

ROUGHLY EDITED TRANSCRIPT

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WILD HORSE AND BURRO ADVISORY BOARD MEETING
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>> FRED WOEHL: I want to welcome everybody to the second day of the National Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board meeting.

Before we get started, there's a couple of things I would like to do first off, is that I was remiss yesterday to thank a couple of real important people to the board, and that is Dr. Boyd Spratling and Callie Hendricksons for your service to the board for the last three years.

It was very important, and you and Dr. Boyd will be missed.

But we're not going to let you get away.

We will still be calling you and trying to get some stuff with you.

Also, I would like to thank Ms. Sarah for all of her hard work and what she's done to

make this meeting a tremendous success.

We come to these meetings and we set and we think these rooms are like this all the time, and they are not.

We come here and we have our books in front of us, and we think they are here all the time and they are not.

Sarah works with her crew to get this stuff here and I would like to personally thank you on behalf of the board for all of your hard work.

Thank you, Sarah.

To get us started this morning, we will have Ms. Kathy Libby give us a few highlights and high points and guidance for the rest of the day.

Ms. Kathy.

>> KATHY LIBBY: Am I mic 'd now?

Thank you.

So welcome back, especially to those of you who are listening online, and a reminder to those who are online, there is a link to both the agenda and the PowerPoints that we'll be using today.

Just a brief review for this morning.

We had an update on the off-range activities at the BLM wild horse and burros program.

Today Bryan Fuell will give us an update on the on range and then Kate Schoenecker will join him and they will have more.

We will have a break about 10:30, and at 11:00, Ken Visser, with BLM, will be providing an update or an intro on rangeland policy and management as the management of our rangelands is absolutely essential to the wild horse and burros program, as well as every other program in BLM.

We will break for lunch at 12:00 to 1:15 and then the board will engage in its discussions and recommendations, the recommendations to the BLM, and discussion about their activities for the next year.

So, again, I welcome you all and turn it back over to Fred.

>> FRED WOEHL: Thank you, Ms. Kathy.

Yes?

>> I would like to thank you to Ms. Ramona Delhomme, who puts together the airline reservations and she's in the Reno office.

>> FRED WOEHL: She does a good job of travel.

I always have an airplane when I get to the airport.

And that's all on account of her.

Very good.

I guess then, Bryan, you are up, my friend.

>> BRYAN FUELL: Good morning.

Bryan Fuell.

Thank you.

I appreciate the opportunity to speak to the board this morning.

I am the new on-range branch chief for the horse program.

I reside in Reno state office, although I'm a Washington office employee.

A little bit about myself, because I'm new to the board.

I grew up in southern Idaho in an agricultural family, and I have the background in wildlife and range management.

I spent a number of years working as a seasonal with the state of Idaho and Utah as well as the wildlife tech.

I started it the at the Bureau in the early '90s in Ely and then Winnemucca district and then about eight years ago, I had an opportunity to go into management and spent eight years as a manager for the Wells field office before coming to Reno as the on-range branch chief.

We can jump right in.

Well, I knew that was going to happen.

We had the -- the font is hard to read, but we currently 179 herd management areas.

AML is 26,684, which is 23,700 -- and I apologize if I'm reading the numbers wrong.

23,764 wild horses and 2329 I believe is what the number of burros.

That's appropriate management level set through planning documents.

Currently, I have 2014 numbers and I apologize the '15 numbers are not available, but 49,209 horses were on the range as of 2014.

Broke down to 40,815 wild horses and 8,394 burros for a total of 49,209.

At that time, we were 22,525 animals over AML.

As we have heard already, the program sees an average of about 20% growth, depending on, you know, each HMA is different, but overall, about a 20% growth.

2015 numbers, you can kind of estimate where we are there without me.

Currently the delay has been -- we had a state that has some number issues.

They are very sensitive because of ongoing litigation and so we have been trying to work with them to get their current numbers.

They were reluctant, you know to give a number that's high or low.

They want them to be as accurate as possible.

We expect those numbers to be posted -- we target to have that done by the end of the month.

So next week, we should have the numbers in place for the '15 estimates.

Any questions?

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: 20% increase, how does it set on that predictability?

>> BRYAN FUELL: Well, each HMA is different.

The difference is 20%.

We see fluctuation, of course.

Obviously in the west very a very big drought going on that has a toll.

Resources are limited and so we'll see fluctuation for sure.

It's not a consistent.

It changes, but it does say overall, you know, I think the average is around 20.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: Okay.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: I have a question on that real quick.

Are you adjusting that -- are you establishing that 20% by foals on the ground?

Are you taking into account -- I just read a report a couple of days before the meeting that mortality -- the mortality of the young horses between birth and 1 year has been really increasing and a lot of it probably because of the drought, but that mortality is, you know, averaging over 50% in a lot of areas.

So my question is whether that 20% estimate, is that -- are you taking into account that figure or are you just talking about what your counting as babies on the ground?

>> BRYAN FUELL: Well, the number is derived of inventory, and those are being done about every third year.

Some of them are being done more than that, but that's where -- and then they used the basis of their gather information and the inventory flights determine -- if they don't have a current inventory, they use those numbers.

And then those numbers it reflect changes when the inventory is redundant.

There's an unknown death tolls.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: I think it was in the NAS report, I was skimming something and that was one of the comments that they made was that the -- just all the counting stuff really needed some serious review and -- which is the reason the USGS and you guys are partnering up on some of this inventory counting being correct?

>> BRYAN FUELL: Right, yes.

And we have a discussion following my sort of the on-range program, we will talk about inventory.

Kate is here.

And then we'll go into research.

But we do have some slides from the USGS regarding ongoing current efforts with inventory.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Okay.

>> BRYAN FUELL: 2015 gathers, now this will be the fiscal year '15.

Currently, we have completed 12 gathers on 12HM As.

1827 animals were removed.

179 animals treated with PZP.

Some of that number is lower than we had expected.

One particular incident was the Fish Lake HMA in Nevada, where the animal condition was poor.

They didn't release any animals.

They stopped at AML.

They can't gather excess animals because of range conditions and animal health.

It was best not to stress those animals any more than they had to.

So they did not do the PZP treatment.

So we have 179 that were treated thus far.

There are three HMA summer gathers planned at this time.

127 proposed removal.

Zero PZP and that's because of the interest in those HMAs for adoptions.

They opt to not treat animals because they have a high adoption rate in Oregon, that's two of them.

We have 87 animals that have been water bait trapped thus far and we have 269 proposed.

More to be removed gathered due to using water bait trapping and then one HMA -- and I do have -- you have a spreadsheet that was part of your handbook there that does

show the numbers and those HMAs that are proposed to be gathered and treated and water bait trapped, et cetera.

One HMA, they will release 10 mares with PZP treatment and then we have ongoing PZP treatment where there's no gather, no removal and that's through darting.

And there are 402 proposed.

We don't have an updated number of how many of those have been treated.

I think the majority have yet to be treated for the current summer, rest of the year.

>> FRED WOEHL: You said in some of these HMAs, even though you have a high adoption rate, you don't treat those.

>> BRYAN FUELL: Let me explain.

>> FRED WOEHL: Go ahead.

Go ahead.

>> BRYAN FUELL: We let the district or the field determine in those cases when they have such a high interest and the public are so interested, they have management plans in place that propose -- that are supported by us that say we don't want to do PZP because we have this high interest and we have such a demand for our animals.

The Kigers being one of them, they don't want to use PZP because they have such a well respected big interest in adoption.

Does that make sense?

>> FRED WOEHL: Well, it does make sense but I'm trying to fit that in in the overall picture of things and part of the thing we want to do is reduce the number of horses that we have on range.

And I understand managing the horses like you are, but it just don't seem -- it seems inconsistent with the overall policy.

And I guess one of the things I'm getting back to is that I made a recommendation a while back to have treasured herds like the Kigers and the Sulphur Mountains and all of that, but it was not approved and yet we are doing that.

Don't make any sense to me, I guess, what I'm asking is -- I don't even know what I'm asking.

It just don't make any sense to me that we're not treating horses.

I mean, supply and demand is good, but some of these people, if they couldn't -- couldn't get a Kiger or a Pryor Mountain, they would take another horse, you know, from somewhere else.

I just don't think it's proper management to just pick out one horse herd out there and say, we're going to treat this horse herd differently than we do everything else.

Does that make sense?

>> BRYAN FUELL: Noted.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: I disagree.

You have to look at some of these herds that have unique genetics and give them some special attention.

I like you had brought up the thing of treasured herds a couple of years ago and some of the advocates were dead set against that because they wanted all the horses kind of treated the same, which is the point you just brought up.

But I -- you know, my personal feeling is that I think some of these herds do deserve a little special attention because there are some very unique genetics and the Cerbat, Kiger, Sulphur And Pryor, I think those herds need some special attention.

We disagree on that.

>> FRED WOEHL: No, we don't disagree.

I agree with you in what you are saying, however -- let's just go on.

(Laughter)

We'll talk after a while.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: I understand what you are talking about.

They didn't want to do that and they are doing it.

Make there's a recommendation in there somewhere.

>> FRED WOEHL: Yeah.

Yeah.

Yeah.

Okay.

Go ahead, Bryan.

>> BRYAN FUELL: This -- I wanted to explain the picture because I had some questions about the photo.

This is the Hagerman horse.

This is a 10,000-year-old fossil found in southern Idaho and actually my Hometown.

But anyway, it's -- it -- any way, a remnant of horses in the American continent 10,000 years ago.

I wanted to talk about the proposed EIS that we are working to try to move forward to -- with some proposals.

I want to say that we have not officially decided to do this yet, but we are putting together kind of the information packet to try to move this thing forward.

I think that you had been briefed on this last board meeting about a programmatic EIS that we are proposing.

So we are moving to try to put some kind of a statement work together for approval.

If it is approved, we would like to move forward with selection of a contractor.

This is a programmatic EIS that we are proposing to do, which is, in my words, it's kind of an umbrella, a 10,000-foot umbrella over the program that would give the field opportunity to a selection of a suite of tools that they could select from to help improve management.

It would not -- I want to also say that it's not a ground decision.

It's just something that could be tiered to for an analysis of potential tools that could be picked from, the ground -- the field level would still have to do their documents for how a management area would address some of these concerns.

Anyway, currently we are proposing, we would like to see a contractor selected this year.

We would -- obviously with an EIS, there's a big scoping process.

We are proposing that we would visit at least 10 or more cities and potentially in the West and possibly in the East that could be as a starting point of scoping.

Once that would be done, we would move into preparing a draft EIS, which would take -- normally those take two to three years on the average, looking to see -- the best case scenario is probably spring of '17 would be a draft EIS to the public for review.

>> FRED WOEHL: Yes?

>> RICK DANVIR: Two questions on that one.

When you are looking for approval is that internal BLM approval to move forward?

>> BRYAN FUELL: Yes.

>> RICK DANVIR: Okay.

>> BRYAN FUELL: We haven't gotten the full briefing packet to the front office, if you will.

We will be looking to get that approval to do press release type thing and start moving forward with the project.

>> RICK DANVIR: Okay.

All right.

And the other question was can you envision within this EIS it being somewhat goal oriented with some adaptability in -- you know, some discretion at the field level to use a variety of tools to achieve the goals of EIS rather than just being locked into certain practices?

>> BRYAN FUELL: Right.

Right.

That's an important thing to note is that there's not a one size fits all for HMAs.

They are all different.

They all have different management goals, different tools that they need to manage and the Kigers was one, that we just spoke of, that they choose not to use fertility control because of the demand of the adoption field.

So --

>> RICK DANVIR: Thanks.

>> BRYAN FUELL: You're welcome.

Obviously with an EIS, we only put out to the public, this is what we are thinking.

It's not anything that we have set in stone.

These are some of the ideas we have to potentially put into the EIS.

That's where the scoping comes in play, where the public gets to hear some of the ideas and possibly provide us with other ideas.

And then we put that accumulation of ideas together and obviously, you start -- you draft an EIS with alternatives.

So anyway, some of the ideas that we have potentially could be addressed in the EIS is the population growth suppression methods.

This could be spay, neutering and contraception that are different than what we are using now.

We could be looking at establishing a national -- or a facilitated achievement of AML, a strategy to get to AML.

We have management of HMAs that are currently done at HMA levels that could be a tool to use to tier or to bring together complexes, as being managed as we typically do that as gatherers but not necessarily on the ground management.

We could have that.

So ultimately, what we will do, we are proposing that it would amend the resource management plans for the western states, all BLM offices that have horses, burros that they could change language to adapt to some of these management concepts, because the number of the RMPs are quite old.

I mean, we are in the process of revising them.

There are some that are older, and the ones I had in Wells was '86 or 87, dated.

That's proposed to be revised but it hasn't started yet.

And then at the bottom tool that I mentioned there.

So, I mean, ultimately try to give, again, some kind of a suite of opportunities or tools to the field to be able to better manage or help manage wild horses, burros.

Accumulate ideas of potential discussion points within the EIS.

Wild horse health and welfare, reproductive, genetic diversity, population dynamics, behavior would definitely be one with these treatments.

What's going to change?

What potentially could change in the herd?

Threaten endangered species and other sensitive species and the impacts that horses potentially have on those, and any ideas to remove or reduce those impacts.

Impacts to other wildlife populations the nonnative of noxious weeds issues impacts the livestock grazing.

Impacts to nearby non-federally administered lands, riparian and wetland conditions.

They are all there.

Socioeconomic impacts and watershed.

That's the gamut of the type of discussion that would be involved in an EIS, what we are proposing to do and how it would affect or not affect these other uses.

Any questions?

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: You mentioned the unique genetic qualities.

Have we actually done the research to map part of the genome and identify markers in the DNA that we can tell just what -- simply what pure bred beef has done.

Do we have any pattern to identify unique genetic characteristics from one herd to the next or one HMA to the next?

>> BRYAN FUELL: We have been doing blood samples for years and it's been transitioned now into hair samples.

So the answer is, yes, we have been collecting genetic information from the herds for quite sometime.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: Have you been able to identify some unique traits within the

different HMAs?

>> BRYAN FUELL: Well, you know, the answer is more, I think, complexes morph because you see so much movement but there is ability to identify animals at some level as to where they originated from versus, you know, in other HMAs that are 100 miles away.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: Secondly, looking through your additional areas in management concerns noxious weeds and socioeconomic effects, several of these fall real heavily into places where counties are doing work with their weed programs and obviously some of the things that are going.

As you go through this EIS, are you reaching out to counties to encourage them to apply for cooperating agency status?

>> BRYAN FUELL: We haven't done yet, but we will put out opportunities for cooperating agencies.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: I definitely encourage them.

I think that would help with some of the clashes or some of the conflicts we had particularly in Utah and Nevada, and the BLM between some counties.

>> BRYAN FUELL: Yes.

So this is my first part.

We have Kate with USGS here.

She'll talk.

Paul griffin is the biologist, the research biologist that oversees the inventory and then we'll talk a little bit about research.

Is there anything else with on-range before we go there that you want to ask?

Helicopter contract.

The answer is yes, we do have the animal welfare component in the contract.

That was your question.

I knew the answer but I was reluctant.

I didn't know if Mary wanted me to come up.

It is in there.

The solicitor is reviewing the contract for final and then we hope to have it posted very soon but those components are in the contract.

And I believe that Dean had mentioned there has been a review by this board, although I see -- I think he said, Mr. Falen and Mr. Spratling.

>> He's still on the board.

He just didn't make it to the meeting.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: I will talk to Dean.

I will talk to Dean about that.

He had been keeping me pretty apprised of what was going on but some stuff has fallen through the cracks.

I just wanted to make sure that whatever elements that are in place can be included in all the contracts, whether it's helicopter gathers, short-term holding, and basically anybody that's touching the horses, whatever has been decided on and has been firmed up should -- those guidelines should be inserted in any contractual obligations.

I would not like them to keep waiting before the entire thing is done before those are implemented.

What you are saying is anything that has been done now in the CAWP will be included in the gathering contract?

>> BRYAN FUELL: Yes.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Thank you, Bryan.

>> BRYAN FUELL: I will turn the mic to the doctor.

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: Good morning.

I'm going to be reading Paul's slides for him.

He gave me some notes about what he wanted to talk about.

Yeah, there we go.

So we hired Paul in 2013, since the report, the BLM and, we have improved aerial surveys and population counts.

And to that end we entered into a contract with BLM to hire somebody who was an aerial survey specialist.

So we -- because USGS helped to develop and test these methods, we knew of several other people who had also used these in elk and other species and so we contacted a few of these people that we knew already knew the method and Paul was one of those people.

He moved to Colorado and took the position to run the aerial surveys and do training for the BLM staff.

So currently, there are two methods that are called the new methods to count and to give an actual population estimate.

The double observer method and the photo recite method, these are both methods that have been tested and publishes work.

One of them is the double observer method.

And the other one is the photo mark recite method.

USGS tested the validity of those methods and the BLM staff often refer to these two as the new methods.

When I talk about the new methods, you know, instead of doing a minimum count or something else, we are using these new methods now.

So what Paul does is -- you know, and the agreement we have with BLM, it covers help in planning the routes of the aerial surveys to make sure we have full coverage of the survey area, training observers how to conduct surveys so that data can be analyzed to account for missed animals.

In other words, a population estimate with errors -- with error bars around it, preparing data for analysis by a contract statistician and helping with record keeping of the results and data storage.

So in December of 2013, we hired Paul Griffin to help with this and lead this subsistence.

So since late December of 2014, USGS engaged in several types of training activities related to Ariel, mostly observed to teaching staff and other observers how to conduct the double observer surveys.

Training included in in flight training and in person training in meetings and webinar trainings where participants share a screen and a telephone line.

So just focusing on the wild horse and burro specialists directly responsible for horse and burro management at the state district and the office levels USGS has trained 20 specialists in flight.

The inflight training is where the USGS trainer is sitting in the helicopter or the airplane along with the other observers teaching them how to search for animals, make observations and fill out the data forms.

Four more specialists were trained in person in meetings and another five were trained in webinar teaching sessions.

At this point, there are only a few specialists who have not gotten some type of personal training in the new method.

10 Forest Service specialists have been trained as well, and these numbers do not include the 10 pilots, 32 other BLM staff, and six other Forest Service staff that were trained in how to conduct the new surveys as well.

In addition to this type of training, USGS has prepared draft standard operating procedures.

So we are going to develop SOPs for aerial surveys, which we plan to publish sometime this year.

These SOPs will codify the method so that they are consistently applied in the future and that's really what we were trying to do with this whole contract and getting somebody to help BLM consistently is to add reliability and consistency to those surveys so that every time -- even if there's turnover in staff, you have the same aerial survey route every single time.

And you nigh the same area and you make sure you have full coverage and you hant that GIS layer to the pilot and say this is where we need you to fly and then you have a lot of people trained to fly that method, because they all know how to do it.

Aerial surveys entail more than just flying and counting, however, and the USGS has been involved in all aspects of carrying out.

There were Ariel surveys over 67 field management and 67 wild horse territories using one of.

In most cases we worked with the loyal staff to plan the path that the aircraft would take, also called the flight line.

Those lines are drafted and stored in a geographic information system and loaded on to the pilot's GPS unit ahead of time.

Having preplanned flight lines ensures the areas are surveyed completely, as completely as possible and reduces the amount of time that an employee has to navigate.

If you are sitting in the front of the seat of the aircraft, you are the one telling the pilot, I need you to go up to this geographic barrier and then turn around and swing back.

Now with the GPS unit, they follow the flight lines and the person in the front seat can be observing for animals instead and not having to give directions to the pilot.

So it frees up your observer.

For each HMA or HA or territory, the estimated number of animals present but not seen in the survey is based on analyses of observer detection probabilities.

So those analyses are conducted by Dr. Bruce Lubos who is contracted to BLM and the Forest Service to work on it, to do the analysis of all of these population estimates.

I'm up to slide 3.

No we are fine.

16 of the 17 projects were analyzed and the only one we haven't received the data.

On average the from the time that the data was received at USGS to when Dr. Lubos provided feedback was under two months.

That's one of the problems.

Analyses were not being conducted quickly enough and so with this whole new process, we have been able to speed up the analysis time.

We work with Dr. Lubos, to help expedite his process.

Those results are available to the herd managers much quicker so they can use them.

For fiscal year 2015, BLM is planning to use aerial surveyed at 78 herd management areas and the Forest Service is planning to conduct 9 aerial surveys, most of which are jointly being planned with the BLM.

This fiscal year there have been surveys at eight herd areas not included on the table in

this slide.

So far the aerial surveys have already been completed for six of these projects which totaled 27 HMAs and two Forest Service territories.

So looking at it geographically, here's where the BLM and the Forest Service have conducted aerial surveys with the new methods from February of 2014 through last week.

The areas surveyed with the new method is blue for BLM and/or range for Forest Service.

And light green and dark green are Forest Service territories not yet surveyed with the new methods.

Purple areas were intensively surveyed from the ground.

The light blue areas are US Fish and Wildlife Service lands that were surveyed jointly with BLM and USGS and the pink area was partially surveyed by the Department of Defense.

What you can see on this map is that BLM and Forest Service have made great efforts and investments in up to date aerial survey methods on a very large fraction of the area's HMAs or territories.

The surveys planned for the remainder of this fiscal year will continue to paint more of this map blue or orange.

BLM has stated a desire to resurvey each HMA on a three-year rotating schedule.

If that continues, then we will soon have reliable population estimates and local estimates of population growth rates.

Which I think would be very useful for a lot of these herds to have a starting place and then every time you resurvey that area, you can figure out what the growth rate is of that population.

So in closing, I would like to conclude that so far the agreement between BLM and USGS so improve training and record keeping related to aerial surveys has led to program-wide improvements.

There are a few things that remain to be completed, however, and we expect to make progress on these this year.

First, we'll finalize the SOPs for these new methods.

And the SOPs will also have the benefit of getting the input from BLM field people.

So as we fly these surveys we also talk to the BLM and we say, okay, what worked?

What didn't work?

What are you having trouble with?

We get feedback and we can include those in our SOPs.

We continue to work with staff with the BLM national operations center in Denver.

We are developing a geographic database that will be used to present all sorts of information about the Wild Horse and Burro Program.

In this bigger context, we hope to store all the tabular and spatial data in one database.

We hope to develop analysis scripts in a software called R.

One of the reasons that Dr. Lubo has a hard time finishing these quickly is they have to be done almost manually in Excel and it takes a long time.

What we are hoping to do this year is get somebody to actually put those scripts in R so it will be much more automated and it will go even faster.

Once we do that, we can also test some other things where we need to be able to rerun analyses and do boot strapping and rerun analyses and rerun it.

One of that is testing stratified sampling.

So a lot of times we fly an area and the herd manager will say, well, we don't usually see them over here.

What we can actually do is test that and it's a way to potentially save some money on the aerial surveys.

If we don't need to survey large areas that are very, very low density, would you save aerial survey time but we can't do that unless we can test a survey, and fly the whole area and fly it again and do numerous studies to analyze it and see what did we miss.

And you have to do more to see what could you have cut out of that survey.

So that's it.

If you have any questions, I would be happy to try to answer them, otherwise, I'm sure Paul will answer any of your questions if I cannot.

Thank you.

>> FRED WOEHL: Aerial survey.

Rick?

>> RICK DANVIR: I think it's -- I think this is an excellent approach.

Essentially what you are kind of doing now is more of a census, but you are going to test with the stratified samples, you test it and see if we can, you know, maintain this same kind of accuracy and repeatability?

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: Exactly.

>> RICK DANVIR: By reducing the amount of night time.

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: Exactly.

20 years ago we used to fly these count units using sightability models.

I flew a lot of those surveys and we would fly all of our high density areas and we would look at a map and circle all the areas that are high density and say we must fly these but this is low density and let's pick three of them and they can you can extrapolate, with the low density.

We used to do it and we will see if we can test it and see how accurate it is.

>> RICK DANVIR: Sounds great.

Thank you.

>> JUNE SEWING: In the physical counts, have you found any significant differences in the original counts than what you found with the new ones?

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: So the original counts were mostly minimum counts.

So BLM would go out and probably survey and count as many as they could see from the ground what we did was apply some corrections to account for the animals that were not detected.

And that's -- it's not more than 20%.

So, yeah, there were -- they were -- some of them were a lot higher and some of them were only a little bit higher which, of course, makes sense because if you are flying in an area that's very open, you have great visibility and you have great probability of detecting the animals.

You have a very high probability but some areas that have a lot of tree cover and canopy cover and the animals can hide under them, or you miss them or the sighting conditions were patchy, in those conditions, you miss more animals.

And so in those surveys or in those habitat types, the correction factor was a little higher.

>> JUNE SEWING: Thank you.

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: Okay.

I think Bryan is going to continue and then I will talk about the USGS research after that.

>> BRYAN FUELL: That's Kate's.

Go back to mine.

There we go.

That's where I want to be.

First on the slide is the USGS research and we'll do that second because that's -- Kate will come up and give a big overview on what's ongoing with USGS research.

Just speak a minute -- I want to speak a minute about the RFA that was done in 2014 for the request for new and refined fertility control techniques and this is the RFA that was done last year.

We did receive 24 proposals and a few of them were -- here there is government money.

It had nothing to do with wild horses and burros.

We did give those -- reduced that list down.

A number of the proposals were reviewed by NAS, who in turn -- I think it was about January or February of this year, they give us their report.

They broke the proposals down into short -- what they recommend, what they didn't recommend, and put them into short, medium, and long-term type study scenarios.

We did review those with the PGS board or committee from the board here, and we are

currently have a smaller list that we are -- kind of a minimal report here, but we have a minimal list that we are now trying to work to select.

But since it's contracting agreements, I can't give a whole lot of the detail but that's kind of where we are.

>> FRED WOEHL: Do you have an idea of when this is going to be done?

>> BRYAN FUELL: It's moving forward, Dean Bolsted on the Washington staff, he's moving forward to trying to get these things.

There are still some issues with them, as far as we gave minimal for administration and a number of them were over that.

They had a percentage of the money that would go to admin and we were going to work with them to try to get those refined to lower them and meet our qualifications.

So there's still some work going on.

Anyway, we do have a list of them that we are moving to fund.

It's kind of a minimal.

We can't say a lot.

Anyway, that's where we are with the RFA.

Questions?

Well, I will turn the mic back to Kate and she can go through -- she has quite a bit.

We're doing a lot with USGS with the research and it will be quite informative.

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: Okay.

So I'm going to talk to you about the research that USGS is doing for the Wild Horse and Burro Program.

First, I'm going to tell you who we are, because there's actually a team of researchers that are working on this.

Then I will go through the status of ongoing research.

We have four projects that we have been working on for the last year or longer.

And then I'm going to talk to you about the proposals that are being developed at the request of BLM.

So they actually asked us to develop proposals for certain studies.

The research team on the left, the USGS researchers, I'm the research lead for our team.

Dr. Sarah King is from Colorado State University.

She's an equine specialist and she is a behavior colleague.

And Dr. Paul Griffin has a background in statistics and aerial.

And Steve Germane and Linda Zeigenfuss she does a lot of work with habitat and Eric Beever did work on habitat and then Zack Bowen is the branch chief.

We collaborate with several people, several of them from Colorado State University.

We are also working with Emily Kachergis in BLM, she's in the AIM program, looking at some habitat conditions with us.

And Randy Boone is a GIS at Colorado state and Dr. Steve Jenkins is working with us on updating or really building a new Equus model.

We will be collaborating with other population ecologists and people like that at Colorado state most likely.

The partners in all of this research are the BLM state leads and the wild horse specialists.

We work very closely with the people on the ground, not only to make sure we are meeting their needs but we understand the full realm of the problem and what it is that they need.

So we're working with staff at a lot of the holding facilities but particularly Pauls Valley on one of our project and the BLM Washington is one of our partners in this work.

So for ongoing research, I'm now going to talk about four projects, population estimation using fecal DNA and we are trying to do noninvasive.

And radio marking and radio tagging study in a pen trial.

We are looking at some carrying capacity modeling and there's a study that's been ongoing the spay and vaccination.

These were identified as specific needs by the BLM or they were listed in the National Academy of Sciences report.

So let's start with the fecal DNA project.

So estimating wild horse population size with fecal DNA.

Noninvasive methods to study wildlife, using DNA from hair and feces.

All of the species in those pictures they are reliably counting those animals using fecal DNA.

Noninvasive methods do not require handling animals.

And so it's less stressful to horses.

Other studies have demonstrated use with single sampling and some are using citizen scientists.

We did a project in Rocky Mountain National Park on big horn sheep that was recently published and 79% of the samples were done by volunteers.

It's a way to engage the public and stakeholders to helping out with solutions.

Wilderness values and wilderness concerns have driven development of these new techniques in some areas you can't fly helicopters anymore.

And so they are looking to scientists to develop new techniques to actually count these animals.

We proposed to test this for wild horses to provide non-aerial options to count horses and they may be preferable to some wild horse specialists.

So not everybody wants to hop in a helicopter flies.

DNA in the feces, epithelial cells that come out, those are the marks that identify the individual horses and then mark recapture models -- every time you find that fecal sample once, it's considered a mark and then the recite is when you find it again.

So you can either do this by going out and sampling several times or you can do sampling the entire range one time and then every time you re-find that sample, you run it through a population model, and it helps you figure out what your error rate is and how many animals there are.

What we were -- what we were curious about is with older samples amplify.

In the big horn sheep studies and many of these other studies, you need fairly fresh samples.

What we found is that the older samples are actually still complying.

So older fecal samples with horses, we are still able to get DNA out of them.

It's quite good.

It's rather promising, actually.

Population estimation from fecal DNA can potentially provide managers with a new tool that's defensible, accurate.

It's accepted and used in wildlife.

It's very well published and it's less stressful to horses and potentially less expensive than aerial surveys, although not yet, because analyzing all of those samples also is a lot of lab costs.

So at the moment, it's not less expensive than aerial surveys.

And you can also gain public engagement by using volunteer.

And samples will be used to determine the genetic structure of the DNA.

You don't have to conduct a gather to get hair and blood samples if you can get the individual genetics out of the fecal sample.

So we are testing that right now as well to see if that will work.

[Off microphone comment]

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: So we are doing a dung aging study.

Sarah has marked fecal piles in the field to see how old they are.

She has samples back six to eight months and there will be some that are even a year old and we are trying to see if the lab can actually get the DNA out of those and she's got a catalogue of how old each sample is.

What I think is really going to end up mattering more is what season.

That's something we want to know too, when would be the best time to collect your samples.

The samples dropped in the wet season are not amplifying as well.

We collected them in May, August, and like October or November.

The August samples have been the best because they drop and it's dry.

And so if there's not a lot of rain and no moisture, there's nothing to wipe that mucosal layer off of the dung and that's where the best DNA is.

So it -- what we are thinking is that it really matters what time of year more than even how old the sample is.

Yeah.

So the NAS report recommended the horse contribution to the spread of invasive plants and we will use microhistology and plant DNA to evaluate that.

We are using these same samples and figure out what the horse diet is during these three different seasons and we are germinating them as well.

What we would like to know is, well -- so they eat invasive plants and it goes through and it comes out in the dung.

Are they viable seeds?

Are they really going to spread?

So we are germinating those to see will they grow and will they actually spread?

Go ahead.

(Off microphone comment).

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: We used a control.

So we have the dung from the horses and then just plain soil.

So they are mixed in the same soil because we wanted to make sure that the soil itself doesn't have -- but the desirable seeds -- you mean desirable, meaning native plants.

If they are in the dung, they will grow too.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Are you tracking that?

In other words you are tracking how much invasive stuff.

Are you also tracking the desirable?

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: Well, yes in the sense that it would be in the same sample.

I mean --

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: But --

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: It depends on what they eat.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: You are counting the invasive weeds, are you also counting the desirable.

And it's part of the data?

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: Yes, it will be part of the data.

The plants are still growing.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: One of the criticisms is that they spread noxious weeds and they spread the good stuff.

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: Well, and so do native ungulates.

And so, really, a really good test would be to compare a group of -- a suite of ungulate and see what they are eating and germinate them at the same time.

That's not what we were able to do but we thought we would take a look at it through seeing what are the plants that germinate in their fecal samples.

Again, I think that will depend on the time of year.

So in May, when they -- when they are eating the grasses when we collected those samples this May, there were no seed heads, there's nothing growing, but in August when all the seed heads are out, they are coming up with little sprouts.

So the study is still ongoing and we haven't come up with any data yet.

Thank you for your question.

We also conducted -- because we want to use these samples to come up with the population estimate, we -- we had to conduct it in a population that was already known.

