



2022  
FREES

# Summit Summary Report

Prepared for:

Utah State University

Prepared by:

The Langdon Group  
466 North 900 West  
Kaysville, Utah 84037



**THE  
LANGDON  
GROUP**  
*a J-U-B Company*



# Table of Contents

Executive Summary .....	1
Pre-Summit .....	3
Day One Presentations.....	4
Breakout Groups Facilitation.....	5
Nevada: .....	5
Utah: .....	5
Wyoming:.....	5
USFS: .....	5
PopEquus Coordinators: .....	5
Breakout Group Outcomes .....	5
Colorado.....	6
WORKING GROUP .....	7
Utah.....	8
Nevada.....	9
ISSUES/OBJECTIVES .....	10
Wyoming .....	11
USFS.....	13
Appendix 1: Summit Program and Sponsors .....	19
Summit Rules for all Participants .....	20
Appendix 2: Daily Evaluation Reports .....	28
Day One results.....	29
Day Two results.....	35
Day Three results.....	40
outreach and communication plan for follow up and future conferences? .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Other topics needing further review? .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>



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# Executive Summary

The contemporary management of free-roaming equids in the United States is at a nexus and is dependent on the sustainable management of all rangelands and associated ecosystems. The 2022 Free-roaming Equid Summit was organized by the Free-roaming Equid and Ecosystem Sustainability network. (FREES; <https://extension.usu.edu/freesnetwork/>). The Summit was about the sustainable management of free-roaming equids and all the lands where they occur. Free-roaming equids include wild horses and burros (WHBs) as defined by the 1971 Wild and Free-roaming Horse and Burro Act as well as free-roaming horses and burros not covered by the Act. The purpose of the was to develop connections within the WHB community, foster collaborative conversations, and identify potential demonstration projects for immediate consideration in on-the-ground management.

At this year's Summit, the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) presented a new management modeling tool called PopEquus. On the second day of the Summit breakout groups convened to model the management of selected areas using specific and varied strategies that included removal, fertility control, no management, and various combinations of the same.

A primary goal of the Summit was to create an atmosphere of collaboration. Following presentations on several related topics by leading researchers on Day 1, Summit participants divided into 5 breakout groups to consider potential demonstration projects based on the information provided in Day 1, the outputs of PopEquus modeling, and certain criteria for interest-based communication.

The demonstration projects provided by the breakouts were developed as hypotheticals and as an opportunity to be creative and explore the possibilities. They were an opportunity to ask questions and learn and share information that perhaps hasn't been shared before.

Summit participants were assigned to one of the following breakout groups to develop the concepts for demonstration projects:

- 1) Colorado
- 2) Utah
- 3) Nevada
- 4) Wyoming
- 5) USFS

Each breakout group worked with two facilitators and an expert in the PopEquus. Each group was given general guidelines and went through their own process of seeking to understand the other interests represented in the group and then moving towards discussion of herd management areas (HMA's) and wild horse and burro territories (WHBT's) and potential projects that could be developed and implemented in partnership with the U.S Forest Service (USFS), Bureau of Land Management (BLM), or other agencies. Groups then used the PopEquus tool to have an objective discussion about the area and incorporate diverse public values in discussing demonstration projects that achieve sustainable management objectives.

Each breakout group documented their experience and ideas for demonstration projects and on Day 3, shared that information with the full Summit. These reports demonstrated several broad areas of agreement and shared values, including, but not limited to, the need for change to the status quo and an acknowledged need for management, broad agreement (but not consensus) on the utility of horse gathers and contraception, the overall urgency of the situation, the potential utility of evaluating the appropriate management level (AML) calculations for sustainability, and above all, the desire for healthy herds on healthy ranges.

The demonstration projects developed at the Summit are not intended to create a mandate for managing agencies, but rather, a blueprint of processes for developing implementable solutions with diverse stakeholders and interests in partnership with agencies in the sustainable management of free-roaming equids.





## Pre-Summit

To ensure the broadest possible participation and the best opportunities for meaningful work and collaboration, the Langdon Group worked closely with Terry Messmer, Utah State University, and the FREES staff for six months prior to the Summit to contact, interview, and personally invite individuals and representatives from over one hundred organizations with interests in the management of WHB and other free roaming equids.

