merely enforcing a court order, they have repeatedly ignored court orders to remove livestock.

Recently, in the Battle Mountain Office of the BLM, they violated the laws of Nevada when they branded 168 horses with brands that did not belong to them.

This matter is currently under investigation, as with the brand department and in their arrogance and stupidity, under Nevada law they have conveyed ownership of those horses, those wild horses to private parties.

In addition, we talk a lot about water.

And I have some expertise on that area.

These water rights and these waters on these lands primarily belong to the ranchers.

We need to thank the rancher for watering the wild horse.

Thank you.

>> KATHY LIBBY: Thank you very much, Ramona.

>> Thank you.

>> KATHY LIBBY: And Kali Hendrickson.

>> Good morning advisory board.

My name is Kali Hendrickson and I want to thank all of you guys for what you do.

Today I'm speaking on behalf of three different organizations, the white river and Douglas creek conservation districts out of meeker, Colorado, home to approximately 800 head of horses where there should only be 235, hoax to the Douglas creek herd area.

Also, the national association of conservation districts NACD, which represents over 15,000 locally elected officials, who serve on their political -- the respective political subdivision of the state and the American farm bureau.

Both the NACD and the American farm bureau have very strong policy regarding any necessary action to keep the horses within AMLs to protect the rangeland.

In our community, actions speak louder than words.

There's a lot of talk about managing healthy horses on healthy range, and to ensure thriving natural ecological balance.

We hear the rhetoric about how rounding up horses and the potential of spaying mares is inhumane.

If any one of us could wave a magic wand, we would keep all the horses on the range.

There would be tall grass for all the horses, the wildlife, and the livestock.

The water sheds would be running clear, and the wind wouldn't blow dust.

We have a reality check.

You have all seen the pictures of the Cold Creek horses.

Is that how we want to define healthy and humane?

As sad as the health of the horses, I challenge everyone to look beyond the horse and look at that ground.

It's nothing but bare ground and brush that nothing can eat.

Please note there have been no livestock on this range in recent years.

The horses may be gathered and rehabilitated, but what's going to be done to rehabilitate the land that's been destroyed by excess horses?

It will likely not recover as it's been obliterated by too many animals.

With the overpopulation of horses currently on the range, there are more Cold Creeks developing.

These kind of situations indicate we are moving to managing for hungry horses, desertification of the land and dismiss the public -- or the multiple use mandate.

I encourage you not to sit back and be distracted from the range health issue by people saying that we don't have the budget.

We don't have holding capacity.

We have to study it.

We get sued.

We can't sell horses.

Our hands are tied.

Please insist that BLM manage for thriving natural ecological balance, and the multiple uses that are required by law.

It's easy for us, and I'm included, to sit here in the room and talk about the challenges, but let's keep in mind the folks that are living the nightmare on the land and the horses themselves.

Thank you.

>> KATHY LIBBY: Thank you very much, Kali.

The next three speakers and please forgive me if I totally destroy your name.

Adetta Bernkont, followed by Megan Dixon, followed by Kevin Borda.

>> My name Adetta.

So the BLM plans on spending \$11 million of our tax dollars over the next five years to develop new management tools.

Specifically, fertility control methods and sterilization, and as advisory board members, you should demand why this is necessary when science says that if you leave herds alone, they would self-regulate.

We at friends of animal know it's because the BLM is beholden to cattle and sheep

ranchers who don't want wild horse and burros on public lands at all, as we very clearly heard from some previous speakers.

That's why AML are set pathetically low and cattle and sheep are able to graze on the lands.

Numbers don't lie.

Shocking ratios of cattle and sheep outnumbering horses to 100 to 1 or commonplace in western states.

Prior to a massive roundup in Wyoming last summer, there were 356,222 cattle, 45,206 sheep and only 1,912 wild horses.

A 5-year-old could look at those numbers and see what the real problem is.

Too many cattle and sheep and not enough wild horses, yet the public is continually fed the lie that there are too many wild horses.

Nonsense!

It seems it's easier for the BLM to accommodate the ranchers and manage wild horses to extinction than consider sane, holistic ways to manage our public lands.

In fact, our public lands have been literally turned into feed lots for cattle and sheep that will be slaughtered and turned into beef.

A product and industry that's destructive on so many levels to the environment, the human health, and to wildlife.

We want those welfare ranchers off our lands!

And we want wildlife and wild horses and burros to flourish as they should be on rangelands.

It's clear that the BLM's goal is to rid all western states of wild horses, with the help of animal charities like the Cloud Foundation and HSUS who have betrayed the wild horses by forced drugging of PZP on under populated herds as a solution when anyone who can think still understands it's a wipeout plan for the wild horses.

Insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results.

As advisory board members, it's your job to confront the BLM and ask them why they continue to engage in these violent roundups and fertility control instead of letting the wild horses live wild and free.

We ask you to buy back grazing permits from ranchers when they become available, so that the cattle and the sheep grazing are not possible.

Let them be sanctuaries for the little wildlife that's left.

In addition -- I would like to say that this Orwellian propaganda is very offensive, your land, your horse.

No, this land has been turned into feed lots for ranchers.

>> KATHY LIBBY: Thank you very much.

>> These are not our horses and these are crimes that are --

>> KATHY LIBBY: Thank you.

>> And I will taken to say --

>> KATHY LIBBY: Thank you.

Yes, actually, you are because there are other people who need to speak.

You need to stop.

Please sit down.

>> KATHY LIBBY: Okay.

We have said more times than I can count -- we have said many more times than I can count what the rules of the room are.

I'm sorry, but if you're not going to stick with them, you will not stay in the room.

Hopefully we don't continue in that direction.

Take a deep breath, Megan Dixon and come on up.

You have three minutes.

>> Everyone, my name is Megan Dixon, and I have an autism spectrum disorder known as Asperger's syndrome.

Horses have helped to save my life.

Today, I will help to address about the free wild horse and burros act of 1971.

According to the wild, free and roaming wild horse and burros of 1971, these animals are protected from capture, branding, harassment and death, to accomplish this they are to be considered in the area where they are presently found as an integral part of the natural system of our public lands.

The mission and the spirit of this act are currently being ignored.

Parts are being zeroed out by many healthy wild horse and burros being taken from sustainable areas.

These animals have been captured, branded, gelded and harassed, sometimes to the point of their own death in captivity.

As the wild horse and burros are being removed from their natural systems on our public lands, it is plain to see provisions of this act are being manipulated allowing the management of these animals into extinction.

We understand this board has been appointed to control and manage the wild horse and burros, however, we can not completely disregard the rest of the act.

Genuine advocacy truly dedicated to these animals welfare needs and representation on this board.

Ignoring the true meaning of the act that protects these animals under federal law.

No other horse is quite as American as the mustang.

These tough, enduring horses reflect the history and the influences of many nationalities and people who were forced to confront the westward expansion.

The American mustang is just like the American people.

It is the obligation of everything that has gone before it.

These herds have earned their freedom.

The majority of the free roaming horses and burros on US soil are the issue of many generations of herds living and surviving in the wild.

Their ancestors helped to build America.

These horses survival gives me hope.

The American wild mustang symbolizes my ability to overcome obstacles and pursue my goals, no matter what stands in my way.

These horses are an iconic symbol of America today.

As a American with a disability, these horses give me hope when times feel hopeless.

Please let my hope be free.

Thank you and God bless you all.

>> KATHY LIBBY: Megan, thank you so much for being with us.

Thank you so much.

I'm going to say the next three people, just so we know.

Kevin.

Thank you very much.

Okeydoke.

Yeah, you may want to listen to the list, the order.

Kevin and then we're going to go to Ken Brown, and then Nicole Robard.

>> Thank you for letting me be here.

My name is Kevin Borda, I'm a Nevada ranchers out of Eureka, Nevada, and I'm sure most of the people here have seen us on the Facebook, with the Fish Creek horses.

You know, I think that before things are said that these activist groups need to engage with us as ranchers, instead of painting us as welfare ranches, people that don't like wild horses, people that are inhumane to horses.

You know, we got the poster child horse Sarge.

We did it because that's the type of people we are.

We are humane.

We like the horses, but we also like to run cattle and raise our families that way.

And I think we need to come together with the BLM and all of us groups and come to a

solution and make it all coincide instead of painting everybody as bad guys and our kids and our wives.

Everyone is affected, you know, and our worst one is the Laura Lee of the bunch.

And she's on us hard.

I will have never even spoke to the lady.

I have seen her.

But, you know, if you look at the internet and you see these things -- I'm sorry.

I'm very nervous.

But it grabs at my heart that there could be such bad blood here and nothing gets done.

It's just a bunch of people arguing and paining each of us as bad people and we should just come to some solutions to fix the matter.

I don't have more to say, I guess, but thank you very much.

>> KATHY LIBBY: Okay.

You have another 60 seconds if you want it.

>> No ma'am.

>> KATHY LIBBY: You're good?

>> Yes, I'm good.

I'm sorry.

>> KATHY LIBBY: Okay.

Okay.

So that was Kevin, right?

I'm sorry, now we are going to be Ken Brown and Nicole Rivard.

>> Good morning.

Ken Brown, western counties alliance.

Thanks for the opportunity to respond today, and I wanted to park close to the mic as I knew Kathy would count my travel time.

So --

(Laughter)

-- WCA continues to support a wild horse and burros program on public lands, when proper management exists.

Excess numbers continue to be a major problem in most areas where wild horse and burros animals now exist, excess numbers continue to cause resource damage and create impacts to livestock and wildlife habitat.

WCA supports the working group concept that the board has put in place.

This process can better provide better background information to the board and staff relating to an issue or issues for the program.

WCA continues to support the reintroduction of disposal facilities, which are necessary for -- to care for animals in need.

State land managers and private rangeland owners continue to express concern about WHB animals roaming on land under their jurisdiction, which they do not support.

WCA continues to support an enhanced gathering process, which assists in reducing numbers.

Choppers continue to be a valuable and humane tool to assist with gathering.

WCA continues to not support transplanting WHB animals to areas where they do not currently exist.

The only way we would support anything like that is if it's totally supported by the local government.

WCA thanks the board and the staff for their good work, as you endeavor to make the WHB program better.

>> KATHY LIBBY: You are done?

All right.

Now we have Nicole.

Sorry, Nicole.

>> My name is Nicole Rivard and I'm a correspondent for "friends of Animals.

We would like to advise you to advise the BLM to stop committing crimes against wild horses in.

July the BLM announced more crimes that it would be spending \$11 million over the next five years to develop tools for managing wild horses, like longer lasting fertility control, as well as methods for spaying and neutering wild horses.

Please inform the BLM not to waste their time or taxpayers' money as we are taking legal action to prove that using fertility control on wild horse likely violates the wild horse and burro act of 1971.

We filed a legal petition with the EPA to cancel registration of PZP.

That measure along with efforts to get wild horses listed as endangered under the Endangered Species Act will once and for all ensure that America's wild horses are protected and not treated as pests by the BLM.

Information is now available and I can get that for you, regarding the unintended and previously undisclosed side effects on both targeted mares and wild horses in general.

When the HSUS obtained registration for PZP, the organization never provided evidence that PZP doesn't have negative side effects.

It just provides information about the efficacy of PZP and actually requested waivers for most of the studies ordinarily required from an applicant seeking pesticide registration, including a toxicity study, ecological effects and environmental fate guideline study.

Recent research has demonstrated repeated applications of PZP is not completely reversible and can increase mortality in foals post PZP effectiveness and it interferes with herd cohesion, which is critical to the overall health of wild horses.

In addition, preventing mares from producing foals can create a genetic bottleneck that may ultimately extinguish the species as a whole.

FOA is adamant that new studies indicate that PZP use is harassing and even killing wild horses.

The stress caused by denying the mare to reproduce if she wants is harassment.

While it's true that the WHBA provides for an exception from general mandates to

protect wild horses to control their populations, the animal must be deemed excess and can only be applied if the implementing agency first completes their statutory requirements.

It may be that with regards to the decision to dose a particular mare, the implementing agencies can comply with the WHBA, however, the other horses in the herd that are not dosed with PZP, as well as the unborn foals cannot be legally defined as excessive, and thus, the risk of harassment or death to these animals posed by PZP violates the WHBA.

And like Dean said yesterday, stay tuned!

And one other comment, I see that the BLM, it looks like they spent a lot of money on this new PR campaign for Americanmustangs.com and I would just encourage everyone in the room to read a book called "Last Chance Mustang" it's out by Mitch Borenstein and it tells the other side of the wild horse and burro adoption program.

>> KATHY LIBBY: Thank you.

I appreciate your time and your comments.

I will just say we have Priscilla next.

Priscilla Ferrell, and then I have Brian.

So then our final public comment will be from Heather Stryok.

>> I'm not here to thank you for anything at all.

I'm here to express dismay and it's dismay that there's a landscape in America.

It's federal, public land and that instead of embracing that habitat for indigenous wildlife and animals with whom we have coevolved, it's used for the meat industry.

A government agency caters to the meat industry.

The groups that partner with BLM, the groups called assets yesterday, cater to the meat industry.

They eat cows.

They eat sheep.

They call it a livelihood, and you've got a government that thinks its role is to uphold the meat industry.

In Nevada, cows and sheep outnumber wild horses sometimes 114 to 1.

50 to 1, 30 to 1.

The same is true in other states, including Wyoming.

How do you possibly breed animals into existence only to be chops and hamburgers and call it a boon to civilization.

Those animals live only so long to reach a blood-drenched slaughter house.

And now the same is true for wild horses.

They are being decimated across the states you are finding them through contracts, money exchanges, whatever excites them to do your bidding and to help with suppressing populations already at very low levels.

In Montana 6 out of 7 wild horse herds were abolished and we had a fight over the seventh herd, the Pryor Mountain horses.

We are going to be filing another lawsuit next week, Friends of Animals to protect some horses that are up for another raid, and this is going to go on and on and these challenges will go on until there's a new administration, perhaps a new secretary of interior, perhaps new employees at the BLM.

I think the agency needs to be dismantled.

It needs a new philosophy.

What is wrong is not the minutia.

I can't argue all of your numbers.

It's that you have somebody offended that a wild horse quote/unquote acts like a zebra.

Zebras are wild horses too.

They defy domestication.

I defy domestication.

I ask you not to view them as dogs and cats prolific breeding possibilities and simply let them be what they were intended to be, wild animals living in federal public land.

>> KATHY LIBBY: Thank you very much, Priscilla.

And last but not least, Heather Shryock.

>> Hi, I'm a native Oklahoman.

I didn't come down here with a prepared speech or anything.

I came down here because my heart led me to.

We have an obligation as God's children to protect and preserve all of his creation.

That includes the wild horses.

The public lands, they are his before they are ours.

I would like you to consider what our obligation is here, and that is to protect everything that God has given us.

Thank you.

>> KATHY LIBBY: Thank you very much.

And that concludes the comments from those who had indicated they wanted to speak.

We are technically still in the public comment period.

So I turn it back to you, Fred.

>> FRED WOEHL: Okay.

Very interesting and the board appreciates everything that has been said and we'll take it under advisement.

I understand that a lot of these are written comments too.

We generally get a bunch of written comments and I assure everybody that these comments are read by board members.

If you will stick around this afternoon, we will have a working group session where we will go over some of those comments.

Since we are kind of off the agenda anyway, I would like to pass it around to the board for the next few minutes to see if y'all have any comments.

I know you do!

(Laughter)

Tim, you have five minutes.

(Laughter)

If not, I'm going to adjourn the board meeting and we will readjourn at -- what time do we readjourn.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: 1:00.

>> FRED WOEHL: 1:00.

We are adjourned.

1:15?

1:15.

1:15.

Heaven forbid!

1:15.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: It wouldn't hurt to be back a little early.

Well, if -- if Holle' -- if Holle' wants to do her's at 1:00.

Can you get us back online?

>> KATHY LIBBY: Well, I think as long as we tell the folks online what you are doing, we are okay.

So either way.

>> FRED WOEHL: Okay, we are going to readjourn at 1 p.m. and Ms. Holle' Hooks will give her presentation that the time.

>> KATHY LIBBY: And there's the budget update.

>> FRED WOEHL: Right.

>> KATHY LIBBY: Lovely.

(Lunch break)

ROUGHLY EDITED TRANSCRIPT

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Wild Horse & Burro Advisory Board
September 3, 2015
1:00 p.m. CDT**

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>> I call the meeting back to order.

The first order of business we have is we have Miss HOL will he hooks is going to talk to us about the BLM budget.

I will turn this over to her.

>> Good afternoon, board.

Welcome back from lunch.

So I'm just going to kind of go over the budget overview for the wild horse and burro program. This information should be in your binders.

You can just follow along.

For FY2015 the program did receive a budget of 27. 445 million and of that we have expenditures of a little over \$64.7 million and this is as of August 23rd.

So we still have about 30 days left of the fiscal year of spending to do.

You'll notice as in most of the pie charts you've seen in the budget that you are offering holding whether it's corrals or pastures is the largest part of the pie.

We're still spending somewhere in the neighborhood of about 65 to 70% of our budget on off-range holding right now and you can also see some of the other places where we've spent money, placement into private care.

That does include some of the American Mustang campaign I spoke about yesterday.

It also includes our partnership agreements between Mustang heritage foundation as well as our training programs.

If you'll look at some of our monitoring and population inventories that have also been conducted you will see amounts there.

We're also showing the research part of any funding that we may have been expended on research is going to be in the program support overhead uncontrollables.

Do you all have the budget information?

>> We have finally found it, yes.

>> Is there chance of turning on this front screen, the monitor?

That's what I was waving about.

>> I apologize.

I'm apologizing but it's really not my responsibility.

No one taught me how to turn it on.

I would have turned it on.

>> Why don't you will wait just a few more minutes until it comes on, please.

>> Now it's on.

There we go.

>> Can you see what I see?

>> Yes.

We see what you see.

>> Thank you, gentlemen.

We do have additional obligations and expenditures that will be taking place for our program operations and we'll be completing the research rewards as Dr. Griffin mentioned earlier in his presentation.

Do you guys have any questions about fiscal year 2015?

>> HOLLE, how does this compare to last year's budget?

>> We're pretty much on target.

We are spending a little more funds in the off-range hold -- on off-range pastures.

There was an increase of about 20 cents per horse per day, and in those costs from last year's contracts to when we did award new contracts.

So there was an increase.

>> I guess the only question I have, from last year being at 63%, this year 68 and the projection for next year 70% of the budget going to short term and long-term holding, what do you do when you run out?

>> It's crazy.

It's one of the biggest challenges that we have, especially when we have management operations that need to take place on the ground, and we're having to spend so much funds in holding the animals that are currently in the off-range pastures and off-range corrals.

It is a challenge.

One of the things that we did request, and I was going to talk about it a little bit in '16, is we do have an additional \$2.9 million in the President's budget request that increases our 77 million enacted appropriations to \$80 million.

That 2.9 million is focused on NAS implementation.

So it does give us some funds to do work on the ground but it's Nate enough, for sure.

I don't know that additional funds solves the problem.

For sure one of the things that we do need is some additional research to help with some of the management on the ground, but right now the animals -- it still does not solve the problem of the animals we have currently in off-range corrals and in off-range pastures.

One of those tools that we have in order to reduce the number of animals in off-range holding is the adoption program.

Adoption and sales placement of animals into private care.

>> It reminds me a great deal of Forest Service budget problem where we spend so much on

fire suppression and fire control which we have nothing left for fire prevention.

It's a continuing cycle.

It looks like we're in the same boat here.

We're diverting so much into caring for the ones we can't go anywhere with, we have nowhere to go with the ones that need to go off and that keeps spiraling on the other side.