So we know, okay, yeah, we've got it right or no, we are actually way off.

So we did it in the Little Book Cliffs in Colorado because this is a known population size.

The status of this project is that the field work is all completed.

We did it all last year.

We conducted three ten-day sampling periods with five volunteers each time.

We collected about 600 samples per sampling period.

We may not need to go out and collect 600 samples.

300 might have been enough but because it's research we want to go over and then we can scale back and say, we would have gotten the right answer with only 300 samples.

So we will figure that out with the analyses.

The dung aging study was conducted monthly from May to November to see how old the samples are and do they still comply and all are at samples at the USGS for genetic analysis.

And the initial results are promising.

Even the older samples are amplifying well and we are able to get the DNA out of them.

It's a promising technique for determining genetic structure of the population as well.

Lab analyses for nonnative plant species was initiated in March and we also initiated the germy nation study and then there's a one-year waiting period for microhistology.

There are only one or two labs in the country that do this anymore, and they have a big backlog.

So this type of work could be very feasible in a moderately sized area with just a few volunteers and also older dung does amplify.

So it's good.

And then after the analyses for genetics are completed, the mark recite models will be conducted and we will probably have results late this year.

Late 2015 is what we are expecting.

So we are actually waiting on the lab right now for our analysis results.

So any questions on that fecal DNA project?

Okay.

The next project that I want to talk about, that's ongoing right now is developing suitable radio collar or radio tag for wild horses.

What you see in the picture there is a mare and a gelding wearing two of our test collars.

Those are domestic animals.

That's one of burros at the Pauls Valley holding facility and then up in the corner, you see the little tag.

Is there a way to attach a GPS tag or some type of transmitter to the horses that doesn't have to be a whole thing around their neck?

So we got these little, like, turkey tags that you would put on turkeys and braided them and then epoxyed them into the mane and tail of the horses.

We will talk about that too.

So telemetry collars have been used for over 30 years on ungulate.

I put radio collars on elk, bison, big horn sheep but they have rarely been used on horses.

The ability to mark and locate individuals has application for habitat selection to figure out where the animals are going and what at a fine scale they are selecting and what they need for movement ecology, how far do they range, population estimation using mark resight.

Locating treated individuals that are contracepted.

If you want to find your study animal, it would be great to have those animals marked and there are other purposes as well.

Research using radio collars on ungulate has greatly advanced our understanding of their habitat use and ecology, and improved our -- the capacity for conservation of those species.

A study was conducted on the Sheldon Hart wildlife refuge, it was published in Plos one.

Collars were developed for mares but not stallions.

We want to use one of the collars in the Sheldon Hart and we wanted to test it.

We retained those collars, those same collars that they used.

We also wanted to develop a custom collar with an expansion and contraction part of it, because pilot testing in the summer of 2013 indicated there's a large neck circumference.

When their heads are up and alert, the collar is really tight and when they have their heads down grazing, their neck gets very thin, 5 to 6 inches.

So how do you make something that fits properly when their head is up and when it's down.

That's challenge.

We wanted to design a collar that would be suitable for stallions and we wanted to test alternatives to collars such as the radio tags in the mane and tail to see if something else would work as well.

The primary objective is to measure the fit and wear and behavior of collared and controlled individuals for a year.

So it's mostly focused on fit and wear.

It's a pen trial.

The next step is to do field testing on free roaming horses.

So there's some things you can't answer unless you get them on animals in the wild and there are other questions you can answer when they are in captivity and that's what we are doing.

We are starting in the pen trials.

What we are not testing is long-term -- I can't read my screen.

Long-term efficacy for one year -- or for greater than a year and the proportion of accidents or calamities.

This needs to be done in the wild.

Accidents will occur.

We put radio collars on big horn sheep and elk and all sorts of native ungulates in North America.

And sometimes there are accidents.

When we are handling animals, sometimes there is an accident.

And sometimes animals get in trouble with these collars and they just want to make sure that everybody understands that as well.

We can't measure that in a pen trial.

That can only be done in the wild.

So when we do our first trial in the wild, we will be watching the animals very carefully.

Here we are at the Pauls Valley facility braiding the mane and tail tags in.

You can see the -- well, first, they have beautiful manes, very long hair and it was really easy.

They have enough hair to actually braid them into something.

We put a cord on both ends of it and braided both ends and put something behind the brain and put a mammal epoxy.

It's a special epoxy to put it on seals that's the epoxy we used.

So it doesn't burn their skin or anything like that.

We also had something -- well, they called it a vet saber but somebody is standing there blocking it, so if the horse swings around, the horse can't bite you and it reduces the risk for both the horse and the people who are working.

The vets in the room appreciate the vet saber.

>> FRED WOEHL: It works just as well.

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: I wanted to show you some pictures of the Pauls Valley facility and you can see where these horses are.

It's not a wild situation but they do have big pastures to run around in.

We wanted to have places where they could get into trouble while we are observing them every week.

So these are some of the mares out in the pasture and then these are the stallion pens.

We are doing the test on stallions.

There are three large pens there are about seven or eight stallions per pen.

They don't have the collars on them yet, but I wanted you to see what it looks like.

The status of project is we worked with six or seven vendors and selected four of the collar designs and collected these tags for testing.

We had vendors that sent us something that didn't work and said we can't use this.

This is not close enough to what we need.

A lot of them are very responsive when we said, okay, we don't want all the communications under the neck.

Can somebody move them to the side over here and one person -- one company put them way up here and it was too high and the collar kept flipping around.

We have been working really for quite a while to try to find different designs that would work and fit better.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: How promising is the tag in the mane looking?

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: So far, it's good.

We were surprised.

We were thinking maybe they would get chewed out right away or their friends would come and chew on their manes and tails, except the stallions.

We thought the stallion tags on the tails might do very well, because who is going to come and chew on the tail of a stallion, not even their friends.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Right.

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: So we are thinking that might work.

So far, so good, they are all in place.

That could be good.

The only down side is they are smaller and they don't have the large battery, but they could have application for something simple like flying an aerial survey or one season.

If you want habitat selection for one season, that would be terrific.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Is there any RFID technology that would be applicable in this situation?

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: Yeah, that's a great question.

We are looking into that right now.

So there's -- there's RFIDs that give like a VHF -- very high frequency signal that I know cattle ranches are using to find out where their cattle are going.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Right.

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: We have talked with those companies, or at least one of them.

They are in the process of developing something for GPS.

What we really need is something that can record a signal and really is going to talk to the satellites and record data for us.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: The nice part about that, monitoring can be done remotely, which is a lot less expensive and typically the RFID systems are smaller and easier to --

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: Yes.

And they are tiny on the animals too.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Yes, that's what I mean.

And a lot of these they are easier to handle and less likely to be chewed out or something like that.

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: We will use some RFIDs as soon as we get them, the new GPS ones that they are working on.

We will test them on probably some of these same animals but we couldn't start that yet

because the GPS ones were not ready.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Thank you.

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: Yep.

We pretested collars and tags on domestic animals in September to December.

The collars and tags were deployed at Pauls Valley Oklahoma on 12 mares, 12 stallions and 4 Jennies.

We are collecting individual behavior compared to controls.

We want to know if those collars interfere in anyway in their behavior, do they graze less?

Do they not go to water as often?

The things that would really concern us in terms of welfare, that's what we are measuring and any other behaviors.

And we're also monitoring fit and wear.

We bring the animals in the chute one time a month to look under the collar and make sure they are having no hair loss -- hair loss would not really be the problem.

It would be if they are developing sores or something like.

That when we did the test on the domestic animals, one of the collars that we tested did rub the hair off but we haven't seen that with any of the wild horses.

And we expect preliminary results in early June of 2015.

So we're doing a really intensive three month study and then we'll continue it for the whole year but the first three months is when -- if a collar is going to cause damage or do anything, we expect to see it in the first three months.

We will conduct the study for a whole year to continue monitoring but the first three months is very intensive.

Every week we are recording behavior and checking the collars.

Are there any questions on the radio collaring?

Radio tagging?

Yeah, we look forward to these results.

This could be really neat if it works out.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: It makes so much sense because, I mean, you -- one of the things that I found in -- I do a lot of traveling, to a lot of different herd management areas and one of the things that I found was a lot of the horse specialists are really not so much horse people but range specialists and a lot of them had very little insight into how the horses were utilizing the resources.

And so, to me, it was a -- I'm sitting this, how do you design a management plan if you don't know how they are using it?

And I think the research that you are looking to head up here is going to give some really, really good information in that.

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: Absolutely.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: I think this is something that probably should have been done 25 years ago but I'm glad it's going on now and happening.

It will allow the individual -- like the individual plans that can be custom tailored to each HMA.

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: Oh, sure.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: That's one of the things, you can't just make one and say this is how we will do it everywhere because the conditions are so different.

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: Yes, it has to be habitat specific.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: I'm encouraged by your report and applaud what you are up to.

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: And it's also information that's available for all the other ungulates.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: I like your hat.

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: Any hat?

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: That picture.

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: Thank you.

So moving on, now I will talk about the carrying capacity project.

This was an outcome of the national academy of science report.

There was this need expressed for modeling.

Modeling to address -- kind of get on top and get in front of climate change and think about population modeling, all sorts of modeling was mentioned in the national academy of science report.

So we went ahead and we proposed a course model in response to changes in vegetation production because that, of course, is one of the things that we expect with global climate change is that production in very dry areas may decrease and how might that change the carrying capacity on the landscape?

It can be done without detailed demographic information.

It's a mechanistic forage based model and I'm repeating, somebody else actually developed it.

It's not a population model.

So one of the ways we figure out carrying capacity is looking at the population growth rate.

So there's population growth curve there and when you reach that green line which is carrying capacity, what happens is the herd grows.

It starts leveling off and really what you see in those herds is -- and this is true for all ungulate herds, the babies start dying.

So you have foal loss or calves, more calves die as you reach -- you have density dependent feedback and that's what starts happening and that's what you notice in your population, when you start reaching carrying capacity.

So we're doing it a little bit differently, though.

That's one way to look at carrying capacity.

The other way to look at it is more mechanistically where you measure the forage on the ground.

How much forage is here?

How much do we want to leave on the ground to make sure it doesn't get grazed off.

And how much do we need, let's say there's deer here in the summertime.

This is -- this is mule deer summer range.

How many deer are here?

How much forage will they eat?

And how much cattle are on the range?

And how much forage will they eat?

And what is left over of that?

Okay, how many horses can we feed with this.

Ungulates consume about 2% of their body weight per day, well, it's actually more like 2.5% in the growing season and 1.5% in the winter but it's about an average of 2%.

So you can actually calculate what everybody is eating and what they need.

And then you simply, you know GIS remove the amount of forage production to being for each of those species.

It's a coarse model but in comparisons with some highly complex models, it actually fared quite well.

This was in the Yellowstone ecosystem that they did that.

We are following the methods of Walkner, et al, 2014.

And you calculate the habitat sustainability index.

That's the amount of vegetation that must not be grazed.

So you have to have something that's sustainable on the landscape and you say this is how much we don't want to remove.

Then you subtract the utilization from livestock, bison and other wildlife ungulate.

This was done for elk this particular model I'm showing you.

You calculate the amount of forage that remains on the range and how many mouths can you feed with that?

It's really very simplistic.

And so what we got for elk when we did this in Great Sand Dunes National Park.

You get a midpoint, a high threshold and low threshold, depending how much forage you are willing to allow those ungulates to eat.

You can add a climate change scenario where, you know, you figure out, are there any models in this area that tell us how much we think the forage production will go down in the future with -- with global climate change and then you readjust your predictions and say, okay, how many animals can be fed on this forage knowing that the forage production is actually going to go down.

It's very simplistic but that can also be good to have a simple model that everybody can really understand and everyone can say, okay, this forage is here, and this forage for this species is here and everything is accounted for.

The status of this project is that our proposal has already gone through our review process.

USGS has a review process for the proposals and then they go through a peer review and they are -- my proposals, for example, go to my branch chief.

He makes sure that we addressed all the review comments appropriately and then it goes to our center director and then to BLM.

So our proposal was approved by USGS but it's still pending formal BLM approval.

It's a noninvasive method again.

So we -- we don't need to work with animals at all.

Basically you are using USGS layers.

We met in March 2013 with our collaborators and we will be doing the model building and the testifying in 2015.

Any questions?

>> RICK DANVIR: I have a question or comment.

I have been working fairly closely with two different groups that are actually trying no look at range condition and trend what's out here now.

One of them is Colin Holmer with USGS, you know, out of Boise.

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: Okay.

>> RICK DANVIR: He's the chief of landscape characterization there, but what made me think about him is one of the things that he's really looking at is resilience and resistance to change on landscapes through climate change.

For example, he's already done all the -- you know, the eastern Oregon country.

I'm wondering if it would be -- if it would pay to tie in with Colin and/or open range consulting.

That's who the sage grouse initiative people are using.

And they are getting really good at using ground-based plots, correlating them with like NAP or aerial photos and tying it into whole land set stuff where they are predicting better ground with -- they are getting R squared like .9 for accuracy on bare ground.

They can do range condition and trend stuff over 40 years and you could look at different suites of grazing animals, different stocking rates and management strategies.

It might actually -- if what you are coming up with could be tied to that actual stuff, that's a pretty powerful tool.

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: That sounds terrific.

I actually want to quick write that down.

It would tie well with what SGI is already doing.

They are already funding a lot of it on that portion of the horse range, that 30% that overlaps.

You know, a lot of information is already out there.

It just needs to coordinate.

And did you say Boise, Idaho?

>> RICK DANVIR: He's in the same office as Steve Kinik and those guys.

I can get you the open range contact information too.

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: Thank you.

>> RICK DANVIR: This is really great.

It would be nice if you could actually then, you know -- they could link that to what these guys are actually measuring on the ground and it gives you pretty good --

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: That would be terrific.

What we would like to know is how accurate our climate change predictions.

That's what we really need.

How resilient is the landscape and will there be big clangs or do we need to be going for that in the population levels of all of these different species out on the ground.

>> RICK DANVIR: And if I understand it, that's what Colin is trying to look at, what areas are going to be more or less resilient to change.

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: Thank you very much.

I will get in touch with him.

Okay.

The last thing I'm going to talk about SpayVac, well, 2015 will be the fourth foaling season for mares treated in 2011 and the first season for mares treated in 2014.

Both groups were tested for pregnancy in February of this year, the PZP treated mares have sometimes had false positive as estrone sulfate pregnancy tests and they want to go back and verify the status of both of these groups.

This month, actually.

And then after they find out what the results are from those tests, then they'll make decisions about future monitoring based on palpation results.

That's all I got on SpayVac.

Anyone have any questions?

>> RICK DANVIR: Are we also going to be continuing to look at -- are we going to fund any research looking at, you know, spaying and neutering or does that even need to be done?

>> Am I on?

>> MARY D'AVERSA: Yeah, Bryan was very accurate in that we are in the process of working with finalizing the agreements with the eight research studies that were selected.

Of the eight, seven of them focused on mare contraceptive techniques.

This is, of course, anticipated.

Four of the recommended ones were surgical, three of them were some combination of chemical and pharmaceutical and in the eight, it was a combination of a membrane disruptive approach that was potentially applicable on both males and females.

And, you know, as soon as those are finalized, and we can share more about them, we certainly will.

The range of contraceptive techniques we are looking are ranging from temporary to permanent.

>> RICK DANVIR: This is already funded stuff and what -- what you are talking about is -- it's still in the pipeline?

>> MARY D'AVERSA: Correct.

>> RICK DANVIR: Okay.

(Off microphone comment).

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: We all agreed unanimously that the proposal for treating stallions, we didn't feel they had merit, because no matter what they did with the studs we didn't think that you could make an effective difference on the ground.

You shouldn't totally throw out any potential contraceptive technique.

I don't think we can afford to discard any tool that may help to control the population growth.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: We had 24 original proposals and some had nothing to do with wild horses, correct?

And those -- were those still within the 24?

And we now have eight at some stage of acceptance.

Did I understand that number correctly?

>> MARY D'AVERSA: Yes.

I will break the 24 down to the eight, I would have to refer to Bryan, I know it referred a NAS tech type of team.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: So eight that came out of NAS.

>> MARY D'AVERSA: Yes, there are eight that we are currently looking at.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: Okay.

And those eight went to the PGS committee; is that correct?

Did you review eight?

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: I thought we looked at 18.

Somebody help my memory on that.

>> BRYAN FUELL: Yes, the answer is NAS reviewed them, and made recommendations on ones they thought they had merit, and ones they thought didn't have enough information, whatever, and they directed us to an unknown number and then the board helped find it.

>> RICK DANVIR: I did jump us ahead.

I think that's the next thing on the agenda anyway.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: Yes, but that's okay.

No, I won't drop it.

I'm going to be patient.

>> Will be to the club.

(Laughter)

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: You worry me when you talk about you have been waiting five years on this.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: I'm persistent.

That's all.

I'm not going away any time soon.

>> BRYAN FUELL: But I think Dr. Cope made a good point.

Some of the proposals were dealing with studs.

The group considered those to be -- Dr. Spratling had a number of comments.

We decided that that's not path.

But we didn't want to drop it completely.

For the funds we have, we wanted most return and that's what brought us to the eight.

>> FRED WOEHL: Negotiating to fine tune these?

>> BRYAN FUELL: Correct.

And then man to move forward to most or all.

>> FRED WOEHL: And as soon as they are awarded, you will advise the board of these?

>> BRYAN FUELL: Yes.

Ultimately, the reluctance to say -- the detail is that there are some that won't be selected and that needs to be selected through the right channels, before we say publicly what will be done and not going to be done.

>> FRED WOEHL: I understand that.

>> BRYAN FUELL: Thank you.

>> KATHY LIBBY: What we will continue with now is all the proposed research.

So these are basically studies --

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: I'm going to give you a quick list of these and then I will go through them.

These are all the studies that the BLM requested us to develop a proposal for.

One is burro population estimation techniques.

This was also in the NAS committee report that we haven't really -- we tested these meth to count wild horses but we have not tested them on burros.

Also sentinel demography of burros.

The idea is that there's very little information about burros.

And we need more information about just, you know, the ecology of burros.

So we were also asked to develop the IUD study in mares, evaluating the behavior and ecology of spayed free roaming mare and gelding among the breeding herd, the gelded stallions or geldings and the sentinel demography of free roaming wild horses.

And WinEquus modeling.

And these are all the studies that we are developing right now and they are in various stages of proposal development and discussion.

So --

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: The WinEquus, it seemed like the biggest problem with that, was the baseline information being had to be very -- it had to be -- the variation had to be adjusted to each HMA it was being used for it.

Seemed like that wasn't being done.

It has to do with how well that program worked was directly related to training on how the information is established, the baseline of that program was entered, correct?

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: Yes.

That is.

I'm going to go through a whole bunch of information on the WinEquus on how we came to that.

So if you don't mind, I will go ahead and then we'll talk really in-depth about it in just a moment.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Okay.

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: So first, let's talk about -- and I will just go through that list in the order I put it up there, developing burro population techniques.

We will look at two different methods to count burros.

One is to test the hybrid double observer sightability model.

We will test it for burros across the range.

We will try a modern aerial infrared in burro surveys.

So we tested this a long time ago and it didn't do well from the air, you couldn't -- you know, 10, 15 years ago, you couldn't tell the difference in the infrared photos between a deer and a cow and an elk.

So you couldn't tell what you were looking at.

So how could you count them?

They have -- the technology has come a way, and so we are testing it again using some newer methods which I will talk about.

So the hybrid model and testing will need radio collared burros.

The model we rely is burros to account for the portion of the population not seen by any observer after the double observer model is developed, it can be applied in all the HMAs.

So here's basically the idea.

If you develop a sighting model across a number of different habitat types so we look at Sonoran desert and we look at great basin and badlands in Utah.

When you develop a sighting probability model that tells you what your detection probability is across all of those different study areas, your final model should incorporate all of those.

And so that's what we are trying to do is nigh our aerial survey for burros across the range where the burros will be found so those will be included in our sighting model.

The other piece about this and the hybrid -- it's called hybrid model, because we have something in there called heterogeneity bias parameter.

Let me see what my -- yeah, I don't have it.

It could be quite substantial for burros and the idea is that when you -- so when you go out and find aerial survey, your results are inherently biased because you can only see what you can see.

So it's biased by the observers and their ability to detect animals.

When you put radio collars on animals and you go out and find those animals, that's not a biased sample.

That's a random sample.

They are all marked and they could be standing under trees and they could be standing in the open.

When you compare the difference between those two samples, the samples that are radio collared, versus the sample that you just saw on your own, that's what we called the heterogeneity bias and that bias could be very big for burros because they go stand under trees and they are Pelted -- they blend in and they are in a lot of -- they are often alone.

And you see them in small groups.

They are not in the big groups that run like horses do.

So that could actually be very big for burros and we don't know.

So that's what we want to test.

Once we figure out what the heterogeneity bias is, it can be applied as a correction across all the surveys.

That's what we are really hoping to do.

With the infrared surveys we will be using a contractor.

With the latest IR cameras and sensors that pinpoint the location of the detected animals, aerial infrared surveys for burros may be combined with distance analysis.

If you think about it.

If you go out and see all the animals and they are in -- even in a video, and you count all the animals in that video, it's still just a minimum count which is all we are doing now, except with the newer methods, of course.

So we don't want just a minimum count.

So if you apply a distance sampling so that, you can get a population system with the error bars around it and that's what we want to do.

We will try to use distance sampling.

What we would do the flight line that the pilot uses to fly that survey, you can measure perpendicularly to that animal.

The proposal is completed.

It's out for peer review right now and once it goes through the USGS process, then we will send it to BLM.

We are proposing to start the surveys this fall, if possible and our study sites are 3 to 4 potential burro HMAs in varied habitats and we will need 25 to 30 radio collared burros per HMA.

So as long as we are putting radio collars on burros why don't we gather some other information about those animals as well?

So we are also going to do demography of burros.

This was something recommended by the NAS committee.

There's very little known about burro ecology and so we are proposing to conduct a more in-depth study on one of the herds used in the burro population estimation technique studies.

So we are studying 3 to 4 herds flying aerial surveys and they will all have radio collars on them and one of the them, we will track the animals more closely and look at survival and rangeland selection and for this study we are developing the proposal.

The IUD study is to evaluate the efficacy and unintended side effects and so potentially chronic inflammation or infection of these o-ring IUDs made from a silicon material.

There's one prior study on the use of IUDs in horses.

The citation is right there.

The Daels and Hughes study in 1995.

They found it effective in six mares in one breeding season.

We need to do a little more to maybe vet, it I guess is the right word.

But that's a picture directly from the publication of the o rings.

You can see how big they are and they are very flexible.

So we don't know where it's going to be conducted at this time.

The study size and the duration, there will be 30 mares, 15 of them will be treated and 15 will be controls.

We'll for sure test it for three IUD breeding seasons and then remove them and see if the mares come back to fertility.

That's one of the things we would like to know is will they return to fertility or will it be considered a permanent sterilant.

So I think Steve is thinking they will start it April of next year, just because we may have missed our window this year.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: Excuse me, Kate.

It says three breeding seasons.

Will these mares have access to studs?

My understanding of IUD research historically and it's anecdotal studies that didn't get published is that they work really -- relatively well as long as there's no stud exposure.

If you put them with studs they fall out like crazy.

Does breeding season mean stud exposure?

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: Yes.

We will probably have a series of four or five stallions and every couple of weeks a new one will be released in with the mares just to make sure that they get the job done.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: Fertility.

>> FRED WOHL: I'm not very smart but if you don't have stallions with your mares you don't need anything like this.

(Laughter).

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: I know.

>> That's the approach I took to raising my children.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: Are these pen trials are or these mares going back?

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: It will be a pen trial.

(Off microphone comment).

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: Purchase the horses?

These are Steve's slides.

Most likely, yes.

>> FRED WOEHL: I would think that you could get yourselves some mares from BLM.

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: Well, I think there's a safety issue with having to constantly test them and do, you know, investigations on the mares.

So --

>> FRED WOEHL: Let me have 30 days with them and you can do anything you want with them.

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: Excuse me?

>> FRED WOEHL: Let me have 30 days with them, and you can do anything you want to with them.

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: Yeah, we will see what happens.

>> FRED WOEHL: Okay.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: They did a bunch of pen trials out at Carson City in the past few years?

>> They have done a lot of pen trials at PZP.

They did one IUD pen trial at Carson City years ago.

Yes, they have done pen trials at Carson with PZP and they did an IUD pen trial at Carson years ago.

It was a human IUD.

They fell out.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Yeah.

Yeah.

>> That was the one that was referred to yesterday that where the size of the IUD --

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: But that's the critical point.

You know, perhaps that would be a good -- an option to explore would be working with one of the prison systems that already have the handling equipment and everything.

It's just a thought.

>> The distinction between domestic and wild mare.

We want to follow them closely, which is biopsy and culture and examining that many times is probably going to be a lot more amenable in domestic horses.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Okay.

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: This IUD in the picture is not available any more but there's something else that they recommend.

Any other questions?

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: It's basically elastic silicon and any company that produces it, you give them the size and they will make them for you.

I mentioned yesterday that I actually use a similar compound in one of the products that I manufacture.

And the same -- about the same diameter, about three-quarters of an inch by 5/16th around and they cost me about 80 cents a piece.

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: The price is right.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: One of the reasons I think it's not been explored longer, is because there's not an opportunity for people to make a lot of money with it because they are so inexpensive.

It's just the way business-type stuff works.

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: The next study I want to mention, the free roaming mares.

This fits in with the development of population growth suppression tools.

This study will focus on the behavior, social interaction, body condition, movement and any treatment-related mortality of spayed mares versus controls.

So this will be a field study that will basically come after a technique is developed, most likely something coming out of the RFA.

So we'll take -- we'll take whatever they are using in the pen trial of the RFA or whatever -- whatever BLM says this is the one we would like to test.

This one looks promising.

That's what we will test.

So we are going to start our field work and start collecting the behavior data on the mares now.

So that when they are ready with the agent or whatever it ends up being, we will have mares that we already have pretreatment data on.

And then we can do the treatment on those mares and then continue post treatment to see how their behavior changes.

We will conduct modeling to guide decisions on the number of animals treated.

So we are also looking at a population level effect.

We are going to compare this one herd to a whole other herd that's been paired in a similar habitat type and has the same herd size and so in that comparison, we want to see, is there a population level effect of this as well?

In order to do that, we want to do some modeling to say, okay, well, if you were to do 50% of the mares, what might the outcome be?

And if you do 60% of the mares, if you do 20% of the mares, what would the outcome be and how long would that last?

Because basically, a spaying is no more than just 100% efficacy forever of a contraception and eventually, there will be other ones that the population is still going to grow.

It's not like it will stop all population growth, but it would -- it would slow the population growth and it would also -- but there will be this other component that's still breeding and as those young animals get older, they will join the breeding pool and, of course, you will have to retreat eventually what I'm saying.

It's not a permanent solution forever.

It's just a portion.

We'll track mares with radio collars.

We won't be putting collars on yearlings but we will include the yearlings that are collocated with mares.

We will use the radio collars as sort of the focal animals to help us find everybody else and then we'll measure this population effect by comparing it to a paired herd.

And we are still developing this proposal.

Questions?

Okay.

We're also going to look at the behavior and the ecology of geldings among a breeding herd.

This was another proposal that we are developing for BLM, which fits in with the development of population growth suppression tools.

The study will focus on the social behavior, the movements, congregations do.

They behave differently on the range than they do when they are stallions or intact bachelors.

We'll look at their body condition and their habitat selection of gelded.

We will track individuals with radio collars develop proposals.

I keep saying we will track with these radio collars but we are waiting for the results of radio collar study and make sure we have something that we are comfortable with and we feel it's safe to use.

And right now, there is -- there are no radio collars that are appropriate for horses -- or, I mean for stallions.

There isn't one that's been published yet.

So that's our goal first is to say can we come one a radio collar that's suitable for stallions.

And after that, then we'll proceed with these other things.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: When you do some preliminary stuff, you have a radio collar that will work on the mares and you have collared some mares, the stallions will be pretty close to the mares.

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: We have radio collars on stallions at Pauls Valley now.

We are working on it and so far, it's been -- everything has been great but we are only seven weeks into the study.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Yeah.

Another point is Black Hills wild horse sanctuary, they have quite a few horses there.

And they did a bunch of geldings a couple of years ago.

They had a lot of stallions there and they decided to stop allowing them to breed because they were actually breeding, producing, and putting a bunch of foals in the ground.

And they have -- they might be some -- Susan Watt is the director.

There she may be someone to talk to, her and Dayton Hey.

They may have some relevant information to give you insight on the direction to go on the study with the gelding thing because they still have a few stallions there, but they did a mass gelding there a few years ago and it might be really interesting for you to talk to them and maybe gain some insight.

It might help you in directing maybe a little more direction in your study of what to look for and how to look for things.

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: That's terrific information.

Thank you very much.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: You're welcome.

>> JUNE SEWING: If you put a collar on the horse do they keep it on forever?

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: They have the failsafe and the remote release.

We would like to be able to go out in the field and find an animal and click a button and

the collar pops off.

That's ideal.

One of the collars we are working with does have that capability but it's -- it's a Bluetooth connection and it's -- I don't think Bluetooth is always reliable.

Just saying.

And so we're unsure of that, but the other remote releases that we are using, those are all set for a date.

So you set all of your collars for March 1st and they all pop off on 1st.

So they all have a release mechanism on them.

So in the olden days, I understand your question.

We put radio collars on big horn sheep and they stay on the sheep ever.

They are VHF signals and they stay on forever.

And you see a lot of animals wearing radio collars but these should fall off.

>> JUNE SEWING: We were involved in one of the studies where we supplied the radio collars.

They didn't have any way of releasing them and they stayed on there forever.

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: Yep.

Yep.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: I would like to hear the antidote about the four-year collar.

It's a single collar, one of six that was supposed to drop off but it didn't.

And four years later, we gathered the mare.

This is a Sheldon mare.

I was there when the collar was taken off and this wasn't even a rub mark on her.

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: Yes, Gail sent me those pictures.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: It's just one horse and it's one of six and she wore it for four years.

So it was supposed to drop off, but that mechanism failed.

And we took it off.

>> JUNE SEWING: And she was okay?

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: Yeah.

Yeah.

She didn't have a rub mark.

She was a body condition score 5, and she looked great.

>> JUNE SEWING: Good to know.

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: We hope for all of them.

And, again the NAS committee recommended to find out about the free roaming horses.

That's what we are doing with several of those control herds, we are using for the controls for the gelding and the space study.

Those are going to be sentinel demography herds.

As long as we put on the radio collars, let's learn, let's find out what they are doing and learn about horse ecology, the same way we understand it for all the other ungulates.

And we will look at fertility and fecundity, recruitment and these studies are further along.

We are writing it right now.

We are talking about WinEquus.

Okay.

Okay.

9 -- so those sentinel demography populations those are actually trying to gather some empirical data that we can use to feed the model.

So like Tim was saying just a few minutes ago, the data that were used when Steve

Jenkins developed this model years ago, this wasn't a lot of information and so he used what he could.

He used the few studies that were available but that's all he had and so that's what he used.

So we are proposing that we use the information, the ecology, and the demography information that we will gain from the other herd areas we will use that to update the model, not only update it, but actually redo it.

So that it has more capabilities because right now it can really only evaluate one treatment at a time, which is usually PZP or -- no -- yeah.

That's about it.

And then the user puts in a few inputs about the herd.

They think about, well, what is my habitat like?

Is it like this herd or that herd?

And then they choose.

They input those values and then they run the model and it gives them pretty much one scenario.

What we are proposing to do and this really came out from the field offices.

This is the wild horse specialists have said this is not meeting our needs.

And so we had meetings with them, and there were some surveys done of the field specialists to say what do you need in a population model that will help you, you know, have some better tools to do what you need to do.

So --

>> FRED WOEHL: Now we'll move on to something else.

(Laughter)

I'm sorry.

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: We are just getting started.

>> FRED WOEHL: I just had to get even.

I just had to get even.

>> You are funny!

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: Yes, please do.

>> RICK DANVIR: Did USGS and BLM start to settle in on what they think would be the right number and location of sentinel populations?

Is that determined?

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: We are getting there.

We are very close with what herds -- I have been doing site visits.

I visited Wyoming.

I was in Utah last week.

I will be Arizona in a couple of weeks and then be going to Oregon.

So we have a number of areas that we are looking at, and we are getting close.