This pre-summit engagement included dozens of meetings and conversations with state and federal land management agencies, governmental offices, and even some congressional staff. This process took considerable time and effort over many months, and it was often a challenge to determine who were the right people to talk with. In conversations with line staff and administrators at the USFS, BLM, USGS, there was some ambiguity on where the appropriate decision-making authority rested and who might be best to engage and invite to the summit. Some were concerned that the federal agencies remain explicitly neutral in the conversations among activists and NGOs on both sides of the issue. Similarly, representatives from state wildlife and land management agencies, including state WHB leads were consulted on summit structure and agenda and were invited to attend and participate. Ultimately, all agency staff who participated were helpful and enthusiastic about the summit and its goals.

In addition to engaging all relevant governmental staff and interested NGOs, the Langdon Group also invited representatives from the Navajo Nation to participate and present at the summit. Some of the same challenges as with the federal agencies maintained in this instance as it proved challenging at first to determine the best people within the NN to invite. Several virtual meetings were held and ultimately the tribe decided to send five representatives to the summit. Terry Messmer arranged for their registration and accommodations, but ultimately the tribal representatives had conflicts and did not make it to the summit.



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## Day One Presentations

The first day of the Summit provided attendees an opportunity to hear from a broad range of researchers and experts on free-roaming equids. Participants were instructed to take the information presented on Day 1 and incorporate it into their deliberations and decision-making in the breakout groups on Day 2.

- Stakeholder Knowledge and Perceptions of Free-Roaming Equids and Their Management-Nicki Frey, Utah State University Extension
- Enhancing stakeholder engagement to achieve the sustainable management of free-roaming equids-Celeste Carlisle, Return to Freedom
- Wyoming's Wild Horse Ranch: A Social-Ecological Experiment-Alex Sas-Jaworsky II, Wyoming Wild Horse Preservation Society and Derek Scasta, University of Wyoming Extension
- Partnerships Create Success on the Devil's Garden Plateau-Laura Snell, University of California Cooperative Extension-Modoc County
- Healthy Lands and Healthy Horses-Community Outreach Events that Promote Lasting Change-Jessie Hadfield, Utah State University Extension
- Dehydration and mortality of feral horses and burros: a systematic review of reported deaths-Derek Scasta, University of Wyoming Extension and Eric Thacker, Utah State University (Virtual)
- Non-native Ungulate Impacts on Greater Sage-grouse Late Brood Rearing Habitat in the Great Basin, USA. Melissa Chelak, Utah State University; Steve Peterson, Brigham Young University, and Mikiah Carver McGinn, North Carolina State University
- Cattle and Horses: Wet Meadows and Riparian Functions-Sherm Swanson, University of Nevada-Reno
- Can cougars eat their way to AML?-Dave Stoner and Peter Iacono, Utah State University
- Free-roaming Equids-Fertility Management, Human Perception, and Decision Tools (Panel) – Mojave Ballroom
- Fertility Control and the Management of Free-roaming Equid Populations- Ursula Bechert, DVM, PhD, SpayVac-for-Wildlife, Inc. and University of Pennsylvania. (Virtual)
- Public perceptions of fertility control to manage free-roaming equid populations-Nicki Frey, Utah State University Extension
- Why the BLM supported development of the PopEquus model? -Paul Griffin, Wild Horse and Burro Research Coordinator at Bureau of Land Management
- Equid Ecology and the PopEquus model: supporting decision makers and the management of free-roaming horses- Kate Schoenecker and Brian Folt -- U.S. Geological Survey, Fort Collins Science Center.



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## Breakout Groups Facilitation

At the Summit, on Day 2 each delegate participated in facilitated small group discussions to collaborate on different management strategies for wild horses and identify possible demonstration projects on existing HMAs. Groups were instructed to follow a simple model of interest-based negotiation, focusing on three things:

1. Process questions, such as appropriate introductions and interest identifiers,
2. Substantive issues and objectives, such as developing a problem statement, and
3. Potential barriers to implementation of proposed solutions and demonstration projects

Facilitation for these groups was provided by:

Nevada:

- Dan Adams, The Langdon Group
- Mark Boshell, Utah Public Lands Policy Coordinating Office

Utah:

- Andy Rasmussen, The Langdon Group
- Katie Kraska, ASPCA

Wyoming:

- Celeste Carlisle, Return to Freedom
- Trevon Strange, Berryman Institute, Utah State University

Colorado:

- Keith Carlisle, USDA – Wildlife Services
- Stephanie Boyles-Griffin, The Humane Society of the United States

USFS:

- Amanda Gearhart, University of Nevada-Reno
- Nicki Frey, Berryman Institute, Utah State University

PopEquus Coordinators:

- Brian Folt, U.S. Geological Survey
- Michelle Crabb, BLM
- Jacob Henning, Oklahoma State University
- Paul Griffin, BLM
- Kate Schoenecker, U.S. Geological Survey

## Breakout Group Outcomes

On Day 3 each breakout group reported back to the full Summit on their process and findings the previous day. Each group took about thirty minutes and addressed, to varying degrees, their experiences



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with the three aspects interest-based deliberations. This report organizes the groups self-reported findings under those three headings:

- 1) Process
- 2) Issues/Objectives
- 3) Barriers to Implementation

## COLORADO

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### PROCESS

On Day 3 the Colorado breakout group reported that their process had been focused on the best possible outcomes for the wild horses. They found all in the group shared a compassion for the horses and considered themselves advocates in some way, Fundamentally, they agreed to dedicate their deliberations to improve animal welfare. Before they moved to group objectives, participants identified several principles to guide their discussions and efforts:

- Be informed and guided by best science
  - What is the best available science?
- Adaptive management. Be nimble enough to quickly update science and practice.
- Commit to learning from each other and different perspectives
- Consider also: impacts to human and health safety, such as animal vehicle collisions and damage to property, when animals leave HMA's
- Off range animal health and quality of life for those horses in long-term care
- Value balancing domestic livestock with WHB populations
- Preservation of WHB to be a priority.
- Acknowledgment that conservation and preservation mean different things to different people in the group, based on their background.

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### ISSUES/OBJECTIVES

The group chose the Sandwash HMA (<https://www.blm.gov/programs/wild-horse-and-burro/herd-management/herd-management-areas/colorado/sand-wash>) for their demonstration project. Sandwash recently achieved AML and the group asked what is next? Sandwash is a multiuse area, with livestock grazing, WHB, and other considerations.

Objectives for the group reflected the values of each participant and included:

- Prioritizing alternative gathering techniques to helicopters
- Build capacity to maintain AML. 100 horses were darted last year. Their modeling found contraception through darting was an effective methods to manage to near AML.
- Staying within budget was a priority
- Monitoring sage grouse population as an indicator of rangeland health.
- Genetic diversity
- Reassessing and reevaluating AML. The group acknowledged AML is not static.



- Maintaining current water supply and adding new water sources.
- Helping to minimize impacts to water sources.

The group then proceeded to model various proposed management strategies using the Pop Equus tool and their identified principles and objectives to guide the modeling. They used a variety of the tools found in Pop Equus and were pleased with its functionality. They discovered twelve possibilities to achieve AML, but discovered they could not achieve AML, or their other objectives, without horse removal. The group did acknowledge that not all participants were comfortable with the model, and they asked everyone to email their Pop Equus facilitator the information they learned from using it. Additional observations and questions from the group included:

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#### BARRIERS/SOLUTIONS

- Animal Unit Months maybe don't mean what they used to.
- There is, perhaps, some ambiguity for the definition of chemical sterilization
- National Academy of Science Report is now 10 years old. Can it be revisited?
- Is fertility control changing herd dynamics? Other factors impacting horse behavior?
- Surgical sterilization, for both male and female horses was non-negotiable for some. But by the end of the day they were willing to consider isolated use of surgical sterilization for older horses who had already contributed their genetics to the herd.
- Fertility control is not necessary for herds that have achieved AML
- Horse welfare is preeminent
  - No sale of horses without limitation. No euthanasia.
- Rangeland health is critical
  - Complete removal of livestock was not negotiable. No resource degradation. No extinction of species.

Overall, the Colorado group exhibited a willingness to work together, even with disparate perspectives and values. They found common ground on a number of principles and even management alternatives. They all found this to be a useful exercise in modeling and relationship building.

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#### WORKING GROUP

Brittany Hill .....	BLM
Ginger Fedak .....	In Defense of Animals
Holle Waddell .....	BLM
Jason Bruemmer .....	USDA
Elke Tukker .....	CSU
Brad Banulis .....	CO Parks and Wildlife
Kelly Taylor .....	Mule Deer Foundation
Sierra Campbell .....	Berryman Institute
Kalon Throop .....	CEMML - Colorado State military lands
Shelby Hagenauer .....	American Farm Bureau Federation
Holly Gann .....	American Wild Horse Campaign
Lynae Rodgers .....	BLM
Scott Wilson .....	American Wild Horse Campaign