>> And that's true.

You bring up a good point.

Some of the programs I discussed yesterday during my off-range presentation, although we're talking another maybe 250 animals or 500 animals, it still is an additional number of animals we're placing into private care.

It is a slow process, but we're looking at new and innovative ways to move forward with them. So our -- I am hoping that it will increase the number of animals placed into private care, but it is not the main solution.

You're right.

And I don't know what is.

Dean didn't ask me to prepare the solution.

Otherwise I would have.

That next slide shows kind of what our FY-15 units of accomplishment have been.

This is all of the program operations, the way we are able to spend money.

I spoke to you guys before about what the program elements are and how they relate to the performance measure.

I won't bore you with that information.

But this is just a quick snapshot of where we are as of August 23rd.

I didn't add the targets in mainly because I didn't -- I didn't want to have to give long explanations on maybe why we didn't meet or exceeded.

So many things change.

Our program priorities change throughout the entire year.

What we've planned for often does change from the time that we're actually executing our budget.

So for the most part this is what we've done.

We've placed, as of August 23rd, it's showing we placed a little over 2,000 animals but I ran the information right before my presentation yesterday and we did place over 2500 animals into private care.

You'll see that Dr. Griffin spoke earlier about the population inventories that took place in some of the HMAs, and that number is identified in the conduct census of wild horse and burro areas.

That number is there and how much we spent on that.

Do you guys have any questions?

>> John, do you have anything you would like to say?

>> No, I was going to back up a minute to what Dr. Cope said.

It's frustrating to me that, for example, a year ago right now the BLM come back to us and they said, okay, folks, we're not going to gather any more cattle -- I mean, any more horses.

That's it.

All these -- only horses we're going to gather is under court order.

And here we got 70% going on 80 pretty quick of all the budget going to -- going to off-range

holding.

And we cannot continue to do this.

So we're either going to have to do something different.

>> DAVE BAKER: We have to put in for a lot more money, and money isn't always the answer, but you got to be able to get these horses off public lands because when it comes right down to it, these horses are on public land is absolutely the most expensive place to keep them because there's nowhere that does more harm to the resource than the extra horses on public land.

You get further and further behind the further we go.

And so we just can't keep using up this whole budget on off-range horses.

I don't know what the answer is, but I know you can't keep doing that.

And we've got to talk to BLM about getting more money or something because we can't keep beating up the resource because we have no other options.

>> And I would agree, John.

One of the things that I'll share with you is when I came and began working for the Washington Office and with the budget program, the budget specialist in FY 2010, I think it was 2010, but in that year, the budget was not \$77 million.

In fact, our appropriations, I believe, was \$40 million.

We're looking at in five years we've doubled that budget, and the majority of that budget is being spent on off-range holding.

I would say that's a huge challenge.

So that is a good example that additional money -- throwing additional money at the program probably is not the best option without a plan.

And we've gone through several different plans and several different options and discussions about what would be the best way to move forward and how do we move forward, and one of them has been research, is what it's been looking at.

We were directed to propose a plan on how would we reduce holding costs.

And we have presented a couple of different plans, but in the interim, we continue to have the challenge of holding the animals that are currently in the facilities.

I don't know what the solution is.

I'm sure the contractors would not want us to not pay them.

>> Along with your line of thinking, the only option you've got is to adopt out more horses one way or another, and, of course, that's on the table.

That's some of the things we're talking about.

But we just can't continue on this percentage that we were' going on and using up all the budget on the off-range holding.

It's going to do us in.

>> Correct.

>> Yeah, I know -- when I mentioned this at the last meeting, but I would -- somehow I would think it would be wise to approach the funders with the idea of asking for additional funding, but to have it earmarked for either increasing -- you know, increasing adoption -- to be used to get -- get animals off range and/or for gathering add administering population growth suppression.

The two areas that could help us with --

>> Well, one of the things that we talked about as a board is that under the -- under the 2016, I

know we're jumping ahead, but they're showing \$231,000 for maintain grass, shrub, water projects.

It's one thing we've not ever done as a board.

We've not ever heard BLM talk about the renovation of these pastures that have been, and so -- and I agree with John... when you're spending 70% of your budget to house horses, that don't leave very much to go out there on the range and fix some of the damage.

>> I'm all in favor of fixing up the countryside out there, we do it all the time, but it's going to be like shooting in the wind if you don't get the horses off down to a management level.

>> One of the things that's noteworthy to me is that in an \$80 million budget there are \$151,000 for population growth suppression and we all agree that that's where the solution of the problem lies.

In the 2014 it was, what, 101?

Just a little over 100,000.

I realize there's budgetary constraints that I may be totally unaware of, but it would seem to me it would make sense to put a whole lot more effort into using the tools the BLM does have to try to control on the range if they can't gather, and I'm sure there's reasons for it, but I'm -- I'm looking at the pie chart and I just see it's only \$151,000 out of an \$80 million budget for population growth suppression.

>> Tim, I can clarify that for you.

That population growth suppression that you see in the pie chart is actually the implementation or the on the ground application of the PZP.

So the doesn't really include any of the -- doesn't include the research that's associated with it. It doesn't include any removals related to research or population growth suppression efforts.

It's actually the on the grounds, the darting programs, that take place, that's what's captured in that wedge of the pie.

>> No, I'm hearing that, but what does that represent in horses treated?

>> I believe our plan is between three and 400 animals.

>> So three and 400 out of tens of thousands is a drop in the bucket.

That's my point.

>> If you do the math, you might as well be totally politically incorrect, if we were to hit zero population growth tomorrow, there's still 45,000 horses out there that we need to do something with.

>> That's correct.

>> When you stop and think about that, and we heard a lady tell us today to let nature take its course, do I want to starve to death 40,000 horses and all the associated wildlife?

The problem is what we need is help from the American public to actually accept the reality of what's out there and allow BLM to do unrestricted sales.

I don't see another answer, as hard as I can look for it, because this is a time bomb ticking with a damn short fuse.

>> Very short fuse.

I agree totally with what Cope just said.

I think -- of course, most of us have been to D.C. and met with all the principals back there and preached this time and time again.

But somehow or another -- you know, I have said for years I don't know how bad the situation

on the public lands has got to get before somebody really steps up to the plate and does the right thing.

And doing the right thing is what cope just said.

We're going to have to sell these horses.

Unencumbered.

And until we get that done, we're -- we've got a tall hurdle to get over.

>> So, Dean, just -- I talked to you about some of this stuff in the past.

Part of the fact that so much of the budget is being taken up by warehousing horses, in some ways, because of directives that have been handed down is somewhat of an unfunded mandate, because you can't -- your hands are tied.

So is there some way that you can go back to -- whether it's Congress, whatever, that you could get a budgetary separation in holding costs versus operating costs so that you could get a realistic operating budget so that you guys can get a lot more proactive in that the holding costs could be separated out in a budget request?

Is that just too common sense from my standpoint?

Or is that -- is that too difficult to manage --

>> I think that's more a question for Tupper.

>> Whoever it is.

Whoever needs to answer it.

I like talking to Dean.

I can see him easy without twisting around.

>> Well, you can see a lot of those costs there are fixed costs.

So with a fixed budget and fixed costs, you have limited operating room.

What you just suggested, if I got it right, is ask for a separation between fixed costs and operating costs.

>> Absolutely.

Because, really, you guys -- even though the law says you can euthanize horses which is what everybody is talking about here, but the BLM has already said they're not going to do that.

So what's happened because of that, when you gather horses, you have to feed them and take care of them.

So there's an unfunded aspect in this thing that is kind of through the back door that you guys are getting loaded up with this cost that just keeps going up every year that's not allowing you to free up your operating system to take care of the problem that you're dealing with.

So it reminds me of the seen in "I Love Lucy" in the chocolate factory.

Really, right?

So my question about that, is there -- I'm just throwing that out there from the 30,000-foot level, from a budgetary standpoint, is there a process that you can go through that you would get that separated out so you could get a more realistic operating budget to do the other stuff that you need to do to take care of -- to address this on the range?

That's what I'm asking.

>> So just to summarize and, Holle or Dean if I got this wrong, you can step in, I'm not afraid to be corrected, the budget process is pretty long.

So we're working on '17 right now.

In fact, yesterday, flying out here I was editing stuff for the '17 budget.

And so we don't get to -- we don't demand what we want.

We just put in requests for, this is what we would like to see, and then we work with the Department, and then OMB, to see what actually goes up to become the President's -- or recommendations to the President's budget.

So we have worked at length on different options, you have expressed some of them here, for what we think would be a little bit better way to get the appropriated dollars back here.

But what comes back to us, can't say.

>> Let me follow up on what Tim is saying a little bit.

Because there's a really good suggestion to divide this budget up.

Because that's the only way that the money people are going to be able to see what's going on.

I mean, we got a permanent budget here, and we have so horses, and if you don't want them to die, you got to feed them.

You've got so many horses over here in a totally different deal, and they've got two problems.

They're going to starve to death anyway unless we do something and on top of that we are denuding the resource.

My question to you, if you were successful in dividing this up into two budgets, which I think is a good idea, how much back-up data do you need from all the people here to back that up, to divide this budget up, and prove to them that we need this extra money to maintain the horses that we already got on the public land and to help decrease that number so that we can have less.

>> John we have plenty of data, but your support in the form of recommendations from the board, because you do have -- you represent a large constituent of folks, that's always, always valuable.

>> We would sure be glad to help you any way we could on that issue.

>> We'll take the help.

>> Anybody else?

>> So, Mr. Chairman, I was --

>> You may continue.

>> It was a really good discussion.

I'll just -- you have already kind of reviewed this F-Y16 President's budget request.

It is just that.

It's a request.

Congress could come back and say you guys need to operate at \$60 million and that's your enacted operations, deal with it or they could come back and say, we'll give you \$120 million.

What can you do with that?

So we really don't know.

That we won't know until maybe sometime in December.

I know we will be under a continuing resolution, but we don't know how long that continuing resolution will last, and as I've stated here before, the continuing resolution allows us to have a certain amount of spending authority at that time, and usually what takes place is we have a discussion about what program priorities are going to take place.

We had a little bit of a discussion, Dr. Griffin and I were talking, because he thinks he's going to need to do research removals.

That will take priority over any other operations in the wild horse and burro program at the

beginning of the fiscal year.

So we'll be looking at where we need to shift those funds and probably between the program as well as the directorate to make sure that we can conduct the research removals that we've committed to conduct.

So if you have any other questions about FY16 I would love to hear them.

Mike, I believe you did speak correctly about the budget process.

It is very long, and I've explained that to the board a couple of times, that we work in three budget years.

We always work in the previous year, which is now FY-15, the current year, which is FY16, and then the out year, which is FY-17, and that is a balancing act because it's very hard to look at FY-17 and what the needs will be of the program when you're not sure what will be accomplished in FY-15, what challenges you may face.

You've heard Brian speak to the emergency removals that took place here recently.

Those were emergencies, meaning we did not plan for them.

So that's space that was off-range holding for removals for some other type of removal that wasn't emergency means something else got put -- got put on hold in order for us to complete the emergency removals.

We are playing a shell game right now.

We do have some available space, but as soon as we conduct removals, that available space will be taken -- space will be taken up and we'll require additional space.

That means the purple and green wedges of the pie will become larger.

So it will assist with the numbers for that particular fiscal year, removing from the range, but it will not the following year when we have another foal crop.

So if you don't have any other questions, I would love to take some more questions, but if not, I will let you all move on with your meeting.

>> Anybody else?

Thank you very much, Holle.

Appreciate you.

>> Thank you.

>> The next order of business that we have is something that Tupper and I -- it's kind of a bittersweet thing for us.

We're going to recognize the board members that are going off this year.

This will be -- unless they get reappointed, this will be their last board meeting.

So BLM has a gift for them, and I'll let Mr. Tupper handle it from there.

>> I hate this part.

No way.

So I have -- can you hear me?

I haven't been here that long.

And I meant this, I said it to some of the folks here yesterday, I work in a great place.

I have great crew.

We have a lot of fun at work.

But I enjoy the heck out of coming out here and hanging out with this crew.

And I feel like in just two visits, this being sort of the end of just the second one, I've got friends like Tim, who is going to invite me up to his house -- aren't you?

Aren't you?

>> We'll go kayaking on our river.

>> Awesome!

I've got two dogs but you've got horses.

They can sleep outside.

>> No, we have plenty of dogs.

>> I feel like I've made friends in just a short amount of time that I will keep forever maybe

[laughter]

Can never tell.

I rub people wrong occasionally.

I don't know if you can tell that.

>> Feeling is mutual.

>> Thanks, dude.

You're a stand-up guy.

Thanks so much.

>> Best thing that's happened to this board and organization is you coming on board.

Since I have been here.

>> Tim, you are a swell dude.

[applause]

As you can tell I'm really well polished and rehearsed.

>> Way too much bromance.

>> It's easy to get to know a guy like Tim.

He's got a lot to say.

Other folks that contribute as much or more, and they're a lot quieter, but when they speak you get the attention of the crew, and it's been an absolute pleasure.

Where do you live?

>> Wyoming.

>> I'm going to come visit you, too.

>> Sounds good.

>> Oh, man.

Can you hear me?

This is my longstanding friend John Falen.

We met yesterday.

We have a lot in common.

How long have you lived in Nevada, John?

>> 38 years.

>> 38 years.

All right.

I was born in Nevada in '59.

I've hunted, fished, rock climbed, stepped on, jumped out of an airplane over.

Nevada is my favorite place on the planet and I have been everywhere.

>> [inaudible]

>> You are quite the stand-up guy.

Your name precedes you.

It was mostly good.

Mostly good.

I want to say -- seriously -- you hold that.

>> I'll just set it down.

>> John, it's been a pleasure.

>> My pleasure.

Glad to meet you.

>> I'm sure I'll see you again.

I'm counting on it.

Thank you.

[applause]

>> Thank you, Tupper.

I couldn't have done that without crying.

So you did a good job.

The next order of business we're going into, we're going into our committee reports, and we're going into our recommendations that we make to the board.

There will be a small agenda change.

At about, oh, I'd say 2:00 or so, maybe 2:15, depending where we can find a break we're going to break and have a 10 or 15-minute break to take care of stuff, and then we're going to come back.

That's what we're going to do.

Kathy, do you have those photos I asked you about?

What we're seeing here, these are some of the Cold Springs horses everybody has been talking about.

These are very, very sad.

This is the thing that we've got to try to work hard on to keep from happening.

We saw this week, we saw the long-term care horses, and long-term holding, and they didn't look anything like this.

This is bad.

Anybody have any comments they'd like to make about this?

>> I do.

>> Have at it.

>>> You know, I mean, nobody wants to see this, and, you know, we hear it again and again that if we would take the cows off we would reduce the other animals that are competing with the horses for food, that this wouldn't happen.

That's probably true for a few years.

But if we're going to continue -- if we're going to allow -- if the only tool that we have available is natural regulation, that's how it works.

I've seen it with -- I mean, I've been in the wildlife business a long time.

I've seen it with deer.

I've seen it with jackrabbits.

I've seen it with elk.

That's how it works.

It's not pretty.

It basically means they run out of food.

If you are really lucky, they run out of food and quit having babies.

But it's not

[no audio]

We just need to let them stand there until they tip over.

I mean, this is not management.

>> This is not management, that's true.

Dr. Cope, I would like to ask you a question about these as far as what would you have to do to these horses to rehab them?

>> Feed them.

>> I mean --

>> It's going to take a long time, a lot of care.

They're obviously susceptible to disease.

Their whole immune system runs on protein.

One of the things that Rick touched on but didn't bring up is the horses aren't the only critters out there.

We're not seeing pictures of the pronghorn and the white tails and the mule deer and everything else that's there, because I'll guarantee you if the horses look like that, so do the wildlife.

>> And on top of that, if I may, I always liked to emphasizing when you see horses, they're the last man standing.

Everything else is gone, dead, all the other livestock, all the other wildlife out there is gone.

The horses are the last thing to go.

That horse right there, there isn't anything alive within miles of where that horse is standing.

Obviously not a bite of grass or feed either.

Last man standing.

>> One thing I didn't understand, either, John, until -- when we were looking at this is there are no cattle competing with horses in this area.

>> Hasn't been for a while.

>> Right.

>> To me this highlights when -- I mean, I sit here as the humane advocate up here, and as everybody knows here, anybody that knows me, knows that I'm extremely passionate in my advocacy of horses.

Looking at this stuff here, brings me -- literally brings me to tears.

The unnecessary suffering is what is the main reason that I took this job, to sit up here and do this.

And when I hear people sit up there or out in the audience or whatever and they say let nature takes its course, what they don't understand is nature's course nowadays isn't what -- isn't a pure course because we have so interfered as man with the systems that are out there that control the environment, we have an obligation, a humane obligation, to do whatever we have to do so this doesn't happen.

Because what takes its course isn't a natural course, because the horses can't migrate to where they want to go.

And neither can the wildlife.

So when I hear them saying let nature takes its course, it just drives me a little nuts because this is the end result, and it's cruel.

It's un-- it's just -- there's no excuse for it.

And we have to do everything in our power to maintain the resource out there so that what horses and other wildlife are on the range don't look like this.

So it's --

>> It does tear you up.

>> It tears me up big time.

>> Well, I wanted to show these -- go ahead, Julie.

>> I would like to make a couple addition A points about the photos.

If you scroll through these, you'll find somewhere you see alfalfa hay on the ground, and I would submit to you when someone asked Cope about what do we need to do to rehab these horses and he says feed them, it really isn't that simple.

I know that Cope knows this.

When you have a horse that's this far down, if you just throw alfalfa hay in front of her, you're almost guaranteed to kill her because the gut has become so compromised and the microorganisms that do some of the digesting processes that are absolutely essential have been so compromised -- in fact, they're dead.

They're dead and gone, those essential populations of organisms.

So getting them to where you can actually put feedstuffs in front of them and expect them to take it in and utilize that to rebuild themselves is actually a very, very tough project.

And it's tougher in this species than in a lot of other species.

So I just want to point that out.

It's not as simple as buying some hay and putting it on a semi and taking it to these horses.

Secondarily, I would remind us that there are lifetime consequences -- even if we could rehab that mare and foal on the screen right now, there are lifetime health consequences to that foal for having developed under these nutritional conditions.

And we know from human studies there are lifetime consequences to that foal's offspring.

And so these decisions about letting this get this mismanaged that we get caught up in the politics of we've got no place to go with these horses, so we can't gather them and all that kind of thing, all of that is inhumane at so many levels.

>> Thanks, Julie.

I was obviously being semi facetious when I said feed them.

We used to refer to that in North Dakota as cattle looking like that as scenery disease or A grocery-OSIS.

The reality is they shouldn't be out there, too many with too little field.

I would like to he quote Dr. Robert Miller and he said years ago in the animal rights issue, it's so true, Roberts said animals have no rights.

Humans have responsibilities.

And I'm sorry, we're not full fulling our responsibilities if we allow wild horse herds to look like that.

>> My purpose and intent for showing these was just I wanted the board to understand this is the responsibility that we are charged with.

>> I just want to make one small comment on the natural course of things, and to add to what

everyone has said, I just want to remind us, too, that under a natural system an animal wouldn't get this way if it had natural predators, and that's part of how we've interfered. So this animal, in a truly natural balanced system, would be humanely euthanized by its predators before it got to this point.

So this is a very -- and all of these sequela down the road for the foal and the next generation, these animals hadn't evolved to get this way, and so that's why those mistakes are still there, and I don't think they'll ever evolve to be able to deal with it otherwise.

>> That's what I meant by the last man standing.

Everything else is gone.

>> Thank you, Cathy.

You can take a moment now.