We have looked at half of them at least, and some of them I think we have already decided that we will use them, but we haven't -- okay.

So as I was saying about WinEquus, this really came from the field people, who said we need a better tool.

And what we're proposing is it will project costs -- cost benefit analysis and population growth for various management alternatives, including PZP removal, spaying, gelding and any other treatments.

So, for example, you could in the new model that we are trying to develop, you could say we're going to spay this many.

We are going to contracept this money and how much will it cost?

Right now there's no way to evaluate these treatments and what they cost.

So we partnered with Rebecca Moore, she's an economist for BLM.

She works for BLM and she's actually housed in our office at the fort Collins science center and she's going to be working on that part of the model and then we'll work with

population ecologists and programmers to develop the rest of it.

And we are also working with Steve Jenkins who developed the original WinEquus model.

He's retired but, you know, he did -- he's the first guy who did this and we thought, let's work with Steve and have him give us what he knows and he wanted to be involved in as well.

So we are partnering with Steve as well, Steve Jenkins.

We developed this statement of work because we have been working with the field staff.

So, you know when we got that input from them and said this is what we really need, we came up with a USGS statement of work.

This is what we will do.

These are the tasks and we did that with BLM input.

We are collaborating with Dr. Steve Jenkins and Rebecca Moore and we are waiting for BLM approval of our statement of work.

As soon as they say, yes, this statement of work is appropriate, then we will go ahead and develop our proposal.

But, you know, the thing to keep in mind is that those sentinel demography studies will feed this model.

>> FRED WOEHL: So you can't get one with the other.

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: We can come up with a framework for the model and start working on that.

And when we get that information from the sentinel demography work we will feed that into the model and use that to update it, but we can definitely come up with a new framework that includes a cost benefit analysis, and the result of multiple treatments.

>> FRED WOEHL: Kathy, do you know where we are at on that?

On that proposal?

Mary, rather, I'm sorry.

>> MARY D'AVERSA: The WinEquus?

I do not, I'm looking for help from my awesome staff in the audience.

>> What was your question?

>> FRED WOEHL: Where BLM is on this.

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: On this project?

Oh, it's in our camp right now or are you talking about the approve -- approving the statement of work.

Oh, I'm sorry.

Apologize.

I think it's in Dean's inbox.

Yeah.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: I wonder if your question had been answered yet.

>> FRED WOEHL: Mary looked to Bryan and Bryan said nothing.

>> MARY D'AVERSA: And I think --

>> FRED WOEHL: It's in review?

>> MARY D'AVERSA: That's my understanding.

I can check my cheat sheet, of course, to see if there's anything new on it.

Hold a sec.

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: Basically the statement of work is what we will use for the proposal.

>> FRED WOEHL: You can move on.

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: We want to make sure that what we are doing meet the needs.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: In the statement of work, in a couple of conversations with BLM staff, I don't know how simplistic the program is going to be, as far as user friendliness and operational things but one of the things I had -- is this program going to have the

capability of somebody at the BLM being able to input what they would like to achieve and then having critical path options then laid out for them?

So rather than developing their own critical -- or having -- I'm just saying it's something that might be a good tool would be being able to put in what the desired end result would be and then having a program that would lay out a couple of it critical path options.

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: That's a terrific suggestion.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: And then have --

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: It's stepping into it backwards.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: And then they have different critical path options to look at to say this is something I got the staff and the knowledge and the ability to do.

This one is going to be a lot easier for us to do, versus A or C.

Let's take B.

So one of the things that I thought when I was first looking at this whole WinEquus, that seemed to be one of the difficulties of the program, is that people would sit down at it and look at the screen and go, okay, what do I do now?

And I think if you start off with the solution that you are looking for and then try to find how can I get there, if that program would help people make those decisions, to me, that would be a valuable tool.

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: Thank you very much.

That's a great suggestion.

Okay.

The last project is really under discussion.

There's nothing -- no proposal development yet for this at all.

It was recommended by the NAS committee report as well, and we would propose that we would do something in a pen trial followed by a field study.

That's all I can tell you.

We are discussing ideas.

Any suggestions?

>> FRED WOEHL: She's asking for help.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: I don't know.

I'm afraid to talk.

>> FRED WOEHL: Go ahead.

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: We are just discussing this right now.

If you have any input, you can feel free to get it to me any time.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Yes, how much study would have to be done?

I mean from the doctors that are here, Sue and Cope and Julie, I mean, if the PZP works on horses how much -- I mean, I just get a little crazy about some of the study time that's lost.

Every year we are doing more studying and it's more time things are getting out of -- that need to be addressed.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: When you start crossing species line, you are just not sure.

That's why you really need to do it.

You run into these snags every now and again where you say, oh, they are pretty much the same thing.

So the same drugs will work and they don't necessarily do.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Here's what I'm throwing down on the table to consider is that pen trials are one thing and they take a long time, and what about going right to some type of field trial in a small population of burros that you could monitor?

Is that something that can be done or is that stepping over the line?

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: I think it's stepping too fast what if you have negative effects from it and you don't know it because they are out in the wild and the only way you do it is by mortalities.

I think it's to proceed more cautiously.

>> PZP has been given to burros in one study and physiologically, you know, it seems to

work just as well in a burro as it does a mare.

The issue isn't so much the reproductive physiology.

It's the logistical challenges that go along with using it.

Because burros are harder to access and harder to identify.

Most burros look the same, generally.

And they are also harder to access because they don't tend to herd up unless there's extremely limited resources.

So one study was done in the Virgin Islands by John Turner and had good efficacy with liquid PZP over a short term.

But the issue really isn't the reproductive physiology.

The issue is more the logistics behavioral aspects and mechanics and that sort of thing.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Yes, that was the one that was done in St. John.

Yes, I lived there for a couple of years.

And the other thing that -- I know HSUS has some funds available to help us on PZP research.

I don't know what type of caveats are with that funding, we would have look at that, but it's a source to look at that collaborative venture, it might be something, something to seriously consider.

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: Thank you.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: You're welcome.

>> RICK DANVIR: That's a request that can be extended to all the groups that are interested in -- you know, in good management and health of these animals, is any -- any funding that could -- that can be directed from any of these groups into some of this research, I would think would be -- would be money well spent.

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: We always need bodies on the ground.

>> RICK DANVIR: So veer help.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: With the study that was done in St. John, with what Dr. Kane

was saying, being physiologically, that there didn't seem to be an issue that mostly it was an access issue, as far as administering it.

You know, I'm just thinking of fast tracking is a way to fast track stuff.

You know, not this -- you know -- not to sound redundant, but in the five years I have been here, there's way more studying and an awful lot of movement on a lot of things sometimes.

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: We are behind the curve a little.

We are playing catchup.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Yes.

And the Forest Service also has a couple of areas that has some pretty good burros on.

You know, find out -- I mean, I would just encourage if there was any way you could just do something in the field sooner or later.

If you could access the stuff in St. John's and get past the physiological parts and then get into the field and do something.

I would really, really encourage to take that path in that's possible.

Just so that we can say okay we are doing something and I know the biggest problem with them is rounding them up.

I was at a gathering in Twin Peaks where I was there for a couple of weeks, I had one of the most entertaining afternoons of my life out there where I watched four burros about a mile away that you could see them and every time the helicopter was coming towards them, they would all run under a tree and go like this.

And as soon as the helicopter went by, they would go back out and wait.

I mean, I was -- we were just laughing.

And they never got touched.

Nobody ever picked them up.

And they were moving them around, there were four or five of them.

They are smart little critters.

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: The only thing that I would -- only comment I would make is that we also need to make sure that we have ample pretreatment samples so if we are collecting behavior on these samples which we will start, you have to have some pretreatment data on these individuals even if they are in the wild, wild orphan trials and so what I'm saying is we wouldn't be able to start for a year or two for sure, because we've got to have pretreatment data before we find out what is the behavior of those individuals.

How does it change after you treat them?

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Okay.

I tend to be a hands on, let's Git-er-Done guy.

Is there any reason why some of that stuff can't be done concurrently?

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: That's what we are doing.

I mean, we are doing it currently.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: If you have some pen stuff going on here, if it --

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: Oh, I see.

Yes, that's what we are planning to do.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: If you develop your baseline here, while you are doing something here and you have the results and you got them, you know, at a similar time frame that you are done and you go, okay --

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: Bingo.

That's exactly what we are doing.

We will actually start collecting the behavioral data even though we haven't determined the contraceptives.

We are developing them as pretreatment data in the sentinel demography data.

And then once we are ready with whatever contraception is proposed, we will be able to test it in the field.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: You also have the options of exploring an IUD in a donkey and a burro.

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: Sure.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: And that's a one-time touch deal instead of a yearly or, you know, twice a year -- or every other year.

So instead of saying the explorer one thing and how does this work and five years down the road, it says turn the etch-a-sketch upside down, I would encourage anyone with population growth suppression that we do as many -- explore as many options as possible.

And so, I mean, there's no reason why if you are doing a pen study on PZP, how about an IUD in someone of them as well.

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: I think the idea for this project was to test multiple things at the same time.

And if you test those multiple things maybe the one that rises to the top once you say, okay, we give this one, it will be okay.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: That's the homey water.

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: And then that's the one you immediately start in the field because we already have those burro Jennies pretreated and we have been watching them for a year.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: If you have data on more than one thing, there may be areas where darting make more sense than getting your hands the burro and the darting will work better.

I understand the difficulty with the darting is identification of the target.

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: And they are really hard to get close to.

Some horses are very hard as well.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Yeah.

>> FRED WOEHL: Glad to see some of the past recommendations of the board is being addressed in some of these proposals.

I really appreciate that.

Does anybody have any questions or comments?

Ms. June?

>> JUNE SEWING: Yes, I do.

A lot of these studies, you said that you used volunteers and part of my responsibility on this board, how do you go about, you know, soliciting those volunteers?

So many of the groups seem to want to volunteer.

So how do you -- how do you go about it?

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: When we did the fecal DNA study and we collected those samples with the volunteers, we listed them on the ecolog web site.

We got CSU students and we had people applying from France, Spain, Italy, saying we'll pay our own way.

We will come and pick up horse dung for ten days.

You don't have to pay us.

It was amazing how many people came out of the wood work to work on these projects.

>> JUNE SEWING: So these are usually volunteers that have some experience or education?

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: They are typically people would are studying wildlife biology or in the wildlife sciences in some way.

That's who we ended up using for the last -- that doesn't mean that we couldn't have other volunteers helping us.

There are some things where that would be fine.

>> JUNE SEWING: Is there some way then for just ordinary volunteers that just wanted to, you know, maybe with a little training be able to do that?

Would there be some way that they would have the information about that?

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: They would have to go through USGS to -- through our volunteer system, and get registered in our USGS volunteer system and then we could pick them up when we had a need for volunteers, but there might be a better way to do that so it's more streamlined.

We certainly could use people who want to be --

>> FRED WOEHL: I think what June is referring to is BLM staff on the ground, district offices have a list of volunteers, generally, that --

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: Okay.

>> FRED WOEHL: That could be tapped into.

Is that what you are thinking, Ms. June?

>> JUNE SEWING: Well, no, not necessarily.

I mean, it's just that there are -- there are those advocacy groups out there that say they are willing to volunteer.

Now whether they are registered any place or not, I don't know.

Just the general public in a way.

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: We can figure that out.

Yeah, and we are working with BLM as well to develop more volunteer opportunities.

So that's one of the things that Sarah Bohl actually talked to me about.

They found out that we did this fecal DNA study with volunteers.

Hey, how can BLM get more involved in using our volunteers to help with the research?

So we've also talked about that.

With BLM.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: It would be nice to have a clearinghouse for volunteers of some sort.

Really.

In a place that -- positions that are -- people that are looking to volunteer and people that are looking for volunteers even from all desperate groups, they could have a place to post when there's an opportunity.

>> FRED WOEHL: That's a good idea.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: I wonder if that's something that could be on the BLM website.

>> FRED WOEHL: There's something on the BLM website, isn't there Ms. Sarah?

>> SARAH BOHL: There is, but the clearinghouse idea is actually available now through volunteer.gov, and it's something that the BLM Wild Horse and Burro Program has not utilized yet but I would like to see that happen.

It exists already there's no reason to rebuild it.

They have a good site where you can post job descriptions and search with a clickable map to find volunteer positions.

If we had a situation where we needed or could use some general public volunteers open a research project, that's a way to easily get the word out in a very efficient software that's already up on the web.

>> FRED WOEHL: Sarah, Sarah, is that something that we need to make a recommendation on as a board?

To use that site?

>> SARAH BOHL: Well, I think there's different feelings about it.

I think having had a number of conversations with -- and this is just with different state leads, I think there is a strong feeling that a lot of the volunteer opportunities with the wild horse and burro program -- I'm not talking about research right now -- that they really want to be very confident that the volunteer has an extremely good horse knowledge.

>> FRED WOEHL: Right.

>> SARAH BOHL: That is appropriate and they have some concerns about putting out a blanket invitation to bring in people who might have the very best of intentions, but might not have the knowledge or experience working with mustangs.

>> FRED WOEHL: Oh, I agree.

I agree.

>> SARAH BOHL: I'm not sure.

I think -- I just know it's a tool that could be used and there are different views about people's interests in using it.

>> FRED WOEHL: Thank you, Sarah.

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: Could I add, that we do tend to focus on students who

want to learn wildlife ecology, who are interested in the wildlife sciences or the natural sciences, because we're trying to train the next generation.

>> FRED WOEHL: Right, I understand.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Do you get enough people for your needs?

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: Yeah.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Because I mean, if you weren't, then you would say, well, let's seek some more but if you've got --

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: Yeah.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: You have more than you need?

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: Way more.

I wasn't making that up when I said people -- want to fly to from other countries to come here and pick up horse dung for that project.

That's what we advertised the project was going to be.

We had students from other universities nigh from Minnesota.

One guy came from Minnesota for the ten days to participate.

And they paid their own way, you know.

>> FRED WOEHL: Dr. Cope has been patiently waiting.

[Off microphone comment]

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: And get through that part and move forward?

That's -- if they did it on five burros it will be a little tough to do it, but what were the numbers like, do you remember?

>> DR. ALBERT KANE: I can't remember the exact number but I will say it was maybe a dozen burros.

Maybe more than that, but it wasn't a big study.

I think the thing that I would emphasize is physiologically, does PZP work in a burro?

That question might have been answered.

As soon as you change to another agent, an IUD, anything else, all bets are off, because now you have a very different aspect of the physiology you are going to work with with regard to uterine shape, size, et cetera.

The other thing is burros are not seasonal breeders.

So when you are using an agent that typically we are now looking at a window of optimal efficacy that goes out the window when you try to give it to a burro.

I won't say that we are perfectly comfortable that PZP is completely safe and works a certain XYZ manner in burros.

I can just tell you that it's been tried and it did have some efficacy in burros.

So at least that initial, you know, will it even work has been tried.

As opposed to some other species where the initial will it even work, it doesn't work at all.

It doesn't work well in dogs, for example, or cats.

So burros are close.

They are not horses with long ears, I realize that.

I had burros most of my life.

But at least with that aspect of the physiology, I think, you know, their ovaries and their uterus, and they are equids, and they respond pretty similarly with PZP.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: If there's enough done that we don't have to go back to square one, it gives us something to build on rather than starting over.

>> DR. ALBERT KANE: There's something to build on, because we know it can work --

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: Thank you.

>> DR. ALBERT KANE: And the other thing I would emphasize is it's one study.

We have been challenged, we get one study with good results and then there's an adage in research, you don't believe anything until you repeated it and if you are an epidemiologist, you repeat it a few times before you hang your hat on it.

We had numerous instances in this program, including one we are addressing right now with SpayVac where initial results are promising.

You try to repeat the same results and you can't repeat them.

It doesn't work as well.

And it's particularly common when you move from controlled environments and trials into the field, and that's because all of your other logistic things start to influence efficacy but even in a captive trial, we have seen it in PZP where we tried do control groups that used so-called known entities that is PZP 22.

We couldn't repeat the same efficacy in the next trial, and that's what happened in Carson City with the last PZP trials in Carson City.

And then we are seeing similar problems with SpayVac.

So just remember one study -- I know you know this Cope, but even if I said that was a great study with 60 burros and 60 controls and it was just tight as can be, it's still just one study.

So I wouldn't hang my hat on it, but it's certainly good news that it seems to work.

It works really well in mules.

(Laughter)

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: Almost 100%.

>> KATHY LIBBY: If you get called on again, I will have you come to the table.

>> FRED WOEHL: Anybody else have any comments, questions?

You have another --

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: I wanted to thank the BLM for inviting me today.

>> FRED WOEHL: You are more than welcome.

>> RICK DANVIR: I think this was great for the BLM and USGS to get together and get this done.

I think this is -- this is moving forward.

>> FRED WOEHL: It is.

It is.

A lot of stuff we talked about in past meetings is being addressed here and that's really good.

Julie, you look like you have something you want to say.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: No.

No.

I agree and I guess it's a moral here about those of us who have the luxury of being out in the field and just go for.

And government just moves more ploddingly, and there it is on a recording.

(Laughter)

>> FRED WOEHL: The national audience have heard you now.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Yes, all three of them.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: I'm trying to remember to be patient.

>> FRED WOEHL: Well, you have to understand that they have to move in such a way where there's lots of people out there with varying opinions and so they have to be sure all the Ts are crossed and you will the Is are dotted and the government sometimes moves slow but if you move in the government, that's a positive thing.

It's kind of like turning a great big ship.

You can't turn it like a car.

I see a gradual shift coming.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: I'm worried that Mary is maybe recording these comments of.

>> MARY D'AVERSA: I'm sorry, worried that I'm doing what?

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: I'm worried she's writing down these comments.

>> FRED WOEHL: Didn't you see her taking pictures and all of this?

It's been nice knowing you.

>> MARY D'AVERSA: No, when I'm not masquerading from Kathy, I'm trying to get an answer from our Jedi master.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: Mike Ray always said that trying to change government policy was turning a ship with a canoe paddle.

>> FRED WOEHL: But I feel a movement.

I feel a movement.

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: I wanted to say that science is not well served by a hurried up attitude and what we need to do is think ahead and think forward.

We have to say, what's coming and let's plan for that instead of being behind this.

>> FRED WOEHL: On some of these issues that you are talking about, should have been talked about ten years ago.

>> DR. ALBERT KANE: I just want to say that I think it's great that USGS has all of these projects in the pipeline.

>> DR. KATE SCHOENECKER: But.

>> DR. ALBERT KANE: There no's no but to that at all.

I have been working with USGS for 14 years on wild horse and burro research and these issues were talked about ten years ago at great length.

But I would caution you to remember that the just go for it attitude and approach has gotten us where we are today with some agents that aren't working.

They may have worked in early trials and we just went for it in the field and we were very disappointed.

We all were.

And they are not working.

And now we have agents that we thought were well developed that aren't working as well as the early trials, captive or in the field.

So science is slow and repeating research projects is very difficult.

And at the last meeting, somebody said something about your failed study.

And in, fact, it wasn't a failed study.

It was a study with negative results, which was a very well scripted and performed study, which means that it was a very successful study.

But we heard yesterday, what we call publication bias which is where only discuss your positive results.

And that's happened a lot with some of these agents where there have been studies with good results and those percentages get mentioned.

But it never gets discussed when the percentage is zero.

So those studies where they tried to dart horses and couldn't dart a single horse over a year are never discussed.

But that's the reality BLM faces in management application.

So it's a little frustrating, you know, to hear the just go for it.

You guys in government and research drag your heels.

Just remember there's a reason sometimes we proceed cautiously, and it's because we don't want to go back to the drawing board, which is where we are headed right now with a couple of agents.

I appreciate your can do, get it done attitude, that's why you are on the board, and that's great.

But at the same time, you have to balance that with careful progress with good scientists and that's what USGS can bring to the table.

Francis started this 14 years ago and we were not rushing to judgment 14 years ago and it's a good thing we didn't.

And we tried not to rush to judgment and that's just the way it proceeds.

If it were easy, it would have been done 20 years ago but it's not an easy task.

So I know it's frustrating.

Nobody is more frustrated than we are, believe me.

>> RICK DANVIR: I have a question to build on that.

Are we going to receive updates on progress -- progress updates on this at each meeting now?

Or at least once a year?

>> MARY D'AVERSA: Is that something that the board would find helpful in its advice to us?

I think we can find a way to work with that then.

>> RICK DANVIR: We need to take a long view.

We may be at least looking at 100 years, right?

You know, there's -- and if this is done right and it's continued, and it's finished, at least it's going to build the right kind of foundation for those managers that are out there now and their replacements and their replacements to do a better job of managing into the future with the -- you know, some the challenges they are going to face, than what we have done in the past.

And I think we need as a board, we need to make sure that this foundation gets built.

>> FRED WOEHL: Absolutely.

Anybody else?

>> MIKE TUPPER: A comment.

>> FRED WOEHL: You bet.

>> MIKE TUPPER: I have only been in the government for 35 years.

I'm kind of new to some folks.

>> FRED WOEHL: Newbie!

>> MIKE TUPPER: Yeah.

So the government, like when you try to change course, it's like turning an aircraft carrier with a canoe paddle and that's true, but when you finally get to a course, and even though you might be running very, very slowly, when you hit the beach, it's like hitting the beach with an oil tanker and you have so much motivation and tools and information behind you, that when you finally get there, you can make really big differences.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: We were thinking of the Exxon Valdez.

(Laughter).

>> MARY D'AVERSA: The concept was great but the analogy just left us.

(Laughter)

>> MIKE TUPPER: Okay.

That was a little too quick.

>> FRED WOEHL: That's a good point.

A good point.

I think Ms. Kathy this will be a good time for a break.

>> KATHY LIBBY: Time for a break.

Yes.

>> FRED WOEHL: So you want us back in at 11:00?

>> KATHY LIBBY: 11:00.

And Ken Visser is here.

>> FRED WOEHL: 11:00.

Thank you.

(Break)

>> KATHY LIBBY: Okay.

Everybody.

Hello.

We are about to reconvene.

>> FRED WOEHL: We appreciate that but it's time to get back to the business at hand.

All right.

We are very fortunate to have Kenneth with us today.

We wanted to talk about the AUM, AUL controversy, if you will, and I'm sure Kenneth is going to explain that all to us.

So without any further adieu, I will let Kenneth from the floor.

>> KENNETH VISSER: Hi, I'm Ken Visser, I work for the division of forestry service rangeland, riparian and plant conservation.

I appreciated the comment from Rick, about taking the long view and establishing foundation.

What I would like to talk about today is the foundation for the establishment of the grazing administration on public lands.

This does not apply to Forest Service lands at all.

So the topics I'm going to cover are a brief sketch of the historic public land livestock use, what led to the Taylor Grazing Act and its implementation and contemporary BLM livestock grazing administration and decision making.

Normally, I present this -- this is a sweetened and condensed version of a talk I prepare at our training center to incoming rangeland management specialists and I wander around.

So if I feel awkward up here, just -- sort of sitting here like I'm testifying.

The Taylor Grazing Act was best initiated right after the Civil War.

The combination of opportunity, demand, ambition, exploration, ignorance and growth.

There was' demand for livestock products in the east, following the Civil War.

The Civil War herds were decimated.

Texas not so much.

Texas had additional herds.

They drove them north to shipping points in Kansas and discovered the open ranges in Montana and to the west.

These investments were backed by eastern banks and foreign venture capitalists.

The reason it was so profitable is there were minimal start-up costs, free foraged, unchecked and unregulated use.

The ranchers, the homestead act was passed around, I believe it was 1860, in the Lincoln administration, and ranchers settling the West used homestead laws to claim lands and waters to establish a foothold and then use the surrounding public lands for their herds.

This is an historic photo that's actually on the -- sorry, I'm sorry standing up.

I can't help it.

This is -- this is an historic photo from the IZ Ranch.

It's actually on their website.

I hope they don't mind that I used it, but it gives an idea of the numbers of cattle and what was going on out there.

I went through state and other economic records, tax records, and things like that, in an attempt to get an idea of the number of livestock grazing back during this hey day, between 1865 and 1900, the old West days, and this slide illustrates that in the millions heads of growth of cattle and sheep on the western rangelands, 11 western states.

Next slide is a -- putting that in perspective is to translate those numbers into year-round use and to put them into animal unit months.

And animal unit month is a measurement of forage.

It is defined from a forage standpoint as 800 pounds dry matter of forage.

That's pretty much it.

My analogy I use for animal unit months is think of a lawn mower or riding mower and what comes into the catchment is the quantity.

That's what we are actually measuring.

Animal unit month has an annual unit component and a temporal component, the month.

It's the amount of forage that one animal unit consumes in one month.

There's a different definition for BLM grazing fee assessment purposes and the -- the definition that the Forest Service used for grazing fee assessment purposes is a head

month, but the Forest Service also uses animal unit month for forage quantity amount consumed.

If you look at this slide, I have manually inserted with the arrow the current level of permitted use on BLM lands and to be absolutely -- to be clear, this number, the blue line is not BLM lands because, of course, there were no BLM lands back then.

That's the population based on tax estimates -- or tax, census and things like that, which makes me think that even that may have been under reported.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: When you say current is that -- I mean is that just for this year or is -- what does that represent when you say current.

What do you mean by current?

>> KENNETH VISSER: Current levels and later in the talk, I will get to a slide that shows what billed AUMs, BLM has from 1953 until now.

>> RICK DANVIR: Does the red line just refer to livestock?

>> KENNETH VISSER: Yes.

And I probably put more detail in these slides thinking that I didn't have enough time to actually go through it like I would really like to, but it's there for your reference, you know, in the future.

>> RICK DANVIR: It's great.

Thanks.

>> KENNETH VISSER: So we had a range problem, and this was starting to attract the attention of Congress.

What was attracting the attention of Congress was that the actual depletion of the range to levels that were -- it was just called the deplorable wastage.

And this is -- that's fifth bullet there, and so they started to initiate bills to regulate livestock grazing on the public domain as it was called then.

It was the lands that weren't under any formal designation.

They were lands that the United States had in its possession but they weren't especially managed for any particular purpose.

Beginning of the stewardship really started with the Teddy Roosevelt administration,

and Cleveland before that.

Roosevelt got to go and created the Forest Service.

And the Forest Service administered grazing on forest reserves.

As a result of some of that administration, many of -- there were many reductions on the forest and this led to additional pressure on the public lands as livestock removed from the forest, sheep, what have you, cattle, would just be let loose on the public lands.

And I want to come back to this point too with respect to the current condition of our rangelands.

To this day when there was over wintering, lower shipping points and lower elevations, the depopulate plant communities are a shadow of what we would expect to see based on range site descriptions which are descriptions of plant communities that are developed by the natural resources conservation service.

This was a debate in Congress having to do how is the best way to get a handle on the problem.

Some thought a series of livestock leasing would be a solution and others thought that putting lands in private ownership would be the proper solution.

And through this debate, the initial -- through the initial debate, the ones who advocated more lands and private hands would be the incentive needed to turn the range condition problem around.

This is a quick advancement between 1916 and 1929, we had livestock numbers as high as ever, and we had controls sort of loosened because we had troops to feed and Europeans to feed, as well as Americans during this time.

Once the war ended, livestock prices collapsed, and plunged over indebted farmers and ranchers into very severe financial trouble.

It became clear also in the '20s that the amount of acreage allowed for homesteads in the arid west was just insufficient.

You could not make a living just on 640 acres of desert land, even if that was pure riparian meadow.

You had to have the public lands associated with that in order to make an economic go of it.

One technique used by ranchers, well, operators back in this was to -- this era was to

patent or homestead on known water sources, thereby leading to some of the land use patterns that we have out in the west, which you will see like entire drainage be box checked as being all private and then surrounded by public lands.

This eventually led to the Wilson administration issuing the public reserve order and that was to prevent waters that were still remaining, to prevent those from going into private hands and being dominated by one or two ranchers.

The idea was that everybody should have a little -- all grazers should have a chance to use this water, and not just one or two ranchers.

This was -- this was what led to the Taylor Grazing Act.

Same time in 19 -- early '30s, of course, we had the great depression.

We had a bad drought and bad farming and this was enough to turn the tide to finally have -- get the Congress to enact the Taylor Grazing Act.

This wasn't the first attempt at organizing grazing districts.

It was preceded by the Pumpkin Creek Grazing District and the Owens Valley Grazing District which were set aside by separate congressional action in '28 and '31.

As I said, this is a very condensed version.

So now we are already to the Taylor Grazing Act.

In brief, the TGA, which I will just call it the TGA authorizes the secretary throughout the range and charge a grazing fee.

It requires us to cooperate with state and stock associations and to lease lands that are not included in grazing districts.

That's in Section 15 of the act.

So you will hear folks say, well, we got a Section 3 permit.

We got a Section 15 permit.

Interesting historical fact was once the grazing division was organized in the Department of Interior, the general land office still administered the lands that were outside of grazing districts.

So the grazing service was set up specifically to organize and develop grazing districts.

It wasn't until 1946 that the general land office and the Bureau of Land Management were joined together to create the Bureau of Land Management.

Even then there were separate rules for Section 15 authorized leases and Section 3 grazing permits, all the way up until 1978.

So job one, following the Grazing Act was to establish grazing districts.

This is a map from the 1945 drafting office of the Salt Lake City, where it was at that time, and it's with a list of grazing districts and what their names were at the time.

You will notice right here, that this doesn't have a thing because that's the battle mountain grazing district and that was not created as a grazing district until 1951.

The ranchers there particularly salt of the earth kind of types and they are figuring -- I'm basing this on a memorandum, I have read, a contemporary memorandum, that if they did not organize under the grazing district, they wouldn't have the government coming out and bothering them.

So they disabused them of that notion and eventually they formed a grazing district.

First, the first -- Section 3 of the TGA says preference shall be given in the issuance of grazing permits and grazing districts to applicants as may be necessary to permit the proper use of lands, water or water rights owned, occupied or leased by them.

Now, I'm emphasizing proper use of lands or proper use of water and water rights.

There's two kind of different modes of operation for livestock operations in the west.

Roughly you can roughly divide it as north of snow line and south of the snow line.

Going back in history, in the late 1800s, first in Montana, 1886 and '87, there were massive blizzards and in 1887, '88, there are massive blizzards in the Great Basin.

Up until that time, the accepted practice was to leave livestock out on the range year round, higher elevations in the summer and bring them down to the lower elevations in the winter.

These blizzards killed a lot of cattle and put a lot of people out of business.

Carcasses were littered in the range.

Anyway, north of the snow line, they decided that they better come up with a different idea on how to work this.

So what they do now, and it continues until now, they range hay or forage on their private owned lands to feed their cattle that they will keep as root stock over the winter and that is -- that is what in our parlance called their base property.

What this does, though, and how the implementation of these provisions, what it did was pretty intimately intertwined or joined at the hip the public land grazing privilege and the base properties of privately owned base properties of the ranchers in the west that have public land permits.

And that system also allows for the -- so when we establish a permit and a preference, those are -- those are attached to -- in our record keeping, they are attached to specific properties and those properties when they are sold can be -- the new owner is eligible then for a permit, if they otherwise qualify, as well as the BLM rules, not the Forest Service rules also allow preference and grazing privileges to be transferred from one property to another property.

So, again, this is just emphasizes the economic intertwining of what's going on out there, as far as grazing privileges.

So we go through the initial adjudication.

It's done on -- with a lot of help from grazing advisory boards which were local ranchers elected by their peers to look at the applications that came in and decide who was -- who got what and who was bogus and they would make recommendations to the district grazer is what they were called at the time and then district grazer would write one decision adjudicating an entire area.

The concept of allotments were -- was still -- I wouldn't say the concept was rough.

It was just sort of -- it was a big, wide open out there and rancher A used from this mountain ridge, down to that lakeside over there.

That was his general area.

There may not have been any fence or anything, but that's where he would be adjudicated his permit.

So, again, the initial adjudications were found to be overly generous.

World War II, when the focus was on food production and then not so much on regulation and range ecology and things like that, and it became evident during the '50s that a lot of the initial adjudications over allocate -- continued to over allocate the range for the ranchers.

This resulted in efforts again to readjudicate and this was a trying time, I this, for BLM

officials at the time because a lot of the results of second adjudications were resulting in further reductions.

And that is economically stressful, of course, for the rancher.

This is an example of an older adjudication decision, just so you have an illustration of what one looks like.

Note that this decision is three pages long with a one-page attachment and it's sent to one party, the receiving rancher.

Now we have -- I'm going on to the evolution of multiple use, and the multiple use concept.