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Martin Lowney..... USDA Wildlife Services  
Steve Nurney ..... Salt River Wild Horse Management Group  
Peggy Coleman Taylor..... American people  
Robin Watson..... BLM  
Rose Lombardo..... The Botstiber Institute for Wildlife Fertility Control  
Sarah King..... Colorado State University  
Stephen Leonard..... BLM

## UTAH

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### PROCESS

The Utah group reported a cordial discussion, but with some concerns that certain activist voices were dominant at times during the day. They also noted that a significant number of scientists added a distinct quantitative quality to the discussion. They also found several unanticipated shared values and perspectives among all participants, primary among them was an acknowledged need for active management of wild horse and burro populations – though there was no consensus on methods of management. Other commonalities included a focus on healthy horses on healthy rangelands, an acknowledged need for contraception and additional funding resources. The group agreed that the status quo of wild horse management is unsustainable and significant efforts and resources should be dedicated improving education of the public and including public volunteers in management efforts.

The group noted the difference between this and past Summits. The precision of the modeling done in this meeting was superior to the hypothetical discussions of the past.

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### ISSUES/OBJECTIVES

Participants also noted the utility of the Pop Equus model and after running initial models in three different HMAs, chose the Cedar Mountain HMA. The group used multiple computers to simultaneously model many scenarios. They discovered there were no modeled scenarios that achieved HMA without gathering horses. However, gathering alone as a strategy was prohibitively expensive. Additional methods and findings included:

- Contraception with Gonecon, combined with IUD's and Removal had the highest efficacy for achieving AML. The group ran models with twenty year parameters to understand long-term trends.
- More familiarity with the Pop Equus model and its entire range of functionality is necessary before running with any scenarios or conclusions it produces

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### BARRIERS/SOLUTIONS

The group identified a number of barriers to implementation of their demonstrated managements strategies:



- Lack of resources, primarily funding. Participants acknowledged the recent increase in funding for BLM horse management has helped, but more is needed, particularly for off range holding.
- Capacity:
  - Agencies are limited in vehicles and infrastructure to manage horses gathered
- NEPA process is often a barrier and constrains the time of agency staff. NEPA reform could be useful in more effective and expedited management.

The group concluded their Day Three presentation with recommendations to work with local agency offices and prioritize robust engagement with Congressional offices.

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#### WORKING GROUP

Chris Davies .....	Utah State University
Daniel Crozier .....	Utah Cattlemen's Association
Greg Sheehan .....	BLM
Gus Warr .....	BLM
Suzanne Roy.....	American Wild Horse Campaign
Gloria Tibbetts .....	BLM
Paul Briggs.....	BLM
Tammy Pearson .....	Beaver County Utah
Jessie Hadfield .....	Utah State University
Miles Moretti .....	Mule Deer Foundation
Klint Eastman .....	Preston Nutter Ranch - Carbon County Utah
Kaylon Sencio .....	BLM
Meredith Hou.....	American Wild Horse Campaign
Kendall Laws .....	Public Lands Coordinating Office
Kevin Bunnell .....	Division of Wildlife Resources
Marilyn Wood .....	Iron County
Mark Nelson .....	Utah State University Extension
Mike Worthen .....	Iron County
Randall Violett .....	Utah State University
Redge Johnson .....	Public Lands Coordinating Office
Heath Hansen .....	Senator Mike Lee, Utah
Riley Peck .....	Utah Division of Wildlife Resources
Scott Chamberlain.....	Trust Lands Administration - State of Utah
Simona Picardi .....	Berryman Institute
Gary Webster .....	Rep. Chris Stewart's Office
Troy Forrest.....	Grazing Improvement Program
Slate Stewart.....	State of Utah School & Institutional Trust Lands Administration (SITLA)

## NEVADA

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#### PROCESS

The Nevada breakout group reported a very positive experience and functional discussion dynamics. They were able to find consensus on some major concepts and found they shared an urgency to address the wild horse and burro issue. They noted Nevada is the driest state and has the largest



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challenges with WHB. Despite taking nearly four hours to really discover the perspectives of all participants, they were able to focus on potential solutions more than differences and difficulties.

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#### ISSUES/OBJECTIVES

They spent a lot of time learning the inputs and functions of the Pop Equus program and were unable to get into detail or complex modeling on their proposed demonstration project. They found that the scale of an HMA was the primary factor in achieving AML. They could model scenarios that achieved AML on a small HMA but found it challenging to maintain those gains when they modeled nearby, larger HMAs. They suggested this as an opportunity for volunteers to help maintain the HMAs that achieve AML goals.