The next order of business is for us to talk about our Working Group reports and then we're going to just merge these as we said today, and I've asked the Vice Chair, Dr. Sue, if she would take over this for me at this point, and I'm going to turn it over to her and let her do what she needs to do.

Dr. Sue?

>> Thank you.

So, we'll have our basic format will be that we will hear from our various working groups that have been working on specific questions and issues and discussions over the last couple days. They'll report to our whole group.

And then we'll have comments and discussion amongst ourselves, and then if there are any recommendations that come out of that we'll deal with those at that moment and then move on to the next Working Group.

Is everybody good with that.

We'll start with the resources group, and that's Cope, Julie, Jen and Rick.

If you would like to report out to us.

>> Seems like we're spending an awful lot of time talking about resource issues, and some of these things may kind of overlap other areas as well, but I've got -- I've got a couple of recommendations, but basically what I think we find ourselves talking about the most is this whole idea of we don't have healthy horses and healthy ranges, or at least we're very, very concerned -- in places we don't and we're concerned it's going to expand and increase.

The number one solution to trying to deal with this seems to be how do we get back to AML? Frankly, in my personal opinion, we don't -- we really don't have time to try to get to AML just using population growth suppression.

We have to remove a bunch of horses.

We need to go there quickly.

If we were -- again, if we were working with real wildlife, we would just harvest a whole bunch until we got down to where we wanted to be, and then we would try to implement things like population growth suppression.

If we had the luxury of enough money I suppose we could gather a whole bunch add put them somewhere else and let them live out their days and start over again, but we don't really seem to be in a position to really jump in with the population growth suppression.

So if we really want to keep these animals balanced with the resource, we've got to remove a bunch of animals now, and I'm not sure how to do it.

It's our big challenge.

And I'm a little baffled on how to do it.

I guess I'll say the BLM having both arms tied behind their back by the funders, given that, I think there's some things I would like to see the BLM at least get set up to do as we're working through our research projects.

Number one is I'd love -- I strongly urge BLM to develop a range-wide programmatic EIS for the wild horse and burro program for our review.

I really appreciated the way Barry laid out -- it was easy for me, the way I'm wired, seeing a flowchart like that looking at various decision points and options was very helpful.

And thanks again, Barry for doing that.

That helped a lot.

Any comments from other members on that recommendation?

>> I did some scribbling this morning.

I would like to kind of combine recommendation 5 and 6 and move it forward again, because, remember, Dean said that when we talked about that one of encouraging state, local and county government and agencies to participate, it says in there that the PEIS would include extensive outreach and consultation with all interested publics including with cooperating agencies.

At the same time the answer to 5 is the BLM is considering and hasn't really decided whether or not to do that PEIS.

You can word Smith all you want.

I would like to resubmit recommendation 5, that BLM is encouraged to proceed with the current WH&B programmatic EIS, but I would like to extend that to say and assure that an extensive outreach and consultation effort is instituted to expand and intensify relationships between the agency and all cooperating agencies and put them in together.

>> Agreed.

The collaborative approach.

And get -- increase awareness.

>> It's a little different from the collaboratives we will talk about later in that this involves cooperating agencies.

>> But get the county governments involved.

County and state levels.

>> County and state.

>> So, Cope, would you actually like me to capture that -- you've got it?

>> I actually wrote it down.

Do you believe that?

>> Because you said it really fast.

>> Again?

The total recommendation --

>> Slowly.

>> Okay.

All right.

The way I came up with it to read finally under recommendation 5 still states that BLM is encouraged to proceed with the current wild horse & burrow programmatic EIS and extended

that to read and assure that an extensive outreach and consultation effort is instituted to expand and intensify relationships among the agency and all cooperating agencies.

Does that make sense, Dean?

>> Yes.

>> Any other discussion on resources?

>> Yes, I think that perhaps here is where the recommendation belongs, that the advisory board would encourage BLM to pursue possibilities for pasture rotation for horses within the HMAs, and there are certain places where that's possible and places where it's not, but wherever possible, pursue rotation with an eye to trying to maintain the rangeland health with the utilization of this tool.

And, of course, this is with the intent of trying to maintain the thriving natural ecological balance that's necessary for the long-term health of the horses.

>> I really agree with that.

I mean, you really -- there's a couple of main primary tools you have with grazing.

One is managing stocking rate and the other is managing distribution so that you provide growing season rests periodically to try to keep those plants alive, and I think that's what you're talking about.

>> Exactly.

>> Particularly if you're trying to carry a high population you want to move them around, provide some rest, give those plants a break a bit.

>> Cathy, did I word that in a way that made sense?

Did I word that in a way it made sense?

>> I didn't capture most of it was my problem.

I apologize.

>> With utilizing pasture rotation for horses, encourage BLM to utilize pasture rotation for horses wherever that is feasible with respect to the -- that HMA.

The intended purpose of these rotations is to maintain thriving natural ecological balance.

>> Madam chair, was it not our intent to assign a person to each recommendation so that BLM would have a contact person in case there's some lack of clarity about them and to do that now instead of --

>> That would be good.

Thank you for reminding me.

>> Maybe you could just add somebody's name at the end of each one.

>> At the end of each one, yes.

So number one is Dr. Cope.

Number two, Dr. Weikel as a contact person.

>> I would like to add one thing in there, but while this land area is being rested that there be some help in enhancing that land while it's resting, like reseeding or if it applies like a juniper removal and that kind of thing so that there's just -- you don't just leave it there.

You do something to enhance the recovery.

>> Because a pasture rest would sure facilitate that, wouldn't it?

To be able to do it and to establish successfully.

>> June, I would submit that that whole idea of rehab and our support for rehab efforts in areas that have been damaged, specifically with respect to horse impact, I think that's so critical it

almost needs to be an additional recommendation instead of just tacked into this one, because it's a powerful concept.

So I just submit that someone needs to word that one well, because it's a powerful concept.

>> Do you want to do that then, June?

>> I'm not so sure I'm very good at wording.

Sometimes words escape me.

But in resting --

>> You could recommend the BLM apply best management practices to restoration of rested pastures.

>> Is that too broad?

>> No.

>> It's great.

>> I want to make a distinction between rehabilitation and restoration.

Rehabilitation is what you do after some sort of a catastrophic event, a fire, hurricane, a flood. Restoration, that's what you do when it is long-term, it's planned, you've got -- you've done an EA or EIS.

You put your plan into action.

While the rehabilitation gets the headlines, because it's after some sort of event where people get to stand in front of a camera and go "there's a fire behind me" or a flood or a hurricane, it's restoration where the government can add -- can have its greatest effect because restoration is typically a very well planned out event.

>> See, I told you I wasn't very good with words.

>> June, does that adequately aperture what --

>> Yes.

>> Thank you.

>> Do you want to change it to say through restoration/rehabilitation?

Do you want to include both of those terms then?

Is that necessary or --

>> No.

We'll be happy to, but the restoration piece gets to the point that I'm the most interested in.

>> Okay.

That's what I was asking.

Didn't know if you needed both words or not.

>> I guess as long as you're interested you don't need further clarification.

>> We'll just call you.

Every one of these will have a name to it.

>> I've got a couple more to throw out.

Did you have --

>> I have one more but go ahead.

>> I'd like to -- for us to recommend that the BLM consider wild horse and burro management and monitoring activities at the larger metapopulation level as well as scaling down to the HMA level.

There's different issues we need to look at in different scales is my point, and so -- and depending on whether that has to do with genetics, gene flow, animals relative to -- [no audio]

Normal ebb and flow of horses from other areas, and you know some of the advocates and some of the folks here are concerned about genetic issues.

I know some aren't.

Some folks here -- up here and out here could care less about that, but that is a valid concern in some of the HMAs.

So I think that the metapopulation concept is a great one in some respects.

But I think you can't abandon little islands here and there.

We don't want these HMAs like the Galapagos islands.

>> That does lead into my next recommendation, what you're talking about, because -- it's a great point.

We're trying to do a couple things.

We're trying to figure out how to carry a smaller total population and we're also -- and there is a lot of concern, we've had a lot of concern expressed about isolated populations that don't intermix with others that are perhaps -- are too small for genetic --

>> Some of them are too small for jaw -- real true genetic viability.

>> That's probably true.

Could be anyway.

So why don't we -- I would like to see BLM develop a proposal at the large scale, at the population scale that combines at least the tools of population growth suppression and the concept of having reproducing and non-reproducing herds.

We have herds out there where there are enough individuals that can meet and greet each other.

Those should probably be the reproducing herds, particularly if they are ones that lend themselves to gathering and growth suppression.

Some of the more isolated herds -- I guess rather than zero them out, why don't we make them be non-reproducing herds?

>> I don't know that you can -- for myself, I would be uncomfortable throwing that kind of blanket over the concept because some of the isolated herds because of their isolation have some pretty unique genetics.

I know -- not to beat on the drum too hard, but there's -- a lot of folks really aren't going to care about that.

They're looking at the whole horse issue and numbers.

But the fact remains there are some herds that with unique genetics and they deserve to be preserved, protected, and managed properly.

Or managed for those genetic pools.

I think the BLM has done a pretty good job with a lot of respect with some of the herds.

>> Thanks for that.

Don't misunderstand me because I'm not directing them to say based on size you put it into one of two bundles, but give them the opportunity to do that because there are -- like you say there are qualifiers like -- you know, there's always going to be this pull between genetic diversity and breeds --

>> And practicality of maintaining the resource and I understand all that.

>> I'm asking them to put the rock on the table and say, all right, given that that's a possibility, a way we might be able to use again to try to get down to -- being able to do some of this with

the limited funding that we have, I would like to see the proposal.

I would like to see what they would think.

>> Rick, may I ask is that the language you spoke that I typed?

Yeah, I said reproducing and non-reproducing.

>> I think the non-reproducing herd element to me is in the areas that have a lot of bigger populations have more transference of horses from one HMA to another and a complex, having some non-reproducing elements in those herds to me makes more sense than in the isolated herds.

But maybe I'm wrong.

>> Could you put at the end of it "except legacy herds or treasured herds," or something like that?

I'm trying to remember what we were told earlier that we need to be up here and not down here --

>> I'm not trying to get --

>> I would like to literally let them put a rock on the table and let us look at it.

>> I think the BLM knows which herds are which, and I think that -- what I just want to do is have a language in there that's soft enough to allow them to make the proper decisions with the proper herds but also to manage as a meta-- I think there is maybe some element to the metapopulation management system that will work really good in these herds and then there is some that's a more specific sharp-shooter approach might be more appropriate.

That's what I'm saying.

I don't know that one-size-fits-all here.

I'm agreeing with you, Rick.

I'm absolutely agreeing with you.

I am trying to interact with you to see if we can come up with a language that is ambiguous enough but not so ambiguous it's ineffective.

>> I guess what my proposal is to at least shall R -- at the very least combine the ideas of population growth suppression and reproducing and non-reproducing herds period.

>> That's fine.

>> I would rather not restrict it any more than that.

They can add to it.

>> I want to agree with Rick in that I think we want to put the ball in BLM's lap about looking at this, and I really think we want to avoid that phrase legacy herds at this point, and we need to understand -- I think we all know at this table that when we're talking about looking at this in the big picture, whether we use the word megapopulation or metapopulation or not, we're not talking about just genetic diversity.

That's included in this concept.

But it's looking at all aspects of those herds and not just genetic diversity.

>> Maybe the way that this should be worded, then, that would make everybody up here on this dais comfortable is that there should be some caveat in there that herds where genetic diversity is a priority would be looked at as a separate issue or something to that effect.

>> As far as possible or as -- or something at the beginning?

>> Why don't we wait and see what the proposal is?

>> There you go.

>> That's what I was going to say.

>> We can always comment on it -- we're not operating in a vacuum either. We'll figure this out.

If we don't, we'll put a name back there and give you a call.

>> Assign a name, would you, chair, on that one.

>> Rick for 5.

>> Either one.

>> Are you able to take both, Rick?

>> Sure.

>> That would be great.

>> Madam chair, if I may, since it's not really clear if Rick's going to be back, could you add someone else on there, too?

Two names?

>> Your Working Group, do you want to -- do you have a volunteer from the Working Group?

>> I volunteer to be second on that.

>> Rick and Jen?

>> Yeah, have Jen take it.

>> Which one do you want, Jen?

>> I really hope Rick reapplies and he is appointed, but if he's not we don't want to let these fall through the gaps.

>> I was wondering if Mike was trying to tell us something with the plaques going out.

>> If I may ask point of clarification of number 5, are you asking BLM to develop a proposal, to whom are they proposing --

>> To the board.

>> To the board.

>> Anybody they want, but to the board.

>> Moving on, we had more recommendations?

>> I think we had one more that falls under this resource category.

If you want to put it in a different category, I'm okay with that.

I would propose that BLM's deadline of 2020 or the point where they believe they can achieve appropriate AMLs in the 22 HMAs that are in sagebrush focal areas is too far out there.

So I would urge BLM to do everything they can to expedite reaching AML in the sagebrush focal areas as quickly as possible.

>> Utilizing all available tools?

>> Absolutely.

Utilizing all available tools, Kathy.

>> Or all effective tools.

>> Effective tools.

I like them better.

>> I still have one, Rick.

>> Everybody good with that.

>> I also had one --

>> What's --

>> Go ahead.

, Dr. Cope.

>> One we didn't really talk about that much but I talked about it with Alan last night, it's becoming a greater and greater threat on the HMAs was exemplified by the Soda Fire.

We had to locate 300 horses.

I don't know how and where the cohesive strategy and what it entails but there are three major pillars.

The first one is to develop fire resistant landscapes.

Second one, fire adapted communities.

Third, firefighter safety and response.

Two of those three hit BLM HMAs on the head [inaudible] BLM is doing a real good job stepping up and working and trying to adopt that cohesive strategy but talking to Alan, I don't think it's a bad idea for us to be on record asking the BLM to move forward and try to work that cohesive strategy along with other landowners.

What I did write up this morning thinking about it was my suggestion and recommendation would be that the BLM should continue and expand its efforts to embrace and implement the cohesive strategy to make HMA landscapes fire resistant.

>> [inaudible]

>> Uh-huh.

HMA landscapes is what I put because it does refer to fire-resistant landscapes and the strategy.

The plan is out there.

It's called the cohesive strategy.

It's in place.

There is western strategy that comes out of the western regional strategy committee.

The strategies are there.

The difficulty is getting some of the different agencies and entities to think about it.

A lot of them are doing things that fit with the cohesive strategy very well.

They're just not realizing what it is.

>> I think it's a great suggestion.

>> I guess I have a question to show my ignorance.

How does the fire -- whatever -- fire resistant landscape, how does that work into available forage for horses, animals --

>> It may work both ways actually because part of it involves occasional targeted grazing to graze out invasives, and part of it may be to at a given time of year graze it a little more intensely to drop the ladder fuels down.

The other part of it is going out and removing the junipers and pinions out there creating fire hazards.

There's a lot of ways you can go at it.

>> Everybody good with that?

Do we have any more recommendations?

>> I have one.

[off microphone]

BLM would like to do that.

Somehow we need Congress to understand that they need to get us to AML in all HMAs.

We need the funding to make it happen.

Funding and the tools to make it happen.

>> Does there need to be another component to that suggestion?

I totally, totally agree obviously with what Rick is saying, but along with that suggestion has got to be somewhere to go with those horses.

Some way, shape or form, whether it's sale authority -- we need to keep hammering on sale authority.

That might be the answer.

I mean, this thing is getting bad enough to -- where we're going to have to go back to the decision-makers and change some minds somewhere.

You know, Rick is dead on, but having said that, we have to do something with --

>> Well, could you say that BLM work with the Congress to

[off microphone]

Congressional action to provide funding and something to do with --

>> All necessary tools?

>> All necessary tools.

There you go.

>> This kind of comes back to what we're --

>> I know.

That's exactly right.

[off microphone]

>> More like the fixed --

>> Something to say, look, here -- like say here is the situation we have.

Boom, boom, boom.

Here's what we need.

We're in a mire.

In order to get out of mire so that we can now start operating and operating efficiently, here is what we need to get over the hump.

We need a hump bump here in order to -- it's like taking the little half step you take when you're marching close order and you're out of step and you need that.

>> Why don't you ask Dean and I and the crew to bring you back three different proposals for how to get to AML?

>> There you go.

That sounds like a plan.

>> Be careful of your recommendations.

Remember, agency personnel are legally barred from lobbying Congress.

We can't ask BLM to ask Congress --

>> We can show you some different scenarios.

>> Great.

That's the best way.

I would prefer you guy bring us a rock to put on the table.

>> The thing we need to say is BLM work to develop a program to achieve AML and bring the board three alternatives to accomplish that?

Take Congress completely out of it?

>> We just did.

>> You said it, but we didn't get on the board --

>> We did.

>> Congress is gone.

>> Hey, don't you wish.

They're just out fundraising.

>> Kathy, for number 8

[off microphone]

>> And for 7, that would be Dr. Cope?

And for 6, that's Julie.

Correct?

>> Correct.

>> Number 6, yes.

Okay.

>> Do we have any more recommendations or discussion for resources?

Going once, going twice.

Now, Fred, you mentioned a break.

Did you want to take a break now or to go through another couple of these short work groups?

>> I would recommend take a short break because somebody's raising his hand real high.

>> 10 minutes?

So we'll be back at 20 minutes past 2:00.

>> 20 past 2:00?

That's five minutes.

>> My watch might not be right on.

>> 10 minutes, though, right?

>> 10 minutes.

2:25.

[recess]

>> S. McDONNELL: We'll resume our Working Group reports and recommendations with the Working Group volunteer resources Working Group, volunteers, as we've been calling it.

That's Fred, June and Cope are the Working Group.

>> F. WOEHL: We talked about this at length, the group did, and come up with some things, and I think Cope, you wrote something down, didn't you?

>> R. COPE: I have a couple here.

>> F. WOEHL: I'll let Cope go ahead with what he has.

>> R. COPE: One of the things that became clear from the recommendations from the last meeting, recommendation 7 there was a miscommunication, we believe, between the group and the agency.

The agency miss -- we either didn't express it properly or the agency misinterpreted what we were trying to say when we talked about involving the public in training programs to allow them to help with monitoring and the adoption process.

So I rewrote that if you want to try it here.

The old resolution 7 now states that BLM should develop training programs and standards to allow -- then we've got the same from before -- all qualified individuals to be an asset to the

BLM WH&B program.

I put a gap in here.

To allow qualified individuals, forget the rest of it -- let me start back over, Kathy.

BLM should develop training programs and standards to allow all qualified volunteers to assist in monitoring of riparian areas, stubble height, herd numbers and water sources through site-specific photography.

And that also volunteers should be trained to assist with public relations and dissemination of information regarding horse adoption.

Training programs and standards to allow qualified volunteers tour assist in monitoring of riparian areas, stubble height, herd numbers, water sources through site-specific photography.

And also, volunteers should be trained to assist with public relations and dissemination of information -- actually -- information?

Okay.

Regarding horse and burro adoption.

Just in simple terms is what the suggestion is, the recommendation, is to kind of utilize some of the programs that are being developed by some of the Land Grant universities to train permittees and interested parties to establish photo points and take sequential ones from the same position so you can see the changes and modifications of the landscape and the resource and also to bring in others so that they can help recruit potential adopters.

Essentially utilizing help where we can find it and train them so that they're sending a uniform message regarding adoption and so that they know what they're doing when they're taking pictures at different times during the year.

>> You didn't go far enough on adoptions.

Would they need to do more than that?

>> R. COPE: Go for it.

I just scribbled that down.

>> F. WOHL: Okay.