The preamble to the Taylor Grazing Act, public lands pending their final disposal.

So the attitude was we are custodians -- this is before my time.

I say "we" because I worked for the BLM going on 36 years now.

We are custodians of this land.

Eventually it will be transferred out of the federal land base and into public lands -- I mean, into private hands.

That's -- that attitude gradually changed and in 1964, the BLM had the classification and the multiple use act.

This act required the BLM to classify lands for disposal or retention and to develop land plans to guide the activities on those lands.

So this is kind of also the genesis of land use planning for BLM, was the early '60s.

Also in 1964, we had the Wilderness Act and then in '69, we had the NEPA or national environmental and policy act.

1971, the wild and free roaming horses and burros act.

'73, the endangered species act, the Clean Water Act, in 1976, we got BLM's organic act.

This act finally said new policy.

We are going to retain these lands, unless we got a good reason to not keep them.

So it's sort of a flip flop of the old dispose of them.

We will retain if there's a need for an exchange or something else.

Sure, we'll do that.

But the overall policy is to keep them and manage them.

1978, the public rangelands improvement act.

1979, the archaeological resources and protection act.

These are some of them.

It's not all of them, but I give you these because in our analysis documents we usually touch on these in one way or another.

When I say analysis, I'm talking range analysis, range permit renewal, examinations, things like that.

1978, we had a significant grazing regulations overhaul and in 1978 and '88, we had completion of grazing EISs and Resource Management Plans required by FLPMA.

Now, these grazing EISs have an interesting back story and that is in 1974, 1973, the BLM saw that they had to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act.

So their solution at that time was to write one environmental impact statement for the entire grazing program for the entire 159 or 175 million acres of their grazing allotments back at that time.

The NRDC the national resources defense council said, not so fast.

We think you need more site-specific analysis.

What they did was agree through a settlement of a lawsuit to complete these grazing EISs.

I was hired in '79 as an inventory crew member to gather the information necessary to complete the wells, RMP, 1985.

So now we have vegetation inventory data.

So I was on a crew that supplied vegetation inventory data to grazing EISs.

In the early 1980s, we had some of the first -- one of the first EISs came out using that,

the Reno EIS using that data.

That was challenged in court, and at the end of the day, they said compounding errors and use of the computer programs and things led to unreliable information.

We got a new administration, and the new administration said, we're not going to use one point in time inventories to determine livestock grazing capacity anymore.

Instead, we will implement a system of -- we will hold the permits where they are, and implement a system of monitoring and adjust -- monitoring vegetation and monitoring -- and adjust over time.

But we're not.

In 1995, skipping forward and I don't have my watch out and I wanted to leave time for questions.

1995, we had rangeland reform.

This set of regulations changed the way the BLM did business in several areas, but one of the most significant areas was it actually codified the fundamentals of rangeland health and the standards and the guidelines for grazing administration.

This led to efforts by all.

It also let the old grazing advising advisory boards go and established a new council to advise the BLM on a district basis or a larger regional basis as Resource Advisory Councils.

But I would say of this, the rangeland reform, they did attempt fee reform at that time.

And that was turned into such a controversial element that the secretary decided -- Secretary Babbitt decided at the time to set that aspect of reform aside and to let Congress come to a solution and so far, we're still left with President Reagan's executive order of 1986 which indefinitely extended the grazing fee formula found in the public lands improvement act.

In 1998, a significant event happened from the interior board of land appeals and I will get into who they are in a little bit more detail later.

And this was the beginning of the permit renewal environmental assessment.

In 1992, or thereabouts, an office in Utah, I believe it was out of Moab.

I forget the exact office, wrote an allotment management plan for the Comb Wash

Decision.

Some people say it's Comes Wash.

The allotment is named because it has features in it that make it look like a rooster's comb.

Anyway, a little trivia.

They relied on an EIS.

We have these EISs.

Why do we have to do more NEPA in order to renew a grazing permit.

It turns out the IBLA -- it went through various levels of appeal, the IBLA speaks for the Secretary for matters coming out of the agencies under her control.

And they said if the IBLA doesn't give you a balanced decision making process, that considers all resources then you need to do a more localized analysis.

This has really changed, also -- and changed how BLM did business with much more analysis on a local level and a much more complicated way to get to renewing the grazing permit.

This was the slide I was promising you with respect to the actual livestock grazing use from 1953 to 2013.

'53 is kind of an arbitrary date, but that's date that we believe we have reliable records based on our own internal accounting systems and systems like public land statistics.

Anyway, it shows that the number of permits has declined from -- around 30,000 down to 17, 600.

Those change annually, but right now -- the exact number always changes.

And the number of AUMs authorized was up at 18 million.

This is actual AUMs, not bought and paid for annually, as to where we are now, which is around -- I think around 9.6 was the latest figure for 2013.

So here are some more livestock grazing statistics.

17,000 some plus permits and leases.

12.4 million AUMs active, 2 million suspended, listed on permits.

Of the active listed on permits, in 2013, 8.5 million AUMs are sold and 3.9 were taken in nonuse.

We are in a drought, and fire are two significant things.

The livestock markets are also another thing that will cause ranchers to take less use than potentially is authorized by their grazing permit.

We don't charge them for nonuse.

Okay.

Switching gears, I kind of have to, because I don't have much more time.

We have current BLM grazing regulations that are in Title 43, Code of Federal Regulations.

We used the 2005 edition.

We -- the code of federal -- what is published in the code today if you go to ECFR and you say, oh, use these grazing regs will be wrong.

We have not republished a correction to reflect the fact that in 2006, our regulations were enjoined.

It's in process, Mike.

I can have Joe brief you.

It dragged on forever.

In the grazing we have 10 subparts, administration, and grazing management, authorizing grazing use, prohibited acts, specific thing to deal with unauthorized grazing use.

And penalties, fundamentals of rangeland health and standards and guidelines for grazing administration and then effects of wildfire management -- the effect of wildfire management decisions.

With certain exceptions, the BLM issues a grazing permit for a ten-year term.

For example, if Tim leases Julie's base property for a three-year term and comes to us and applies for transfer of the preference into his name and the permit, that was formerly

held by Julie, we would then do that for a three-year term to Tim.

So that's why we issue it less than a ten-year term.

That's a typical example.

Grazing permit, gives the grazing use period.

The mace of use and the amount of forage use in animal unit months.

AUMs are calculated by multiplying the number of units and the number of days allowed plus the percent of forage within the allotment that occurs on public lands divided by 30.41666 and why do you think that is?

Well, if you take 365 and divide it by 12, this is what you come up with.

Because we have 30-day months.

Never month.

It's a fee billing thing.

The grazing permits that will include provisions rotate your cattle like, this don't put salt here the creeks.

This time of year, you will be up on top and this time of year, you will be down on the bottom.

Management of livestock.

Generally the management and resource conditions that we were shooting for are not necessarily stated on a permit.

They are on an active plan that applies to their allotment where the permit authorizes use or generally in land use plans.

This is just a picture of a sample grazing permit.

Typically this part would contain a lot more terms and conditions.

This is a sample, just generated -- I had generated out of our system.

It doesn't -- it's a fake permit, basically.

But that's the general format of what they look like.

Now I wanted to talk a bit about our grazing permit regulatory framework.

We are required by the regulations to periodically review the permitted use allowed by our permits and change that use if needed to manage, maintain, improve the rangeland productivity, make conditions better.

You can read what's on the slide.

In doing so, we must coordinate with the affected permittees estate that's responsible for managing lands or resources, where the allotment is located and the interested public.

The interested public can become an interested public by writing to the BLM and say I'm interested in your management of this particular allotment.

Please make me an interested public.

That's the sole requirement.

We are required to invite them to comment on their environmental analyses and invite them to get copies of proposed decisions having to do with those allotments or those permits.

So we're needed -- we need to provide opportunity for the public to participate in our analysis of these plans and to review our data and our -- what we're basing our decisions on.

Our decision making framework is usually -- it's uses user utilization.

It's for the measuring forage usage.

Many ranchers are required to submit reports of how they actually grazed.

We recognize there's flexibility there and things happen, and so we want to get as accurate information as possible and we have these use reports.

This is an illustration of a monitoring map up in Idaho, which was put out to the public saying this is the allotments we are going to monitor this year.

You can certainly welcome the come along if you want.

And at the end of the day, we also do standards and -- rangeland health standards and assessments and publish these documents and make them available.

Again, I'm just going faster than I'm comfortable going but it's been a long meeting, eh?

To make a grazing permit decision, we have to comply with NEPA.

This is an example of the Hubbard Vineyard allotment grazing permit, renewal EA.

We used the NEPA process.

So we have -- rough and dirty, we have a land health evaluation and it says this standard isn't being met and this standard is not being met and livestock are significantly contributing to not meeting this standard.

What will we do about it?

Well, there are probably options to deal with that.

So those various options are analyzed -- are developed and put forward and analyzed in an environmental assessment.

That's how that fits in together there.

In our decision making framework, we must comply with other processes including consultation in the Endangered Species Act, archaeological surveys, and things of that nature.

And then at the end of the day, we have a grazing permit decision that is issued to state what our intention is with respect to how they are going to graze and so forth.

Notice the -- I put the little 1962 adjudication decision and it was three pages long and one page attachment and sent to one party.

I invite you to compare that to this decision, contemporary decision 27 pages long.

18 page attachment, sent to 75 parties, all potentially appellees.

Now moving on to our due process, now we have issued the decision.

Our rules require that we -- before we issue a decision that changes livestock grazing, we have a two-step process, generally.

If we have an emergency, or an immediate need for -- to address a critical resource problem, we can issue a decision and the immediate effect.

An example of that would be we have a fire that burns.

I will try to make this realistic.

We have a fire that burns part of a pasture in an allotment and we want the burn part to rest, but it's large.

The pasture is large.

There's no division between the burn and the non-burn.

So there's still forage out in the non-burn area, and the rancher says, well, no, I need that forage.

I want to graze that.

Well, we can't keep you off the burn without keeping you off the pasture.

He may disagree with that assessment and say, I want to get out this anyway and we will have to close it -- we will have to issue a decision and an immediate effect.

Typically a rancher when there is a fire, there's no forage, but they will take nonuse.

Sometimes they don't always cooperate, or sometimes there's a gray area or there's room for dispute.

Generally for grazing normal permit renewal, we have a proposed and a final decision.

The proposed decision is protestable to the issuing officer.

If I issued a decision -- I will use Tim again since he is staring right at me.

If Tim is a rancher and I issue him a proposed decision, he can come -- he can -- I would also send a copy of that to the interested public.

Tim can say, I don't like this decision.

You didn't account for certain information I have.

I probably should have told it to you at the appropriate time when you were invited to be fed but I disagree with your decision or in some aspect.

And so then we'll take your protest and evaluate it and determine whether we missed something and if we didn't, then we'll respond to your protest and either in the final decision we'll put that in the administrative record and it's your final decision.

Final decision is I'm just trying to go through process here.

So final decision is then appealable to the office of hearings and appeals and the secretary.

The final decision and these are the -- you know, the citations, and so forth and so on that -- where that comes from.

So we have the due process is they could be protested to the BLM official.

The final is appealed to the hearings and appeals.

The secretary is delegated.

The office of hearing and appeals to speak for her in matters before the agency.

And typically grazing decisions are assigned by the offices of the hearings and appealed to the administrative law judge if there's questions of fact that need to be examined.

If there's no questions of fact or if they can get rid of it through summary judge.

Or it's not a triable kind of thing, then our solicitors and the appellants lawyers will engage in the legal process to try to take care of the issue.

Sometimes we do have, you know, a rather extensive -- and it is -- Mike is the administrative law judge and you are the recorder and I'm sitting here and I'm actually testifying.

That's how those work.

Then any party can appeal the administrative law judge.

BLM or the appellee can appeal that to the IBLA but once the IBLA speaks the BLM is done.

The appealing party can appeal what is essentially then the secretary's decision in the federal appeals process.

We have tons of those too in the grazing -- well, tons is not an accurate characterization, but lots.

And I think that might be my last slide.

So that was my presentation.

I didn't really touch on the HMA, AML thing but I wanted to leave time for questions so you could ask specific questions and if it gets outside my expertise, or something I'm

not -- I'm iffy about, I will ask Bryan as well.

So thank you.

>> FRED WOEHLE: A very good explanation and discussion of the Taylor Grazing Act.

One of the major things that the board was interested in was how the Taylor Grazing Act impacts or affects the 1971 wild horse and burro act.

And how the AUMs are calculated and when are they calculated?

And when are they adjusted and things of that nature?

Is that about what we talked about?

[Off microphone comment]

>> KENNETH VISSER: I would recharacterize your question how did the wild horse and burro act affect the Taylor Grazing Act because that was there first.

>> FRED WOEHLE: That's one of the questions, what takes precedence, the Taylor Grazing Act or the wild horse act?

>> KENNETH VISSER: We'll get -- I can't really quote the wild horse and burro act, but when we are managing in concert with other uses, I take that as words that mean that we have uses that are there.

We have wildlife habitat.

We have all the uses that are going to use the wild landscape.

We have recreation.

We have all the multiple uses of BLM.

We will manage all wild horses and burros as well within that framework and within the framework of our land use plans.

I should emphasize that the FLPMA requires this land use planning process and I think I would suggest that in the earlier plans that is where they established appropriate management levels.

And is that how it worked in Wells, Bryan?

Do you want to come up here?

>> BRYAN FUELL: Sure.

>> KENNETH VISSER: And maybe walk them through a multiple use decision if that's pertinent.

>> BRYAN FUELL: I think Ken touched on it, FLPMA directed us to take all the public lands and filter them.

We used the land use plan process, our RMPs which dictate how the land is being managed.

So it's not one has precedence over the other.

It's how they fit together is how our direction has been.

AML has been set through carrying capacity calculations which is real similar to what Ken was speaking of.

Those calculations are done on what's the carrying capacity of the range?

Those were typically done by allotment, not by big areas, allotments.

And so the AML carrying capacity, livestock grazing were done through those allotment evaluations is how we did them.

Ultimately at the end, you come out with a multiple use decision, which means multiple decisions.

We had a wildlife decision, we had a horse decision and we had a livestock decision.

Now, when you look at an allotment, you have to look at those elements that are essentially there for -- once you determine, you start beginning.

The allotment doesn't necessarily have all HMA in it.

Normally it's just a portion of the HMA fit within an allotment.

So you are only looking at that portion as to horse livestock carrying capacities.

You look at the resources that are there for livestock, resources there for horses.

They didn't necessarily mesh.

A good example in Nevada, water is controlled or managed by the state, not by the

federal government.

So permits are issued to -- based on beneficial use.

In other words -- in other words water on public land belongs to the livestock operators normally.

We don't have the capacity to -- there's two levels of looking at water capacity.

If I'm going way too deep, I apologize.

>> FRED WOEHL: No, you are not.

>> BRYAN FUELL: The carrying capacity using water -- what I refer to as artificial water, if it's well water, we don't have any legal access to that, unless we have a water permit on that well.

Normally it doesn't exist.

Those water rights are normally owned by the livestock operators.

Water that is on the surface, it is also owned by the livestock operators, but they -- there is state law that provides for wildlife use.

In Nevada, the federal government by law in Nevada is determined we cannot own water there.

Very limited to what water resources.

We cannot own beneficial use for livestock.

The law doesn't allow for that.

We do have old permits that we do, that most are being eliminated once they are being reviewed.

The surface water we have argued that wild horses are wildlife and they can use the water as provided by wildlife law, if you will.

Nevada is in the process of trying to eliminate wild horses specifically from that list.

Anyway, water, forage and then those habitat needs, do they exist?

And then after that, you look at how much horses should receive with that.

Normally, there's multiple tools to the land managers.

Some of the RMPs have the specific number of animals that existed at the time of the act because there was census inventory done at that time.

They were reference points to direct the manager as to what the appropriate levels were.

Again, livestock horses aren't -- they use the same forage but they don't necessarily manage the same way so you have livestock where they won't go to because of distance to water but horses will.

That's are the factors that you take into being.

Ultimately that process is done through the public process.

AML is set through the decision process where the public reviews that information, and then it's set.

After that's done, there's a process to change AML, and that's real similar.

You have carrying capacity, normally we reaffirm AML, and we do gather plans now.

That's where we bring in data that suggests the AML is correct, or the tools adjustment AML.

That's where we talk about the AML.

>> FRED WOEHL: HMA can have several allotments on it?

>> BRYAN FUELL: Correct.

>> FRED WOEHL: And each allotment has a separate AML.

>> BRYAN FUELL: Correct.

>> FRED WOEHL: And this AML is based on actual, what's on the ground at this time, and this?

>> BRYAN FUELL: Right.

One thing I will probably need to mention is when we do those calculations, my experience, and I'm sure it's done more ways than how I did it as a specialist.

The factor, the normal year factor was calculated in.

So you use monitoring data in where you have lots of precipitation and the years you had low precipitation and you come one that average and that's what we used to determine it.

>> FRED WOEHL: So depending on the HMA and some of them, you could have an increase in cattle AMLs and one allotment in a decrease in cattle AMLs in another allotment.

>> KENNETH VISSER: I would prefer that you don't use AML and cattle in the same sentence.

>> BRYAN FUELL: The answer is yes.

The number of authorized livestock within an allotment in an HMA could be changed to go up.

Normally if you do, that though, you are addressing AML.

Because there's an additional forage, you will obviously argue there's additional forage for wild horses.

The same applies for if it goes down, or who is the factor?

What's the causal factor of that, to decrease the allowable use.

That could decrease the factor if they are a factor in that reason.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: There are different allotments within the same HMA but the horses move from one allotment to the other, how does that make sense?

>> It doesn't.

>> BRYAN FUELL: The answer is that ultimately, the process we use to set AML set the number for the HMA but you manage the HMA at an AML.

It is confusing and it doesn't make sense sometimes but that's how we have done that.

>> KENNETH VISSER: You understand there's overlap and intersection and so you will have, you know -- we there's a map developed from Nevada that shows the intersection of wild horse HMAs and allotments and so you will have -- it won't take in the entire allotment.

Some are entirely within allotment.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: It just seems strange that you would have different AMLs and an HMA and have the AML by allotment.

>> KENNETH VISSER: Is that how it works?

>> BRYAN FUELL: Yeah, we don't do carrying capacity with -- things are changing.

Complexes, if you will, we did carrying capacity by allotment and that's how those allotment decisions like the one -- Hubbard Vineyard, that doesn't have an HMA, but if there was HMA there, then the a.

Of AUMs in that allotment would be determined through that document and it would address -- it would talk the big picture, the actual allocation of AUMs for horses would be done specifically to that document.

Because there's only -- that document only pertains to those AUMs or the allowable use levels that are in that allotment.

That's how we have done it.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: You are right.

That doesn't make sense.

>> KENNETH VISSER: Well, with our allotments, we have many to one and one to many kind of relationships and so it's really --

>> BRYAN FUELL: It's all integrated.

>> KENNETH VISSER: If you have a recommendation, we are all ears.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: How is a determination made in an HMA as to the AUM allocation to establish AUL for the horses versus how many of the AUMs are dedicated to livestock.

>> BRYAN FUELL: I tried to touch on that.

Some RMPs had initial data from the time of the act.

So you have those numbers that are brought forward, not necessarily that's the number, but that --

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Number of one?

>> BRYAN FUELL: The number of animals in an AUL, but it's a reference point to

determine how many animals exist at the time of the act and then you can look at what the changes of uses have been and try to determine a carrying capacity.

The answer is, there is no one set way of doing it.

It does allow for potential bias, I will agree to that, but it does -- but it does allow for flexibility in the field to use the tools that they have, and no allotment is the same.

That's ultimately -- or no HMA is the same.

There's no one size fits all for everything.

So flexibility is the key to do that.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: I understand that, but I still -- the question I guess, is how is the determination made -- when the law was passed, the intent of the '71 law was to preserve these horses and allow them to thrive in herd management areas.

And, you know, that doesn't mean that that's a number that existed in '71 is the number that should be there today, any more than it -- if you are trying to protect a species, whether it's a duck or a horse or whatever, when you make that decision to take action to change the course of how they are going to be managed that doesn't mean that that number there that day is going to be the number that you will have 23 years from now.

>> BRYAN FUELL: That's just a reference point for the manager.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: My question is, from that reference point is there a philosophy that the BLM is following in establishing -- I'm not trying to put you on the hot spot here.

I'm trying to ask the question.

I'm being adversarial and so please bear with me.

In my travels around to different -- in talking to different horse specialists and the different districts and talking to different people, what you just highlighted is what is my -- my burning question is, is that there is not a general approach, a consistency in approach.

When I look at the range allocations, when you are looking at it from an AUM standpoint, there are some ranges -- there are some HMAs as low as 2.6% of the allocations of AUM are going to horses and the rest to livestock in the herd management area.

And then there are others that are 12 -- and I think about the highest I have seen so far that I have looked at and that's using your database and that is BLMs.

About the highest I have seen through the horses is in the 20s, the low 20s.

So I'm struggling to understand.

I mean, understand or wondering is there at some point a process that the BLM could take a look at to establish what is a reasonable percentage allocation of resources between the horses and the grazing?

And is the -- I understand there's historic use by the livestock industry, and I know that that's got to be taken into account to a certain degree, but it just seems to be we would like to see -- is there any way that we can take some of this -- the analysis of how to do this and is there a level of -- at least a range of standardization that we can put on it that would seem to make sense, like Cope was just saying.

You admitted yourself that some of it doesn't make sense.

Is there something that this advisory board could do that could make that process easier for you folks to do?

>> BRYAN FUELL: Well, AML, to my knowledge, or for the most part have been set.

And meaning that they have gone through the public process.

They have gone through a decision process.

The challenge to me is that we -- over my career in 20 plus years at the bureau, we have only been to AML a couple of years on most of our HMAs.

I mean, we have been -- we have had -- our inability to maintain AML on these allotments or these HMAs, excuse me, is the challenge.

We don't really understand whether AMLs are correct or not.

When we do our evaluations, we are looking at those range land health standards.

There are -- most of these RACs have advised us and we adapted the standards for horses.

We are evaluating the wild horses for the standards for the rangeland manage.

We need to get to AML and show that the AML is correct or it needs to be adjusted and it can go ultimately up or if it's an issue, it can go down.

If it has an effect on another important -- IE, sage grouse.

But that's where my take is, is we really need to get to AML before we worry about whether or not there's a -- figure a way to make them bigger or smaller.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Here's the problem I have with that myself, and this is my opinion sitting here and there are nine personal opinions on this board.

The NAS study, all four of them have all said that AML is not what you should be hanging your hat on, and that that seems to be what the BLM hangs their hat on in regards to the horse management, is AML.

And it says that the process of how it's achieved and how it's acquired -- I have talked to people who said they have been working with the same AMLs for 35 years.

How is that possible when the range conditions change so much?

So it just seems to me like the BLM keeps hanging their hat on AML, AML, AML, and yet the NAS studies all four of them have gotten -- I'm not even going to pull the book out and recite it because I'm sure you have all read it, but it all goes back to the AML not being an accurate number, not being a scientifically arrived at number.

And in some cases, even anecdotal, and I think you need to go back to that, and you are saying we need to get to AML, but, you know, that's like saying, I need to go to Chicago.

I need to go to Chicago when I'm heading to New York.

So it doesn't -- I'm having a struggle with it, and that I'm really glad you guys are here.

The AUM, how it's figured out makes total sense to me.

Every bit of it.

How the cross between AUMs and the allocation to the horses escapes me.

And that's what I'm looking for.

>> MARY D'AVERSA: I might be able to provide a little bit of a different angle which compliments what Bryan is explaining as well.

And that is when Ken explained the -- when he discussed the FLPMA, the NEPA process, and then talked a little bit about the land use planning process or the RMP, each of our management areas have resource management plans, those resource management plans are basically -- that's what land use allocations or made.

So once those allocations were made, it's a valid design cushion of how it is managed to AUL or AUM level or such.

If the debate you are really wanting to have is a certain amount of forage is out there, how much will be allocated to horses and how much allocated to livestock, recognizing that allocations, you know, horses use the range differently than livestock.

AUMs done always translate evenly.

I have been a party to a number of discussions on how you might try to measure and make those determinations, but I think the real important piece here is that is where the opportunity is to have that dialogue.

The opportunity to have that dialogue is that the Resource Management Plan level for your different districts.

So in the idea is and/or if there's an interest by the public in having a discussion of, okay, there's X amount of forage out here, with he would like to see more available for this use or less available for this use, the same way we discuss about having these used for oil and gas, those are land use allocation discussions.

It's not deciding how to -- it's not deciding how to make a use.

It's deciding what uses are appropriate where.

So that's where if there's a district or a state that is doing an RMP revision, that has HMAs and there's an interest in the public in having a dialogue, and -- and having forage allocations relatively -- that's the place in our planning process that it would be most logical for that discussion to occur.

I can't say how accurate -- the level of detail that you are asking for here.

In terms of where that occurs in the decision making process, it would be at the land use allocation or the RMP level and it's a little bit of a different scale that might be getting to your question differently and Kathy is hovering behind you for some reason.

>> FRED WOEHL: This is too good to stop.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: From a resource management standpoint, my question for Ken and Bryan is, it seems the limiting factor would not come in the grazing season but in the dry or the winter season, when all that is out there is the horses and the wildlife.

So when you determine the AML or the carrying capacity of the various HMA, do you start with the total forage for the year or do you dwell on the minimum forage.

At that point, generally the livestock are gone.

It occurred to me -- it seems to me if you base it on the conflict between wild horses and livestock, it would be less than the conflict between wild horses and wildlife, because at the minimum usage and the minimum carrying capacity, the livestock are not part of the equation.

Is that how it's developed.

>> BRYAN FUELL: Yes.

When I speak of my experience -- I'm new to the national level.

So when I speak, I speak of just experiences that I've had.

But in -- I specifically had an HMA that in the wells feel office in Nevada, it was very large and it had a very productive amount of grass.

The AML was 112.

We were questioning why is it so low?

You have so much more potential there.

And especially when livestock don't even go up to these areas because it's away from the water.

Well, that's the water that the livestock or going from.

You can't base it off of well water.

It's a personal property right in Nevada.

We can't take that.

It's based on the springs on top of the mountain, which are limited.

That's where the 112 came from, whether it's higher or lower.

We haven't addressed that, but it is -- that is the limiting factor.

And so -- we have, again, been questioned numerous times, why is it so low?

That's why.

>> FRED WOEHL: To paraphrase, Mary, what you said, so I can understand it, basically, you do set these by public input, the AMLs at these RACs.

These RACs know the area, they know what's there, and they have an open communication and they set what the AMLs are?

Is that basically correct?

>> MARY D'AVERSA: No, not exactly.

>> FRED WOEHL: Not RAC?

>> MARY D'AVERSA: No, the AMLs are typically established or reiterated based on previous work at the land use planning level.

>> FRED WOEHL: The land use planning.

>> MARY D'AVERSA: I think where the RAC is coming in, the RACs basically work with the standards and the guides for land held evaluation.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: My question, if I were going to, I guess, try to fine tune a little bit or take something to make like maybe a more direct point of looking for, one of the things that I find that I find -- that I question, I guess, is the disparity in the range resource allocation to the horses from HMA to HMA.

And I think that one of the things I would feel good about is if there was a little more consistency or some type of goal in the fact that, you know, the BLM was charged with managing these horses and, I mean, you guys are land managers, not animal managers and so it's a task that, you know, it's not something you guys were geared up for.

It seems like if it was a herd management area and it was going to be managed, it would be nice to see a consistent percentage of the range resource allocated to horses in those HMAs.

And whether it's 20% or 25% or whatever, but to have a little -- and to have some goals there, and if it's the public input that drives the allocations, then is that -- and you are saying that the range management land, the land use point is where the public input can affect the allocation of the resource?

Is that what I'm understanding?

>> MARY D'AVERSA: Yes.

>> KENNETH VISSER: If I could interrupt.

Let's take Bryan's example of the Springs limited by where we are on top.

That's where the forage is.

The cattle don't really get up there and there's private water.

Now imagine that private water is not private water.

Wouldn't that affect -- that would affect how much is there.

I would suggest that -- let's call it 10% across everywhere.

It doesn't respond to what's on the ground which is what they are responding to in this.

(Off microphone comment).

>> FRED WOEHLE: Has answered your -- what you just said, why they can't have a consistent AML for horses in every HMA is because of water.

In Nevada, the BLM has at this point, only surface water that the horses can water out of.

They can't own any water.

I heard what Bryan said that possibly in the future that will change if Nevada changes horses from -- to be not wild animals; is that correct?

>> BRYAN FUELL: Well, that's what the state is after, if you will.

But I want to say too that the horses do water at the wells.

>> FRED WOEHLE: Oh, I'm sure of that.

>> BRYAN FUELL: We don't base our carrying capacity off of that.

>> FRED WOEHLE: But you are not 100% sure that will happen over and over and over.

Right now.

And that's one thing that the board recognizes ask that if it wasn't for some of these ranchers watering some of these horses, there wouldn't be no water for them and I understand that and I appreciate that greatly, but to answer what you said, that's one of the reasons why there can be more cattle on an HMA than horses because of water.

Is that --

>> BRYAN FUELL: That is one type of scenario.

One size doesn't fit all.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: In the same way the AML can't be consistent, what you just said isn't consistent either, as far as from area to area.

And I just -- one of the things that has troubled me is when I started pulling up numbers and I really did, I did a huge amount of work with it and I hit on it in the last meeting and I'm hitting on it again, is when I start looking at the percentage of range allocations in herd management areas, these horses are restricted to a much smaller percentage of grazing ground than livestock are.

And so I think it represents somewhere between 9 and 11%, that they are wild horses in the herd management areas.

It seems to me more priority should be given to horses when possible.

I understand from what you are saying that that's not always possible but -- and I just would like the BLM to look at that and take that into consideration in these herds' management areas.

You know, to me, the charge of this law, the intent of this law -- and that's what I'm looking at.

You know, and this is a mace where I'm talking from my heart instead of my head.

But sometimes I think that's a good direction to be in.

I think that's what makes us different as humans but I think that these -- there's maces that the intent of this law was to protect and allow these horses to thrive.

And they have -- we have -- there are areas that were first set out, where we go from 307 to -- I'm not sure what the count is today, the last time I looked was 179.

I would rather see them be in less areas and managed better and given more freedoms and -- you know, I understand that there's -- I would rather see a job done really well and if it means in a less -- a smaller space and with less of them, if that's what it takes, you know, maybe that the sacrifice we have to make.

But the thing I really want to see is that the intent of the law was to manage these horses and for the BLM to manage the horses for the sake of the horses, and it just seems like -- I understand the multiuse concepts and all of that other kind of stuff.

It just seems like the horses are on the dirty end of the stick an awful lot and I don't think it's intentional.

I think it's just the way it's worked out.

There's a lot of pressures.

You know, you guys are a balloon.

BLM is a balloon and you are surrounded by porcupines.

(Laughter)

And they are playing volleyball.

With that balloon.

So I understand.

So -- I guess that's enough.

That's enough from me.

>> FRED WOEHL: Julie has something.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: Real quickly.

BLM, in addition to all of these variabilities that you mentioned, there's differences from state to state.

For example, we have an allotment that the BLM is going to drill a well on this year.

I heard this Monday at you are RAC and it's because it's prohibitive for hauling water out there.

They have been doing it for two years and in Oregon they can do that.

And that water will be available for the horses.

So that's the difference between Oregon and Nevada based on water use law from state to state, and yet BLM has to accommodate both of those kinds of solutions to a problem, if you will.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: Through the Snake River adjudication, all the water in Idaho is allocated.

There's no extra.

They say whiskey is for drinking and water is for fighting over.

That's pretty much the way things are.

We had a big uproar because the court actually ruled that the Forest Service through the wild and scenic river acts has automatic water rights in the salmon river and that caused a horrendous uproar.

It's something that's a very big issue through the West and when you start talking about taking somebody's water away from them, and you are talking about taking away their life blood and that starts fights real fast.

>> FRED WOEHL: As you can see, as a board, we are very interested in this.

This is a major component.

Does anybody else have any comments?

We are in our lunch hour but I don't care.

This is good talk.

>> JUNE SEWING: You said that there are no water rights that are available through the state or anything at all, privately owned.

The only way you can acquire -- well, water rights is by buying them from somebody.

We have so much land, actually, in some parts of Utah that have been like totally abandoned because somebody has just bought the water rights for that land and left it, you know, because they didn't have a need for it.

They just used it for the water rights.

>> FRED WOEHL: That's something back in the east, you know in Arkansas, and I mean we don't have that problem, and so it's hard for some of us to understand some of these major obstacles in managing the horses.

And just operating out there, but we have back in the east.

If I want to drill a well on my place, I drill a well on my place.

If I want to go down to the creek --

>> JUNE SEWING: It doesn't matter if you own the property or not.

>> FRED WOEHL: If I want to go down to the creek and get a bucket of water, I get a bucket of water.

>> JUNE SEWING: And it's more restrictive, as far as private use of water.

You have to own so many acre feet of water before you can even build a house.

>> FRED WOEHL: Really?

>> JUNE SEWING: Yeah.

>> FRED WOEHL: And I will stay in Arkansas.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: And it's headed for a showdown in Oregon.

Of the state issues the well permit, like the one BLM will drill, but people's domestic wells are going dry in the town of denial which the post office is in Nevada but most of the population is on the Oregon side.

At least half of the domestic wells in the town -- and there is no city water source, have gone dry because of well permits in the surrounding area that have been issued and they are tucking the water table down and so somebody will take that to court in eastern Oregon.

>> FRED WOEHL: Incredible.

>> KENNETH VISSER: I know you are dealing with the larger picture, and we went up to Oregon, they had Owalee allotment and there's a herd management.

The ranchers now are hauling water in these big water tanks.

The land itself, after working in Nevada for ten years, the land itself looks, I would say it looks like it's in the third week of June without water as far as plant and a lot of areas are physiologically affected by growth.

Some -- there's hydrological drought and then there's plan physiological drought and we are seeing impacts of both up there.

>> FRED WOEHL: Yes, both.

>> KENNETH VISSER: And the little Awahi, it's very dependent on pit reservoirs, the pit tanks and I would say of the ones we visited, nine out of ten were dry.

I mean absolutely dry.

>> FRED WOEHL: It is.

All lines clear?

Let's break for lunch.

Before I break for lunch, I have one more thing I need to say.

We need to wish a very special person happy birthday.

Debbie Collins, part of the BLM staff back, there it's her birthday.

Happy birthday.

I won't tell everybody how old you are.

>> KATHY LIBBY: Mr. Chairman, do you want to return to 1:30?

>> FRED WOEHL: I want to return at 1:15.

I want to keep us on track.

(Lunch break)

ROUGHLY EDITED TRANSCRIPT

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
WILD HORSE AND BURRO ADVISORY BOARD MEETING
APRIL 23, 2015
1:15 P.M.

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>> FRED WOEHL: If everybody will take their seats, we will start the meeting, please.

Well, board, I think we have had a very good meeting.

I think we covered a lot of ground.

We had a lot of great information, a lot of great speakers and I think it's been very beneficial.

Now comes our hard part, where we have to start talking about what recommendations we are going to make, break apart into working groups and I would like to, if it's all right with the board, just have each working group have a discussion over what they are -- what they have been talking about.

But prior to that, as we know, we've had some changes on the board.

And I've got some ideas of what I would like to see on these boards, as far as replacements.

So I'm going to read these off to the board and if y'all have no problems with this, we'll just as Captain Pickard always said on the Enterprise, we'll make it so.

Okay?

The first working group that we have is the resources.

And I would like Dr. Julie to be on that, to take Dr. Boyd's place and I would like Jen on there to take Callie's place.

On the public comment committee, I'm taking myself off of there, and I'm putting Jen on there, if that's okay.

The public comment.

It will be you, Tim, and Jen.

On the population growth committee, Dr. Julie will be going on that and Dr. Sue will be the chair.

The members on that will be Sue, Julie, Cope and Tim.

On the ecotourism, Callie is out of there, and I'm putting myself on there and I was going to ask Rick to chair that.

>> RICK DANVIR: What?

>> FRED WOEHL: Ecotourism.

>> RICK DANVIR: How did I do that?

>> FRED WOEHL: On the BLM formed working groups, Julie is going to take Dr. Spratling's spot on the CAWP and Jen has asked to be on the adoption one and Jen is also going to be on the ecosanctuary, taking Callie's place.

Now does anybody else have any changes or anything they would like to do or they would like to change their committee assignments or --

>> DR. SUE McDONNELL: You skipped the financials.

>> FRED WOEHL: No changes on it.

>> DR. SUE McDONNELL: Well, Callie was on there.

>> FRED WOEHL: Let me ask y'all about that, and I understand that this was a recent working group, but does the board still feel like there's a need for it?

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Honestly, I think any budget or financial concerns we have would probably be addressed by other things.

There's no reason that a resource or growth suppression group can't comment on the budget or the finances.

>> FRED WOEHL: Yeah.

So if -- based on that, I take it that you think we can --

>> RICK DANVIR: I think it's redundant.

>> FRED WOEHL: Okay.

>> DR. SUE McDONNELL: Any big issues about finances would need to come from the whole board any way.

>> RICK DANVIR: Yeah, yeah as a recommendation or whatever.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: Mm-hmm.

>> FRED WOEHL: Does anybody have any other comments?

Is everybody happy with where they are at?

Mike, you know I didn't put you on anything.

>> MIKE TUPPER: I'm good.

I have plenty to do, thanks.

>> FRED WOEHL: Okay.

If everybody is good, then we will go ahead and start with the resource working group.

I think we will make Cope the chair.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: Rick has been doing some work.

I will turn it over to him in a bit.

The only two things that we talked about lately, first after today's discussion and presentation that we had on the programmatic EIS, as I mentioned and they said they were going to, but I would like to have it put down as a recommendation from us anyway, is that the BLM very much do outreach and try to make certain that as many counties as possible participate as cooperating agencies in the process of developing the programmatic EIS on the population control.

I believe that's what it was starting at.

Some of the gathers in population, when we had the presentation this morning when we talked about the issues and the management concerns being the prevalence and the expansion of nonnative invasive and noxious species, impacts to the non-federally administered land, riparian wetland conditions, soil conditions, socioeconomic conditions, down the line, those are pretty much in the wheel house for county government.

So the more the counties we can have involved as cooperating agencies in that process, I think the better results you can get.

Other than, that June and I have also talked a little bit on monitoring, which we believe will become a bigger and bigger concern as time goes on and a bigger and bigger budgetary issue for the federal agencies that are just going to have a horrible time doing the required monitoring of the range conditions.

One of the things that's being worked on in central Idaho is allowing permittees going down through the university so they can locate spots and points within particularly water holes, water sources, riparian areas, crucial spots like that and identify photo points and then allow nonfederal personnel to simply go out on a regular basis and photograph the same area from the same spot in the same direction so we can use that as a photographic record of the changes on the range.

We get that with June, but I think volunteers would be a place to initiate and something that could help out and cover everybody's tracks a little bit better.

Rick, now over to you.

>> RICK DANVIR: Those photo points are the best.

And the stuff I was going along with range monitoring, the couple of people I mentioned earlier, when we were getting our presentation, are trying to take -- they are basically some range people who have been frustrated with the lack of really good, you know, easily accessible, cost effective range monitoring stuff.

And so what they tried to do -- they are getting very good at, is developing some means

of looking at some of the functional attributes of range.

You know, basically cover, bear cover, the shrub, litter, and they are getting really good at using free satellite data and tying it to photographs, historically, you know, plots on the ground and being able to then take some of that plot data and extrapolate it over the landscape very effectively.

And it's low cost, because they are using -- using the right kind of stuff.

The one outfit is being -- Colin Homer is working with BLM on some projects.

You know, with you?

>> MIKE TUPPER: Yes, USGS has 41 years of geosynchronous and georeferenced photographic and infrared data and there's -- there are more uses for it than we can imagine just yet.

But ground cover is one of the things that we have already started.

You can give us a recommendation, but we are already looking into it.

>> RICK DANVIR: That's great.

That's good.

I'm glad, and the other outfit is doing some similar stuff, and they are working with the sage grouse initiative people.

So that's -- you know, I think at least it gives us -- instead of arguing about opinions on what the range looks like, it gives us the quantitative data to base our opinions on.

You know, I just got to -- you know, one of my concerns was how we were coming along with the population modeling stuff, but I'm really impressed with the progress that was made, working with the USGS on population demographics.

That's outstanding.

I really would like to see that be made a priority, and if we can in any way shape or form help that along, I think that's something the board could do that would really do some good.

>> FRED WOEHL: There are several proposals she mentioned and we might do a recommendation to encourage BLM to adapt those proposals or something like that.

-- or incorporate.

Do 'em.

Proceed.

I'm trying to use big words that I don't know what they mean, Julie so cut me some slack.

>> MIKE TUPPER: Those were items we put forward to the USGS.

>> FRED WOEHL: Okay.

>> MIKE TUPPER: They are developing that from our ask.

>> FRED WOEHL: So it doesn't matter if we say don't do them or not, you are going to do them.

Never mind.

>> RICK DANVIR: I think that's a movement in the right direction.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: But along those lines, I think the board wants to stay involved but somebody already asked that, will there be regular updated on each of these projects?

Yes, I think we definitely want to hear about all eight of them, even if you drop one, we want to know a why.

>> FRED WOEHL: We can make that in the form of a recommendation.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: I so recommend.

(Laughter).

>> FRED WOEHL: We have to write it up.

I know this is your first meeting but we don't have a secretary.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: Okay.

I can do that.

>> FRED WOEHL: So you need to write that up.

And the next part of our meeting, we will have recommendations.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: Just a reminder, that Fred is from Arkansas and now you can't use big words.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: Well now you --

(Laughter)

>> FRED WOEHL: Oh, these are my friends.

These are my friends.

Oh.

Is this any more from the working group?

>> RICK DANVIR: I just have one other item.

I sat in on a two-day meeting with a group that was based out of Wyoming Dr. John Tanaka out of the University of Wyoming put it together and it was hosted by the sustainable rangelands round table and what they were asking was could thriving natural ecological balance be better to find?

That's what the two-day conversation was about and the group who decided that they probably could and it went back -- and they came up with sort of a means of, and a list of people they thought might help with that definition.

It went back to the rangelands roundtable and, you know, basically would need some funding to put it together.

It's just something that I would suggest maybe Mike contact Dr. Tanaka and just see how he felt about that and see if it's something that you thought might be useful.

I don't know that -- I think that it might, because -- just because of the way it went.

>> MIKE TUPPER: I worked with one other project there, so I can get ahold of him.

>> RICK DANVIR: He or Christie Maslow, if you know her.

>> MIKE TUPPER: Don't know her.

>> RICK DANVIR: I think that's everything I had on there.

Monitoring population.

Monitoring rangelands is my -- was my big one.

The only budget item I had to do with growth suppression.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: I would like to quickly enhance a little bit -- somebody was talking about the connection between monitoring and volunteerism and opportunity to meld some of those things.

I saw a project in California where US Forest Service had erected these posts but on the posts they had a bracket.

And the bracket holds your cell phone and then there's a sign there and it asks you to take a picture at this site, point your camera this direction and take a picture at this site and then upload it to a certain website.

So what they are getting is they are getting monitoring done by a huge array of the public and it just seemed like a really efficient way to get quality stuff and a lot of it.

Anyway, just -- all taken from exactly the same point because that's part of the problem with a photo point is --

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: It sure is.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: How much zoom you put on it and that sort of thing.

So --

>> FRED WOEHLE: All right.

Anybody else from the resources?

Anybody want to -- okay.

We will move right along to public comment and, Tim, I think you have some things about that?

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Yeah, we went through -- June read them all twice.

I can't say I was that diligent.

I went through them one and a half time.

>> JUNE SEWING: I read them again before we got here so that I could be a little --

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Yeah.

There were some very lively comments, as one would expect.

But one of the things that I noticed, there was a really shift -- there was a nice shift, a real positive shift in the tone of the public comments to people offering their opinions without being rude and everything which was a really nice thing to see.

As far as things that people were addressing -- I mean, there were a few of them there.

A couple of people took an enormous amount of time to put together their opinions on how they thought the adoption program could be improved, and it was really amazing because -- one was a group and one was an individual that put together and all the board here is familiar with my milk run proposal and it was really along that same kind of lines, of making things a lot more available and making things mostly targeted to the Eastern States areas because they wanted to be able to get horses easier.

There was a huge amount of support for the PZP program, and which is to me, a huge shift.

A couple of years ago, there were an awful lot of folks who were screaming not to use it.

And now this was, I think, only three or four comments against PZP and there were hundreds encouraging the BLM to use PZP.

And we know it's not the silver bullet.

It was really neat and also along with that was a lot of requests to be allowed to assist if it was possible.

So there's a nice shift of people looking for that kind of thing.

There were a couple of really good letters from ranchers that were very supportive of the horse program, and they were asking about just keeping the horses in numbers that didn't conflict with their livelihood, and I think that's really important to note, it really is.

I don't know if we are able name people by name who wrote in, so I won't do that.

There were a couple that were very well written and had some very, very good points.

One of them was -- one of the letters that we got was -- like I said was from a Facebook group of folks that are kind of brainstorming and stuff that they could do to make things better for the horses.

They have a couple of -- what I would like to do at some point, I have the copies that I held out that I just wanted to bring attention to the board members and see how they felt.

There was a number of them -- letters that were very concerned about the situation of Scott City with the moving of the horses in Kansas and one of them was quite lengthy that went into great lengths about reevaluating free protocols and could the BLM -- they weren't so much critical as saying this was a tragedy and maybe there were aspects of it that were avoidable and can the BLM please really evaluate that and set up some protocols such as feed protocols for horses being transferred to try to keep something like that from happening again.

You know, they don't know what the reason is.

We were told today that the report is not ready.

So that, you know, it's all speculation.

But I think the message there was people asking, please, really look at what happened and what can we do to make sure something like that doesn't happen again?

Or minimize, you know, whatever happened.

And that was in a number of letters.

A number of letters referred to the NAS study, asking about, you know, some of the high points of the NAS study of, you know, what is going on with those points.

So -- and I think that's pretty much my synopsis.

There were a few asking about the comprehensive animal welfare program and where that was in being applied to gatherers and just overall handling of the horses and I think we have some pretty good answers to that in this meeting.

But -- June, do you have anything you would like to add to that?

>> JUNE SEWING: No, I think that's, you know, pretty well covers it.

I just wanted to say that I did read all the letters, including the one that accused me of either sleeping or being disinterested.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Yeah.

There were only a couple of them that were off base, do you think?

>> JUNE SEWING: One the things that kind of concerned me a little bit as far as maybe the knowledge of what some of them are asking is that like you said, they were very positive about the use of PZP, but they didn't want any more gathers.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Right.

>> JUNE SEWING: I mean, it's just --

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: There were a number of them that said use PZP and stop the gathers.

You can't do one without the other.

>> JUNE SEWING: I mean, you can do water trapping but that's a very slow process and you can -- it takes less -- I mean, you can do more horses with PZP and a gather than you can over the same period of time in the water trappings.

So I guess, you know, if you want to use more PZP?

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: And I guess one of the things that would really encourage people that -- there were a number of them -- a number of letters that basically said that we don't pay any attention to it, and nobody really listens to us.

And I think we are -- you know, we formed this subcommittee a few meetings ago specifically to let people know that everybody on this board reads the letters an they really do.

We discuss them, and it's -- it's important.

Your input is -- of the public is very important to us and we appreciate the time and the effort that people put in, you know, especially when they come to these meetings at their own expense and everything else, and this they are passionate about it.

And we do pay attention.

>> JUNE SEWING: One of the other things -- as a matter of fact, it was on the handout yesterday.

That the BLM is working towards the extermination of the horses.

I can't see how they can see that when they look at what the BLM is doing, when you look at the studies.

None of those things point towards the extinction of the horse.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: In your report, are you addressing the comments post Riverton meeting but prior to the --

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: What we respond to -- because we don't get the public

comments for this meeting until now.

We don't have time to read them and digest them.

And like June said, I went through them when we got them last time and we got a packet a week or so after.

A lot of people who made comments at the microphone then commit a written comment and so we follow up.

And we go through them again, usually before the meetings and June and I get on the phone and we talk about them.

What do you think of this?

And she pointed out several that when I read them, it just -- the point escaped me and so, you know -- and so we do.

We talk about them and then we share those thoughts.

We talk about everybody else on the committee when we have a chance and share those thoughts and then we discuss those thoughts here.

And that's pretty much --

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: So the comments in our booklets for this meeting, were submitted far enough ahead --

>> JUNE SEWING: The packs you got yesterday?

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: The one that was in your book.

>> JUNE SEWING: Oh, yeah.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: There's quite a few already.

>> JUNE SEWING: The ones that came yesterday were the ones that were made today.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: I know.

I got it.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: We are trying to change --

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: I got it.

>> FRED WOEHL: You got it.

Okay.

>> DR. SUE McDONNELL: When I'm reading those comments, I'm -- (Inaudible) I'm impressed and somewhat frustrated with repeated inaccuracies.

>> JUNE SEWING: Yeah.

>> DR. SUE McDONNELL: And how we can best help people get better information.

An example is -- and I can understand where this happens but the PZP being a pesticide, you know, how can we get that information out that why it's not a pesticide, but actually just a technical classification for -- you know better than I.

How can we get that information to people to try to help good people who are wanting to understand?

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Good hearted people and that's a good point.

I should have made a note on that, because we talked about it earlier.

The only reason why it's classified as a pesticide is because on on range control, there was no category for birth control for horses.

The EPA had to find a slot to put it in and that's where they put it.

>> DR. SUE McDONNELL: I realize for some people it may not be satisfying but for many people it would help them understand it and it wouldn't perpetuate a negative.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: That's something we should put some thought to, because there's such -- I mean, you know, I have just got -- we have hundreds of them, and I guess maybe some of the more repeated inaccuracies like that or repeated misconceptions that we would like to respond to, maybe that's something we should make a list of and say, okay, here's something.

We can talk about it at the meeting and have BLM --

>> DR. SUE McDONNELL: Facts and myths on the website.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: And click or something.

The problem I have throwing it up with a website, unless somebody goes up to look for, it they won't be able to find it.

>> FRED WOEHL: I think we can address that at the next board meeting in comments.

We can put that on the agenda and have an hour where we talk about inaccuracies or myths that we have determined.

I think we can do something like that.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Because there's folks that -- there's a lot of stuff like that.

I mean, I was getting -- there are people that are saying that the deaths that occurred at the Scott City horses, for instance, happened in Rock Springs.

No, it had nothing to do with Rock Springs.

One of the things I did forget to mention, there were several references to the Tom Davis issue.

And that still is something that, you know, that investigation has been going on for three years and I myself would really like the BLM to do something about doing whatever they can to get some kind of a --

>> FRED WOEHL: Well, I can address that based on my experience with the USDA, when OIG investigates something, it's slow.

I mean beyond sloooow.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: I understand that, Fred.

I really do.

As you know, my eldest daughter works for the inspector general for the navy.

Right now she's running an investigation into human trafficking over in the near east and I understand.

This has been a really pretty simple case as far as a lot of respects.

>> FRED WOEHL: What we know is a pretty simple case but we don't know all the aspects of it.

I'm probably speaking for Mike when he can speak.

They have no control.

They can't call OIG and say, hey, I need this done now.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: But they can call them and say what's going on with it?

All I'm asking for is people's patience are -- you are going to call them?

Is that what I heard?

>> MIKE TUPPER: I have really good friend at OIG, he's investigated me so many times that we're on a first name basis.

Yeah, I'm back!

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: One of the things about the public comments that -- one thing I would like to say is that a perception of an impropriety is just as real as an impropriety and that I think one of the things that the BLM or anybody can do in general, if there's a perception of something that's easily disproved, or easily proved, get it done and get on with it.

And it just seems to me that a man who was sold without limitations, 1700 plus horses, who said he was bringing them to a good home, who lives on 100-acre piece of land and those horses aren't there and, you know, the horses aren't there and you can't find out where they are, and there's records of them being on the Texas border, across the river from a slaughter plant, just doesn't seem like it should take three years to come to a decision to what's coming on.

That's all.

>> FRED WOEHLE: Let me say -- and here again, you don't know that for a fact.

You were not there.

You didn't see those horses.

You are doing hearsay.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Not all of it because I dealt with the state of Colorado talking with the under sheriff, the District Attorney, and the brand inspector, I mean I've got a little bit --

>> FRED WOEHLE: You have to be careful what you say.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: What I'm asking for is if there's something that was done wrong or if there wasn't something that was done wrong, it just seems like let's get it over with, that's all.

>> FRED WOEHL: I agree with that but I also know how OIG works.

They are very slow.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: I think we should post the inaccuracies, and myths, and it doesn't mean that they will believe it.

I have been dealing with the wolf inaccuracies for a long time.

Mark twain says a lie can be halfway around the world before the truth can get its boots on.

We have the same thing.

>> FRED WOEHL: Yesterday in the public comments we had a great presentation open the law that said that the principal but not exclusive use of it, and then we had someone come up and in that meeting said the primary use, and he said that several times.

You know, so you are absolutely correct.

Even though we say it, it might not work.

All right if everybody don't have any problems, we will move on to the support, volunteer resources.

Cope, you, I and June are on this.

I spear headed some of this with Sarah.

We got a lot of good things going on in this area.

There's been a lot more use of volunteers.

One of the big things that has happened, if you looked at Facebook and the Internet, there's a lot more good photographs of these horses that are up for adoption, and that's volunteers taking them and putting them on there.

And so we are increasing the use of this.

We had the America Mustang Program that's kicked off here with us here.

That's going to entail using a lot of volunteers to -- to promote the horse and get more horses into good homes.

So there is things going on, but there's still some stuff that we can do.

I would like to see a training program for volunteers.

If somebody is interested in volunteering, they have a small training program for them so that they can be beneficial.

I mean, everybody -- I mean, y'all know this.

You talk with -- if somebody buys a horse, they don't know anything the first day, but in two weeks, they are an expert.

And so, you know that's -- so try to get some of these folks some knowledge that they can be beneficial.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: That may work for the general overall range condition but some of the spots we talked about with Rick and myself, you need a little bit of training to understand what it is that you need to look at.

We would love to have the volunteers but that's another instance where a training program would really be applicable through the BLM to say this is the picture we need.

This is what you need to focus on.

This is what we need to see the difference from season to season before they go out and take a picture and upload it.

>> FRED WOEHL: Right.

>> JUNE SEWING: I think people who do want to volunteer, they need to -- most of the volunteer opportunities are at the district level or the local field office levels.

So they need to establish a relationship with that field office.

>> FRED WOEHL: Absolutely.

>> JUNE SEWING: And then get whatever training or something that they might need for a specific project.

But you just can't run out there in the middle of the -- you know, and do something.

>> FRED WOEHL: Oh, no.

And the thing is -- I'm talking from personal experience, I have been a volunteer with the Eastern States for well over 12 years now.

The first year or so, when I was a volunteer, I had to prove myself.

And I also understood it wasn't the fact of the way I wanted to do it, but the way they wanted to do it because they were the boss.

I thought I could do it better, I did it the way they told me or asked me to do it because I was basically working for them.

And if you go in there with an attitude that you are going to change everything, you don't need to be a -- a volunteer.

Now, you can make changes over a long period of time if you will prove to them that you know what you are doing and that you want to help and it's -- it's easier.

>> JUNE SEWING: I guess the other thing that needs to be under when so many people say they want to volunteer or whatever.

Do they think volunteering is?

Do they want to, you know, do some picture taking or pick up poop or whatever, or do they really -- or do they want to be in on the planning stage, you know, or whatever.

>> FRED WOEHL: Right.

Right.

Right.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: Something that just occurred to me that I would like to run by Mike and Sarah and whoever else.

There are several very well functioning forest collaboratives around the country where people get together and they are the forest users, local government, environmental groups, and various interests come together to discuss the problems we are having on the forest, to recommend projects that we should go forward.

Where do we utilize fire breaks?

How do we help develop the community wildfire protection plan?

How do we do projects that fit with that?

Is there potential there to use that model on some of the HMAs?

And actually bring the groups together and work collaborative like that instead of fighting with each other and actually agree on what we can and can't do?

>> MIKE TUPPER: I can't speak for the Washington office because I don't think there are very many people who want to come and do anything.

But certainly out in Santa Fe and Phoenix and Tucson, where we have field and district offices, there are really well established volunteer groups.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: As far as that collaborative, I would like to throw that June's way.

Is that something can be done in southwest Utah, where we can have people come together and talk about it at the table and not in the courtroom?

>> JUNE SEWING: I don't know.

I don't know.

I really don't.

I never -- you know, because there's the other component of volunteers which I continually promoted because that's what we do is the financial support, you know.

Where, you know, as I said many times, you know, that's what we have done on a volunteer basis, is when people need to have something, you know, district office or whatever, like I mentioned yesterday, we bought the material for -- when they bought that shade shelter, whatever, at Palomino Valley.

You know, our association bought that material.

And I think if there's some, you know -- the people in an area, in a district or a field office, they can get them to let them know when they need to do a project.

I think what was it Tim said, was talking the other day about they didn't have the material to do, like, for water trapping or something like that.

When they need material for a project, you can easily, you know, cooperate or partnership with them on doing that by -- what we always do is they order the material and then they we pay for it.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: I'm thinking more along the lines of just having regular meetings whether that's every two months or however long you do it, where it's quarterly, semiannually, where people come together from all the stakeholders or those that are interested parties, along with the agency people, and say, hey.

Where can we go with this?

Instead of saying we want to do this.

Get together and what's feasible for the agency?

How do we make this happen?

How do we get the ranchers and the advocates on the same page and where do we find areas that we agree and build from that?

>> JUNE SEWING: I guess we could try that.

It's not something I ever thought about doing.

It is something that we can look into it and see if it's possible.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: It's been working in some places for the forest collaborative as well.

Whether this be done in Utah, Nevada, or Idaho, I don't know.

Rick?

>> RICK DANVIR: You can take the sage grouse initiative.

And thinking about Utah, you know, creating improvement program folks, NACD, NRCS, and a bunch of NGOs all sat down regionally, in various working groups and worked through that one.

It was contentious.

I think you might even use some of those same existing groups, like in southwestern Utah, for example, or in central Wyoming, you know, out of Lander, Rock Springs.

Could you get some people that would gladly sit down.

They would rather sit down and work through that than to -- than to sit here and beat up on, you know, the national BLM.

>> JUNE SEWING: Well, and that actually brings to mind the fact that, you know, we have the wonderful white tail prairie dogs in southern Utah and they are on the threatened list and there was, you know, a very large area of people, diversity of people that did work on that, trying to get something done to work around that problem.

So, I don't know, maybe then something could work.

It took them about --

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: I don't think anything is going to happen next week, but maybe incubate it a little bit.

>> JUNE SEWING: I was involved with it at the beginning and after I retired, I didn't really care.

(Laughter)

But anyway, it took them about three years before they ever really got something resolved.

What happened, though, was that it started out with a very large group, including county commissioners, mayors and, you know, representatives from the cities and the different agencies, you know, Forest Service, DWR and, you know, BLM, all of those people.

But it narrowed down to a very few people, you know, from where it started, as far as those really working to get something done.

>> FRED WOEHL: Very good point.

Did you have something along this line?

>> No.

>> FRED WOEHL: All right.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Can I clarify something that I said about the Tom Davis thing.

Those were the allegations against the guy that I was reciting.

What I was just saying and I want to make it clear that those allegations, they seem that they are so straightforward that I don't know why it takes three years to see if they are true or not.

I wanted to clear that up.

>> FRED WOEHL: I yes, it shouldn't take three years.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: And understand it's a reflection of my -- my comment is a reflection of input that I'm getting from the general public wanting to know what's going

on.

So I think I need to make that clear.

>> FRED WOEHLE: I'm very confident that BLM wants to know what's going on too.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: I don't doubt that.

I don't doubt that at all.

One thing I do not -- and I have said this -- I have been on this board five years now, one of the very first things, the eye opener for me is when I first got appointed as the humane advocate and Don Glenn gave me permission and set me to go on a tour out west.

I spent several weeks on my first tour to go into Gathers and I got my six shooters and put on my white hat and everything, I was blown away by the incredible level of expertise and caring that 99% of the BLM staff had for these horses.

And I will tell you what, I had my tail between my legs the first day on that, because I was expecting to see all the stuff I had heard about and I was blown away by that wasn't the case.

And the thing that most impressed me was the -- how much these people that are working their tails off cared about the horses and some of the conditions and the psychological environment they had to work in while doing their job to do their best to care for these horses.

And I still feel the same way.

I feel more so today than I did then.

>> FRED WOEHLE: Thank you, Tim.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: I wanted to make that point.

>> FRED WOEHLE: Moving right along.

We are going to the population growth suppression working group.

You are the one that kept correcting me this morning.

(Laughter).

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: It's just hard for him to link those words together without stuttering.

>> FRED WOEHL: That's hard for me to say.

(Off microphone comment).

>> DR. SUE McDONNELL: And some that will take medium term and some that will take longer.

There will be some things coming along -- anything that would lead to a recommendation before we get the results?

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: I think we asked multiple times to concentrate and don't exclude any method of population growth suppression.

Those are the two overriding issues looking over the projects.

>> DR. SUE McDONNELL: This overlaps with the comprehensive animal care that we will have more tools in the tool box.

Most of the tools, as I understand them, even those that are proposed in the research will require gathers and in many cases more than one gather, which we know is challenging from the horses being more difficult to gather or to handle repeatedly.

And I would like to know your thoughts on recommending that we encourage BLM in any way that they can to explore more modern behavior modification methods, including trapping but also just positive enticement methods that horses condition very quickly to auditory signals, the sound of a feed source, and in talking to behaviorists who work with horses and who had similar experiences, here and around the world, one question that I always have is why aren't we using those techniques?

And that way you can repeatedly and they will come running, and that will be -- that will be in my view much more important as we -- if we do move into any of the methods on the table, or any of the tools that require sedation, we all know that if these animals are excited versus calmly coming in in a positive motivational state, it's -- it's much more difficult to achieve the desired level of sedation safely.

And I just want to know what your thoughts are on that and how we might be able to encourage -- there's not going to be another call for research for probably a year or two; is that correct?

Mary?

Do you know?

>> MARY D'AVERSA: I do not know the answer to that question.

>> FRED WOEHL: Sounds good to you, don't it?

>> MARY D'AVERSA: Sure.

>> DR. SUE McDONNELL: I think this most recent call very much focused on the tools themselves, not necessarily on how we can humanely and positively attract the horses for us to work with them.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: I think having the tool or a method or a tool to administer them, it should be -- the research that should be concurrent, you know, and two quick analogies or two quick examples in the years that I helped with the Chincoteague gather.

A lot of guys, we would carry bull whips.

And when we go to the north end of the island, the horses, they didn't get very good water, because there's no good water out there and they were living on a salt bay.

We had a big corral at the bottom of the north end of the island.

We would put good hay in there and bring in a fire truck and bring the tanks with good water and we would get out there at sunrise and crack the whips and half the herd would go down there and run into the corral.

The mares said, a good clean lick of water and the Black Hills Wild Horse Sanctuary.

They use a truck with a noisy grain mill, it's quite a walk.

If they have to bring horses in, they will run that mill and the horses come running down out of the chutes, out of everywhere and then they just slowly drive that truck and three-quarters of the herd just follow them right back into the corral.

And a lot of those are horses that came off the range.

And so they are -- you know, they are pretty wild.

You know, they have become habituated to the human act and there's going to be people that are going to be critical of that, but if -- it having a little habituation like that means we can administer some nonpermanent growth suppression methods, I think that's a good thing.

I think your point is extremely important.

>> DR. SUE McDONNELL: I think a well designed protocol, you can minimize the

getting friendly to people to a very specific stimulus that's not going to occur under other circumstances, a particular sound that can be paired with positive reinforcement.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Right.

>> FRED WOEHLE: I tend to agree that's true, but as a livestock person, you are always going to have that group that don't.

And what really concerns me about that is getting these horses situated to that and having good hearted, well intended people who know that, go out there and honk their horn or rev their trucks and these horses think they get something and they are harassed, they are tried to pet.

You understand what I'm saying?

>> DR. SUE McDONNELL: Yes, and I should be clear that there are methods to make it very -- if you think it out very carefully, so that there won't be inadvertent triggers for it.

So it does need some thought and research.

We are probably not all going to go out with our F150 because there's too many of them where we found the same sort of thing.

It needs to be well thought out.

I would think that that would be time and money well spent since we aren't yet -- maybe with the prize challenge, we will come up with something that the animals don't have to be handled, but in the meantime --

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Putting more emphasis on water and bait trapping would make a lot of this stuff with these horses, I think it will make it easier in the long run.