The thing I was going to say is that -- the thing that -- I feel like that, again, we're up here, and we don't need to be down in the weeds.

I think that the national office should work hard and encourage the local offices to use as many volunteers as possible to complete all tasks assigned to them and should at that point develop the training programs and all this to carry that out.

Because as we all know, the national level where we're at up here don't -- I mean, we have to encourage them to encourage them.

Did that make sense?

>> T. HARVEY: That doesn't make sense I understand what you mean.

>> F. WOHL: Well, you have a swing at it --

>> T. HARVEY: My Yankee logic is a refreshing splash of water on things sometimes.

>> F. WOHL: How should we say it?

>> T. HARVEY: Here is what I'm wondering as I'm looking at all this stuff that's up here.

I'm not on this board but I'm sitting here looking at it and I'm wanting to stick my fingers in my head and pull a piece of my brain out and flick it on the floor.

One of the things we talked about with this volunteerism and stuff is matching up the needs of the BLM with talent out there that could help the BLM, and one of the things we talked about

at some point in our conversations here was the setting up have -- having people that want to volunteer have some kind of place on the Web site or a form they can fill out, whatever, that would -- almost like a little resume saying here is what I can do for the BLM, and if the BLM has a corresponding thing that said, well, we could use help here and here.

Matching up the volunteerism with what they need help with is what we're trying to do here, right?

>> F. WOEHL: If I may.

Is pat still in the room?

Pat, come up to microphone up here.

Please.

Yes, sir, please.

I'm sorry, he's got me all flustered.

You are the New Mexico horse lead.

>> Yes, sir.

>> F. WOEHL: You use lots of volunteers.

>> Yes.

>> F. WOEHL: What can we do or what can we recommend that would be beneficial to help you obtain qualified volunteers to help you be able to train these for the aspects that you need them in?

>> I think there's a lot of difference between what we do here and what's done out west.

In terms of what we do here is mainly adoptions.

What does that entail?

We have public relations.

We have compliance.

Those are really the only two that I can think of that we could use any volunteers.

For public relations, we would have to train them in that there are certain terms that you don't say.

So you have to choose your words carefully, and, Dean, if I'm getting off base here, you just straighten me out.

You know, as far as public relations, we have volunteer groups that have been established for a very long time that we trust and we use.

But you can't just take anybody off the street and say, you know, do the public relations for us, and same with compliance.

I mean, there's strict regulations that we abide by, and so you have to be really careful on who you can send out to do any compliance inspections.

We use APHIS veterinarians.

We use former BLM employees.

But he may have somebody that is overly passionate, for lack of better terms, that may come down harder on an adopter -- it may be an issue of ignorance and not fault on the adopter's fault, if that makes any sense.

>> F. WOEHL: It does.

I've been a volunteer compliance officer for about 12 years, and so I understand this, but the thing is, I get lots of emails, Tim gets lots of emails, all of us get emails of people that have tried to volunteer and they can't.

So what we're trying to do is figure out a way that these people that are interested and are qualified -- I mean, I don't mean just Joe blow off the street, how they can become involved and be an asset.

You don't have all the time to do everything that needs to be done.

How far are you behind on -- on compliance reviews?

>> We're not.

There is a little bit of a liability issue.

What happens if a stack of panels falls on a volunteer?

I understand we're covered in our tort claims act but those are issues --

>> And workman's comp, if they have a signed volunteer agreement with you, they're covered under workman's comp.

>> I'll be quite frank with you, the volunteers that approach us usually want something to do with handling animals, and we have a strict set of operating procedures we must abide by. Whether you want to take that next step and use volunteers in that kind of work, there's a series of training they need to go through and I know that's what you're getting at, but how far do you want to get into the volunteer work when you get into those types of issues as far as handling animals and maybe be something you put them in harm's way?

>> F. WOEHL: I mean -- the purpose of a volunteer is to assist you in areas that you need.

Does that make -- and if you don't feel comfortable with having somebody help you at an adoption by helping you set up panel or all that, that's your call.

I understand that.

But if -- if you have adequate personnel and all that.

But if you are not going and doing as many satellite adoptions as needs to be done to move these horses because you don't have the personnel to do that, that's where a volunteer force could help.

That's all I'm saying.

>> Yes, and I hear what you're saying, and probably the biggest need we have for volunteers is public relations in terms of getting the word spread for adoptions and just basically trying to sell what we're doing.

I apologize, I'm not communicating real clearly, but we send out -- we send out flyers before every adoption, and basically just try to get the word on the street.

Because as I pinpointed yesterday, you can have the best marketing plan in the world, and it's not going to guarantee success.

But if nobody knows about it, it's all for naught.

So in terms of what we do with adoptions, that is by far the most important aspect of our adoption program, is marketing.

>> T. HARVEY: So if you had a database that you could go to pull out talent for things you need, would that be a tool you would use, you would want.

Like you have adoptions coming up.

Because the needs I'm hearing, they're not all the time, but when you need them it would be really nice to have them.

>> That's a good point.

We have a fairly big area and limited resource.

So I'll give you an example.

If we had a complaint, a compliance complaint in Brownsville, Texas, yes, that would be extremely helpful because it takes one of our compliance officers to drive there and a day to drive back.

So if we had somebody in that immediate area that could get there within 24 hours, yes, that would be extremely helpful.

>> So if we made a recommendation up here to -- a recommendation that some type of a database and a training module for some of these things that would be the more frequently demanded, like compliance, PR help, like if you do a -- you know, helping with adoptions, whatever -- literally let BLM decide where they would want to have the help, but if they made up a little database that people could then -- people could go on, fill their own information out, here's why I might be qualified for that, and if they get qualified for it, it would be a database that BLM could use to go to say, hey, I can't get down there.

Who is the closest one there?

You could go and put in a Zip code and it will say hey, 50 miles away or 30 miles away is Joe over here and he can do that for us.

Does that make sense?

>> It certainly does.

And that would be extremely helpful.

>> T. HARVEY: How does that sound to the other board members?

>> You lost me.

>> T. HARVEY: I lost you?

>> R. COPE: To establish a list

[off microphone]

Qualified suitable volunteers, but they are locations that could be called upon for assistance with the need arises.

>> T. HARVEY: The key component is would be on the wild horse and burro Web site would be just have a point, and this may be somewhere --

>> They already have this on the Web site.

>> T. HARVEY: Is there a place people can put their name on it and put down what their qualifications are?

>> F. WOHL: Yep.

>> T. HARVEY: And --

>> F. WOHL: I don't know about that.

It has a place if want to volunteer --

>> T. HARVEY: I'm talking about creating an interactive system that basically someone like Pat could put in an interrogatory of what he is looking for and he will get an answer --

>> R. COPE: I think that interrogatory needs to come from the agency and not --

>> T. HARVEY: That's what I'm saying.

Where the interrogatory is coming from is from -- is the person in the entity that needs the help.

I'm just trying to fine tune this stuff up here a little bit, but in the generic enough term that we're staying at the 30,000-foot level.

>> S. McDONNELL: Any other discussion or recommendations on volunteers?

>> F. WOHL: I don't think we got this one done yet.

We have about four up there that are all basically says the same but they're all different. Is there some way we could condense all that into one that makes sense?

Thank you, Pat.

Appreciate you.

>> R. COPE: I think that last one could go at the bottom of the first one.

Although the -- dissemination of information and public relations may be important, you may want to add, and other appropriate tasks.

>> F. WOHL: The thing is you could make this really simple by saying that the national office should encourage local offices to -- well, let me back up -- we need -- they establish an interactive database and web presence for interested volunteers to sign up and to allow BLM -- local BLM offices to review areas that they need help.

Would that cover everything.

>> R. COPE: Keep in mind this originally started with training modules.

We want to keep that in there, that the BLM should allow --

>> F. WOHL: And have something typed in there that already says -- Dean, bail us out of this.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: Maybe Tupper's idea, bring the idea.

There's about three areas we could use assistance with here and there and everywhere.

One is what we're calling public relations.

I view that at volunteers at adoption events to assist us with potential adopters.

Not only do they explain the requirements and guidelines, but they talk intelligently about the animals and what it's all about.

They help promote adoptions and provide a real life experience.

So adoptions help there.

Pat talked about advanced help in the community to put out posters in local feed stores.

That's kind of advertising and marketing.

The other thing is the compliance thing.

But it would require this training that you're talking about, and we could maybe develop an online compliance training course.

We've always had that in person.

Haven't put it on.

But in order to have an effective Volunteer Program, it's more than just a list of names.

It needs to be well thought out.

It needs to be worked on.

It's not two weeks from now we have an answer to you exactly.

But those are the things I'm thinking about.

Three areas that could use help in, but we need to talk about training.

I think at breakfast you told me if you have adoptions at adoptions -- adopter volunteers at adoptions they need to be trained.

They need to know what's going on.

So, you, Fred, with your qualifications, you guys could be mentors and available to help people who are having trouble -- if you had somebody in the area where you live, we would say, hey, could you help Mary down the road.

Those kinds of things are the things I think about.

>> F. WOHL: Well, maybe would it be okay to come in there and say that BLM should develop

more opportunities for volunteers and training and get back with us with that recommendation?

>> KATHIE LIBBY: I was thinking your earlier ones were come up with some proposals.

So maybe you to want BLM to develop a strategy to increase --

>> F. WOHL: Develop --

>> KATHIE LIBBY: Appropriate use of volunteers.

>> F. WOHL: We encourage BLM to develop a strategy to develop and use more qualified volunteers and aspects -- in aspects of what goes on.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: Training --

>> F. WOHL: You don't have anything to say?

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: No, I already said what we said.

We have an on-range and off-range volunteer thing going on here, the one Cope talked about and --

>> F. WOHL: Right.

He's more on range, I'm more off range in my approach because that's where I'm from.

We already have a database -- the issue is trying to get the appropriate job titles for the volunteers loaded into that, and I think that's what Sarah has been struggling with trying to make that work because just trying to get people like Pat and Chris Robbins in Idaho, all the different state leads to kind of have time to sit down and figure out.

Because they all have different needs that are some are on range, some are off range, more or less, but that's kind of the challenge right now.

So I just wanted to let you know there is a database so we don't have to develop that.

But your recommendation, if you were wanting to go into -- suggesting that we try to get these job descriptions more fine tuned so we have something to load into that system would probably be helpful.

>> F. WOHL: Here's what's driving this with me, is that I get lots and lots and lots of contacts stating they want to volunteer.

I always go there and do that, and -- well, I've done that, and I called them, and they never call me back.

You know, I don't care what somebody's -- what -- there's always something that can be done.

They can go to an adoption and hand out applications.

It don't take a rocket scientist to sit there and hand out applications.

>> Just keep in mind not -- like Pat said, a lot of them do want to work with the horses, and that's where there is very limited opportunities even if we do get these job descriptions, but hopefully moving into 2016 as we were discussing with Mike last night, we're hoping to expand into some more adoption location opportunities so we'll have more locations for people to help us, because right now I talk to a lot of people myself, I ship a lot of things to people that do help us on a regular basis handing out pens and flyers and so forth, but sometimes there's people that call, and we simply don't have an adoption for hundreds of miles from where they are. So that's again one of those things maybe in 2016 we'll have more opportunities, and especially with our America's Mustang campaign, just having people -- maybe there's not an event but they can help those people go visit that Web site.

So there's some new opportunities that I think might be coming up in 2016 that would be helpful, but we Dee have a database.

I just didn't want you to think we had to create that from scratch.

>> F. WOHL: Kathy on that last one if you would put a comma and put on range and off range I think that's good.

>> T. HARVEY: What prompted some of this for me is the -- at the EMM that I just attended in Pottsville, Massachusetts there were three people from the BLM.

I thought they all worked from the BLM.

I met one, hadn't met the other two.

Introducing myself, one was a volunteer, and you guys flew him out to Massachusetts from Wisconsin, and what I just couldn't understand is why would you go to the expense flying a volunteer unless he paid his own way, why -- there were so many people that were standing that wanted to help out there and all the guy was doing was handing out pamphlets.

I talked to him.

>> I know exactly who you are talking about because I was actually supposed to attend that one, and I had other things come up and I wasn't able to do.

Kristin was the one from Milwaukee.

She had to be there from BLM to do the paperwork.

There was another person I understand that was an actual volunteer.

I thought they were local.

There was another person that came out of our Washington D.C. office to help Kristen --

>> T. HARVEY: No, that's not who I am talking about.

I'm talking -- I don't need to throw the man's name on the table.

He told me he was in charge of volunteerism, is what his job is now, and so -- kind of took him aside, you have all these people.

I was standing there, I can't tell you how many people walked up and asked what could they do to help.

I know that if the BLM reached out it would have been absolutely no problem -- there's all kinds of folks there trying to get mustangs to New England, and what I just didn't understand -- and that's -- and I'm not being critical -- I think the reason why is they didn't know -- there wasn't a vehicle to make that happen.

So it was easier to just put a guy on an airplane out from by the Milwaukee office, somebody they were familiar with, and take with them to the EMM thing.

>> I actually this was kind of a training experience.

Now I remember the gentleman that we're talking about.

But I don't think it was a loss resource for BLM.

The person was an actual volunteer.

That particular event they didn't need as many because it wasn't a full-fledged adoption.

>> T. HARVEY: They didn't have the room to run the actual adoption for the horses because they were doing construction work on one side that facility.

>> In that case we would have had more volunteers.

The reason I'm making that comparison is because last year their northeastern event that was like in Pennsylvania, it was strictly Kristen and several volunteers that helped out.

They do have some good volunteers up there.

>> T. HARVEY: The whole thing -- I don't want to keep beating on this.

We have other things to talk about.

The thing I'm saying, what doesn't make sense to me is there's so many people there that could have done what this fellow was doing that it would have been a whole lot less expensive for one thing and also it would have been nice for people locally to see a local person helping rather than --

>> S. McDONNELL: Thanks, Tim, can we --

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: I just wanted to say I think volunteers has been a common discussion over the last couple of years, and I don't think BLM has hit the mark, but through all this storming and norming, I think your number three kind of captures.

I think I kind of get and have an idea of what our folks -- the team of folks could do, and if we engage our field staff in helping us develop the strategy, there probably would be more ownership in it if the Washington Office develops it and tells them what to do.

I kind of have an idea how I would like to proceed.

And however you like to develop we will respond.

>> Shall I hit the delete button.

>> Fred volunteered, Kathy, to be the point person on this recommendation.

>> KATHIE LIBBY: Who?

>> I would like to add another component to the Volunteer Program.

I mention this almost every time, I think.

There is another part of volunteering rather than your time but it's your money as well.

Some organizations, such as ours, don't have like a lot of members that are available to go out and do things, but we have contributed many dollars to BLM programs, and there's an opportunity for everybody to do that, but they have to know what those opportunities are.

I believe we even had a recommendation one time that this could be done through the local district offices if they had a project, they could reach out to the different organizations and say this is what we have and this is -- you know, this is what we need, and if you can help us in any way monetarily, basically, that I think it would be helpful.

They're always saying they don't have enough money, but quite frankly, I sometimes have difficulty giving our money away because they just don't respond.

I don't know --

>> Do you want to do a recommendation?

>> J. SEWING: I'm pretty sure we had a recommendation once before, and the BLM accepted the recommendation, but I don't know whether it hasn't followed through or whatever.

Anyway, I just think that that's something that we need to -- to consider as well.

>> F. WOEHL: Could you say develop strategy to publicize financial needs and local areas so that interested advocacy groups or individuals are aware and can make --

>> T. HARVEY: How about using the word donors.

>> F. WOEHL: That would work.

So donors could --

>> J. SEWING: Well, you know --

>> F. WOEHL: Or something like that?

>> J. SEWING: It's fine to do that, but I just -- we've talked about this -- about other resolutions and things that -- or suggestions we've made where they maybe have accepted it but there's been not any basic results.

>> F. WOEHL: There has been a lot --

>> J. SEWING: There has been but there have been some that hasn't.

>> F. WOHL: I think this meeting here what we did yesterday, I don't think that's going to happen too much more.

>> J. SEWING: If you want to make that a resolution, that's fine.
I hate to be such a skeptic.

>> KATHIE LIBBY: Are you too skeptical to be the point person?
I know you're not.

We're just going to put June -- okay.

How are we doing -- are we feeling comfortable with volunteers, these two recommendations as they stand?

>> R. COPE: One more I would like to qualify, one of the last recommendations, I have been working with Dean already on it, do you have last spring's recommendation 8 over there, Kathy?

If you can paste that in, I wanted to add a clarifying sentence to it.

BLM essentially accepted the interpretive group but it looked like they interpreted that as BLM RACs which we didn't mean.

If we could add one sentence where it says -- I would just like to add the sentence that said BLM should be an active participant in these groups which should include NGOs, local government and state and Federal resource management agencies.

Does that make it more clear, Dean?

Is that what we're talking about?

The sentence to add at the end is quote, BLM should be an active participant in these groups which should include NGOs, local government, and state and Federal resource management agencies.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: Cope, could I ask a question?

So part of the recommendation is a response to some of the collaborative efforts I described yesterday with various entities to do on-ground fertility control stuff.

Recommendation wouldn't necessarily fully exclude working with an individual group, but you're describing a more comprehensive --

>> R. COPE: There is --

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: Many partners --

>> R. COPE: An organization or a loose organization modeled on the forest collaboratives that are working toward bringing people to the table to move projects forward and decrease the likelihood of litigation.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: Right.

I get it.

Thank you so much.

>>

[off microphone]

>> Kind of like ICS, it expands and contracts depending on the issues you want to address.

What we try to do is get people to quit throwing rocks at each and sit down and discuss it and find common ground and move forward instead of stalling everything out.

That's really the key.

That's absolutely the key.

It's good to have them every now and again just to maintain lines of communication. The less often you discuss the situation with each other the more likely you are to be at loggerheads.

>> S. McDONNELL: Our next Working Group report, ecotourism.

Fred and Rick are the Working Group members for that.

>> R. DANVIR: I don't have very much.

Frankly -- you can comment, Fred, but I see this as maybe a lesser priority than some of the other things.

So this is something, Mike, you should only work on in your spare time, like Sundays and holidays.

>> F. WOEHL: Or after 10:00 at night.

Rick, I think that the BLM, the Bureau, based on what we are seeing, have got a pretty good handle on this.

I mean, there might be a few things that we can add or maybe improve on, but I think they're trying to do as many of these as they can.

It's a different process.

It isn't a contract.

It's a partnership, which means it's a little bit more loosey-goosey.

>> I heard one comment on each one.

We can leave it there.

I guess my serious point was there's other things that may take priority.

>> F. WOEHL: Very much so.

>> R. DANVIR: These are consider type considerations.

For ecotourism, what we wrote down, and, Julie, you kind of made me think about this, to clarify, Julie and some other people were telling stories about that made me think there may be some HMAs out there that do receive a fair amount of visitors going out to actually look -- look to see the horses.

So what we are going to offer you is that BLM may consider using well visited HMAs as an opportunity to educate visitors using just as an example, interpretive signs, kiosks or cell technology about the Wild Horse and Burro Program challenges and adoption opportunities.

>> F. WOEHL: You know, we saw some of that in Wyoming, some of those signs posted at some of those riparian areas, the Oregon Trail and all that.

That's a great idea.

>> Does that kind of capture what you were talking about, Julie?

>> I my try to clarify because these people are familiar with these areas, thinking specifically of the kiosk at Diamond or south steam room road about those specific herds because it's a good opportunity to see those herds in the area and it's a great place to disseminate information and I would like to kind of see that incorporated into the rec. plans for those individual districts, and I just think it's an additional way to greet people.

It's also, at least in the sites where I see this being useful, and I can't help but believe there might be others, it's also a way to kind of remind the community that these wild horses are an economic asset.

A visitor count to those kiosks might convince the county court indeed those horses really are an economic asset to their county.

That was kind of the thinking behind it.

But we were specifically thinking about things like kiosks and maybe a mobile cell app --

>> For self-guided tours?

>> JULIE WEIKEL: You apparently know tech people who can get that kind of thing done.

>> R. DANVIR: The only other comment I heard about ecosanctuaries is that ecosanctuary operators as partners should be provided training and materials to accurately represent wild horse and burro opportunities to the public.

Make sure they are -- not lock step, but make sure we've taken the time to make sure that they understand -- it's -- I have come to a lot of meetings and I still to a large degree a novice in some of the depth of this program.

And if these guys are to some degree interfacing, they're representing BLM as a partner to the public, we probably ought to make sure they understand what they're talking about.

>> KATHIE LIBBY: Who would like to be point for 4 and 5.

>> F. WOHL: Probably both of us.

>> KATHIE LIBBY: Both of you named point people.

Okay.

Makes sense.

Good.

>> I'm good.

Rick's done a good job.

>> S. McDONNELL: We can move on, then, to the public comment Working Group, which is Tim, June and Jen.

>> T. HARVEY: It's pretty short and sweet, I think.

There's really been a real change, a nice positive change in the tone of some of the public comment, and I think we see that reflected in some of the things that we've saw here at this meeting with the cloud foundation working with the BLM and some things, and I think that's a reflection of a nice shift we're seeing -- I mean, there's still -- we don't need to get into specifics in all of this.

We'll keep this one kind of short and sweet.

There wasn't a lot of difference in the bulk of the commentary that we received in the last meeting.

I haven't seen all of it from this meeting because we actually get our hands on it after the meeting is over.

What I would encourage people to do is, there's still a fair amount of form letters.

Most of those are of a critical nature, prosecutorial in some respects, and I think that the ones that are of real value, the commentary that's really valuable are the ones that are with positive suggestions on what can be -- with solutions rather than just pointing out problems.

So I would just really encourage folks, we know there's problems, but, really, the biggest help that we get from public comment, and we've gotten some really good public comment that has instigated very vibrant conversation that resulted in some recommendations.

It's the ones that are offering solutions and positive stuff are the ones.

>> I would just like to add to that comment, a comment that a couple of the people made that brought to my mind the need for the restoration of the land, and that was a suggestion that came from one of the comments, and so I think that the public should know that we do listen

and we do try to implement what they're saying, as long as they're positive and helpful.

>> It has stood out to me how every individual comment is read and considered.

Where there are specific fact-based comments and ideas that are forward-moving and generating -- there are a number of times those individual pieces come up in committee meetings.

Or some of them are represented here, and that stood out to me

[off microphone]

>> Did you have a recommendation?

Everybody ready to move on?

Great.

Our next Working Group report will be population growth suppression.

Julie, Cope, Tim, and I'm also on that committee.

Who is going to lead us off with --

>> JULIE WEIKEL: I would like to lead us off by thanking the presenters.

A lot of the data this committee needed to form its recommendation -- we got access to within the past few days and we appreciate getting that.

It's also frustrating for us the huge amount of time that it takes for this stuff to move through the process, but, at any rate, it's nice to have information, and so with that -- with that said, this board would like to press support for continued commitment to long-range research because the tools that we have in our toolbox today aren't as good as we would like.

We all would like some better solution for some of these issues that we're battling with now.

So a commitment to long-term research is absolutely essential.

Though committed dollars are minimal.

They're certainly not too much.

And we would encourage BLM to keep their eye on the long goal which, of course, is minimal -- a necessity to handle the horses on the range at an absolute minimum, and that's really where we all want to get to.

That will require a commitment to research.

This board would also like to encourage BLM to use the tools that we have available at hand, get them in the field and operating [inaudible] population growth as much as possible right, noting that Cope makes a very powerful point when he says that even if tomorrow population growth was zero we still have huge, huge problems, both with respect to range health and the huge costs of this program.

Just a few very specific things, and this is -- this will be the third recommendation.

Because the long-term goal of population growth/suppression is the fewest possible hand Lynx, maybe zero, and gathers, and knowing that that can only be achieved if we can slow the reproduction rate so that it fits the system in which those horses are grazing, we would encourage BLM to open a door to research with respect to other ways of monitoring individual animals, and maybe these are long-term -- long-range chips, and that's been an area of active research in other fields for some time, but collars that drop off after two years have a wonderful benefit for two years.

After that they don't provide much information.

So I just would encourage BLM to be looking at the long-term need to know these individual -- these animals as individuals in order to track the success of treatments applied or

not applied.

On a separate topic, I would like us all to recognize and to keep population growth suppression has to move hand in hand with understanding that the budget dominance by money spent on holding is detrimental to the program in general.

A preferential use of program dollars is rangeland health improvement.

We can call that restoration.

We can call it whatever.

But that's the long-term better use of these dollars for horse health and healthy sustainable herds.

And I hope Kathy can be more succinct than I was because that was way -- all right.

Another point.

This board recognizes and appreciates that AML has problems, and it's a concept that people have criticized, and sometimes rightly so.

We know how it came to be historically and we know that it got established by different methods and difference places, and even recognizing that AML has some problems, this board would like to encourage BLM to encourage districts to make low AML compatible with reasonable climactic disaster.

This is in recognition of the fact that the desert is a highly variable environment, and when AML reflects only what can go on out there in an average year, you end up with situations like we saw at the beginning of this afternoon.

So I would encourage BLM to make low AML reflective of an extreme drought or something along -- something similar ecologically.

>> So what you're saying is actually to lower AML?

>> JULIE WEIKEL: I don't know.

Sometimes it may or may not be.

It's going to depend hugely on where that is.

>> F. WOHL: But it's my understanding that BLM does not set AML.

Is that a wrong assumption?

>> JULIE WEIKEL: It sets -- I'll let Dean take that.

It's subject to revision.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: AMLs are subject to revision and BLM does set AMLs, lows and highs, a range.

>> F. WOHL: I have always been told it was a committee that set AMLs, that there's a committee process with locals and they do --

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: Many of them were set through our Land Use Plan decisions, through EISs. Really it should be an implementation decision in Land Use Plans to manage horses and burros. The implementation then would set the AMLs and practices like population growth suppression that you're going to use to manage the herd.

That's the ideal.

But we do set AMLs.

>> F. WOHL: You just sunk my battleship.

You threw me a curve ball that blew me away.

I didn't think BLM could touch AMLs.

Every time when the past when the board has recommended that we were told it couldn't be

adjusted because it was a committee process.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: It's committee insofar as it's subject to public review and comment and scrutiny.

>> F. WOHL: I must have been drunk, but I sure recall it.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: If you noticed last year's AML number published in our end of year statistics were a little bit lower than this years.

It's not --

>> F. WOHL: Okay.

All right.

>> R. COPE: Isn't that done with an RMP either revision or amendment --

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: You could do it through a Land Use Plan revision through the RMP or we could make it an implementation decision and change it through an Environmental Assessment that would amend the RMP if that's where it sat.

But it's certainly not static, and like the Idaho AMLs, you could decide it's got a different AML, those ones that just burned up.

>> Regardless of AML, if the conditions warrant, you can take horses off because the range conditions.

>> Let me sink the rest of your battleship over there.

It's not a committee.

It's an interdisciplinary team.

>> F. WOHL: I -- I had hit that curve ball.

>> So the folks who know what's going on out there.

>> T. HARVEY: Fred, you're just down to a mine sweeper now.

>> Just for clarification, too, that knife can cut both ways.

If you talk about everything else we will talked about today, because of a fire -- or something that took a bunch of junipers out of an area, you know, some great precipitation and some land rehab, you could double an AML.

I mean, that's the -- that's the reality, you want it to track what's available.

>> Exactly.

It should be realistic for that particular part of the country and that particular ecosystem.

And respect the whole range of environmental circumstances.

>> I will agree with her on the idea -- the biggest reason to look hard at the low end of AML is because if I put -- if I put cows or sheep out on a place and I can load them up and take them away if the weather isn't cooperating, I can hedge my bet and maybe shoot for the mid or the high range.

But if I'm managing elk or pronghorn or particularly horses where you don't have that flexibility to reduce quickly because of weather conditions, you're better to carry a lower population -- a lower, healthier population that can survive.

I think that's where the low end is coming from.

>> Just a housekeeping question for our population suppression/growth Working Group, does this possibly belong better in the resource -- we talked about it because they're all interrelated --

>> I'm perfectly happy with it be in a resources.

>> May I ask another silly question?

I know I was told here today that it takes 10 or 15 years to adjust AMLs.

I know I was told that here today.

But if that's not true, why haven't we adjusted AMLs?

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: The 10 or 15 years was what I referred to as the life cycle of most Land Use Plans, Resource Management Plans.

>> F. WOEHL: That's where the AMLs are set?

>> That's where many of them have been set, but others have been set like almost -- like almost all the Nevada ones have through implementation after the Land Use Plan decided to manage for horses and burros, and it was an interdisciplinary team like Tupper talked about.

And the livestock AUMs, the horse AUMs and allocations all -- and wildlife are all considered at one time, and those decisions were made as one.

So the -- you can change it in five years if -- if you've got 10 years of drought that have happened.

You don't have to wait 10 or 15 years.

I think I probably confused the issue, and I apologize --

>> F. WOEHL: As a way of explanation, we don't have AMLs in Arkansas.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: So let me talk about the high and the low, where that came from.

Before population growth suppression was even thought about, a range -- it takes a herd about three to five years to double in numbers.

So our policy said, set the low at a level that in four or five years the high end would be achieved and you wouldn't be gathering every year to maintain AML.

That was periodic gathers to maintain AML.

So we're hoping with PGF that we extend the time periods between gathers, and it might take hopefully 10 years to get to the high end of the AML after -- if you were at the low end of the AML.

I guess I'm commenting that low end wasn't necessarily designed to align itself with climatic extremes like the drought.

It was more a matter of convenience and operational and capability.

>> I certainly understand that, and I think until we had this specter of three good tough drought years in a row we didn't recognize that the numbers need to reflect a little bit better, at least in the desert, what they're really up against sometimes, and we have good years, too.

Kathy, could I kind of help out with -- I know --

>> KATHIE LIBBY: Greatly appreciate, yes.

>> On number one we can finish that by saying keep our eye on the goal of supporting horses on the range with minimal interference.

I maybe didn't say that -- I like it better now.

Down in number 4, take the first dollar sign out.

Population growth suppression should move hand in hand with preferential use of program dollars currently used in long-term care.

Or rangeland health improvements.

And I think grammatically it's not too good after that.

With the goal of ultimate healthy, happy horses.

>> R. COPE: I'd leave it at healthy.

>> JULIE WEIKEL: I like happy horses.

>> One question on two, do you also want to include implementation and utilization of new tools as they become available.

I can't see it well to state --

>> JULIE WEIKEL: It doesn't state that, but that's beautiful language.

>> I bet he won't be able to say it again.

>> JULIE WEIKEL: Encourage BLM to use available tools -- to use available tools in the field to reduce population growth immediately, and implement promising new tools as quickly as possible as they become available.

Thanks, Cope.

>> R. COPE: One nit to pick in 5, I think you have three Cs in climatic.

I can't see it well.

I think there's a third C there.

>> JULIE WEIKEL: Let's take out and appreciate.

Let's say recognizing that AML concepts behind -- concepts behind AML have problems -- that AML has problems.

Even so, encourage BLM districts, let's do that to consider -- let's say use the word consider -- to consider low AML compatible with climatic disaster such as extreme drought.

To you like that better?

>> That's more resource, though.

>> JULIE WEIKEL: Let's move --

>> Who should we have or as a point for number 5 moving up to resources?

>> JULIE WEIKEL: That now -- do you know what you've done to my numbering system?

All right.

I'm giving it up.

I'm giving it up to Kathy.

These in charge of the numbering system.

I can't deal with it.

>> So we need -- as we work through these to perfect them.

Want as point person for -- how about if I do the long-term research.

>> JULIE WEIKEL: Is there not an additional point here that has to do with our expression of trying to use least traumatic handling methods.

I mean, you've -- it certainly fits here.

[off microphone]

We had language about that in one discussion.

>> In my mind I was satisfied with the response to the recommendation.

I felt there wasn't timely follow through or developing or considering developing those methods -- is that okay, Tim?

>> T. HARVEY: I'm sitting here listening and absorbing everything.

I think -- we're putting a lot of stuff down here these guys are doing why anyway.

I think we're spinning our wheels a little bit, to be honest with you, but I think this is the direction the BLM is going in, so I guess we're just reinforcing.

I think one of the things that the -- the tools, the population growth suppression tools that will be the least problematic in the field are the ones emphasis should be put on and I think we should reinforce that, that we want the BLM to go in, the IUD, for instance, because it doesn't

require EPA -- it's not a drug or anything like that, it's not a surgical procedure.

So the trials and stuff like that I would think might be quicker.

And the field -- some field trials might be quicker to do.

I think that if we're going to suggest -- if I were going to suggest anything in the population growth suppression efforts by the BLM would be to encourage them to prioritize the methods that have quickest potential for field use with the least complications to the horses.

I think the one touch as Julie brings up -- I refer to it as one touch.

You touch the horse one time and you don't have to touch it again.

One of the biggest objections to spaying mares are mostly based on emotions.

The thing that's the most positive aspect about spaying mares, in my view, is that you touch them once, and you never have to bother them again.

And there's a -- I mean -- anyway, we don't need to go down that road.

We have other things to talk about.

I would say reinforcing with the BLM to prioritize population growth suppression research and potential techniques that are going to be the easiest to implement in the field.

Does that make sense?

>> Thanks.

But maybe the --

>> It's really part of number 2, isn't it?

>> It is, right.

>> Bring it forward as quickly as you can --

>> And use the ones that would be most likely to be implemented sooner rather than later due to their -- it might be simpler if I just were the point person on all these, since they're somewhat related, and I'll call you if I get stuck.

>> You won't get stuck.

You'll be fine.

Dr. Cope?

You're good to go?

>> I do have one more correction.

In number 4, long-term care for rangeland health improvement.

Within HMAs.

I would like to add within HMAs, because these are dollars that are aimed at the Wild Horse and Burro Program.

So I think that we need to be -- define that.

>> F. WOEHL: I have a question about number 4.

You're talking about two separate budget items in the BLM budget, range health improvement and population growth suppression.

How can we move -- I mean, you know, you're talking about -- about doing something to cut down the number of horses, which is good, but then move that -- move that money -- I mean, I understand doing that, too, but I don't know if that's something BLM can do that easy.

Is it?

I don't know.

That's what I'm asking.

>> Do you mean move around between those two categories?

>> F. WOEHL: Is that a period?

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: We can put zero or as much as we can afford.

I can tell you the range improvement the couple thousand identified there was simply for water pipeline maintenance or fixing a spring to try to maintain waters.

It is not going to do any land use -- or any treatments of juniper or anything like that.

Those are hugely expensive projects.

>> F. WOEHL: And that's part of the interest and concern of the board is that there's not any of that being done, and I think that's what drove in.

And my question is, how hard is it for you to move that money if we do generate --

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: It's not line itemed by Congress.

We can put the money where we want, to answer your question.

>> And I think I caught different versions of that and I'm not so sure this is as clearly stated as you would like it to be.

It goes hand in hand with preferential use -- are you saying to balance expenditures between those two -- are you okay with it?

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: We need to fix it so we won't get mixed up on what you meant.

In an attempt sometime for the board to clarify these, if you want to send them back in a few days or something --

>> F. WOEHL: The way we set this up when BLM reviews them, that's why we got the name. You can contact them and get a clarification.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: I think I know what Julie means but I think there might be some room for interpretation, and we want to eliminate that.

>> Let's change number 4 to Julie so that you can clarify.

>> R. COPE: Julie are you trying to say as population growth suppression decreases that money should be moved Ford rangeland --

>> JULIE WEIKEL: To tie together -- what I think the board agreed is a better use in the really long-range picture from the -- you know, the 60,000-foot level, what really is good for our wild horses and burros and country as a whole, and that is to make the best sustainable rangelands we possibly can.

Right now we're diverting a whole lot of dollars elsewhere.

I wanted to make point, and we have talked about this extensively, so if I didn't quite capture what we meant by this, is that there's a place we should be making that investment, and right now it's siphoned off elsewhere.

>> The one other aspect of it, though, that -- I think it's true.

I just throw out about that, is there's -- there are a lot of pots of money out there that BLM could help direct -- BLM, not wild horse and burro -- that BLM could help direct towards the goal you're doing a great job of pointing out, the idea of making the range healthier.

It wouldn't necessarily have to come out of the WH&B budget.

Do you know what I mean?

If, for example, it's going to be all we can do to do suppression, we still would encourage the BLM to try to improve range conditions.

>> JULIE WEIKEL: Absolutely.

>> R. DANVIR: Perhaps other BLM pots and other things like that could be directed towards some of these HMAs, and it's -- you know, multiple benefits to multiple species by making the

range healthier.

Wouldn't necessarily come out of our budget.

>> We're losing the tie to the long-term health -- the long-term care dollars.

>> Program dollars used currently used in long term care --

>> I never intended this to be a direct budgetary transfer, and so pertinent to Fred's question, it never was a question about directly taking monies out of long-term care and putting them into population growth suppression.

That's not the point.

The point is that without an investment in growth suppression, the long-term care dollars just eat up every opportunity for us to do anything about restoration.

I used the phrase go hand in hand with, and I didn't really mean a direct transfer of dollars.

I would hope the public would come to recognize that we're not fixing problem until we take care of the ranges.

>> Where do you think that money should go with the herd number decrease and with the long-term care need decreases, where should that money go?

>> Rangeland health.

>> That's what you said.

Am I not wrong by -- I mean -- isn't that what you said, as population growth suppression decreases herd numbers, program dollars currently used for long-term care should be devoted to rangeland health improvements within HMAs with goal of happy, happy horses --

>> Come to think of it, Fred, I'm fine with that.

I think it helps -- I think the board convey their real big high-level long-term concerns to the public, which is that we have to get at the heart of this problem.

>> I'm okay.

>> Everybody good with population growth suppression?

Our last Working Group report is on increasing adoptions and sales, and our Working Group is Jen, Fred, John and June.

>> F. WOHL: We've talked about this a lot and I'm going to ask Jen if she would go ahead kind of talk about this and we'll add and --

>> JENNIFER SALL: As a committee we talked a lot about the mantle ranch in Worland, Wyoming.

I don't know --

[off microphone]

-- how the partnership works, but what we see out of -- he has a facility that holds up to 200 horses and I believe he adopts out about 100 a year after training for a period of weeks or months.

He sells/adopts to the public at about 100 horses a year.

It's quite successful.

I see these horses all the time in Wyoming being utilized, and it's -- I don't know what the recidivism rate is, but the word of mouth in Wyoming in seeing these horses first hand is it's quite successful who they turn out.

As a committee, we brainstormed, like, is it possible to create a plan for -- create a holistic training plan for horses in -- that are off range where we can adopt out differently, have halter gentled or horses who are used to being ridden more available to the public, and not just

through Mustang challenge and Mustang makeovers and inmate programs, prison programs, and I'm curious, I don't know what the adoption rate difference is there through those prison programs versus open adoptions, but the mantle ranch, my understanding, is one-of-a-kind in what they're doing, and I guess we are curious, Fred, about the potential creation of a more holistic training and adoption plan for these animals.

And second to that, I think, is it possible to target this in markets that have not yet been tapped with wild horses.