>> DR. SUE McDONNELL: Well -- I'm sorry.

>> FRED WOEHLE: One of the things is personnel.

It takes a long time to -- I mean, you have to have somebody up there a lot, bait trapping or water trapping.

And with BLM personnel going down instead of coming up, that's a problem.

That might be a good use for some volunteers if you are interested, but that's one of the big problems with water and bait trapping is the amount of time.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: I did a water trap once and basically we set up corral panels

around a water source and found three or four ways in.

Then we went away for a few weeks.

The horses got used to it and then when we wanted to trap horses we went up there and sat there.

We closed -- over a period of time, we closed all but one gate.

So then they got used to that coming in and out and then when we wanted to catch horses we went up this and hid in the bushes.

When the horses were in far enough, and we had hides near the gates and then we closed gates.

>> FRED WOEHL: It takes a lot of time.

I helped with the trapping for the Forest Service in northern New Mexico.

We had three bait traps set up, videos on each of them, but someone had to sit in that trailer 24 hours a day, with a button on to close that gate when the horses went on there.

So it takes a lot of time to go --

>> DR. SUE McDONNELL: Well, in contrast to that, the behavior modification should go much quicker because you should not have to wait.

It's well established in horses that they are almost single trial learners, but usually three or four times and you wouldn't -- whenever they remember for a long time, so that when that stimulus appears again --

>> FRED WOEHL: Oh, yeah, I agree.

>> DR. SUE McDONNELL: Right.

>> FRED WOEHL: But you won't get 100%.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Nothing is 100%.

Helicopter gathers are not 100%.

>> FRED WOEHL: We heard about those donkeys that you were talking about, they hide.

That's a great.

>> DR. SUE McDONNELL: I would go as far to say that these areas that are zeroed out, correct me if I'm wrong, I heard that they were areas that are difficult to manage.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Some of them are.

>> DR. SUE McDONNELL: And perhaps had to due to the geographic changes.

I think the behaviors, we would like to take on the challenges of working in those areas because it would be an easy work around conceptually to use the positive enticement behavior modification as opposed to gather.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: With we get to the herd repopulation committee with what you are talking, maybe the -- we should put our heads together between the growth suppression and the herd area repopulation.

It's a logical effort to maybe see if we could do something that would benefit both and be a research and an opportunity for the BLM.

>> FRED WOEHL: I hate to cut off this dialogue, but we need no move on a little bit.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Yes, sir.

>> FRED WOEHL: That's really good.

The next one is ecotourism and Tim, we haven't done much on that, have we?

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: No.

>> FRED WOEHL: Rick?

>> RICK DANVIR: Again, looking at ecotourism and ecosanctuary and I'm not sure why we have two separate --

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: We actually joined those to go.

>> RICK DANVIR: I thought we did last time.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Yes, we D. last time what we decided to do is take the two of them, even though there's -- there's --

>> RICK DANVIR: I didn't do anything on either one.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: There hasn't been a lot going on with it, as far as places that we

can offer input, I believe, was the main thing and Callie was really the lead on that, the charge on that.

>> FRED WOEHL: Right.

I think what Callie wanted was a little bit different.

That's why we had an ecotourism and an ecosanctuary.

She fell like you could have an ecotourism on an HMA.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Yeah.

>> FRED WOEHL: And not have a sanctuary and so they were two different things, but I kind of thing we could probably combine them two, if you wanted.

If that's okay with the board.

>> RICK DANVIR: Combine them -- you can do -- one committee could have two divergent paths.

>> FRED WOEHL: Because they are parallel.

>> RICK DANVIR: They are parallel paths.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: Does it matter that it's one BLM, and the other is board initiates and we have the authority to decide or not decide that BLM wants a certain focus group?

>> MIKE TUPPER: We can work together on that?

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: Okay.

>> RICK DANVIR: I think we can move the members around.

>> FRED WOEHL: I think the members are the same, except Rick is not on the ecosanctuary.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Yes, he is.

I have it written in pen right there.

Right there.

(Laughter)

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: That's because she didn't understand.

>> FRED WOEHL: Lord, give me patience, please.

Yes, Rick, you are written in pen.

So is Jen.

So we're good.

Moving right along.

>> RICK DANVIR: It's written down.

It's got to be true.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: You just got yourself another assignment.

>> FRED WOEHL: I will ask you about the herd population, Sue.

Do you have anything on that?

>> DR. SUE McDONNELL: No.

I'm not --

>> FRED WOEHL: You are the chair of that?

>> RICK DANVIR: Yes.

>> FRED WOEHL: Oh, you are the chair of that.

It says so right there.

Somebody wrote it in pen!

(Laughter)

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: There has been some feedback -- basically the feedback from the BLM, we made a recommendation to do the initial recommendation was we were trying to put some kind of a reproducing component, a small reproducing component in a herd that went back and there was a lot of resistance to that by a lot of different people.

We thought it would be a good opportunity to put a 20% population -- 20% reproducing component, and study that and using more than one area, perhaps to see what is a nice

ratio that seems to create a reproduction rate that's easily handled -- handled and that if there are some excess forces that then they are not exceeding the adoption demand.

What that morphed into was a non-reproducing herd was acceptable and that's the recommendation we made and the BLM accepted that.

Since that time, not an awful lot has gone on.

There was some confusion as far as what the subcommittee could do or couldn't do in regards to looking into that.

June has made some inquiries in Utah, and there appear to be several HMAs that might be okay, but need to be looked into.

And I think that where we are, June and correct me if I'm wrong.

What we need some type of holy water sprinkled in our general direction in regard to --

>> JUNE SEWING: Well, two of the things I found out in speaking to them.

I got it narrowed down.

I spoke to Gus and he thought there were several -- maybe three or four areas in Utah that could be used for that purpose.

Kind of narrowed it down to one area, and two things, the first place, it has to be in their land use plan.

You know?

Now, they can -- I talked to -- I talked to Chad in the Cedar City district office and he said in their -- their land use plan and I'm not really sure about all the particulars in the legal stuff and everything, but there is a way they can do that, but, you know, it still takes about a year before they could actually accomplish that.

The other problem with it is that then it would -- it would create another job for them.

They would have to monitor that herd, but that might be another way for somebody to volunteer, you know -- like on our board, we have a retired BLM wild horse guy.

He could easily be, you -- you know, monitor that herd.

He would know what to look for in the horses and all of that kind of stuff.

So, I think it's doable.

It's just not going to be something that's going to happen overnight.

>> FRED WOEHL: Well, we probably need to start.

Why don't you make that as a recommendation that they look at that area to do a pilot reintroduction.

>> JUNE SEWING: And one of the things, I guess on a more personal basis, that I felt like we could approach them on a partnership, as far as, you know, our association is concerned, because depending on the reason why that area was zeroed out -- if it had to do with a lack of water or, I don't know, whatever, that if there needed to be some monetary thicks needed that we would be able to maybe help do that.

And like I said with our person who can do the monitoring.

I think that may increase or encourage other areas to do that.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: I think where we would like to go with the recommendation is to ask the BLM to -- there was some confusion when I was looking around and there was some confusion and I was notified by somebody within BLM that really, I couldn't be asking the questions I was asking and looking again at kicking tires was good.

I guess what we really would need is permission from an okay from the BLM.

Can we start -- can we as a subcommittee make some inquiries and initiate something to find out what areas would be appropriate and to try to get a process going and like June said, setting up a partnership for some kind of -- seeing what we can do to get some type of area and this is what we want.

I'm very motivated ourselves to get this to work.

There's also the opportunity to do some stuff with Dr. McDonnell's idea of some of these ideas she was just talking about in this area.

This area could be a study area.

It can be a model for other areas.

You are taking horses out of holding.

It's not a reproduction issue.

So you don't ever have to go in there and gather horses for reproduction issues for growth suppression and we are not paying to feed them and they are not in a holding

area.

>> FRED WOEHL: It's going to have to go in their land use plan.

It takes a planning process.

So if we as a board recommend that they pursue that, we already have a spot for it, and then it's all of this other stuff we can do.

We will have to start some place.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: What we need, though, before anything.

I'm trying not to be super specific about this because I don't want to cause anybody trouble.

Basically what I was told to do was sit on my hands, that once the recommendation was accepted, it's up to the BLM to do this, not us.

Okay?

I'm trying to be as politically correct as I can.

We need permission to -- because it's been -- this was accepted two years ago.

>> FRED WOEHL: Permission from who?

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: The BLM.

>> FRED WOEHL: Permission from the BLM to make a recommendation?

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: No, I was told to stop making phone calls to look -- that it wasn't my job to find the area that it was the BLM's job to find the area and when they found something, they would let me know.

That's basically what I was told.

>> MIKE TUPPER: Okay.

I took that as you needed our holy water.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: We are a little bit on egg shells.

Can we really be doing this or not.

>> JUNE SEWING: I'm not.

>> FRED WOEHLE: I'm not on egg shells.

Here's the thing, this is more a district office or a state office than it is national issue.

And so I think the fact that June has took the initiative to contact her district office --

>> JUNE SEWING: Yeah, and I have no opposition at all.

>> FRED WOEHLE: And they advised June how they needed to proceed was to revise their land use plan and then -- I think that's the first step that we really need is to have that step in order to do this.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: So full speed ahead.

>> FRED WOEHLE: I think the board could make a recommendation on the HMA.

>> JUNE SEWING: And I'm not sure which one it might be.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: I don't want to make it HMA specific.

We want to look at a bunch of HMAs that may be specific.

>> FRED WOEHLE: What are the name of these HMAs that have been zeroed out.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: I know the name of a couple of them --

>> FRED WOEHLE: I don't want to name a couple of them.

I want to name all of them.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Fred, what I'm trying to say is when I tried to get that information, I was told that I wasn't going to get that.

>> JUNE SEWING: You just don't know the right people to talk to.

>> FRED WOEHLE: Mike, Mike, Mike, Mike.

Mikey, Mikey, Mikey.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Thank you, Mike.

>> MIKE TUPPER: I will ask on my end.

>> FRED WOEHLE: We will have a list.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: So we are free to pursue --

>> FRED WOEHLE: No.

No.

He will have a list.

>> MIKE TUPPER: I will get you this information.

I'm thinking of the names I need to call right now.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: And we will talk about collaboration with your ideas in this process maybe.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: I have a quick question about that list.

Is there any chance that the information would be available that once the list exists, there could be the primary reason that it was zeroed out, so that it quickly becomes a short list?

>> JUNE SEWING: You have to cut some of it with private property rights and things like that.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: Yes: So we want to rapidly eliminate the ones that are just off the table, totally.

>> MIKE TUPPER: Yes, there's probably a way to do that, however, we have really, really limited staff on this side of the house in the wild horse and burros program.

So I'm going to have to borrow folks from other disciplines which is why I was writing this list of folks that I could call to see what got zeroed out, why, and which has -- and I'm not saying that we can do it, but I'm saying I can at least start.

>> JUNE SEWING: And I can do that in the state of Utah.

You don't have to --

>> MIKE TUPPER: Any other volunteers?

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: And just so you know, Dean Holstead put together that list of information together and presented it to the board.

That's what initiated this process.

>> FRED WOEHL: If the board already has it, it's in some of our past --

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: S not quite that simple.

>> FRED WOEHL: What I'm saying is we don't need to lick our cap over again, if it's already been linked one.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: The land use man or amendment will take an EA and that ain't going to happen quick.

>> JUNE SEWING: Well, see, I was told under the one -- now I'm not sure that this is going to be in that area, but when I talked to the wild horse guy in the district office in Cedar, he was the one that said their land use plan has something that they -- and like I say, I don't know legally or whatever, something that they put in their land use plan that could be done without that whole process.

But it would take about a year to do whatever it was that needed to be done.

That's what he told me.

So I don't know.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: New one on me.

>> FRED WOEHL: All right.

Proving right along.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: You're getting a text.

>> MIKE TUPPER: I'm getting a text?

>> MARY D'AVERSA: May I ask a question for clarification?

>> FRED WOEHL: Yes.

>> MARY D'AVERSA: Once we turn over this list -- this list that exists of zeroed out HAs, and the reasons they were zeroed out, what is the board's intent as far as the next step?

>> FRED WOEHL: Well, part of the thing that the board -- and I guess I'm speaking on behalf of the board if I'm wrong, correct me.

Is that this repopulation of the HMAs, some of the information that the board has

received over the years had to do with not having any water, not having any ability to do gathers and all of this.

And some of the aspects has changed now, and there hasn't been any effort by BLM to repopulate these areas.

And that's why we are doing this.

That's why this is part of this committee.

And, you know, with as much pressure there to put horses from short term care to long-term care to reduce that cost, if we have the opportunity to put 100 horses or 200 horses back on the range, that's a thing we need to do.

And part of the thing for us, it would help us to know where the HMAs are and the reasons why.]

>> MARY D'AVERSA: And my other point of communication and maybe I'm not listening as fast as the board was moving.

Is the objective non-reproducing herds?

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Yes.

When Dean presented some of this information, there were a number of areas that were zeroed out because it was difficult to manage the herd on that area.

Monitoring of that water source was an issue.

With the volunteer monitoring group or something like that, that we may be able to put a non-reproducing heard out or if it's not a gathering issue now, then that becomes a moot point.

>> MARY D'AVERSA: Thank you.

>> FRED WOEHL: CAWP.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: I want to make a quick relevant point of maybe repopping HAs.

This -- these will be semi habituated animals almost by definition, and they won't be as wild as they used to be and to Dr. Sue's effort to go to a non-development.

-- if there are private lands adjacent.

It could be a potential problem.

--

>> FRED WOEHL: I think that goes without saying.

>> MIKE TUPPER: It came to my attention that the question you asked has been answered already and it's on our website.

All the zeroed out HMAs and the reason they are zeroed out.

And so -- but that doesn't get all the way to the heart of it.

The heart TV for me would be -- I leaned over and said to Fred is there an allocation and a current RMP that says --

>> FRED WOEHL: There will be very beautiful horses and you will be able to interact with BLM horse specialists and you will see how the horses are treated and you will see how they are taken care of, and how much interest you have from folks and if you would like to have a horse, here's your opportunity to have a legend!

Part of the American west.

They are doing a great job as far as increasing adoptions.

Our numbers are up and I expect them to go higher.

This America's horse deal that we have coming up is going to be really beneficial.

That video that we saw, I can't hardly watch that without having a tear in my eye.

I mean, it just -- just -- there's a lot of stuff going on in this and Debbie and Holle' have done an outstanding job in this fact and I think we need to thank them for that and just keep on keeping on.

>> JENNIFER SALL: I will talk.

>> DR. SUE McDONNELL: Does anybody have an m & m and I will talk.

>> FRED WOEHL: Oh, lord help us.

I wonder if that would work by Tim.

I will put you by Tim next time.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: I wanted Life Savers.

>> FRED WOEHL: That's why you put him by me.

Ecosanctuaries.

We talked about that and we haven't gotten anything done on that.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: The BLM formed working groups if they don't call us, we don't answer.

Well, I called them.

I do check in with Dean now and again, but that was my understanding of how those groups worked.

>> FRED WOEHL: All right.

Okay.

Does anybody have anything else they would like to talk about before we go into recommendations?

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: One little -- not little issue, and it's something that I would like to consider for some kind of recommendation is that one of the things -- I get a lot of traffic, shall we call it, on the issue of babies born in holding are tracked or not tracked from the time they hit the ground to when they were branded.

When I was asking questions about that, it looks like they are really not accounted for until they are branded.

You can find out what HMA the mom is from, correct?

I think in an effort to -- and for transparency, to make sure that there's not a perception of anything wrong going on, is if the BLM could -- I don't know how much trouble it would take to create a simple database that mare, you know, 384 had a baby on such and such and if that baby dies, it's noted.

If it doesn't, it's noted when it gets branded.

But that -- there's some kind of a record somewhere that -- and publicly available database so that people -- and what's -- I've gotten several emails from people who, like they go and they are watching what's going on at a holding facility.

And they are watching the horses and they are watching the babies and stuff and then all of a sudden one of those babies is gone and they don't get a clear answer to what

happened to the baby.

I think it would be -- it's an easy way to answer the question is to say, here it is.

It was -- here's when it hit the ground.

Here's the day it died or here's the day it got branded and went from there.

I think in an effort to maintain transparency, with -- I think it's an area --

>> FRED WOEHL: And based on what we heard yesterday, they are counted as an unbranded horse.

Now I deal a lot with yearlings.

A use a lot of yearlings when I do and a lot of places when I pick up these yearlings, I have pictures of momma and the baby.

The people there at the corrals take pictures of them when you adopt these horses, you get these pictures.

I don't know that it's that much of an issue.

If someone is out there looking and the horse comes up dead, I can see them wanting to know and the BLM person will think she will get really upset if I tell her that it's died.

I think these horses are accounted for.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Yesterday it was distinctly said that there's no database that they are entered to.

>> FRED WOEHL: I thought they said, it was an unbranded horse.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: No, there's not.

>> FRED WOEHL: There is none?

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: No.

>> FRED WOEHL: Mary?

I thought Holle' said they are an unbranded -- I thought they were counted as an unbranded horse.

Here's Holle'.

>> HOLLE' HOOKS: Yes, they are marked.

They are marked as unbranded, if they are born alive.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: So there's a written record of their existence and then that is from the day they hit the ground, there -- they are in a database?

>> HOLLE' HOOKS: As an unmarked animal.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: I misunderstood.

Is there any way to mark them as being associated with the mother?

>> HOLLE' HOOKS: I would have to clear that with Bea because I think normally when it's associated in VS, it's attached to the mares' freeze mark.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: It's gate to have some clarification.

It's like if my kid is brand and go give them a name until they are six months old and they get branded.

It seemed to be a bit of a point of contention with some folks.

So I would like to clear it up and if there's a path that they can follow that's there, let's point them to it.

>> FRED WOEHL: It's one of the things that Debbie and I have worked on is that these foals -- because a lot of folks like different horses from the different genetics and what I have understood or I have seen is these yearlings born in captivity, they are being shown from Sulfur Mountain or Adobe Town because they are following their momma.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: I'm not talking about the yearlings.

I'm talking about the time frame the horse hits the ground to the time it's six months old.

That's what I'm talking about.

>> FRED WOEHL: How can they go on and tell me that this yearling that I got is from Adobe Town if they didn't track it from when it was born?

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: The point I'm trying to make is a publicly available, whether it's through -- evidently people have tracked a foal.

>> FRED WOEHL: I don't think there's any database that you can check on any horse

that the BLM has.

>> HOLLE' HOOKS: And they are paired with a mare.

Are you happy?

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: I wasn't unhappy!

I'm one of those people that until I get a clear answer, I will keep poking the bear.

>> HOLLE' HOOKS: Sure.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Someone asked me to do something for them, and I will do.

It thanks, Holle', I really appreciate it.

>> FRED WOEHL: I tell you what we'll do, this has been mentioned to me earlier that we need to keep our session short because of just the fact that some of us are getting older.

So let's take about a ten-minute break.

What do you all think?

(Laughter)

(Break)

>> KATHY LIBBY: Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman.

I thought you gave us ten minutes.

>> FRED WOEHL: Well, 3:00.

Close enough.

>> KATHY LIBBY: Whenever you are ready.

>> FRED WOEHL: We are going to start back in about two minutes if everybody can begin to make their ways back to their chairs.

Tim, we're about ready to start.

I'm scared to death.

I'm scared to death.

While we are waiting for everybody to get back, we have a couple that had left.

I was asked to share a true cowboy poem with y'all.

So I will take this opportunity to do it.

There has been a time or two in my life, where I haven't had a horse around me.

And this poem sums it up.

The rested and contented to take the time to hear.

I have missed that predawn silence not found up on the track, the world says I must follow but I shall have it back for once again I have horses to fill my spirits whole.

Dear God, oh, how I have missed them and how they make me whole.

And the crowd goes wild with applause.

(Applause)

(Laughter)

Thank y'all.

All right.

The meeting will now come back to order.

We had our -- (Cell phone ringing) whistling at me.

Are you training him too?

Where is my M & M.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: All he wants is attention.

Positive reinforcement.

>> FRED WOEHL: Oh, goodness.

I forgot where I was.

We had our group discussion and now it's time to develop our recommendations.

Okay?

And I want these recommendations, if we can, to be substantial, things that we can be proud of, that when we read them back at the next meeting, we can be proud that we had done them.

So I have just one or two that I would like to bring up to the board and see what you think.

The first one of these and this is something to do with something that I think is very important.

I talked to a few of the board members and they agree with me.

I would like to recommend that BLM consider moving the division chief position to the West, where the horses are.

This would give a more hands on management style to the horses and I think it's something that's really good.

I think sometimes being back here in DC, they are kind of removed.

You know, and with -- the ability to video chat, email and all of this, I think it could be done without any problem because they have already done that in a lot of areas.

And so does the board have any discussion about this?

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: I think it's going to depend more on the individual than the location is my comment.

I have seen people isolate themselves pretty well in Salt Lake City and Boise.

>> FRED WOEHLE: I agree.

The other thing is you might have an opportunity to hire a better person if they didn't have to move to D.C.

Would you, Cope, move to DC?

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: Not on a bet!

>> FRED WOEHLE: All right.

I rest my case.

I rest my case.

Because whoever gets this chief job, the division chief needs to be somebody really, really good and needs to be somebody that has a heart for the horse and has a heart for the people and has the respect of folks.

And the more we can broaden pool of candidates -- and I'm just -- and I'm probably meddling where I shouldn't be meddling, but it would give the man sitting next to me a lot more leeway.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: What does the man sitting next to you think of the idea?

>> MIKE TUPPER: You know what, just my idea is I would rather hire hard than manage hard.

And so give me a broad suite of candidates to choose from and that means I can be really, really collective.

I can be really, really hard during the selection process.

So like you said, a person can hole up anywhere.

You can hole up in DC, as well as Boise.

But, anyway, I will take it under advisement.

Just in general, I like the sounds of, it but it would be a change of pace for the program to have -- not to have the leadership 2,000 miles away, but I will consider it.

>> DR. SUE McDONNELL: Mike, has it always been in Washington, D.C.?

>> JUNE SEWING: There was a time when it was in Reno.

>> MIKE TUPPER: In my vast three weeks...

(Laughter).

>> FRED WOEHL: Since you have been involved in the program.

>> Yes, master.

The grasshoppers.

>> MIKE TUPPER: I did see Kathy nodding her head that it was in D.C.

(Off microphone comments).

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: What about the possibility of asking the BLM in regard to this to make an option at the discretion of the person serving?

That would make sense to me that -- you know, only the person serving -- they know what they are up against and what they have to deal with, and, perhaps the true answer may be the ability to do both.

>> MIKE TUPPER: That's how I would fly it as an option.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: I think it's a great idea and I think it's a great concept because, I mean, you are asking somebody to oversee and it just -- I think it would be a good thing if the person could be living what they are working, you know?

>> FRED WOEHL: But I also like the idea of your options.

So how can we word that?

Make it not mandatory that the position is -- the position is not mandatory to be in D.C.

>> JUNE SEWING: It says consider.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: Or an optional move to the west.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: The option of.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Just at the discretion of the person serving, wouldn't that do it?

>> MIKE TUPPER: I have noted enough of these positions to have optional locations to work from, that I have a pretty good repertoire way of wording it.

>> FRED WOEHL: How should we word this recommendation?

>> MIKE TUPPER: Oh, this is official.

I can see that.

>> FRED WOEHL: Yes, it's official!

>> MIKE TUPPER: We are good too!

Kathy is fast!

>> FRED WOEHL: The BLM should consider making the position of DC location optional based on the needs of the person filling the position and the agency?

>> MIKE TUPPER: Yep.

Person and program.

Yeah.

>> FRED WOEHL: No, no, they will be written down for us.

Yes.

All right that's the -- I will read it one more time.

BLM should consider having the DC position have an optional location in the west based on the preference of the person and the program needs.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Should we say which position we are talking about?

>> FRED WOEHL: It is.

The D.C.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: That looks like the DC, D.C.

>> MIKE TUPPER: How about division chief.

>> FRED WOEHL: I knew what you meant.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: This is another point where we need clarity.

It's clear now.

>> Process point two, I believe we draft these up for you.

You take them, take another look home, and officially submit them, is that not correct?

>> FRED WOEHL: That ain't how we have been.

So the language here is what you use.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: When we are gone, we're gone!

>> KATHY LIBBY: Okay.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: Somewhere I read originally that the board had 30 days after the meeting to make recommendations.

Did anybody else read that?

Did you read that, Jen?

>> JENNIFER SALL: (Inaudible).

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: But getting it done now is a really good plan.

>> FRED WOEHL: Why fix it when it ain't broke.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: It's easier when we are all here.

>> FRED WOEHL: All right.

Number two, this is another recommendation that I have come up with -- we have come up with or you.

The BLM -- we recommend that the BLM continue to reduce costs involved with horses in care facilities by moving as many as possible to long-term situations.

Long-term care options.

>> KATHY LIBBY: Back to the beginning.

>> FRED WOEHL: Continue to reduce costs involved with horses in care situations by moving them to long-term pastures.

That's kind of rough, but we can refind it some.

>> RICK DANVIR: As opposed to short term.

>> FRED WOEHL: I bet Rick couldn't say it again if he had to.

>> RICK DANVIR: Probably not.

>> yesterday it was off-range corrals and off-range pastures.

>> FRED WOEHL: ORPs -- from ORCs to ORPs.

ORCs to ORPs.

Increased reliance on offerings pastures than short-term facilities.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: And it's not just horses.

To me, it would be horses that are not good adoption prospects.

>> FRED WOEHL: Yes, well, that's another one I got.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: I mean so that's --

>> FRED WOEHL: That right there -- well, the way she has it there is good.

She's not even mentioning horses.

She just reliance on off-term pastures instead of short-term holding.

>> RICK DANVIR: Are we going to list a whole bunch of them and vote on them?

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: I think what we should do is write them down and go back through and say that one is good.

Does that sound good to everybody?

>> FRED WOEHL: It sounds good to me.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: We should remember that John Falen is not here.

I think he should be allowed some input on it.

So we might want to go ahead and approve them tentatively but allow John to comment.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Well, I think we have a quorum.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: But nonetheless --

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: I'm not discounting John's opinion at all, but I don't know how the chair feels about it.

But we definitely have a quorum.

>> FRED WOEHL: We have a quorum, and I also agree with Cope.

I will principle one of these off or have them send them to John and have him go over and see that.

Makes sense.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: I don't think John is going to sit there and veto anything but we might have an idea for some subtlety and the verbiage that we have here that might make a big difference in it.

Rather than making a final version today, I would like to tentatively approve them pending John's input.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: I question I have with that -- and I would need somebody who is more knowledgeable about our rules is that my understanding is that everything we do officially has to be done in a public meeting.

So if we allow John to change something, then that, obviously will have to wait until the next meeting to be put in as a recommendation.

>> FRED WOEHLE: Good point.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: If that's the case, is Julie right that our rules and bylaws state that the board has 30 days to make recommendations?

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: That's what I'm saying -- what I'm bringing up is I don't want to trap ourselves -- put ourselves where we do all of this and now it can't go forward until next August.

That's all.

>> FRED WOEHLE: All right.

Let's -- let's set it like this.

We'll go ahead and list all of these and we'll go back and we'll pick the ones we want.

And then we will tentatively approve them until we can get an actual reading on what the rules are and if the rules say that we -- that don't make any sense either.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: We might be able to get the answer now.

>> FRED WOEHLE: Here we come.

We have the girl who could help us.

>> SARAH BOHL: So advisory board when it makes recommendations that has to be done as part of a public meeting and do you have a quorum.

So I think the best path forward is to create your recommendations here today and finalize them.

>> FRED WOEHL: Okay.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Agreed.

>> JUNE SEWING: We can give them to John and say too late.

>> SARAH BOHL: The short-term holding, I think the new term is off-range corral.

Correct?

>> FRED WOEHL: Number three, these are the ones I've got.

Provide funding to allow board members to attend, assist in and gain firsthand knowledge concerning all aspects of the wild horse program.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: All aspects is a little scary to me.

(Laughter).

>> FRED WOEHL: The thing is --

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: You could say the various components of the wild horse and burro program.

>> I'm sure we are talking with horses present, rather than all aspects.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: You just don't want to have to go to Washington, D.C., and sit in on budget meetings.

>> FRED WOEHL: Oh, no!

Heaven forbid, that's not what I'm talking about.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: The intention here is for people in their areas of expertise or areas where they want to gain knowledge.

I mean as an advisory board, it would be very, very beneficial for any place that we don't have firsthand experience to be able to go and observe or whatever.

So -- and I think in different areas, I mean what you want to observe may not be the same thing I want to see.

So I think the any aspect language is so that any of us can request -- we can request.

It doesn't mean they will do it.

>> FRED WOEHL: We can ask for it.

Okay.

I hate to be domineering, if you have anything, step up.

Continue to develop and implement programs like America's Mustang.

These provide factual, education and information to all interested parties.

Factual, education and information.

I'm really pumped about this program!

Now, what do you want?

>> Well, Sarah and I were having a conversation back there and I was asking whether or not it was appropriate that we ask for clarification on some of the recommendations because there are times we have gone back and we are trying to guess what you guys really meant in your recommendation and so perhaps we don't provide the best response that we could have provided.

>> FRED WOEHL: Okay.

>> HOLLE' HOOKS: So I'm having a hard time understanding number two.

The number two recommendation.

>> FRED WOEHL: Well, Holle', here's the thing behind that.

We have been told in these meetings that you are trying to keep are control of the costs, and part of the way you are doing that is by taking as many horses out of short-term care and putting them in long-term care.

That's why you are doing this great contract to try to find off-care range.

We are just saying you need to continue to do that.

>> HOLLE' HOOKS: Okay.

>> FRED WOEHL: Does that make sense?

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Continue?

>> Why would you need to do that?

>> HOLLE' HOOKS: If we are already doing that, I just don't understand --

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: Because it has a -- because it has a sister component that you are going to tell which is moving horses -- identifying horses that --

>> FRED WOEHL: Yes, that's coming up.

There's a sister to this.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: When we review the list, we'll stick 'em together and then it would make more sense.

Actually this one should come after the --

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: Holle', what he will do is talk about individuals that are not very adoptable, give them huge backlog of adoptable horses that we have and just go ahead and get them moved on out of short-term holding.

>> FRED WOEHL: Instead of having a horse be turned down three times if we can identify these horses in the first 30 days, we will have them bred out and not have them trucked all over the place.

>> Why don't you do that.

They would rather use off-range pastors.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: In support for the BLM's program of moving horses as expeditiously as possible from short-term holding to long-term holding, the board proposes --

>> FRED WOEHL: You are talking way too fast because Kathy can't type that fast.

>> HOLLE' HOOKS: And I would add this as well, Julie, is that when you are looking at -- when we write our budget justifications and, Renee, I don't mean to step on your toes but when we write a lot of our budget documents and we were talking about the president's budget request, we are always looking at ways to be more cost effective.

How is it that we can spend the money that we are requesting from Congress and then at the same time, those appropriated funds, we want to get the most work accomplished.

We want to be able to get things on the ground.

We already know that we are committed to the animals that are currently held in the off-range pastures and the off-range corrals.

That's always our goal.

Because costs -- and, again, Renee, I'm sorry, but costs have increased in off-range pastures.

And it could be at some point that off-range pastures won't be the most cost effective.

Perhaps it's ecosanctuaries or something else that comes down the road so if it's so BLM seek more cost effective, off range situations, you know, maybe one thing, but it is something that we would already be moving forward.

I guess I just didn't understand the recommendation for something that we are moving and striving for every day.

Every day.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: She raises a really good point.

This is not the open option for moving these horses.

>> RICK DANVIR: Perhaps the way we should reword it is simply that we applaud and encourage the BLM's efforts to seek are, you know, a situation -- an off-range or out of -- what I'm trying to say is horse care outside of short-term holding, out of the off-range corral.

Eye used to short-term holding.

>> HOLLE' HOOKS: It's off-range corral.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: I'm used to short-term holding.

It's just getting them out of --

>> RICK DANVIR: I think we need to be aware of unintended consequences here and --

>> FRED WOEHL: Why don't we just delete the whole thing and go on?

(Laughter).

>> RICK DANVIR: I mean, I think it was a great idea and based on today's cost breakdowns, that makes a lot of sense.

>> FRED WOEHL: Yes.

>> RICK DANVIR: I'm not sure how --

>> FRED WOEHL: That's what I was trying to do.

I got the distinct impression that this is what y'all were doing, based on the budget analysis that we had and our talks that you were trying to move as many horses in long-term care as you possibly could because it would cost less money.