>> F. WOEHL: Basically the Eastern States and set up some of these storefront type things like Steve mantle has scattered throughout the Eastern States, along with that have some sort of short-term holding in these eastern state areas where people can come pick up horses, whether they're trained or not.

Another component that we talked long and hard about is financial benefit for people who adopt horses, and one of the things that we talked about at length, and I think it's a great idea, is that you go and get you a horse, keep this horse for a year, you train this horse, and at the end of the year you take the horseback, you apply for a title, and you have to go through a series of tests, if you will, and Tim had the remarkably brilliant idea of maybe having a Mustang-only horse show where you could show this horse could load in the trailer easy, you could pick up all four feet, you know, everything you needed to do to this horse, and when that happened, you applied for the title of the horse, and BLM gave you a check for X amount of dollars.

It would be a lot cheaper -- currently the cost of keeping these horses in long-term care based on what I saw when I added up and sub tracked and all that, was almost \$2800 a year.

If you do that over the lifetime of the horse, that's quite a bit of money.

If you can get rid of these horses -- I don't mean get rid of these horses, but you can find these horses good homes and offset that cost of them having to train that horse and feed that horse for the first year, give them a thousand or \$1500 when they show this horse is trained, and is going to have a useful life, we have cut that down tremendously.

It's out of BLM's hands.

It's in the hands of someone that loves this horse.

>> T. HARVEY: It's a structured incentive payment so you're paying less than half what it would cost to keep the horse in short-term holding that year and the horse now rather than in a holding pen is in somebody's hands and it becomes a good using horse and other folks see it, and when other folks see it, other folks want it.

Like I've always said, the best advertisement for these horses is just a well-used horse.

Wet saddle blankets and dirty tack.

>> It's a tiny detail but you remove -- that is the compliance check where you get the title and --

>> T. HARVEY: It's the compliance check.

It's your titling to the animal.

And the other thing is you are showcasing the horse in a noncompetitive fashion.

I mean, I applaud the extreme Mustang makeover has done an awful lot to bring attention to the horses, but not everybody has that competitive edge to them that they want to compete.

In fact, I think most people don't.

There is a segment of the horse people, but I would say three out of four folks that I know of are just trail riding and enjoying their horses, that they're not competing, and so this is going to

be your mark -- you're now taking and addressing 75% of the potential horse owners out there in the program with an incentive for them to take one of these horses into their homes and once they're in their homes they're solidly in their hearts.

That's the biggest thing to me.

>> An added advantage that just came to mind, if you select those basic handling skills -- what I'm hearing you say, it also brings emphasis to a humane handling and the gentle handling, because many of these people just want a Mustang, and they don't want to perform it. But one of the challenges is, like you've said before, three years, four years down the road, they still have the rope halter that it came with, meaning it hasn't had any routine healthcare because they can't catch it.

So that program could really educate -- be -- you know.

>> T. HARVEY: It's an education program, and the pickup on the horses could even be -- the way my brain works, but the process of distributing the horses at a drop-off could also become a clinic opportunity to teach some folks some basic skills on -- these horses do need to be handled -- all horses need to be handled with respect.

By respect I mean the human needs to respect the animal.

But these animals need a different touch than domestic horses do.

They really do.

If they're handled softly and if they're handled with empathy and compassion and quality at the beginning, these horses -- I mean, I cannot believe what I can get from my mustangs compared to other horses.

They just give you so much of their heart, and so what Sue is saying, she and I are on the same page big time, and the quality of the initial handling of these horses has got such a huge impact on the rest of their life.

This is an opportunity to affect all that all the way down the line.

To me it's just -- it's just a win situation all the way through.

>> F. WOHL: Dean, I've got a question for you on this.

This is something that's unique.

I mean, something we've not ever approached.

Do you think that it would be feasible or possible or even more beneficial to set up a BLM group, including BLM employees and a couple of the board members, to kind of flesh this out a little bit more where it would be more beneficial?

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: -- get something done to get back to the board and the board could be engaged to help flesh this out.

Washington Office representative could be engaged to help flesh this out.

And we've all been talking about more storefronts and distribution points in the east.

So our Eastern States team should be involved.

I haven't glanced over my shoulder see what Miss Holle' Hooks impressions are.

We've used incentives in the program before.

New Mexico piloted a program where -- when they applied for title they were eligible for \$500. But this adds the thing, the component, that there's a training standard here to come back to, and --

>> The beauty of this is that I think the standard that would be the -- to me the most beneficial would be a standard established for the comfort of the horse so that you can demonstrate that

the horse can be led comfortably, can trailer load without being forced into the trailer by six people and a broom and that kind of thing.

There's also an opportunity here, a lateral opportunity here, for tip trainers, people that have some experience with mustangs, in that we may be able to do something in conjunction with the Mustang heritage foundation or something like that to get some assistance for people that want some help with training, that want to do this and say, you know -- there's a lot of little tangents much could possibly come off this, too.

>> F. WOHL: Madam chair, if I may start a new recommendation that BLM form a Working Group with all interested parties, BLM employees, and BLM advisory board, the two that I'm thinking -- or the three currently would be Jen, Tim and myself, and one more at your picking to flesh this out and present it at the next board meeting.

John, too?

>> Excuse me.

I guess I'm a little confused.

There is a Working Group from the BLM on adoption.

I don't know why we would need to form another group.

Could that group not be -- do that?

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: Certainly.

That's most appropriate.

I had forgotten we had that one.

>> Because Debbie Collins is the contact and she's the contact on both groups, and I don't know whether she's had a chance to research that or not, but she was going to see who was on the -- what did you find out?

>> Just remember, when you get back to it, you can look at the language I have been recording to see if it's anywhere near close.

>> I did find the attachment.

In fact, I emailed it -- Kathy said if we need to put it up on the screen we could.

Basically, this is kind of funny, the group that you all are talking about that you just reported out on, that was actually the BLM formed group.

You didn't have an advisory board forum group for adoptions when I went back and looked.

Yours were, I think, ecotourism, which is when I found out I was your point of contact, and, Kathy, I don't know if you can pull up the other ones -- it's -- it's -- okay.

Yeah, it's working groups.

This might help everybody, because we'll be able to see -- there were three or four BLM forum working groups and three or four advisory board working groups, and this shows the people that are attached to those.

>> Right, I mean, I'm well aware that BLM has a Working Group forum for adoptions, but what this is something above and beyond just adoptions.

>> Yeah, but that says adoption and sales.

>> I think --

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: We're talking about forming a group specific to this endeavor, correct?

>> F. WOHL: Yes.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: This would be specific -- it would be an incentive project.

>> F. WOHL: And instead of the board and Debbie working, it would be the board and people

that are doing this.

I mean -- do you know what I mean?

It would be the Eastern States.

And the people that are in the field doing this, coming up with a program --

>> You're talking about a whole different working group, has nothing to do with the adoption --

>> F. WOEHLE: It has to do with formulating this program.

>> Maybe if you would look at the language, maybe that's what's going on here.

What is the specific proposal?

What is it focused on?

Because I just wrote down what I heard but it was just kind of going from person to person.

And then you can decide whether you need a new Working Group --

>> June just asked me about the working groups and that's why I looked up the information for her.

>> F. WOEHLE: The way I presented this was that BLM form a multi-disciplinary, if you will, broad-based -- BLM employees with board members to develop an incentive, adoption, training program tool -- Tim, take over.

>> If I just as a member of the public -- like is there an Avenue right now between the BLM to -- to train -- is there an Avenue for someone of the public to do what the Mantles are doing? How do you start that process?

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: Maybe I'll call on Debbie.

We have one contracted the Mantle contract to acquire and train horses and then we have the prison training programs and then we have the Mustang heritage foundation.

>> If I could just add to that, I think Tim was referencing earlier there's a lot of people that don't like to compete.

You're correct, there's a lot of people that do like to train but don't like to compete.

That's where the trainer incentive program practice comes in to help those people.

They help us get these trained animals, and that's what we were discussing last night, Holle', the foundation and I were updating Dean and Mike on things that we're working on for 2016 to increase the amount of opportunities to bring in trainers that can train even more animals in 2016 on the East Coast.

Those would not necessarily be people that would go to extreme Mustang makeovers.

We also have a couple other things that we've been kind of kicking around but they're not as formulated yet.

But that is something that we've already actively -- or have in plans for 2016 with the foundation.

>> T. HARVEY: With all due respect on the [inaudible] program I know at least 8 or 10 people that have told me their tip trainers out east and all of them told me the same thing, they can't get horses.

>> That's what we're trying to fix.

>> T. HARVEY: I understand that, and I've been saying this for five years, six years I've been on this board, and it's not just the tip trainers we're talking about.

I think where Fred is thinking is, this idea isn't for -- necessarily for the professional trainers.

This is for all those other folks out there that aren't professional trainers that want the opportunity to do something, and it's an incentive -- I mean, it's a whole -- there's a whole lot

more folks out there that aren't professional trainers than are.

We need to open up every Avenue possible.

I'm not looking to set up something to compete with the tip program, and this actually could be something done in conjunction with tip trainers, as I had said before.

>> I don't think it would compete --

>> T. HARVEY: I think it complements it.

>> It's a parallel and I think it's something the foundation could help with, is the reason I'm kind of interested in this program, because I think it would tie right into what they're already doing, and as far as having trouble getting horses, the foundation could help in that situation for people who want to get horses because they're doing that all the time.

>> T. HARVEY: I think the beauty of this thing is you're taking a concept like Jen is talking about with the Mantle by establishing some focal points out east that would become drop-off points, it would also be the reconvening points that people would go back to with their horses to get their certification, and basically -- it would be -- they would be certifying them as good equine citizens or whatever --

>> J. FALEN: We've discussed it quite a bit here, but I think it's fine.

>> T. HARVEY: To hash out the details is easy.

We just need to know if the BLM is interested in the concept.

>> F. WOHL: I have no problem with using the existing Working Group, but I didn't know if you could add more to it.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: I think we have that purview to put whatever BLM team members on it to make it work.

I heard two concepts here.

One is more storefronts and providing incentives and it sounds like that might be aimed at people who adopt untrained animals.

The second thing you were talking about is the mantle type contracts.

Then BLM has been working on another concept that hasn't been publicized yet, but it involves another layer of training animals, making them available to adopters, and then maybe even trained on the foundation of halter rope, tied, stand, loading train trailers.

We had some other things our staff has been working on some of this stuff.

We can't flesh it all out here, but let's put the team to work and give them some outline of a goal here.

Let's decide if it's storefronts and incentives, is that one thing, and then do you want us to consider, secondly, more trained animals through contracts?

>> I think one is planning and implementation for wild horse training with a specific -- with a plan for the East Coast, which it sounds like a lot of this is in the works.

>> Just so you know, the contracting part, that's one of the things that Dean was referring to than we've been trying to flesh out.

It's a lot more complicated for BLM to do contracting for -- like Steve Mantle.

Steve is maybe one of eight that survived a project we tried to do that many years ago, and that's why the tip program is much cleaner for the BLM because we don't have to be involved in trying to reimburse multiple trainers through multiple contracts.

So that's why we are -- just trying to say everything should be tip training, I don't want you to think that.

It's just we've been trying all these different avenues looking at opportunities and that is one of the cleaner ways for us as a government agency to be able to reimburse someone that wants to do that kind of training.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: The concept is more trained horses, be it whatever.

We can use our imaginations to create --

>> Then the second being the incentivized adoption, plan for incentivized adoption.

>> F. WOHL:

>> J. FALEN: Bottom line, it all adds up, adopting out more horses.

>> So you're saying there actually is not supposed to be a board adoption committee?

>> Well, when we looked up the chart that Sarah sent out, it showed the BLM forum and it showed the advisory board formed, and I believe -- let's see.

Which tab are you on?

Okay.

So you can see just that one says.

>> You have the public comment, the support volunteer resources, population growth suppression, herd area -- sorry -- reproduction --

>> Repopulation.

>> Repopulation.

Okay.

And then we have -- and that's what I was explaining to you all the other morning, I didn't realize -- I had been now the new lead for the BLM formed adoption sales committee and that's why I wanted to update you all on some things after this meeting since Fred was out last week. We also have a comprehensive animal welfare program, increasing adoptions and sales and ecosanctuaries.

So -- when you were and I were talking earlier, that's why you and I were confused because you had an adoption idea and you were trying to remember what group you were presenting it from.

So this cleared it up.

>> So then we don't have a Working Group on the board from the advisory board?

>> No, apparently you and I were right, that wouldn't make sense.

So I guess we were right.

It didn't make sense.

>> So why have I been on the Working Group for the last four years?

>> I don't recall who had it before, to be honest with you, I'm sorry.

I just inherited sometime this year, I guess.

>> Can you send us at some point an email with this chart?

>> We did get one.

Sarah sent us one.

She emailed us one.

That's how I actually stumbled across it.

>> I apologize.

I didn't see that.

>> No problem.

Thank you very much.

>> Are you comfortable with our wording on these?

>> I mean, I probably -- I was hoping that somebody would take a look and tell us what language --

>> F. WOHL: Here we go.

Brand-new one.

We're going to start over.

BLM and board members to develop a comprehensive program utilizing the following:

Incentives for adopters -- incentives for adopters who train horses -- who train their horse.

More pick-up places, I.E., storefronts in the east.

Explore training facilities in the East -- not like, but -- comparable to the Mantle Ranch -- similar to the Mantle, M-A-N-T-L-E,.

>> Were we going to put anything about you want to develop -- you got incentives for adopters.

>> How about just incentivize adoption.

>> F. WOHL: That makes better sense.

Incentivize adoptions.

>> R. COPE: Under the B. don't you want that to be e.g. instead of i.e.

>> F. WOHL: The current BLM formed adoption committee on the board will serve.

I mean -- June, do you want to -- you want to serve on this, don't you?

No?

>> J. SEWING: Yes, sure.

>> F. WOHL: Current BLM formed -- the current committee members on this BLM formed board will serve, or something like that.

>> Current BLM Working Group?

>> F. WOHL: Yeah.

>> T. HARVEY: So who --

>> You don't have one of those.

>> Yes, we do.

We have a BLM formed adoption committee.

>> Sorry, I thought that was BLMers.

You do have board members on it.

Got you.

>> F. WOHL: And we're going to add one more, if the board approves it.

I think we're going to add Tim.

If everybody don't mind.

>> Tim is already on here.

Rick --

>> F. WOHL: No, he's not.

It's Jim, Fred, John and June.

>> T. HARVEY: I'm listed as an external expert.

>> F. WOHL: That's the --

>> T. HARVEY: Or is that something --

>> F. WOHL: That's the ecosanctuary.

Add Tim.

Tim, does that look good?

>> T. HARVEY: Looks good to me.

>> F. WOHL: June, does that look good?

John, does that look good?

>> R. COPE: We're curious, is the ecosanctuary that's listed in here under tab 6, is that actually the one that's listed -- these are minutes from last meeting, aren't they?

It says ecosanctuary under tab 6.

Which -- we're lost.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: I can try to address that.

There was a committee that was devoted to ecotourism, and there was a second and different committee, as I understand it, devoted to the terms and conditions that we would solicit for new ecosanctuaries, two very different things, even though ecosanctuaries -- a component of that is ecotourism.

Ecotourism is not necessarily associated with an ecosanctuary might be a different way to say this.

For example, Julie was talking about that for Oregon.

>> Because we've been discussing ecotourism in our discussions.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: That's the history of why there's two different committees.

You could have the same one --

>> R. COPE: One shows up in the minutes from last spring but not in today's listings and vice versa.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: I don't know if one of my predecessors eliminated that group.

We can reconstitute it if we need it.

Let's leave the list today as it was submitted to you.

>> Are we set with adoptions?

So that concludes the Working Group and the recommendations.

I'll turn it back to our chairman Fred.

>> T. HARVEY: Fred, is Jason still here?

There he is.

>> While he is coming up, we did print out for you the wording of the resources recommendations in case you wanted to do any further refinement.

I'm just going to pass them around.

You can --

>> T. HARVEY: Jason, I had gotten an email from somebody that was very, very excited about the overlay map, and actually I got quite a few from the time that was printed.

One of them had an interesting suggestion, and I don't know if it's something we can incorporate.

I want to ask you real quick.

Will there be an interactive point that folks could ask for an overlay that maybe it doesn't exist, like one of them wanted to know, will there be like an overlay for AUMs or an HMA or anything like that?

My thought was rather than get down into the nitty-gritty, sit possible to simply put in like a place you could click and say, not finding what you need, tell us what you need, or something like that that people could do?

Is that something people could incorporate?

Okay.

That would be rather simple than try to figure out what everybody wants.

If somebody can't find what they need there, have an easy, visible place for them to say can I find that?

On scale of 1 to 10, that thing is about a 15 in my opinion.

>>(inaudible).

>> Did you say we're through --

>> F. WOHL: No, we're not through.

No!

No, no, no, no, no.

>> I wanted to add one clarification to the he recommendation I made in regards to financial donations.

I realize --

>> F. WOHL: If you'll hold that thought we're going to start at the top and go through each one and vote on it and at that time you can make your change.

Does that sound okay?

>> Sure.

>> F. WOHL: Thank you.

>> You're the boss.

>> F. WOHL: I'm not the boss.

Start at the top.

What I plan to do, board -- Julie, get back in your chair.

Lord, Lord.

We're going to take each one of these at a time.

If you have any other comments -- first, let me ask this, do we need to take a five-minute break?

We're going to take -- I'm trusting you all to get back here at 4:20 by my watch in five minutes.

[recess]

>> F. WOHL: The way we're going to address this is we're going to start at the very beginning, take each of the board recommendations we have, talk about them, read them, make any changes that the board needs to make, and then we're going to go to vote on them.

That's the way we're going to do this.

Wait until the last two -- we're still missing one.

It's one that he mentioned, too.

I guess we'll go to number 2 and wait for him to come back.

Number 2.

Julie, it's one that you're the key person on, so you can read it.

>> JULIE WEIKEL: Encourage BML -- oh, my gosh, not a good start -- encourage BLM to proceed with using pasture rotations for horses wherever feasible with respect to HMAs.

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

>> F. WOHL: Does anybody have any comment or any changes or anything they'd like to bring up about this recommendation of the board?

>> What's written up here, and I believe what you said are two different things, is that correct?

>> F. WOHL: What?

>> Number 2.

You started with 2.

>> F. WOHL: Because Cope wasn't here.

>> Cathy, that was the most polite d that was the -- that was so polite.

That was amazing.

>> F. WOHL: All right.

If no one has any problems, if nobody has any changes to number 2, we will submit it as a recommendation.

Everybody agree?

Anybody don't?

Okay.

Cope, would you read number 1?

That's yours.

>> R. COPE: I did give -- I just blanked on out Kathy.

I gave Kathy a slight modification.

It says BLM is encouraged to proceed with current programmatic EIS and ensure that an extensive outreach and consultation effort is instituted to expand and intensify relationships with all cooperating agencies.

>> F. WOHL: Any comments?

Any questions?

All right, I'm asking the board, is everybody in agreement with recommendation number 1?

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: May I ask a question?

There seems to be -- maybe it's assumed here, but BLM is encouraged to proceed with the current programmatic EIS.

Maybe it goes without saying.

>> R. COPE: I don't think it says without current -- that was the last recommendation, if I can find it.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: You mean proceed with a programmatic EIS.

>> F. WOHL: Cake out current, Miss Kathy, and Pooh 56789.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: That's not my point.

Do you want to clarify --

>> R. COPE: Just took last spring's, which said the BLM is encouraged to proceed with the current KH&B and programmatic EIS.

At this point I think we're wanting basically to Mav ahead with the programmatic EIS that at the moment according to the response the BLM is considering but hasn't yet decided on.

So I wanted to change that from current, I believe.

So just say -- yeah, BLM is encouraged to proceed with a programmatic EIS.

I would go with that.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: So it probably goes without saying but my point was going to be a programmatic EIS for what?

To evaluate on range management alternatives is --

>> R. COPE: We should specify that.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: You don't mean to evaluate the adoption program.

>> R. COPE: I thought it would be more to see if the he board members came to the meeting in

mass --

>> F. WOHL: To -- to develop on range --

>> Let's ask Dean to provide us with the phraseology that you used because we're talking about the same EIS --

>> F. WOHL: He just did.

>> Let's use their terminology.

>> F. WOHL: We just did.

>> R. COPE: We just did.

To evaluate on range alternatives.

>> F. WOHL: I'm sorry.

All right.

Now, Mr. Cope -- Dr. Cope, would you read that again, please.

>> R. COPE: BLM is encouraged -- do you know how hard it is to see from over here --

>> F. WOHL: Do you want me to read it for you?

BLM is encouraged to proceed with a programmatic EIS to evaluate on-range alternatives and ensure an extensive outreach and consulting effort is instituted to expand and intensify relationships with all cooperating agencies.

I don't think we have a lot of them words back Arkansas.

I have never used them before.

Anybody have any problems with that?

If not, everybody okay with it?

Anybody not?

All right.

Going on to number 3, Miss June, that's yours.

>> J. SEWING: Apply best management practices through restoration of rested pastures.

>> F. WOHL: Is this the one you wanted to make changes to?

No, it's the other one.

I remember now.

All right.

>> J. SEWING: They can interpret that any way they want.

>> F. WOHL: There you go, Dean.

It's wide open.

All right.

Everybody okay with recommendation number 4 -- number 3, rather?

Everybody good?

Anybody don't like it or not in agreement with it?

All right.

Number 3 is good.

Number 4, we have two of these from Rick and Jen.

Since Rick is closer to my age I'll let him read 4 and let Jen read number 5 because it has more words.

>> Consider wild horse and -- monitor -- [inaudible]

>> F. WOHL: Any more discussion?

Any comment?

>> J. FALEN: Question for Tupper.

Would that make more sense if it said appropriate and -- appropriate and multiple scales?

>> Yeah, it would.

>> J. FALEN: Just appropriate and multiple scales.

Fro in or and?

In or and?

>> J. FALEN: And.

>> F. WOHL: At appropriate and multiple scales.

Would you hold that still, Kathy?

All right.

Everybody in agreement with number 4?

Anybody have any more comments, questions?

Concerns?

All those in favor.

All those against, say something.

It carries.

Number 4 is good.

All right, Jen.

>> T. HARVEY: I think you can say --

[multiple voices]

And concept of re -- on reproducing herds.

>> F. WOHL: Any -- any discussion?

Anybody have any objections?

It's good.

Number 5 carries.

All right.

And, Rick, did you have something else you wanted to bring up at this point or do you want to wait until the end?

Is --

>> R. DANVIR: Until the end.

>> F. WOHL: All right.

Number 6, Julie, that's you.

Would you please talk in the mic?

>> JULIE WEIKEL: Deadline of 2020 to achieve appropriate AMLs in the 22HMAs in sagebrush focal areas is too far out.

Therefore, the board asks BLM to expedite reaching AML in the 22HMAs containing sagebrush focal areas as quickly as possible utilizing all effective tools.

>> F. WOHL: Board asks BLM to expedite -- utilizing all effective tools.

Any comments?

Discussion?

Anybody object?

All right.

It carries.

Number 6 is approved.

Number 7.

Rick and Julie, since you did the last one, Julie, I'll let Rick do this one.

>> R. DANVIR: Continue and expand efforts to embrace and implement cohesive strategy to make HMA landscapes fire resistant.

>> F. WOHL: Questions?

>> R. COPE: Cohesive strategy should be capitalized because it is a specific strategy rather than a generic -- [inaudible]

>> F. WOHL: Any more comments?

Any objections?

All right.

Number 7 is good.

Number 8.

I'll just go ahead and take it since I messed up.

Bring back to board three alternatives to achieve AML in all HMAs.

>> Fred, I would like to add a qualifier to that.

I would like to include a time line or a -- you know an idea of when things would be accomplished.

>> F. WOHL: Instead of bring back, could we say present to the board?

>> R. DANVIR: Sure.

>> F. WOHL: Present to the board --

>> R. DANVIR: What I mean is a time line.

>> F. WOHL: Kathy, it needs to say: present to the board three alternatives, including a time line, to achieve AML in all HMAs.

Is that right now, Rick?

>> R. DANVIR: Yes, I think that says it.

>> F. WOHL: I think that's good.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: Does the board want to suggest a time line or leave it up to us?

Not any longer than 25 years.

>> T. HARVEY: Rick, let me ask you something on this, was this something you would like for the resource subcommittee to be able to work on to have a -- or to consider in order to have some kind of response or some kind of interaction by the next meeting?

>> We're asking BLM to bring us the ideas and then we'll look at them.

>> T. HARVEY: What I am trying to find out is, is the subcommittee looking for something to work on so that you've got -- working on something between now and the next meeting or something to look at the next meeting?

>> R. DANVIR: I would like them to put it together, bring us a proposal.

Next meeting would be great.

>> T. HARVEY: That's why I'm asking.

Dean was asking about time lines.

>> R. DANVIR: But the time line I'm referring to is within the proposal, when will you -- in each of those three alternatives, at what year -- at what point in the future would you achieve AML?

>> Rick, you're asking, when do we get to AML?

>> T. HARVEY: I'm just trying to cipher this out.

The likes like you're asking why for a time line when they're going to get the proposals.

>> R. DANVIR: I'm not sure how best to say it.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: I understand.

>> R. DANVIR: And as to when, it's ASAP.

>> F. WOEHLE: Any more comments?

>> R. DANVIR: That's what --

>> F. WOEHLE: Dean understands it.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: That's why I asked the question.
We can give you a plan in 10 years, we can give you a plan in five years.
We can give you a plan in 25 years.
It's all going to cost very much different amounts of money.

>> F. WOEHLE: That's what we need to do.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: We'll bring it --

>> R. COPE: Dean is there a possibility of inserting in there potential variable events as well?

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: Yes.

>> R. COPE: I think that's also what we would like to see should Congress change over Strick shuns you have.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: Here the kind of things we'll think about, maybe gather only to achieve AML quickly as an alternative.
Maybe gather with PZP many treatments.
Does that get you to AML or not.
How much does it cost?
Maybe we combine sterilizations and mix that up with gathers and here is how long it takes and how much it costs.
There's innumerable numbers of combinations to do things here.

>> Might want of those alternatives include the possibility of no longer having a restriction on unlimited sale?

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: I guess it depends on how broad this analysis is.
If it entails an economic analysis of all the costs and holding --

>> Using current regulations.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: Okay.
That's a sidebar that's helpful.

>> R. COPE: I would like to see, Mr. Chairman, one alternative that would include the cost and time line to reach AML pre-rider.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: Without the rider?

>> R. COPE: If that rider weren't there, what would happen.
That's what I'm talking about various Congressional action.
Should Congress revoke the rider and go back to the original wild horse and burro act, what's the possibility and what would it cost?

>> J. FALEN: I like the suggestion of sale without limitation, but what you said, Fred, we know what the answer is going to be if we don't have some changes.
It isn't going to be any different than it is now.
I would be totally in favor of making a concerted effort to try to change the law.

>> F. WOEHLE: I don't want to put words in anybody's mouth, I think why the committee made this recommendation is so that they can show and why Cope made his addition, so they can

show if they continue on without, this is what's going to happen, how long it's going to take, how much it's going to cost.

But if they do it this way, this is what it's going to cost, and you said --

>> J. FALEN: I'll sure go along with that, if you can make a comparison of what's going to happen without authority and what's going to continue to be --

>> How about if we bring you -- before we flesh them out fully, three or four options that you can look at and say yeah, work on this one, work on this one -- there is an innumerable amount of options here.

So we'll do some of the stuff --

>> T. HARVEY: That sounds reasonable.

One of my concerns of falling back on sales authority sales is that becomes a relief valve that may lower the enthusiasm for finding on-range solutions, that every so many years you resort to sales -- to dump excess horses.

I think not having that is maybe the motivator that finds a solution that's better overall for the range and for everything else.

That's my concern.

>> J. FALEN: I still don't think --

>> T. HARVEY: I'm just saying, I'm voicing my concern, John, I don't want to debate it.

You and I disagree on that.

I love you anyway.

>> F. WOHL: Kathy, let's don't add that last sentence.

Let's just keep it as it was.

>> T. HARVEY: What, that I love John?

>> That would be a good with.

>> F. WOHL: Nope, the one you just added.

BLM to provide some draft options.

Take that out.

Yes.

Yes.

And then at the top in front of alternatives add draft.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: I think what's being said here is BLM will develop three or four alternatives that we think may hit the mark, some combination of things, and we'll bring it to Julie and Rick and then they can say thumbs up and then we'll flesh them out and do the economic analysis and all that stuff.

>> There you go.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: Okay.

Thank you.

>> F. WOHL: Any comments?

More comments?

Any more concerns?

>> J. FALEN: I would like to put on the table again that on the sale authority is one of the options is that they study this thing and see -- usually that was one -- use that as one of the alternatives, because the way we're going we need to know what the problems are going to be out there if we don't do the sale authority.

We know all these other things.

>> It's in there, John.

>> J. FALEN: But -- to study the sale authority by itself?

>> Yes.

Yes.

>> One alternative that includes AML without the rider.

>> J. FALEN: Without the rider.

Yeah, okay.

I can buy that.

>> F. WOEHL: Any more comments?

Concerns?

Anybody disagree?

All right.

Moving on to number 9 --

>> KATHIE LIBBY: My comment is that we have 18 minutes.

>> F. WOEHL: I hate to do this to you, Kathy, but I'm the board chair and we're going through this if it takes us all night.

>> KATHIE LIBBY: I just don't know we'll be live streaming.

>> F. WOEHL: Tickles me to death.

They don't need to see my fate anymore anyway.

Julie go ahead.

>> JULIE WEIKEL: Recognizing AML, that the concept of AML has problems, period.

Even so, we encourage BLM districts to reconsider a low AML compatible with climatic disasters such as extreme drought.

>> Paul pointed out it that should be high AML.

You want it to get higher than what you could handle in the [inaudible]

>> Actually, I was feeling that that was a little -- almost contradictory in some respects.

>> Animal -- I want the small number to be what it can handle in a tough year.

>> I think Julie is --

>> I think what she is saying is to manage as close as possible to the low never so you don't get into situations where --

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: If I might make a mistake if you had a low AML compatible with the disaster but your AML allowed you to go higher number, it's -- the high -- is -- then you would be managing below that.

>> JULIE WEIKEL: If you set the high AML compatible with the disaster, you realize -- we'd have to lower --

>> No, no.

>> F. WOEHL: If you say we don't have any grass so the AML for this area is 6, that's a high AML --

>> JULIE WEIKEL: The AML is set prior to the drought.

It's just the range that the BLM district has to --

>> AML is not a static number.

And it's a pretty fluid number.

And the BLM has a lot of leeway to adjust the numbers on the range dependent on what's

going on there.

That's my understanding.

>> JULIE WEIKEL: That's right.

I want the low end to be a number that they can sustain in the face of the severe drought.

>> Julie, can I ask you a question.

I hear people talking two different things.

You're talking about setting the potential low population size equal to what you could have in a drought.

You're not saying hold the horse population at that number?

>> Absolutely not.

Because by definition what this --

>> Take two numbers -- within this range -- any--

>> I understand -- all right.

>>

>> JULIE WEIKEL: I want to give the range managers the option of having a realistic number in a tough year.

>> T. HARVEY: I really don't see the need for one this one.

I think the range managers and BLM -- there is quite a variation in AML in -- I mean, it seems like they have enough flexibility --

>> F. WOHL: This is one of those things --

>> We're down here in the weeds is what I think.

>> F. WOHL: We can't encourage the district to do anything.

We can encourage the national office to encourage the District Office, but our report and any recommendations goes to them.

See what we're saying?

>> JULIE WEIKEL: I agree with that.

So we can take out the word districts.

It's whether or not Washington decides to pass this on down to the districts.

That's their choice.

>> F. WOHL: Okay.

>> T. HARVEY: I don't go along with number 9 at all, period.

>> JULIE WEIKEL: You don't think AML's should be compatible --

>> T. HARVEY: The NAS study has recommended to the BLM to review AML, and I'm pretty sure that that's in the process, correct?

Or something you're doing?

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: They asked us to reevaluate our policies about how we establish AML and the monitoring that goes along with it and the data that feeds into setting AML.

That's what they asked us to do.

>> T. HARVEY: We beat the hell out of this a couple meetings ago, and that was my understanding, is that you guys were already doing this, right?

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: We haven't undertaken rewriting our manual.

It's a massive project and we don't have it on a high priority --

>> T. HARVEY: But it's on your ray tar screen --

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: It is but it's not going to be done any time soon.

>> One thing you said, Tim, made sense to me, if the BLM already has the ability to do this, I don't know that we need to reiterate it.

>> T. HARVEY: Right.

And I think Soda Creek is a perfect example.

Right now they had the fire.

They pulled the horses off.

They've got the flexibility to adjust to range conditions and to disasters and everything else.

I just -- to me it's -- it's -- we're getting down in the weeds with them, and I just don't think that's -- I don't think that's our role on this particular one.

I just think it's -- I understand the intention of what you're looking for, but -- I think they do a pretty good job with it already.

So --

>> Does it make it sound better and possibly fit, Dean, with what's going on now, BLM should structure AML's so the low extreme can sustain herds despite climatic change?

>> JULIE WEIKEL: I like that language.

>> [inaudible]

>> R. COPE: BLM should structure AML so that the low extreme can sustain herds despite climatic change.

>> F. WOHL: What do you think about that?

>> T. HARVEY: I like that a whole lot better than the other one.

I just think for us to say that AML has problems -- it's just -- it just had the living BEJESUS bead out of it.

Delete, delete, delete.

>> F. WOHL: Good job, Cope.

Anybody have any more questions?

Comments?

Any objections to number 9?

Okay.

All nine from the resource have been approved.

Volunteer Working Group recommendations.

Number 1, develop strategy to train and use more qualified volunteers to support wild horse and burro activities off range and on range.

Questions?

Comments?

Anybody disagree?

Carried.

Number 2, June, this is yours.

>> J. SEWING: I can't see it.

>> F. WOHL: Develop strategy to publicize needs in local areas so financial donors are aware of opportunities to support Wild Horse and Burro Program.

This is one you wanted to revise.

Do you want me to read it again slower?

>> J. SEWING: I didn't really want to --

>> F. WOHL: I didn't mean that -- I didn't mean it that way.

>> J. SEWING: I know I'm old but I'm not dumb yet.

>> F. WOHL: June, I didn't mean it that, really.

If I would have thought about it, but I didn't intentionally mean that like that.

>> J. SEWING: I don't know whether it needs -- it just needs a clarification because I realize the BLM does not have the vehicle to accept money or donations themselves, but there is a way to do it in which we've always done, is that we purchase material.

BLM orders the material, they send us the bill, and we pay for it.

That's just a matter of clarification when you're looking at whether --

>> I don't think we need to go to that level.

I think the spirit what you are saying is captured there.

>> J. SEWING: But I don't want them to come back and say, we can't take money.

>> [inaudible]

>> J. SEWING: Financial is the main part of it.

>> F. WOHL: At the end of the sentence where it says program, space, by purchasing material and items.

>> J. SEWING: Supplies.

>> F. WOHL: By purchasing materials and supplies.

Is that better, June?

>> J. SEWING: Yeah.

>> F. WOHL: Okay.

I'm going to read it again.

Develop strategy to publicize needs in local areas so financial donors are aware of opportunities to support the Wild Horse and Burro Program by purchasing materials and supplies.

>> J. SEWING: When you say local areas, should that be like districts in it sounds like local areas means like you're -- you know, that you're just -- that the area's community --

>> F. WOHL: Why don't we take out the whole "in the local area" because we did that in one up above.

Because we're national going down.

So delete "in local areas."

In other words, we're asking the national office to let the local offices know that they need to make financial donors aware of opportunities.

>> J. SEWING: Right.

Are you frowning, Dean?

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: I was trying to read the next one.

>> F. WOHL: Any more comments, concerns, objections?

It carried.

Number 3, that's yours, Cope.

I'll read it for you.

BLM in conjunction with other fed agencies should explore the possibility of establishing -- I'm waiting -- collaborative groups -- I'm just going to wait a bit.

>> R. COPE: Should be regarding the management of specific HMAs.

I'm reading the old one.

What's the last -- last spring number 8 needs to come out of there because that's obviously what it is.

I think it said groups --

>> F. WOHL: I've got it.

Do you want to read it or you want me to --

>> R. COPE: BLM should be an active participant in these groups.

Is that where we are?

>> F. WOHL: Yes.

>> R. COPE: Which should include NGOs, local government, and state and Federal resource management agencies.

>> F. WOHL: Start at the beginning and read it all at once.

>> R. COPE: Okay.

>> F. WOHL: Do you want me to do it -- BLM in 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, local governments, state and Federal resource management agencies.

Comments?

Concerns?

>> R. COPE: Does that make it clear, Dean?

We were a little confused on it last spring.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: I think that's great.

Thanks.

>> F. WOHL: Disagreement?

>> I just have --

>> F. WOHL: Too late.

Already asked.

>> A clarification thing.

Let's say within a given BLM district you had seven HMAs.

Did you envision that this is kind of one collaborative group or it's seven groups?

>> It may depend.

It depends on how big the district is, where -- and whether you have local knowledge that covers them all.

That I would leave up to BLM or whoever convenes it.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: I think we can use our imagination.

>> F. WOHL: Anybody disagree, number 3?

All right.

Moving right along.

Ecotourism.

Rick, you take that one and I'll take the next one.

>> R. DANVIR: [inaudible] consider including recreation plans for these areas.

>> F. WOHL: Comments?

Questions?

Concerns?

Disagreement?

Carries.

Number 5, ecotourism.

Ecosanctuary operators should be provided training and materials to adequately represent the challenges and opportunities associated with the horses.

>> I don't know that it matters but I was thinking with the Wild Horse and Burro Program.

In other words --

>> F. WOEHL: Okay.

>> So they could --

>> F. WOEHL: Deleted horses and put WH&B.

Good job.

Thank you, Kathy.

Questions?

Concerns?

Disagreements?

Carries.

All right.

Public comment Working Group, none.

Any comments?

All right.

Population growth suppression.

Sue, you shouldn't have put your name on all of them.

>> S. McDONNELL: I can read and I can see right now.

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

>> F. WOEHL: Questions?

Comments?

Disagreement?

Carried.

Go right ahead.

>> S. McDONNELL: Prioritize [inaudible] tools in the field to reduce population growth right now and implement promising new tools as quickly as they become available.

>> F. WOEHL: I really like that one.

Any comments?

Questions?

Concerns?

Disagreement?

Carried.

Go ahead.

>> S. McDONNELL: Given that our goal few as possible hand Lynx and we can only achieve that by slowing reproduction rate, encourage BLM to open door to research on monitoring individual animals, for example, use of long-range chips.

>> R. COPE: Is that a different one?

>> One was maintain the research dollars, express support for continued commitment -- we've heard some opposition to the money spent on research for suppressing reproductive growth.

So number one is really about the board expressing support for research, because we will don't

have all the tools we need by a long shot.

3 is quite different, that we need a way to monitor long term without having to handle the animals.