>> RICK DANVIR: Yes.

>> FRED WOEHL: And this other money would be used for other aspects of the off-range program.

So what --

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: On-range program.

>> FRED WOEHL: Well, this is -- whatever it was going to be used.

>> RICK DANVIR: If I understood you right too, Fred, keep the ones in short term that will go to adoption centers anyway.

Keep them easy to get ahold of and the things that are just not -- don't look very adoptable, put them out to pasture.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: And not just for cost reasons but welfare reasons as well.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: There's a real humane motivation here to take horses that aren't good prospects and why put them through the stress.

>> FRED WOEHL: Let me do the other one that goes with this and see what you think.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: Yes, put them together.

>> FRED WOEHL: Have a qualified horse trainers which can be volunteers assess all horses to determine adoption success.

>> DR. SUE McDONNELL: Predict adoption potential.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: The assessment of adoption prospects in that the idea was that

you took the horse -- if we didn't have such an excess of horses in holding, I wouldn't necessarily take this approach, but when you've got 50,000 horses or close to 50,000 horses to choose from, I just think that to just take the horses that are going to adapt to being a domesticated horse, the ones that show an indication of being the most adaptable should be the ones you focus your energy on.

And they also become the best representative of what you have out there for other people to see and that, in turn, increases the visibility of the adoption program.

One of the things that I see, and I have seen it -- and I'm sure we all have, that have been around people that have adopted mustangs.

There's a fellow a couple of miles down the road from me, three mustangs out in the field with the same halters when he bought them and let them out of the trailer five years ago.

They are still out in that feel and he hasn't touched them since he let them go.

He can't catch them.

He can't get anywhere near them.

And I just think that the recidivism rate of horses that are returned.

Fred and I and everyone else here, we need to reduce the recidivism rate and one of the ways of doing that is putting the best prospects out there.

>> FRED WOEHL: Qualified horse trainers who may be volunteers.

(Off microphone comment).

>> MIKE TUPPER: Assess adoptability.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: Okay.

You can just leave that and then say by qualified --

>> FRED WOEHL: Horse trainers, who can be volunteers.

I mean --

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: Who may be volunteers.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: The prison places may be one of the places we can tap into this.

That may be another facet in the prison program, is just assessing, be a triage center.

I mean I could see it being a triage center for that, with a good trainer.

And the horses in the adoption program funnel through that.

You know, any time you can take that and narrow that down and now you have a stream that's directed at a market.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: And you want to add a sentence to that, with the aim of moving horses expeditiously to long-term situations.

>> JUNE SEWING: And then you can eliminate number three.

I don't see that as being --

>> FRED WOEHL: Long-term situation.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: Holle' makes a really good point.

There may be something in the future that is even better.

We don't know.

>> RICK DANVIR: So you are saying that we can lose two and three.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: Yes, they can just go away.

>> HOLLE' HOOKS: Thank you.

>> FRED WOEHL: It's going to cost you!

(Laughter).

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Is it necessary here because pretty much the BLM is operating with the three strikes rule?

>> FRED WOEHL: Oh, yes, why put a horse through that?

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: That's where I'm going.

So is it necessary as a component of this or as a separate, whatever, to put something in there that horses that have been assessed is not being trainable can be -- you know, bypassed the three strikes rule and look for long-term options.

That's the intent here, right?

>> FRED WOEHL: Mm-hmm.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Shouldn't we somehow put that in there?

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: Training prospects rather than untrainable.

>> DR. SUE McDONNELL: Good idea.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: I have a quick question about that three-strike rule, does that include any type of lawmaker that's a potential roadblock or is that just policy?

Is that --

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: I think it's a different policy, isn't it?

>> FRED WOEHL: I think it's policy.

>> MIKE TUPPER: Kathy, what were you saying?

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: Because if this is a policy, we maybe have to be more specific and make a very specific ruling that the board opposes that policy, and would like a more flexible policy, something to that effect.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: It's part of the act verbiage.

>> DR. SUE McDONNELL: Yeah, it's law.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: Okay, Mary is going to read it to us.

>> MARY D'AVERSA: In 2004, the act was amended to state that excess, quote, animals shall be made available for sale without limitation.

But then it goes on to say this applies to animals more than 10 years old and have been offered unsuccessfully for adoption at least three times.

So that standard goes to the sale authority that we currently don't have authorization to use under the act.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: So that's not for the sale of horses.

>> FRED WOEHL: It makes them if they go into three strikes it makes them sale authority horses.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: They are not.

They are being bypassed with the three strike.

It creates a new category, right?

>> FRED WOEHL: Yeah, poor training prospect.

>> RICK DANVIR: Okay.

If they have been offered three times they go into a category where they are available for unlimited sale, right?

>> FRED WOEHL: But that's not being used right now.

Right?

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: You can move other animals to the long term -- the off range pasturing without offering.

>> MARY D'AVERSA: Correct.

I think BLM has adjusted the sale authority concept that we have to offer three times for adoption before we make them available for sale with limitation and that's a BLM adjustment.

So you have to get through the three times for adoption approach before there is the opportunity to put them into private care outside of the adoption concept.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: So can you do that on the Internet?

>> MARY D'AVERSA: Yes.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: So what I'm looking for is a way to get -- my concern is very much I think what Sue was saying is that as humanely as possible, these horses that aren't good training prospects are also really stressed out being handled and running around the ring.

The sooner you get them out -- if they are not going to be turned back out, the sooner you get them to a pasture where they can live in relative peace, the better off.

That's my personal opinion.

I think we agree on that, don't we?

And so to run them around to adoptions just to get these quote/unquote three strikes and put them through all of that stress, to me is really inhumane.

>> RICK DANVIR: So you are saying they could be offered for sale without limitation, simply by the assessment?

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: We are not talking about sales without limitation.

>> RICK DANVIR: I am.

>> DR. SUE McDONNELL: We are moving from one BLM property to another.

That's all we are doing.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Right.

If they can be put on a long-term pasture or whatever.

>> JUNE SEWING: Why do we need to have that in there, to bypass the three strike rule?

It just says assessed as a poor training prospect.

>> MARY D'AVERSA: I think what I would say is if the board has a recommendation that they would like the bureau to pursue, we have a period of time to respond to those recommendations.

If we had a way to accommodate -- if we had a way to accommodate that recommendation and felt it was good business, then we would find a way in conjunction with the regs to do that or with the rules that we follow, or if we didn't -- the mechanics of how to make it works falls on us a little bit and if that helps at all.

>> FRED WOEHL: It does.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: I have one more quick question about this recommendation.

I know Fred meant that it be horse trainers and they could be volunteers but I'm wondering if it couldn't be our specialists at the various holding sites.

They are fairly qualified, reason they?

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Not really.

Not all of them.

>> FRED WOEHL: Let me point out and reiterate, this is the board's recommendation.

We need to make these the best way we know how to and then let Mary -- as Mary said, let BLM give us the answers back.

We actually should not be using -- having Holle' come up here and talk to us while we are doing that or any of that.

These are the board's recommendations.

Does that make sense to everybody?

>> RICK DANVIR: There's no reason asking for clarification.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: I don't think there's a problem asking for clarification.

One of the recommendations we talked to from last time wasn't clearly understood and we had to go over that because there was a misunderstanding of what our intention was and we clarified that now.

So I think being able to clarify these as what our intention is, I think that's a good thing, myself.

>> RICK DANVIR: It takes time for staff to respond to all of these.

We don't want to make frivolous --

>> FRED WOEHL: Oh, no, I don't want to do that at all.

>> RICK DANVIR: Or things that are confusing.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: I was confused once.

>> FRED WOEHL: Getting back to what we were talking about, can we get it that the poor training prospects can bypass the industry strikes.

>> JUNE SEWING: Why do you need to say that?

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: The only reason I added that in because I thought it was necessary to put them through didn't through an off-range pasture.

Is that -- can you put a horse in an off-range pasture without having to go to three strikes?

>> JUNE SEWING: Oh, yeah.

>> I would like to make a couple of clarifications.

We have information on how they become a sale eligible.

One is that it attends three events.

That could be a facility adoption.

So it goes nowhere it has papers makes sure it's the animal that it is and it's not running in a ring and it's the Internet adoption or it could be a satellite adoption event where the animal is put on a truck and it's taken to an event and it's qualified for auction and then the animal would be so eligible.

That was my first clarification because I don't want it to be confused with a three strike rule.

That's how the animal becomes eligible.

So your question whether or not the animal needs to be eligible to go to off-range pasture, it does not.

>> RICK DANVIR: I would rather take the three-strike rule out.

>> HOLLE' HOOKS: One other thing, our goal would be to offset costs, period, you know, find ways to reduce our holding costs, and so that would be one way.

We have 17,000 animals in off-range corrals and then 30,000 animals in on-range pasture and then we would be looking -- of course, we won't adopt 71,000 animals in one year.

We always have animals that would be available to move to any pasture space that we have.

Right now we are full.

That's why we did the solicitation.

Thanks.

>> DR. SUE McDONNELL: Predict the adoption potential.

Leave out the three strikes.

>> FRED WOEHL: All right.

More.

Number five.

Increase the length of the board meetings to three days to allow the working groups an opportunity to formalize and present well-developed thought out recommendations.

Increase the length of the board meeting to three days to allow working groups the opportunity or an opportunity to formalize and --

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: Develop and formalize.

>> FRED WOEHL: Good recommendations.

Well, I had developed.

And I said well developed but you used it before and you can't use that in the same word twice with only a word in between them.

I know I'm from Arkansas but I know that's not good English.

(Laughter).

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: Just a quick question, you want to make it more specific by saying regular board meetings should consist of three days.

The first day of which is to be committed to the board working groups or something along those lines.

In other words, just saying that we increase it to three days to allow doesn't say that there's a whole day of these board work sessions.

We could be more general in the end.

>> DR. SUE McDONNELL: Not just for recommendations but it allows the opportunity for the working groups --

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: The working groups is an opportunity for good works to happen, but we don't have time to do it.

>> DR. SUE McDONNELL: Not just for recommendations, but to get our thoughts together so we make the use of all of these folks who can answer --

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: We kind of hit the ground running when we come in here and

everyone comes in scattered.

I was here at 10:30 in the morning and June got here at 8:30 at night and we are on several committees together.

How are we supposed to meet before an 8:00 in the morning meeting?

So it's --

>> FRED WOEHL: All right.

Well, talk to them.

>> KATHY LIBBY: D discussion, collaboration?

>> DR. SUE McDONNELL: Interaction.

>> FRED WOEHL: I should have paid better attention in college.

Arkansas Tech.

(Laughter)

>> And hardware store!

>> FRED WOEHL: Oh, Tim!

I got a BS degree!

(Laughter)

All right.

Moving right along.

Let's see what else I've got here.

I'm looking.

>> RICK DANVIR: While you are looking, we have another one.

>> FRED WOEHL: Okay.

Go.

Go.

>> KATHY LIBBY: Which one do you want to do first?

>> RICK DANVIR: Either one.

>> KATHY LIBBY: You can't see it, Cope?

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: That's what we talked about earlier during the presentation with the programmatic EIS.

Which we heard they are planning on doing it anyway.

I don't think it hurts to encourage BLM to involve local government.

>> FRED WOEHLE: Yes, I got it written down.

>> KATHY LIBBY: So do we.

>> FRED WOEHLE: Well, I got it more specific than that!

Let me read what I wrote down while he was talking earlier.

Encourage BLM to proceed with a programmatic -- some big word -- EIS to give field managers the tools to manage HMAs in a manner conducive to a healthy environment and incorporate counties as a cooperating agency.

Thank you.

You can read my writing better than I can.

>> MIKE TUPPER: That was memory.

>> FRED WOEHLE: Do you want me to read it again.

>> KATHY LIBBY: Well, I didn't think he was incorporating any of that.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: I'm okay with that.

As long as we got it there that we want the local government engaged as early as possible and the cooperating agency status is the best bet if you read the MOU correctly.

>> RICK DANVIR: If you take the first sentence of number 8 and put it as 7, you would have it all.

BLM should encourage county governments to participate as cooperating agencies.

>> FRED WOEHL: Dang, y'all are smart!

>> RICK DANVIR: Local government.

>> KATHY LIBBY: Hold on a sec.

The programmatic EIS.

>> RICK DANVIR: It should be state and local governments, Cope?

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: Right.

Local governments.

County governments tend to be more often than the state governments but there's no reason not to ask the state.

>> KATHY LIBBY: Do you want to state and local?

>> RICK DANVIR: Or do you want the word "county" in there?

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: The county is usually good.

Rarely do we see cities and conservation districts as cooperating agencies but they would be included in there under local, but in all probability state and county is fine.

Unless we got local conservation district areas or soil conservation districts that think they ought to be there.

>> RICK DANVIR: Yeah.

>> FRED WOEHL: I want to tell y'all, you are really impressing me with these recommendations.

Y'all are doing a good job.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: They have all been yours so far.

>> FRED WOEHL: No, they all haven't been mine.

Y'all have had input on them.

Hell, you changed -- pardon me.

Heck, you changed every one of them I said.

(Laughter)

>> RICK DANVIR: What if we said state and local governments and agencies.

I think that would be -- that would include things like --

>> FRED WOEHL: Conservation districts.

>> RICK DANVIR: And others.

>> KATHY LIBBY: You want to go back to local instead of county.

>> RICK DANVIR: Why don't you state, county and local and that covers everything.

>> FRED WOEHL: Encourage BLM to -- whatever that big word is, EIS and all NEPA processes BLM should encourage state, county and local governments and agencies to participate as cooperating agencies.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: I -- I wonder if we want to lump all of that together and here's why.

The programmatic EIS that we heard about earlier is a very specific thing -- it has a very specific intent, which you don't have to write EISs for every darn research project that came along.

Okay.

That's -- and that's the one we want to support.

Okay?

So I think we want a statement that that's the programmatic -- a programmatic EIS is just that.

It could be any big enveloping EIS.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: If you put the programmatic EIS.

>> FRED WOEHL: We could say encourage BLM with the current EIS --

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: Do you have any others?

This is the only one -- okay, encourage BLM to encourage with the WH & B BLM EIS.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: Separate them out.

I think separating them is a good idea.

>> FRED WOEHL: And then take out all NEPA processes.

>> KATHY LIBBY: Take that out.

>> FRED WOEHL: All NEPA processes take that out.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: I would leave all NEPA processes in because that's where the cooperating agency comes in as part of NEPA.

>> FRED WOEHL: Well, what I would recommend, based on what -- what Julie has said, do a separate --

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: That's what she's doing.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: Kathy's got it where it belongs.

>> KATHY LIBBY: Yes.

>> FRED WOEHL: No, she hasn't got it yet.

Now erase 8 and put BLM up there by EIS.

>> KATHY LIBBY: I heard that -- I heard that they wanted to separate them.

>> FRED WOEHL: Right.

Right right.

But --

>> KATHY LIBBY: So to put it with it, it's not separate.

>> FRED WOEHL: So we are going to encourage BLM with the programmatic EIS.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: Programmatic EIS.

>> FRED WOEHL: Well, it's problematic for me.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: Since that the NEPA process developing an EIS, while you are doing that and any others that you have, try to get, state, local, and government agencies -- boo yah!

I'm good.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: Proceed.

>> KATHY LIBBY: I did proceed and it didn't like it.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: Okay.

Override it.

Because in this case you are smarter than that program.

>> FRED WOEHL: Somebody told me earlier that because I stutter I have a higher IQ.

I really don't think so.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: I agree with you!

>> FRED WOEHL: First time all day.

We need to write that down somewhere.

Oh!

>> KATHY LIBBY: Should we --

>> RICK DANVIR: I think we have another one down there.

>> KATHY LIBBY: We do.

Let me see where I put it.

This one, six?

>> FRED WOEHL: It's pretty self-explanatory.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: Try control Z Kathy.

Control Z.

That should put it back.

>> KATHY LIBBY: I'm sorry, tell me again.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: Hit control z and it should put back.

>> KATHY LIBBY: I wanted to get rid of it.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: You did?

Oh, yeah, you did.

>> KATHY LIBBY: I'm good.

>> KATHY LIBBY: We have one on encouraging and considering training volunteers.

Where did that end up?

This one, number 10.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Where did that come from?

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: That's what we talked with the volunteers and setting up the cameras and training volunteers to do range monitoring.

>> FRED WOEHL: Well, I have a -- what's that word?

Corollary.

Thank you.

Develop a training module program so all qualified volunteers can be an asset to the agency.

>> KATHY LIBBY: Say it again.

Develop training module.

>> FRED WOEHL: Develop a training module/program to allow all qualified volunteers to be an asset to the BLM wild horse and burro program.

Which would include pictures and all that kind of stuff.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: I have a question of BLM with respect to those two recommendations, not that we might not want to make them also, but isn't that already happening on a broader scale?

>> FRED WOEHL: Nope.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: I know there's talk of it.

There's talk of eastern Oregon because we just have so many range assessments that aren't getting done and so I know organizations that have programs on iPads that are about range monitoring and they are engaging in MOUs.

>> MIKE TUPPER: We use a lot of volunteers around the entire BLM but you are making specific recommendations for the Wild Horse and Burro Program.

So go ahead and make your recommendations and we can filter it and see where we may or may not be applying it as judiciously as we should.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: Julie, you are exactly right.

There's talk all over the place.

And we are getting information at university of Idaho high and central Idaho but that's on riparian area where we are trying to get the permittees to do self-training on their allotments.

This is broad spectrum, and range monitoring, particularly around riparian areas and things on that area from the Wild Horse and Burro Program, where we need more evidence out there on that than we are getting of how much range degradation they are actually getting from over population.

>> MIKE TUPPER: So I wrote -- I wrote down earlier so, like, just so -- this is how I interpreted it.

One interpretation is sort of increase our volunteerism, and that's really good.

That's super helpful and there are folks sitting in the audience right now who can really help us with that.

What you are talking about, the way I read it is increase our ability to use citizen scientists.

They are both really good but they are not necessarily meshed but they can mesh.

I think I got it and when you send it to us, we'll do the little mind meld over here and continue to see what we can do.

>> FRED WOEHL: Well, part of the problem -- and here again, being from the Eastern

States we have people from the eastern states that would like to volunteer, but can't because they are not because they say they are not trained.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: I agree about the training program.

>> FRED WOEHL: But here in the East we don't monitor ranges but we do compliance inspections we do help with satellite adoptions.

And all of this kind of stuff.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Yes.

So the volunteerism in the East is quite different from the west.

It really is.

And so --

>> MIKE TUPPER: It's location specific.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Allow individual agencies or sections of agency to say, okay, here's an area where we can use a volunteer.

Let's train somebody to do this and find somebody who is interested in doing it and that will help to take some of the pressure off.

It makes a huge amount of sense.

>> FRED WOEHL: Any more.

>> KATHY LIBBY: Do you want to combine them under one because they are related or keep them separate?

>> FRED WOEHL: When you run it up, I can't read the other one.

I just see one.

>> KATHY LIBBY: Oh, no, because I put them together.

>> FRED WOEHL: Oh.

It looks good to me then.

Develop a training module program to allow all qualified volunteers to be an asset to the wile horse and burro program.

They should consider training volunteers in range monitoring through site specific photography, a/k/a citizen scientists.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: I don't know that it should be that specific about the range monitoring.

>> It's an example.

>> Use EG for the --

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Yes, it's where the EG is.

I know what it means.

I ain't from Arkansas!

(Laughter)

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: Yeah, you fixed it.

You fixed it.

For example -- the whole thing is a for example.

>> FRED WOHL: Kathy, you are really good at your job.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: IE, you are excellent.

>> FRED WOHL: EG.

(Laughter).

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: We do have at least one more.

It's the one about the follow-up on the USGS.

>> KATHY LIBBY: Yes.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: And you had -- you had a bare bones version somewhere.

>> KATHY LIBBY: I'm just trying to get this one.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: There we go.

You can just say periodic updates to the board on progress of USGS's research activity.

Yeah.

That --

>> FRED WOEHL: That's pretty straightforward.

>> MIKE TUPPER: But prior to meetings.

So we are not talking about whether we get here.

We are talking about the actions that fall out of that when we get here.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: Okay.

>> KATHY LIBBY: Should I remove periodic.

>> MIKE TUPPER: As they are available, we will get them to you.

When we get the information without before we show up so that we are not reading it for the first time.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: Mary, you have a puzzled look.

>> MARY D'AVERSA: Thank you.

Yes, I do.

>> Thank you for noticing.

>> MARY D'AVERSA: I'm not sure I wanted to draw that much attention my puzzlement.

I thought this was a monthly phone call, is this intended to be the same thing or additional content.

>> FRED WOEHL: This is something written.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Not everybody can meet -- get on those calls all the time.

>> FRED WOEHL: Actually, Mary, we -- we generally get -- email a list of what we talk about or something like that and so you could bring us up to date on that and then send us the list.

Does that make sense?

>> MARY D'AVERSA: We can work with that, sure.

>> KATHY LIBBY: And then there was -- I actually some notes.

>> RICK DANVIR: I had a couple things.

>> FRED WOEHL: Oh, we are a long way from back done.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: I have a question.

I have a question for Mike, though.

Are we limited in making recommendations to BLM or can it include agencies -- or agencies within the Department of Interior?

>> MIKE TUPPER: Well, for me, you can make recommendations to the BLM.

You are free to do whatever you want.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: The one I put there about exploring the possibilities of helping to form collaborative groups, fish and wildlife has such a big stake in this issue because the sage grouse potential listing coming up.

>> And the Forest Service.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: That's why I said instead of BLM and exploring that possibility of working with and establishing collaborative groups I had that as just federal agencies.

>> FRED WOEHL: Well, that's good.

We can make the recommendations to the Forest Service too.

Not only BLM.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: To BLM and Forest Service, that's all?

(off microphone comment).

>> FRED WOEHL: Which the Forest Service has part of that too.

So we can make recommendations to the Forest Service.

>> JUNE SEWING: In regards to the horse program.

>> FRED WOEHL: Yes.

We can't tell them we need to go cut firewood.

>> KATHY LIBBY: So for this point, Cope, if we said BLM in conjunction with other federal agencies?

Would that work for you?

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: That's not just a BLM issue out there.

>> FRED WOEHL: Okay.

That looks good.

Yep.

Go ahead.

>> KATHY LIBBY: Anybody want to change anything?

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: One of my thoughts on this Sue, in the process of doing the -- repopulating the zero dot area, whatever horses will get selected to go there, they could actually be -- you know, they need to be put into a herd and into a separate area or something beforehand so they can -- there could be some bonding created and that kind of thing and you could also do some of the conditioned training that you are talking about.

Do we want to try to tie some of that stuff together?

>> KATHY LIBBY: As I was taking notes, I separated that.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: The notes I have in regards to this, I think Sue and I -- the things we are looking to do are so parallel.

I don't know if we should tie them together or not.

>> RICK DANVIR: I do have a comment on this.

I don't like the words "rather than."

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Where?

>> KATHY LIBBY: Back up to where I was?

>> RICK DANVIR: Yeah.

I mean, I'm all for -- you know, we use positive enticement where you can, but I'm not -- I don't -- not "rather than."

We need to be able to do gathers.

It's like, you know, it's part of the tool box, right?

(Off microphone comment).

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: There's negative reinforcement.

>> FRED WOEHL: If you keep picking on me, I'm not coming back.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: He understands operant conditioning.

>> DR. SUE McDONNELL: Positive enticement and reinforcement methods.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: The bribes and the rewards.

>> FRED WOEHL: I wouldn't say encouraging horses to come in.

Methods of gathering.

Are.

>> DR. SUE McDONNELL: And refine --

>> FRED WOEHL: Refine.

I like that word.

>> DR. SUE McDONNELL: Refine water and bait trapping methods.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Not just refine, but encourage -- encourage the use of water and bait trapping where it can be effective in --

>> FRED WOEHL: Where effective.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: I think there are areas -- you know, my point of reference is some of the places I have been and some of the herd management areas I have been in, like Conger, you have 170,000 acres and it's huge but there are only three water sources and.

It had a couple of old water traps.

It was effective that one of the older managers for many, many years that's how he maintained, you know -- he maintained the population there.

And so they don't do that anymore.

And so, you know, that's the kind of thing -- and that may be a place where June's organization, for instance, could get involved with furnishing the materials to build a water truck.

And so it's -- one of the things is we want to encourage -- we know that PZP is not a silver bullet but it's one of the arrows we have in our quiver now and we should use it as much as possible to try to manage the horses on the range.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: Kathy, a couple of things.

We can take out "positive" in front of enticement.

Just have enticement and what do you think if we add to the first -- the opening line, modern behavior modification and least stressed handling methods.

>> FRED WOEHL: How about reduced stressed.

>> DR. SUE McDONNELL: Least.

Trust me.

>> KATHY LIBBY: I didn't know whether you were talking to him or me.

>> DR. SUE McDONNELL: Least stressed.

It's an accepted term for what we are talking about.

And --

>> FRED WOEHL: Not in Arkansas it's not, I know I keep --

>> DR. SUE McDONNELL: Not implying that the other methods are what level of stress they are.

We are saying of all available, go for the least stressed.

So we are not -- reducing would imply that possibly could be interpreted that they are --

>> FRED WOEHL: Good.

>> DR. SUE McDONNELL: Got it?

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: There you go.

>> FRED WOEHL: Does she need to put refinement of and increased of water and bait trapping.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: Or just refined.

>> DR. SUE McDONNELL: She's trying to be with the a statement.

>> FRED WOEHL: My grandma couldn't write.

But she did chew tabacci.

All right.

Go on.

Okay.

June, you and --

>> We already did this once.

>> JUNE SEWING: No, we had a recommendation a couple of years ago.

>> FRED WOEHL: But we are more specific here.

>> JUNE SEWING: Oh, okay.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: Back then, it wasn't all on your shoulders.

Now it is.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Now we can pick up a ball and run with it, June.

>> FRED WOEHL: When is an LUP?

>> Land use plan.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: And we could have partner with June's mustang group.

With the national mustang --

>> Leave June out.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: And the other thing is -- or another recognized association that has the ability to do it.

So I think that it's not -- let's not confine it just to June's group.

>> FRED WOEHLE: So we need to put them in more of a recommendation.

Explore partnering with and explore.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: I don't know that you need the "f" there either.

Partnership.

Never mind.

>> KATHY LIBBY: Do you want that done?

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: That doesn't need to be there.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: I don't think 2 -- is 2 still on there?

>> We will take it off.

>> FRED WOEHLE: I don't think.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Holle' introduces that.

>> FRED WOEHLE: Introducing a non-reproductive herd --

>> JUNE SEWING: I don't think you need Utah in there.

>> KATHY LIBBY: Do you want me to leave that out?

>> JUNE SEWING: Yeah.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: You don't want to make it specific to HMA, HA.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: HMA or HA.

It has to be -- to put horses on it, it would have to be an HMA.

If it was an HA, it would have to be reclassified as an HMA, correct?

>> FRED WOEHL: Yes, that's right.

>> KATHY LIBBY: So where did that come out?

>> FRED WOEHL: Part c, tame out HMA.

It's just an HA.

And now part c, how do we fix that?

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: I don't know that that has to be there.

That's a procedural process that's part of the selecting place.

>> FRED WOEHL: And then number c, that needs to stay.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: That needs to stay.

>> FRED WOEHL: Yeah, there you go.

>> JUNE SEWING: That means I have a lot of work before the next meeting.

>> KATHY LIBBY: Is it reintroducing a or is it herds?

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Yeah.

>> FRED WOEHL: Starting out small.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Maybe the tip for discussion is within -- you know, the intention of this is -- one of the intentions is to develop a repeatable model or is that something that doesn't need to be said.

Pilot.

>> FRED WOEHL: Up to the top?

Go up to the top and we will start over them again, just to be sure.

Okay.

>> KATHY LIBBY: Does this need to be larger.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: I have another one.

>> RICK DANVIR: So do I!

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Yeah, we are not done yet, even though we are done with your list.

I will bring up one of my favorite subjects.

>> KATHY LIBBY: Go ahead, Rick.

>> RICK DANVIR: We've got a big serious wildlife listing coming up and most of the comments that I'm reading that are coming from the wildlife and the range people expressing a lot of concern between the condition -- the potential of over AML horse populations on sage grouse and other wildlife species.

I would like to see a report at our next meeting, you know, from the wildlife -- or from BLM having to do with -- with current management in HMAs or AMLs.

HMAs.

>> FRED WOEHL: Rick, I think -- I don't think -- we don't necessarily need to make that as a recommendation.

I think we can do that as an agenda item.

We can go ahead and put it.

Ain't no big deal but --

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: It was an agenda item a week before the meeting, but the report won't be ready.

>> FRED WOEHL: The reports we got today were -- let's go ahead and put it.

>> KATHY LIBBY: What do you want to say, Rick?

>> FRED WOEHL: At the next meeting.

>> RICK DANVIR: HMA populations and the effects on sage grouse and other wildlife.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: Can you bring someone in from fish and wildlife and the relationship to the HMAs?

I mean, we want to look at it at that level because we have a big issue in some states that almost all of our HMAs are in primary core habitat.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: We had a couple of meetings on the sage grouse and they talked about the exposures and the heights of fences and exposures.

>> FRED WOEHL: But since that time, you got one, two, three, four new members.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Well --

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: There's been changes in the proposal for the sage grouse management just last couple of months too.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: How about if somehow in here we ask for a report at every meeting on where the issue is and anything that's pertinent and salient to issues with the Wild Horse and Burro Program.

Like a status report.

Where are we?

What's going on?

I mean this is a critical issue in the management of these horses and then maybe we should be on every meeting we need to have an update.

>> FRED WOEHL: Concerning the sage grouse.

>> RICK DANVIR: It's a big deal.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: It is a big deal.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: When is our next meeting scheduled?

>> FRED WOEHL: In August.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: That would be the only one you need because the critical time is September.

>> FRED WOEHL: So I would say a detailed approach, not just a report.

They can say we had sage grouse and that it would be it.

That would be the report.

>> RICK DANVIR: You know, I might even take a little input from the BLM on this, like, I guess ideally is if you guys -- if BLM has come up with some management strategies to

deal with that potential conflict, that would be the thing that I would like to hear about.

>> FRED WOEHL: Okay, then add down there at the bottom of it, Kathy, and --

>> RICK DANVIR: If there's a better way to word it, then let's do.

>> FRED WOEHL: Okay.

How would you word it?

>> Just for grammar, I would take the "and" out after greater sage grouse.

>> KATHY LIBBY: Well, it's the effects of greater sage grouse and other wildlife.

>> RICK DANVIR: Let's leave it just the sage grouse otherwise it will get too broad.

Let's do this for starters.

>> FRED WOEHL: What do you think about that?

>> RICK DANVIR: I think that's good.

Thank you.

>> FRED WOEHL: All right.

Tim, your AML one.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Just in -- it appears that the -- with all the discussion on the AML and the NSA reports that AML is something that is reviewed and adjusted at what -- which process?

>> MIKE TUPPER: It's the planning level.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Is it something that the board feels we could ask for a -- that basically just -- that AML be reviewed at the -- and adjusted at the opportunities that present themselves?

Is that just a very simple --

>> MIKE TUPPER: We can address it back to you.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: I think that that way it will be -- it would have a look -- it would have a good look in the -- and with that, you know, one of the things that would -- you know, my concern with it, obviously, is that the process of establishing the AML is one

that has got some basis and a consistency in the science and one of the things that it seems that there is a consistency issue.

So that's why I'm a little reticent to throw that on the table now.

And perhaps we could ask -- see if there's a way to clarify or codify how AML is established first, and then go to that.

Because it can be opening up just a can of worms.

>> FRED WOEHL: Well, address what you just said, we know how AMLs are set.

They are set on a basic level by the people there on the ground.

The stakeholders that live there.

So the way they do it in Oregon might be different than the way they do it in Utah.

So as far as having BLM say everybody has to do it the same way --

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: That's not what I'm saying, Fred.

I didn't say anything of the kind.

What I'm saying is that there isn't -- having consistency in how they are arrived at doesn't mean that they are all arrived at in the same way, using the same criteria.

Consistency means if there's a principle involved in how they are established.

That's where I'm coming from.

>> FRED WOEHL: I believe there is.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: What I have just seen is and what I heard is that a lot of AMLs just get passed on year after year after year after year, and they are opportunity after opportunity after opportunity because there are some that have been the same for 35 or 40 years.

>> FRED WOEHL: I agree that, but I don't think BLM can dictate that to the planning boards.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: I'm not saying that they have to change them.