>> F. WOEHL: How does that differ with the research that we saw this week with the collars?

>> S. McDONNELL: Because collars only last until you've designed them to fall off.

They're short term.

They're relatively short term.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: So I believe you're recommending that we use microchips in the horses that are there for a long time --

>> S. McDONNELL: I actually want you to start thinking about putting microchips in now even as you handle them and, furthermore, commit -- there are other government agencies that look at long-term chips.

Cattlemen have been looking at them for a long time, too, for monitoring on the range.

But it's a research that this program needs and wants, too, I think.

>> So is it long term --

>> Long-range.

>> We have long-term chips.

They already last as long as --

>> Chips last forever.

You need a transponder --

>> But you have to be real close.

Julie is tonging about --

>> I use them in my --

>> There is, but the research -- the research indicates there's room for improvement.

I would like the really bright people you have to get involved in that research also.

The collar stuff is important, too, but it's very short term.

We might ask Dr. Griffin to elaborate on some of this stuff because I think he knows what I'm trying to get at.

>> F. WOEHL: Before we go on, it's now 5:00 and so the live streaming is going off.

And I want to say a brief closing, if I can, and allow -- we're gone?

We're gone?

Oh, adios, everybody.

Go ahead.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: You can stay on --

>> F. WOEHL: We're still on?

Welcome back!

>> After a brief announcement for our sponsor.

>> F. WOEHL: Sorry that commercial wasn't long enough.

>> We weren't sure whether you meant long lasting microchips but I think it's clear now that what you're talking about is the kind of RFID, radio frequent ID tags that have a range -- they still require a -- they don't transmit necessarily by themselves.

They need --

>> T. HARVEY: It's an RFID.

I've used them.

>> There's like a tower that sends out a signal and then they Ping back.

>> T. HARVEY: It's the same technology they use in your easy pass when you're going through the toll booths.

>> Right.

I know USGS was debating whether they should apply -- make a proposal along these lines early in the stages of developing the radio collar work, and one of the limitations was that you still need to have a tower every so often in order to identify the animals, but where there are choke points, if horses regularly come through a -- Tim, you could tell us how wide the range might be, 500 meters --

>> T. HARVEY: Actually, you create a triangulation system, if my understanding, as far as location, is the easiest way.

It's the most efficient.

Works similar to the old range finder systems they used to use for coastal navigation, but with modern technology.

>> It's a great way to identify individuals.

Some of the drawbacks are, if you have a 500 acre HMA --

>> T. HARVEY: You could probably put up temporary towers, not terribly expensive.

They don't have to be that tall if you pick the right geographic location.

You and I spoke a little about this one other time, I think, the RFID technology.

It's got great promise.

>> And it's getting better and better.

>> T. HARVEY: Trovan makes --

>> F. WOHL: Well, do you think it would be better to say to encourage BLM to develop a research project on monitoring individual animals instead of open the door?

>> Sure, Fred.

>> F. WOHL: I'm just -- I mean --

>> I don't know that I'm specifically asking our research folks to get involved here.

I want them to stay abreast of this technology at least.

>> Just use the best technology available.

>> Exactly.

It's we haven't incorporated.

Even at this point we need to be thinking about.

Let's say we wanted to look at longevity of spayed mares, we need something that lasts 15 or 20 years without ever having to the our hands back on her again.

We promised her that.

>> The only drawback to a chip system is migration or damage to the chip, and -- in the animal.

It's a passive process.

You know that.

That's the beauty of it.

>> JULIE WEIKEL: We have some evidence where we've identified tissue migration is not an issue.

>> F. WOHL: I'll read it again -- or sue can read it.

Sorry.

>> S. McDONNELL: Sorry.

Are we on number 3?

All right.

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

>> F. WOHL: Any more comments?

Questions?

Concerns?

Disagreement?

All right.

Number 4.

Julie, this is one that you love.

>> JULIE WEIKEL: Owe dear.

As population growth suppression decreases herd numbers program dollars currently used in long-term care should be devoted to rangeland health improvements within HMAs with the goal of healthy horses.

>> Happy --

>> JULIE WEIKEL: I want the word happy out of there.

I like science-based stuff.

>> R. COPE: I firmly agree with the concept.

I just wish I could be confident that --

>> Do you want to put instead of as if?

>> F. WOHL: Any more comments?

>> When!

>> R. COPE: There you go.

>> F. WOHL: Are you serious?

>> JULIE WEIKEL: No, I really want to leave "as."

>> F. WOHL: She wants to leave "as."

>> JULIE WEIKEL: Sorry, Kathy.

There's hope.

>> F. WOHL: Any more comments, concerns, disagreements?

It's approved.

Number one, adoption and sales.

Thank you, Dr. Paul BLM and board members to develop a comprehensive adoption program utilizing the following.

That's not very smooth, Kathy.

There you go.

Recommend BLM work with board members to develop a comprehensive adoption program utilizing the following: incentivize -- whatever that says -- adoptions.

More pickup places.

We ain't got that word in Arkansas either.

More pickup places i.e.,
storefronts.

Training facilities in the east similar to Mantle Ranch.

Current BLM Working Group on increasing sales and adoptions plus Tim Harvey to serve on this committee -- or this group.

Any questions, comments?

Concerns?

Disagreements?

Carries.

All right.

Is that it?

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: You ought to keep going so you can break the record.

>> F. WOHL: We have one more.

Dean, don't laugh, we have one more.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: You just broke the record.

>> F. WOHL: Board members we need a recommendation to BLM where to have the next board meeting.

>> Jacksonville.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: We have one member that had already nominated Oregon.

We've got that kind of promised.

>> T. HARVEY: Early spring --

>> F. WOHL: And we got another board member that would like to go to Jacksonville, Florida.

>> T. HARVEY: Jacksonville has -- it's an international airport -- I have a couple requests from folks that they said the last few meetings have been hard to attend because of the difficulty of -- and the expense of flying into the locations that we've been at.

I know that Jacksonville has an airport that's very inexpensive to fly into, it's the cheapest Florida place, and they have plenty of convention centers, and there's an awful lot of horse folks there, and I think -- in my six years on the board we have never gone to the southeast.

Any time we come to the East Coast it's always been --

>> F. WOHL: The only reason I'm bringing this up, I want the board to understand that BLM has the final say on where the meeting is.

All we can do is make a recommendation, and that's it.

So -- and actually I'm going to take a roll call vote on this or show of hands that we've already got one recommendation that we go to Burns, Oregon -- or Bend?

>> Bend.

You need an airport.

>> F. WOHL: Bend, Oregon.

And we have one recommendation we go to Jackson, Florida --

>> Jacksonville.

>> F. WOHL: All those in favor of Bend, Oregon, raise your hand.

>> That might have a little something to do with it, because if it's in the dead of winter --

>> F. WOHL: The dates we will be looking at will be the end of March or sometime in April. Okay?

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: So you realize going out of Bend, Oregon traveling 110 miles to get to Burns.

>> It's 130.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: It's been 15 years.

It's a good solid two hours.

And then to go to anything in the field is risky in March.

You're not going to get out there because it's too muddy.

>> Remember originally this was tied to giving the board the opportunity to look at some spay situations.

By that time we should have some spay results right there in the working corrals.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: I'll hope for this --

>> F. WOHL: Let me ask this.

Would it be conducive if we waited until about January and do this on a phone call, until we see what's going on?

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: Let's have two places and then we'll have a time, and we can finalize it.

>> F. WOHL: So, if it's all right with everybody, we will submit Jacksonville, Florida and Bend, Oregon for the spring meeting, and we will revisit this item during our board phone call sometime in January and make a final decision at that time.

Because there could be some stuff that comes up that might be very beneficial.

Also at that time, Dean, if you would, if the Bureau has an alternate you can talk to us about at that time, too.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: I think we would -- you guys like field trips and events and educational things.

So let's evaluate what the opportunities are.

>> T. HARVEY: Then we can go to Orlando.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: We did go to Florida, I think it was Mercerville.

>> T. HARVEY: Anywhere in Florida that time of year, that is the Mecca of horse on the East Coast.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: We went to a nice adoption there.

>> T. HARVEY: And Gainesville you have UF, a vet school there, and Gainesville is only an hour outside of Jacksonville.

I'm just suggesting it because that time of year, if it's in the -- it's the -- if the time of year presents itself where field trips in Oregon would be appropriate, then that would be a better choice.

But if it's not, then it just makes -- and it's a cheap place to fly into, and myself, if -- you know, if I decide to reapply and if I do get selected to be on the board again, it's only an hour drive for me.

That's one airplane flight you don't have to pay for.

>> Plus Florida, is almost as humid as it is here.

>> F. WOHL: Before I let -- before I let Mr. Mike Tupper make his final comments and conclusions, I would like to ask each board member if they have something they would like to say before we finalize, starting with Rick.

I think Rick had something he wanted to bring up.

>> R. DANVIR: There was one other recommendation that I wanted to run by the board for consideration that was made to me, and it may have some merit.

The recommendation would be that the BLM arrange periodically for a delegation of, say, three members from the board to meet with the Secretary of the Interior's office.

I'm thinking like the Secretary or a deputy.

To discuss and kind of convey some of our thoughts and concerns about the program.
Talk to her about it from the board's perspective.

>> F. WOHL: Discussion?

>> T. HARVEY: I think it's a good idea.

>> F. WOHL: I think it's a great idea.

I think it's something that we do serve at her discretion.

She's the one that appointed us.

When you and I talked about this earlier, the only concern I had, and I've been reassured it ain't no problem, I didn't want to be construed as going around Tupper or Dean or any of them --

>> If it were me, I would prefer that they were there, that we were just -- I would think we would be reinforcing.

>> F. WOHL: Have them arrange it.

>> T. HARVEY: Arrange it and be there --

>> F. WOHL: I think that would be good.

Tup, what do you think?

>> T. HARVEY: We just broke the record?

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: You did.

He will.

>> F. WOHL: BLM arrange for board members to meet with the Secretary of the Interior to discuss issues related to the program.

>> T. HARVEY: And it's in red and underlined.

That's pretty serious stuff there.

>> F. WOHL: Kathy, put me down as a contact for that.

I'll get back to everybody.

>> Do you want it to say the whole board?

>> F. WOHL: Let's wait a minute.

Let's ask Tupper what he thinks if approved.

>> The whole board.

This is not --

>> F. WOHL: Then put down arrange for the whole board, Miss Kathy.

>> R. COPE: I wonder if rather than moving the board to the Secretary, I know with our FACA committee for the Forest Service, they routinely come to where we are, particularly if we're fairly close to Washington.

Do we want to fly the whole board to the East Coast or do we want to hopefully get the Secretary to come to a normal board meeting of us?

Which would be easier to pull off, Mike?

>> We wouldn't have let it go by without putting that one in the mix.

>> F. WOHL: It don't say flying us into Washington anyway.

It says arrange for the full board to meet with the Secretary at her discretion.

She may want to take us out on a sage-grouse hunt.

>> Does that constitute a meeting because we're above quorum if it were the board?

>> It would.

>> I think so.

>> J. FALEN: Personally, I think it would be counter-productive.

I think it would be a lot more productive to have BLM leadership and three to not over four people from the board appointed to go.

Probably have to go to D.C. to make it fit.

>> F. WOEHL: What do you think about the chair and two others?

>> That would work.

>> Just say a delegation.

>> J. FALEN: Two or three more.

That would be the limit.

I think three to four people would be plenty.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: And to make it -- never mind.

I had an idea.

Never mind.

>> F. WOEHL: Looks good to me.

Any more comments?

Discussions?

Concerns?

Disagreement?

Number 20.

And a new record for the board.

>> T. HARVEY: I would like to add one little thing in here, when we were talking about the volunteerism there was a young lady sitting out in the audience that was listening, and when we got up to take our break, she came up and showed me she went into the volunteer.gov Web site and she typed in wanting to help with wild horses, and only one thing came up, and that was a camp host at Assateague Island.

>> What?

>> T. HARVEY: Being a camp host at Assateague Island.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: So that wouldn't have been BLM's site you hit.

>> T. HARVEY: She went to volunteers.gov.

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: I don't know.

Debbie could answer that question.

>> F. WOEHL: Kathy, go to Google, please.

Type in volunteer.gov.

>> It's the same Web site for all the Federal agencies.

That's why I explained BLM does not have any wild horse and burro volunteer job descriptions in there.

That's why I say they have to be developed.

So the infrastructure is there for volunteers but BLM has to add these categories for someone like the young lady that was going to go look to try and find something to tap into.

That's what Sarah has been trying to sort out.

>> T. HARVEY: Because what was understood -- what was understood is different than that.

Yeah.

>> F. WOEHL: So you say there is none in there.

>> Right, because right now there are no wild horse and burro specific -- there may be some of the district offices or Field Offices, they may have some different types of volunteer job

descriptions out there, but probably what she was looking for that specifically says like wild horse and burro adoption help or wild horse and burro compliance, or whatever, my understanding is none of those are loaded in there right now because they don't exist.

>> [inaudible]

>> T. HARVEY: And I --

>> T. HARVEY: I think she went into volunteers.gov and put in the search engine volunteering with horses and all it took her to was the Assateague camp host.

>> yes, some work has to be done.

>> F. WOHL: Thank you.

Cope, final comments?

>> R. COPE: Just glad to see we're trying to keep things as real as possible.

A lot of the outside influence, and particularly the form letters we get in from the comment, I really wonder occasionally where these people are, but if we can keep the reality of what's out there, as I said, we're simply overpopulated and all the options we have we need to use because it's approaching a critical situation -- well, it is a critical situation.

It's not approaching anymore.

We all need to be aware of that and all need to understand something needs to be done soon.

>> I'm just glad to see there has been some progress made in the four years that I have now been on the board.

I've seen there have been a lot more participation from board members and working groups and those kinds of things, and it's very encouraging, and the cooperation that we get from the BLM I think has changed somewhat, too.

So...

>> F. WOHL: We just got to try to get you more positive and -- Miss Jen?

>> JENNIFER SALL: I think I've learned a lot listening to Dean and Mike and framing pieces as well as education as to what's happening already, and looking at this list it makes me excited about meeting again in April and what the potential is to move forward with some of these pieces, and I think that there are some pretty big umbrellas accounted for here that would have a lot of impact, huge impact down the road on a local level.

>> F. WOHL: Tim up.

>> T. HARVEY: Nice energy.

Lots of neat things happening.

It's very energizing, some of the stuff that's going on, between the staff -- the staff seems to be in a better place, the BLM staff.

Just seems -- probably reflective of change in leadership, but it's just really nice.

It's a nice upswing.

I've seen change.

In the six years I've been on the board.

June's husband had told me, be prepared if I got this job that not much was going to happen, or not much may happen and it could get frustrating and not to get discouraged.

>> J. SEWING: You have to realize that was 10 years ago.

>> T. HARVEY: It was.

The thing was he said, he basically told me things will change, but they don't change at the pace I'm going to want them to.

And I think he could feel my enthusiasm through the telephone, and -- but the things -- things are changing, things are getting better.

Seeing the difference in the BLM in some of the advocate groups to me -- that's one of the bigger things, just seeing folks starting to find that common -- common element to work on towards something rather than being out here and, you know, not having all the advocate groups throwing rocks through the windows of the BLM, and you know -- it feels real good to see all that.

So, good seeing some nice changes.

I think there's a lot of dedicated people here in this particular group of folks here right now is really excellent, excellent group of folks.

>> F. WOEHL: Sue?

>> S. McDONNELL: I really don't have anything to add to everything they've said I would agree, with everything they've said.

>> Great eloquence precedes me.

I do feel -- I do feel hopeful, sometimes more so in one conversation than collectively.

I do think we're making progress.

>> F. WOEHL: John?

>> J. FALEN: I would like to -- I'm looking forward to what they come up with on the one resolution we put on there that involves the sale authority, and I think the sale authority is the key to getting us out of this hole.

We're in a hole that's tremendously deep and has a lot of effects on lots of folks that are trying to make a livelihood out here and it has a lot of effect on the other folks, even the sportsmen out there.

It has an effect on them.

The sale authority issue is huge and I think it's imperative that we go to D.C. is possible totally armed and we might want to take people besides the people that's on this board.

There are some very, very educated folks that's been involved in this thing for a long time that we might want to invite to go with us, but I think we really need to spend some time pursuing that and go there with all the ammunition possible to totally demonstrate what's going to happen if we don't get these horses in a manageable situation and get sale authority on the table.

If we don't get sale authority on the table, it's going to be a long time before we ever seat the light of day.

>> F. WOEHL: Thank you, John.

Rick?

>> R. DANVIR: Let's focus all these ideas and move it forward.

>> F. WOEHL: Dean?

>> DEAN BOLSTAD: Thank you.

I think it's been a good board meeting, very engaged, very focused.

You've laid a lot of work in front of BLM, but that's what we're here for, to do the hard work to try to get through this thing.

I want to say good luck, and if I don't see Tim and John and Rick again, best of luck to you.

I've been to 48 board members since 2003, and this was a really good meeting.

Thank you very much for your service, all of you, not only those that terms have expired.

Thank you so much.

>> F. WOHL: Thank you, Dean.

I really appreciate the way the board has worked.

They've worked really hard this week and prior to the meeting getting things together.

The give and take.

Everybody had an equal say.

It was really, for lack of a better word, a blessing and an honor for me to sit here and let you all share what you knew.

We have some awful smart people here, awful, smart.

Then we have Tim.

And it's --

[laughter]

No, Tim is one of my best friends, and he is really, really on top of everything about this.

He has a very good memory about stuff.

He has been a blessing.

And, Dean, on behalf of the board, I want to thank you.

We're looking forward to a continued working relationship with you at least for two to three more years, and we hope this happens, and now as the designated Federal official, Mr. Mike Tupper is going to close us out.

>> Thank you.

Thank you.

I'm not usually one at a loss for words.

I, too, feel like it's a privilege to be here.

I know it's only my second board meeting, but we have -- I work with a spectacular group, and we do really, really hard, uncomfortable stuff sometimes, and not everybody is happy with it, and we just don't care.

We do the best job we can, and so what I can say is I can see you folks feel the same way.

You come in.

We sit here for -- I'm only here for two days but I know you're here before me, and you're discussing in a public forum some really uncomfortable stuff, and nobody is shying away from it because we live in a really gracious time where we get to do tough stuff.

Who wants a boring, easy life?

These are really good things, and it is just -- I'm just grateful that I get to be a part of it.

And I'm going to be here for a long time.

So you can get used to me.

And I also want to say that the crew that shows up -- I know a lot of them have left and a lot of them see the world through a different lens than I do, but at least they're passionate and they're not just sitting at home.

They got up, put their shoes and socks on and came out to express their views.

Do you know what?

That's really important.

So I'm super pleased with the work of the board, the work of the BLM, and looking forward to getting some stuff done.

Thank you.

>> F. WOHL: And on behalf of the board, I would like to thank Miss Kathy for her yeoman work at keeping us all in line, keeping us on time, adjusting, adapting, keeping me in between the white lines on the road as we drive this ship down it.

I also would like to thank our sound people there in back.

They were excellent.

They done a very good job.

I would like to express my appreciation since the board meeting is technically over to the people that come because this is one reason why we do this, is to try to serve as many people as we can.

Holle' and her crew putting this on and sharing what they do here, the long-term pasture we went to, Pauls Valley, was really, really great and I appreciate their hospitality on behalf of the board.

John, Rick, Tim, man, even though this might be your last meeting, you're still appointed until February, we're going to work your tails off until then.

So get ready.

>> T. HARVEY: I'm not going anywhere until the last day.

>> F. WOHL: All right.

If all minds are clear, no more comments except from Tim, we're adjourned.