We discussed about reviewing them and how accurate they are.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: I doubt as they once were.

We look at the grass that we were presented and the constant, consistent decline in the AML for the livestock given the decreased precipitation over the West and none of the HMAs are at the AMLs and in all probability that should be lowered.

>> RICK DANVIR: Their time might be better spent working on some of these, you know, range assessment methodology that Mike is talking about so that we have good data to look at range conditions under current population levels and then they could -- I think they could be -- make a better assessment of whether --

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: That's why we want to talk about it.

Is there something -- that's why I mentioned a minute ago, instead of that, is there something that we can ask for to -- and I know that this may result in AML being lowered in some places and I know that that's really going to irritate some folks.

But that also -- I also think there may somebody possible when you are evaluating it, some of these areas that are over AML that, you know, range conditions aren't as divided as people thought they were.

Maybe that just means adjusting that number up a little bit too.

So it can go in either direction and that's the crap shoot.

All of it is still -- you know, for me, I want to see and I said this before, I would -- you know, myself, I would like to see these horses that -- where they are managed is being managed -- the horses being managed well.

That's the intention of where I'm coming from.

I know in a lot of places where there's a lot of livestock on an HMA, and that's the major conflict is that livestock to horse, and, you know, one of the things that's been talked about in the past and we haven't talked about at this meeting is the possibility of, you know is it possible for groups of interested people to buy those grazing permits if those grazing permits became available.

There are lots of different options out there.

Can you then convert and increase AML at some point and so that's kind of where -- because of one of the things I heard some board members say, and I heard other people say, if these advocate groups want to say, why can't they purchase some of the grazing permits or we get to make arrangements to go.

And I don't know how possible that is, if it's possible, but if it is -- can that mean -- can

you then increase the AML and maybe we won't do anything here.

>> FRED WOEHL: I hear what you are saying.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Trying to figure out --

>> FRED WOEHL: You and I have talked about this a lot.

I agree with what you are saying but some of the stuff we have had today and it has got me thinking about this.

What is really hard for me to understand and I haven't asked anybody or expressed this is why livestock is managed by AUMs but yet they manage horses by AML.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: That's part of the inconsistency that I'm -- I would like to address that.

That's kind of what I'm trying to do.

>> FRED WOEHL: Well, we might -- and this is -- I mean, AMLs, the way I understand it, and, Mike, you correct me if I'm wrong, it was established by a working group from the people in that area.

Some of them, 35, 40 years ago.

And a change that it's almost an act of Congress with all of the stuff you have to go through.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Well, that --

>> FRED WOEHL: Let me finish.

Allow them to go on because they are not really applicable at this point because the AUMs are down so low on the livestock.

They are not even close to what the AMLs are.

Is that a --

>> MIKE TUPPER: I've got to reframe your question.

I might have this a little bit off.

But AML is established at the allocation level.

That's how we in the BLM speak of it.

That means you have to have a land use plan and you allocate hundreds of different allegations that are determined in a plan.

Oil and gas development, yes/no.

Anyway, so we make the decision for the AML in the land use planning document.

That document isn't built in a vacuum.

They are built at the time with the input from the specialists and the folks who are interested.

So BLM science, interested constituents, come together and it's a year's long process to develop a -- to develop and draft and draft a final and then a decision on a land use plan.

So that said, some of the AML numbers that we have that we are dealing with now, we are just, as you said, Tim, they are from years ago.

Because we haven't gone back and done another land use plan, another RMP, resource management plan for that area.

So that's how the AML gets established.

The AUMs comes from -- I'm not a geological engineer.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: That's a whole different process.

>> MIKE TUPPER: Exactly.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: And I finally understand that better after the presentation.

And the presentations that were done here in regards to that were incredibly helpful.

>> FRED WOEHL: It helped me a lot.

>> MIKE TUPPER: BLM should adjust AMLs to similar or appropriate levels when opportunities present themselves.

So I am going to say we probably do but maybe we should do a better job of describing -- maybe that would be the question.

Could we --

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: You don't have to put anything in the recommendation here, all right?

I'm not -- I'm not insisting upon it -- I'm not.

And it may just be I'm putting the cart before the horse in some respects, but this is -- part of it was a conversation that we had regarding when you explained to me that there is that land use plan point, there is an opportunity to adjust it if it needs to be adjusted and I don't know if that's something that needs to be chased down.

I'm guessing the other board members how they feel about it.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: I think the point here, Tim, Rick's right.

The bottom line is what's the effect on the resource?

>> RICK DANVIR: What can the resource --

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: Unless we are observing and monitoring and understanding what that baseline is, I think you will find when we get through and talking to Barry earlier today, to me the limiting factor for carrying capacity on those HMAs is not how much livestock is out there, it's how much feed is available when the livestock isn't there.

When we get into January and February, how much is there and how much can that support and how much of that are you going to allot to elk and deer and antelope and how much are you going to allot to the horses.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: I'm in 100% agreement with you, Cope.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: That's the bottom line.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: The Forest Service is looking at what is the year round condition for the horses.

>> RICK DANVIR: If you put the cart before the horse to be -- talking about adjusting AMLs is putting the cart before the horse.

I believe the thing we should really, you know, ask BLM to do, and help to support them in doing is develop good, solid -- you know, the most quantitative ways they can of estimating what's out there.

It's based on the rainfall and then -- then they could -- you know, working on divvying it up between the variety of animals that depend on.

>> FRED WOEHL: Here's what impressed me through all of this.

BLM is actually -- actually helping the horse in that they are managing cattle by AUMs and managing the horses by AML.

They --

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: Absolutely.

>> FRED WOEHLE: The AMLs have stayed here because they have been established.

The AUMs are constantly going down.

BLM is managing horses at this level and they want to pull the horses off to AML, but based on the reports that I see, cattle numbers have dropped way more.

They are managing cattles by AUMs and managing horses by AMLs.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: I understand that.

I understand that.

A lot of AML numbers were set, 35, 40 years ago.

>> FRED WOEHLE: Let me just say this.

I agree with that, however, if they go in now and change those AMLs, it's going to lower them because of the current drought situation.

Horse numbers are going -- there are going to be a lot more pressure on them --

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: That's a possible.

>> FRED WOEHLE: That's not a possible.

It's a fact.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: It's a certainty.

It's a certainty.

>> FRED WOEHLE: What I'm saying is we really don't need to mess with this right now.

I'm being very honest with you, because if we do, we're going to upset the whole --

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Apple cart.

>> FRED WOEHL: And you know, what I like to tip apple carts but I won't do it to the detriment of the horses.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: And that's when my caveat when I first started speaking is it may have a backfiring effect.

That's why I wanted to talk about it with the board and put it on the table to talk about because it's a contentious point with a lot of people.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: Would you like a real example to have this discussion with people?

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: What do you mean?

>> The Butte, the AML is 200 and there are 1500 horses.

They are allocated 2400 horse AUMs.

If you translates AMLs to AUMs, but they have -- they have 7 and a half times that many horses out there.

There's 25,000 cattle AUMs allocated to that same area.

Last year, the ranchers got to use 3500 of those AUMs.

That's 14%, and all of this and wildlife gets allocated 3% of the forage.

>> RICK DANVIR: And it's priority sage grouse habitat.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: That's a real example.

If adjustments will occur out there, if you want to change AMLs to protect sage grouse, there will be a lot fewer horses.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Okay.

Delete, delete, delete.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: I'm sorry.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: You know, I'm a pretty fair and honest guy and I'm a straight shooter.

>> RICK DANVIR: I appreciate the fact that you realize --

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: I do realize it.

>> RICK DANVIR: We keep going back to ranges.

They need a tool to be able to make that assessment.

One of the things I really appreciate is the fact that the board doesn't want to open that can of worms up for the benefit of the horses.

>> RICK DANVIR: We use the best methodology to --

>> KATHY LIBBY: Fred, I apologize.

Two quick things.

You have gone about 15 potential recommendations most of which you want to go back and review.

You've got about a half hour left for the meeting.

And Rick, I did want to make sure that I started to write some language down that you were creating and I don't know before we leave what you want to do with that.

>> RICK DANVIR: If Mike is saying he is already working on that, I --

>> MIKE TUPPER: We are good.

>> RICK DANVIR: I saw a nice presentation and it sounded like you were on top of it.

>> FRED WOEHL: One more.

I've got one more to add.

>> KATHY LIBBY: Okay.

>> MIKE TUPPER: I'm not leaving the room.

>> FRED WOEHL: Yes, just because -- just because I -- the national advisory board meet a minimum of three times a year, every four months.

Because there's lots of stuff going on and twice a year, whether an eight-month deal is not enough.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: A December meeting would be good, between Thanksgiving

and Christmas would be a good time to meet and it would put it -- and it would fill the gap up quite nicely.

>> FRED WOEHLE: Yes.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: I know there will be folks who will be screaming about the holidays.

>> FRED WOEHLE: Put down the months of April, August and December.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: It's only a couple of days out of our life.

Are you scared?

>> FRED WOEHLE: December, if possible.

All right is there any other recommendations we would like to make?

If not, we will go back at the top and we'll start and we'll have a consensus if we want to proceed with them or not.

Okay?

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Sounds like a plan.

>> FRED WOEHLE: How come you highlighted them?

Are you going to make them bigger so I can read them?

How we will do this, we will start around the room and each one of us will read one of these recommendations.

June, you start first.

>> JUNE SEWING: What are we, in grade school?

(Laughter)

>> Correct the grammar you go through.

>> JUNE SEWING: BLM should considering the wild horse and burro division chief position have an optional location in the west based on the preference of the selectee/person and the program needs.

>> FRED WOEHLE: Okay.

Any discussion on that?

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Cha-ching!

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: Why does it say selectee/person.

>> JUNE SEWING: I said selectee/person because I knew the advertisement went out today.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: I thought it was redundant.

Maybe not.

>> FRED WOEHL: Do you want to take out person and leave selectee.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: Yeah, I think I do.

>> FRED WOEHL: Okay.

>> JUNE SEWING: So when we read these, are we making that then a motion?

>> FRED WOEHL: No, I don't think we need to do a motion.

What I will do is I will ask if anybody has any objections.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Yes.

>> FRED WOEHL: And if nobody says anything, we will move on to Rick reading number two.

Anybody have any objections?

Number two, Rick.

>> RICK DANVIR: BLM should assess horses to predict adoption potential by qualified horse trainers who may be volunteers at the aim of moving horses expeditiously to long-term situations.

>> FRED WOEHL: Questions?

Comments?

All right.

Tim, number three.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Can you roll the screen up, Kat.

Number three, 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.

>> FRED WOEHL: Comments, concerns, changes?

All right.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: I --

>> RICK DANVIR: I don't know how much money I personally feel we should spend on that.

>> FRED WOEHL: Well, it just depends.

I don't think everybody will want to do a lot, but I think there's some of us -- I think every board member should attend at least one roundup.

Because how can we -- you know, we have heard a lot of comments, you know, and we were asked point-blank, how many of you have attended a roundup?

I attended one several years ago and they changed a lot since then.

I cannot address those issues without firsthand knowledge.

At least I can't.

I mean -- and then the thing about this, if you don't --

>> RICK DANVIR: I'm just saying I agree with that but I'm just saying it's kind of open ended.

You know, we just need to be --

>> FRED WOEHL: Well, let's let BLM tell us.

>> RICK DANVIR: We will move on.

>> FRED WOEHL: Honestly, Rick, let's let them tell us if it's something they want to do or have a budget.

We might want to say provide a budget to allow and then let the board decide how it's

spent.

>> RICK DANVIR: Okay.

It's okay as it is.

>> FRED WOEHL: Okay.

>> KATHY LIBBY: And just so you know, you think I will reorder these and all of them for what you want them to relate to the board, I will put in one place and distinguish those.

Julie?

Number four.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: Continue to develop and implement programs like Americas mustang which provides factual education and info to the American public.

>> FRED WOEHL: Comments?

Concerns?

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: Do we really want to specify one individual group?

Is it affiliated with BLM?

>> FRED WOEHL: Yes, yes.

What I'm -- what I'm saying is that's a like -- like America's mustang.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: That was kind of a partnership with BLM.

>> FRED WOEHL: Mustang heritage and BLM.

And that's just an example.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: Okay.

>> FRED WOEHL: Anybody else?

Okay.

Regular board meetings should be three days, the first of which -- you moved it.

Regular board meetings should be three days the first of which will be dedicated to

allowing working groups an opportunity for face-to-face interaction.

Everybody okay with that?

Okay.

Sue?

>> DR. SUE McDONNELL: BLM should increase -- oops.

>> FRED WOEHL: It's hard, isn't it?

Laugh at me, will you?

>> DR. SUE McDONNELL: BLM should increase dedicated funding for methods of population growth suppression and for methods currently available.

All forms of population controls should be utilized.

>> FRED WOEHL: That's outstanding.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: How about should be considered for utilization.

That would, the only thing.

>> FRED WOEHL: Yes, there you go.

Should be considered for --

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Considered for utilization.

Anybody else?

>> JENNIFER SALL: Encourage Jen to go forward with the programmatic EIS.

>> FRED WOEHL: Cope, I don't know how it ended up like that.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: BLM should encourage state, county and local governments and agencies to participate as cooperating agencies in all NEPA processes.

>> FRED WOEHL: Everyone okay with that?

Ms. June?

>> JUNE SEWING: Develop a training module/program to allow all qualified volunteers

to be an asset to the BLM wild horses program, for example, BLM have you considered training of volunteers to assist in range monitoring through site specific photography, a/k/a citizen science.

>> FRED WOEHL: Questions or concerns.

>> RICK DANVIR: BLM should consider establishing collaborative groups regarding HMAs.

>> FRED WOEHL: Any comments about that all right being HMAs about what?

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: I'm a little unclear on that now.

>> FRED WOEHL: I know it was good when we talked about it, but now I don't know -- regarding what about HMAs?

Cope, that was yours.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: Probably just the management of.

>> FRED WOEHL: Okay.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: I thought it was insinuated but if you want to put management of.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: I would make a point here, I don't know how universal RACs are but in Oregon and Nevada, there's a RAC that serves all the BLM district.

And they -- they are pretty rigidly formatted in whose part of them.

All interests are represented.

There's a minerals person and an off-road vehicle person and all that sort of thing and they advise BLM with respect to all of their activities.

That collaborative group already exists.

Now, it's not as broad as the kind of community effort you are talking about.

I know what -- because I serve on one of those for horse but I want to remind people that we already have RACs out there?

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: In our country, the BLM RAC covers a lot of ground.

So if you have the -- the collaborative groups are much more specific to a locality

whereby at least in our country, the BLM districts are huge.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: So you would say maybe, for example, what you mean is that a collaborative group would be specific to the three finger HMA?

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: Mm-hmm.

>> FRED WOEHL: And he's referring to fish and game and things of that nature.

Now, just so you know in the East, we don't have RACs.

All the RACs in the east are on deer.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Or on the wall.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: I had heard that.

>> KATHY LIBBY: So I typed in of specific HMAs.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: Right, mm-hmm.

I think that makes it a little more explanatory.

>> FRED WOEHL: Good?

Okay.

Everybody okay with that?

Okay.

--

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Provide updates to the national advisory board on the progress of USGS research activities for wild horse and burro prior to each meeting.

>> FRED WOEHL: Okay.

All right.

Is this any more?

Number 12.

That's you, Julie.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: BLM should explore more modern behavior modifications and least stress 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.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: That's a slam dunk.

>> FRED WOEHL: Number 13, BLM should pilot reintroducing a non-reproductive herd into zeroed out HMA.

Explore a partner with the National Mustang Association or other recognized group.

Sounds good to me.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Is there -- June, would you want to have -- I mean, would you want to have -- do we need to have something in there that basically says that our subcommittee can kind of keep our fingers on the pulse of that and assist in that or not?

>> JUNE SEWING: I don't think so, but, I mean anybody is welcome to help.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: I'm just wondering if.

>> FRED WOEHL: If it gets out of that and they contact them, June will let us know.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Okay.

>> DR. SUE McDONNELL: Detailed report on HMA population levels, their effects on greater sage grouse and the strategies BLM is using to address these effects.

>> RICK DANVIR: I would like to modify that a little bit.

To just -- one of the -- the -- one of the strategies I would really like to hear talked about is, you know, prioritizing some of these core areas as removal areas to achieve AML.

>> FRED WOEHL: How can we address that.

>> Say it again.

>> RICK DANVIR: If we are going to be removing horses to achieve AM L., I would like for the BLM to consider prioritizing these areas for the overlapping core sage grouse habitats.

>> FRED WOEHL: Let's think about this.

If we had this detailed report and this report reflects that's what needs to be done, we can make that recommendation at that time.

>> RICK DANVIR: It would be too late.

>> FRED WOEHL: It would be too late.

>> RICK DANVIR: What I would really like is for BLM to make that -- you know to make that a -- I will put it on as a separate recommendation if you wish, but I think that's something that needs to be considered.

If we can only -- if we can only remove certain animals, to achieve AML, I would like this to be listed as one of the priority reasons.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Okay, what I'm hearing is because this is such a tender issue that this would be a priority -- this would be a priority to be proactive in, an area to be proactive in?

>> RICK DANVIR: It would be a priority area.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: I agree with that logic.

>> FRED WOEHL: What area are we talking about?

Almost every HMA or part of HMA is in greater sage grouse habitat.

>> RICK DANVIR: 30%.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: 30%, yes.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: Some of those are not priority areas.

I think what Rick is saying is he would like to prioritize removals from areas that are over AML to address those that are priority habitat for the greater sage grouse.

>> RICK DANVIR: Yes, 80% of the population is dependent on 20% of the sage grouse habitat.

If we could -- if we could do our best and protect that 20%, there's a chance that they won't be listed.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: Right now we have a prioritization, court orders, humane gathers, horses out of water and that sort of thing, and then attempts to achieve AML.

And so what we would do -- and we never get there.

We never get to that option.

Or we haven't for the past several years.

So now we have one more before attempting to reach AML or we just put that in the top of the -- of the category?

>> FRED WOEHL: Well, now they have some gathers scheduled.

They have two, I think, this summer.

Mary?

>> MIKE TUPPER: I'm probably supposed to have this memorized, but I thought it was the first two and then I think maybe we're looking at the science proposals.

>> MARY D'AVERSA: Correct the research proposals.

>> MIKE TUPPER: The research proposals at next priority and then fourth is over AML, is that right?

>> FRED WOEHL: Well, Kiger is being gathered, right?

>> MARY D'AVERSA: Well, okay.

>> KATHY LIBBY: Ladies and gentlemen, you are getting further -- stay conscious of speaking to the microphone.

It's getting late in the day and his hard to hear you.

>> MARY D'AVERSA: The current priorities is as Mike stated, legal, humane issues, research, and then other AML-related gathers.

The gathers that Brian outline for the remainder of FY '15 were gathers that are tending to highlight over AML where there was a high degree of adoptability and they will not go into holding, therefore Kiger and the others.

>> FRED WOEHL: Right.

So what you are saying is that the only gathers that we will have in fiscal year '15 prior to that September 2015 or those two areas that have horses that are going to be adopted?

>> MARY D'AVERSA: Correct.

There's two or three areas.

Yeah, three.

>> FRED WOEHL: Did you get that.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: The FY '15 gathers are already in there.

>> RICK DANVIR: I would like this pushed as high on the list as possible.

>> FRED WOEHL: I'm good with it, I am.

>> RICK DANVIR: I think -- I think it's going to make a big difference to a lot of people.

>> FRED WOEHL: Okay.

All right.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: That should say the greater sage grouse priority habitat.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: The 2015 gathers are already all scheduled and there's not many to put in.

And FY '15, and whether they have an adequate mechanism to protect the bird is by September.

We make that recommendation but it's moot because any gathers that could affect it are already scheduled.

>> FRED WOEHL: Do you think whoever is making the decision would look at this and see where they are trying?

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: I think that decision is already made, is it not, Mary?

>> FRED WOEHL: I'm not talking about BLM.

I'm talking about the -- the fish and wildlife or whoever is coming up --

>> MIKE TUPPER: Without -- I'm speaking as a board member not as the BLM.

So anything that you can do that the Fish & Wildlife Service can look at is -- it's putting another chip on to the table.

>> FRED WOEHL: Okay.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: Yeah, that's useful in that respect.

>> FRED WOEHLE: So I'm good with it.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: Thanks, Rick.

>> KATHY LIBBY: How about the language?

>> FRED WOEHLE: Detailed report at the next board meeting on HMA population levels and the effect on the greater sage grouse and the wild horse and burro strategies BLM is using to address these efforts and prioritize HMAs in greater sage grouse habitat over AMLs for gathers as expeditiously as possible?

>> KATHY LIBBY: We used priority twice.

>> FRED WOEHLE: Well, he said pull out all parts.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: I think that covers it, though.

>> FRED WOEHLE: You think that covers it?

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: I do.

>> FRED WOEHLE: Everybody okay with that?

>> Jen keeps getting the short ones.

>> JENNIFER SALL: National advisory board meets a minimum time of three years a year if possible, April, August and December, if possible.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Would be ideal.

>> FRED WOEHLE: I think we have 15 really good recommendations.

>> DR. SUE McDONNELL: On 14, Kathy, should we start that sentence with a verb, provide detailed report.

Is it a complete sentence without it?

There we go.

>> KATHY LIBBY: I actually do promise one more look at the grammar.

>> FRED WOEHLE: All right.

I'm proud of y'all.

You have done an excellent job.

Excellent job.

>> JENNIFER SALL: Three M & Ms for you.

>> RICK DANVIR: Does everybody agree we should meet three times annually?

>> FRED WOEHL: I feel strongly about it.

Having eight months in again meetings we can't keep up with everything.

I plan to work y'all until you drop.

(Laughter).

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: You better get your buggy whip out and bring your lunch.

>> FRED WOEHL: I will bring my lunch.

The good thing about this is we are ahead of schedule.

We have ten minutes until we are scheduled to end.

Does anybody have anything they would like to say before we dismiss or adjourn or whatever?

I will start with Ms. Sue.

Any final comments?

I mean, June.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: We have to get you -- what are those cards of the players?

>> FRED WOEHL: She has the card.

>> JUNE SEWING: A lot of people call me that, I think because of my last name, you know when they try to remember.

I just wanted to make one comment and what Tim was talking about when the purchasing or whatever permits for -- you know, for crazing.

I mean they -- they -- that is done now.

We actually are -- our association actually owns four permits in Nevada.

Only one, it's a horse permit, the only one we use.

The other three are in nonuse and we own one in Utah and it is also a nonuse.

We also have one -- I'm not sure how that's categorized.

We have a state permit, but -- and it's -- we pay for that.

So I'm not sure -- you know, you don't pay if it's in nonuse, but -- so it's just your horses.

So anyway, that's something that they do.

>> FRED WOHL: That's a good thing for any advocacy group that's in on helping.

>> JUNE SEWING: But you have to purchase those permits from someone who already owns them.

>> FRED WOHL: That's a good thing.

Rick?

Final thoughts?

>> RICK DANVIR: Yeah, I just keep stressing, that you know -- I mean, I love seeing the horses out there, but quantity and quality are two different things.

I'm really concerned with some of these areas that are way over AML.

I'm concerned with -- you know, I don't think it's the right thing to do to a horse.

I know it's the wrong thing to maintain range condition and I'm concerned with wildlife habitat.

I think we need to keep focused on meeting -- you know, learning -- showing that we can meet a targeted population level and then I think we've got the luxury of talking about changing population levels or putting horses back out on the range.

I think we need the first step is to show that we can manage numbers.

>> MIKE TUPPER: Can I double up on that a little bit, and I know that Tim is an excitable gentleman who stays on point until he gets what he wants, and I appreciate that.

So rather than continually talking about AML versus AUMs versus whatever, probably -- not probably, my -- the way I want to approach this is we need to manage the whole scope for range health and then everything that's out there gets a fair shake and so if we sort of change the dialogue from AMLs and AUMs to we are really interested in managing healthy horses on healthy rangeland.

We are just steps ahead.

>> RICK DANVIR: Along with a whole bunch of other healthy animals.

>> MIKE TUPPER: Exactly.

It's the health of everything that we are worried about.

>> FRED WOEHL: Thank you, Mike.

Tim?

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: I think the priority -- the priorities and we are seeing -- we are seeing it, I think, to a certain degree for sure, what needs to be an on range management, on range population growth suppression, and I mean, there's a big difference in the focus in that in the years I have been on here and it's really nice to see and I'm really encouraged.

This is a great meeting.

And some of the presentations, especially the one from USGS and some of the stuff that's going on, there I'm very encouraged by, and, you know, it just -- I really, really strongly believe that the less we can do -- you know, my horse training, we hear it all the time, less is more.

Less is more.

And I really think that the less a.m. of time we can mess with these horses, but still have been able to effectively control their growth, the rate of their growth, the better off we are.

And the closer we can do that to home for the horses, the better off we are for the horses and then we can start -- the amount of money that's being dumped into warehousing these horses is something that needs to be changed.

You know, we need to find a way around that or through it or -- through it.

You know, we need to find a different way.

And I see a lot of dedicated folks here, and not just at the table but the BLM people that have presented to us and everything else.

So I'm very encouraged and, you know, I'm in it for the long haul and I don't mind being the point man crawling through the jungle.

I have done it before.

I will do it again.

>> FRED WOEHL: Julie?

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: Poor Tim!

(Laughter)

I just want to thank you all for a really powerful experience, if I might say so.

Yeah, there's some real challenges here and I guess it finally occurred to me a few minutes ago as the proposals rolled by that it's actually going to be fun to do some real problem solving, because this is for real problems.

>> TIMOTHY HARVEY: Isn't it cool?

Will you sit next to me next time?

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: Anyway, thank you all.

>> DR. SUE McDONNELL: I guess the one comment I would like to make is I was so pleased to hear from USGS and the more comprehensive and complete view that they are able to take looking at things.

I'm not sure that other sources of research work would ever be able to accomplish that without having some long range funding and to have a better understanding of all of the issues.

I was very pleased in working with academic institutions who are submitting proposals.

As I learn more about the program, one thing that I'm impressed with is how little information individual researchers who are really good researchers but they -- they have -- they are kind of blind to all of the roadblocks and so maybe, you know, putting in good ideas but there's going to be either serious pushback or roadblocks.

So I was happy to see USGS and congratulations for BLM for proposing them.

>> FRED WOEHL: Jen?

>> JENNIFER SALL: Fred?

Well, I think a bunch of things right now, but one is -- and this is the least important, but my lack of vocal contribution in the last two days does not mirror what will be my contribution to this process.

Like, I am very excited to be here, and took in a lot in the last two days is an understatement.

And as I sit here and listen and learn and have a different insight into how things work for both the advisory board and the BLM, I'm definitely challenging myself to think about the 10, 20, 30-year plan and not the tiny feelers that move us a little bit in the immediate.

And while they are worthy, it's just my own internal dialogue here is we have a real challenge.

We are in a real challenging situation with real challenges ahead and to me, the question is: What is that long-term view and problems.

So that's a lot of what I have been thinking about sitting here.

Thanks.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: We are in Ohio, but this still is a western issue overall.

I think it's important that we think from the western viewpoint when we come up with some of our solutions and some of our problems that we address.

We went through the Taylor Grazing Act proposal and I was struck that part of the reason the public lands grazing was brought up was there was so little private land in these western states and I think Nevada is 90% federally owned, Utah 70, and Idaho 67% and made the comment that gee, the homestead act doesn't work out there because you couldn't make a living on that 640 acres.

So you had to make the living off the public land.

As they said, they grazed that in the summer and they grazed the private land in the winter.

They put up their summer hay on the winter pastures.

We buy out the grazing permits which sounds like such a great idea, we put a ranch and family out of business.

Agriculture is really the last bastion of production economy that this country has.

They are the producers and the service people serve them.

So when that family folds up and quits and moves somewhere, the local grocery store, the oil company, the parts house, the drugstore, all of these people take a hit and that's absolutely killing our rural towns, particularly the public lands communities and the forest communities of the west, because production is gone.

As far as the logging is concerned, the mining is basically not doing anything.

Right now they are hanging in pretty well, because beef prices are good.

But if we remove enough of the grazers from the public lands, those whole communities move and lifestyles will move.

Bear that in mind.

Out in Idaho, water is for fighting over and whiskey is for drinking.

Those are fighting words and it's a whole different attitude from Arkansas or Ohio or Pennsylvania or Maryland.

So I think we kind of need to put our hats on a little bit and think from the western view point because this issue is unique to the west and the west has some unique slants to it that we really need to address and think about when we make the recommendations.

Other than that, I'm plum happy with everything that's here and I think we didn't do too badly.

>> FRED WOEHL: Thank you, Cope.

Mary, do you have any final words for the board?

(Laughter)

>> MARY D'AVERSA: Beyond for my first board meeting in this capacity, it's been really insightful and inspiring to listen to the range of ideas, as well as the compassion and the care that folks have for not just horses but rangelands that they exist on.

And I will defer my comments to Mike.

>> MIKE TUPPER: Well, I was going to let Mike speak anyway.

>> FRED WOEHLE: I was going to ask him to.

He does whatever he wants.

>> MIKE TUPPER: Thank you.

Thanks to the board, the crew who put this all together, the folks who make us look like we know what we are doing, which I clearly don't.

I depend on the folks that I work with every day.

Thanks for the advocates for showing up and showing us how passionate and intellectually curious and, like -- as smart as we are, we may not have all the answers but together we certainly do.

And so I'm just really, really happy to be here.

I'm proud to be here and part of this organization and what we are doing.

I'm really, really excited about and I will be back here next meeting and next year and we'll get to know each other even more.

>> FRED WOEHLE: Thank you, Mike.

This is my first board meeting as board chair and I appreciate the support of everybody.

I failed to point out earlier that Dr. Sue McDonnell is the vice chair of the board, and she's carried the heavy load because she takes up a lot of slack where I don't have it and she steps up and does it and she's an asset to me and the board and I appreciate you a lot.

I really do.

The first board meeting I was at, I walked in the room and didn't know anything and I sat down and before I knew it, there was a whole bunch of people coming up and telling me how sorry I was sitting up there and doing all of this.

Over the past two board meetings that has moderated.

I am real impressed with the willingness of some of the advocacy groups to talk to us and try to work with us.

And I assure you that we listen to y'all and we try to do what we can, but we're not going to always agree.

There's a compromise that has to be reached and the people on this board have the horses' best interest at heart, regardless of what you hear, regardless of what other people point out to you, I can vouch for every person on this board that they have the horses at heart.

Now, I don't always agree with every one of them, and none of us agree with each other all the time, but we are willing to sit down and talk and compromise and that's the good attribute of this board is they are really willing to get down and work and try to get things done.

I'm really thankful that we got Julie and Jen aboard.

I think they are going to be a tremendous asset to the board.

I have got to separate Julie and Tim at the next board meeting, however.

And that's something that we are going to have to work at.

Since Jen don't talk very much, I will probably put her in between them.

(Laughter)

But anyway, I appreciate greatly -- I can't say enough the folks that put this meeting on, like Mike said.

We think we come in here and this is already set up.

They work extra, extra hard to get this stuff going and it's -- I'm very pleased.

Kathy Libby, I owe you a lot because you kept me on track and you have done really well and you are a great facilitator and I appreciate you a lot.

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: For the record and for the minutes we didn't vote on the items -- or on the recommendations but the bylaws say we can either vote on them or accept them by consensus.

We did reach consensus on the recommendations that were read?

>> FRED WOEHL: We did them individually.

>> KATHY LIBBY: They did it.

Then went through it.

>> FRED WOEHL: I didn't take a motion.

I asked everybody if they are okay with it.

To me, that's consensus.

That's how we do it in Arkansas.

It may not be the way you do in Idaho.

Told me something, do you take a bath in water or whiskey?

>> DR. ROBERT COPE: Depends how thirsty I am.

>> FRED WOEHLE: Let me encourage everyone to come to the adoption at Springfield.

It will be a hoot.

You will see some awfully pretty horses.

>> DR. JULIE WEIKEL: Can you tell us about the details of doing that.

>> FRED WOEHLE: Details of doing it.

Yes, I am and her name is Ms. Sarah Bohl.

>> KATHY LIBBY: Why don't we do that after we close the deal.

>> FRED WOEHLE: I declare this meeting adjourned.

We are five minutes past time.

Now Sarah, you can come up and talk to us.

>> MIKE TUPPER: Thank you, man.

>> FRED WOEHLE: Thank you, brother.

(End of session)