Additional findings and objectives included:

- Need to get all the neighboring states to AML first before Nevada can achieve its management goals. Nevada, with the as many horses as other western states combined, needs existing infrastructure and resources from those other states
- What is the purpose of the model?
  - Is AML appropriate? The model does not inform that determination.

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#### BARRIERS/SOLUTIONS

Group participants identified several barriers to implementation of their objectives:

- Agreement on the concept of AML is a major challenge. They group achieved general agreement that AML needs to be sustainable for a particular HMA.
- Different focuses and priorities of the 6 district managers. Different issues that come up such as fire, weeds, and other resource management issues that compete with WHB among managers' priorities
- Coordinated Resource Management Plans & Adaptive Management
- Distrust, long-term funding, and capacity: money, staff, facilities, etc to implement realistic solutions
- The process of removal and care for the horses takes considerable time. This is complicated by the urgency of the issue.
- There are places that are in desperate need of help NOW.
- Large scale HMAs and rangelands in Nevada preclude darting as a viable form of contraception
- Complications arise also when horses learn over time and become more difficult to gather
- It is a challenge to find volunteers for management at remote locations. One idea is to look at compensating people that help maintain AML.

Overall, the Nevada group identified more barriers than proposed solutions. Nevada has, by far, the largest wild horse hers and the largest rangeland available to the horses. Their problems are compounded by a lack of available resources. The primary barrier they identified was the sheer scale of the land and horse numbers in the state. Nonetheless, the group was positive and encouraged by the relationships they formed and the common ground they identified.



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## WORKING GROUP

Alan Jenne .....	Nevada Department of Wildlife
Alan Shepherd .....	Bureau of Land Management
Barry Perryman .....	University of Nevada-Reno
Dawn Sherwood .....	Oregon State University
Doug Busselman .....	Nevada Farm Bureau Federation
Emily Lent.....	BLM
Greg Hendricks .....	American Wild Horse Campaign
Jason Lutterman .....	BLM
John Hall .....	BLM
Samantha McConkie.....	Berryman Institute
Paul Meiman .....	University of Nevada
Peter Iacono.....	Utah State University QCNR
Barbara Hansen .....	Public Lands Council
Ruth Thompson.....	Bureau of Land Management
Sandee Force.....	USWHBA
Sherm Swanson .....	Nevada Chapter of the Society for Range Management
Tracy Wilson .....	American Wild Horse Campaign
Varlin Higbee.....	Lincoln County Commission
Wade Lieurance .....	University of Nevada, Reno
Whitney Whitacre .....	Oregon State University

## WYOMING

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### PROCESS

The Wyoming breakout group found that their initial introductions at the beginning of Day 2 set a tone of collaboration for the day. They noted that, although there were very different, even opposing, perspectives in the room, by the end of the day there was a noticeable “softening on both sides”. Advocates expressed an overriding accountability to horse health, and all participants agreed that a healthy range was paramount. The group quickly found two non-negotiable items that set the parameters of the discussion: Lethal management and loss of the livestock industry.

There was some disagreement on terminology and the use of words like “feral”. However, they found movement toward agreement on sterilization. There was considerable disagreement there early on but advocates found they could possibly support sterilization for older mares, if it allowed them to stay on the range.

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### ISSUES/OBJECTIVES

The group identified their primary objective as reducing the frequency of gathers while maintaining AML, or close to it, and reducing the need for gathers. Their modeling projected ten years. They chose what they considered the most challenging HMA in Wyoming, the Adobe Town HMA, (<https://www.blm.gov/programs/wild-horse-and-burro/herd-management/herd-management-areas/wyoming/adobe-town>), to model and discuss. In 2021 the BLM achieved low AML and the group used that in their modeling with PopEquus. Their issues and findings included:



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- Adobe Town HMA. When you incorporate in all the private land, the HMA is then massive.
  - Consent decree to manage several HMA's to AML. When gathers fall behind, the horse numbers explode
  - It is critical to work with grazing associations
  - They worked with an idea of eliminating private and state lands from the HMA's
  - Modeled using treatment with PZP and IUD's.
  - If you can't gather 100% of the horses, you will have some sort level of population increase
  - They did not allow AML to go unchecked. The ability to adjust management plans is crucial
  - They did consider sterilization or other things that could help maintain AML longer
  - They did not consider costs in their modeling
  - The group recommended more conversation about manipulation of AUM's
  - One advocate expressed his preference that horses should be given primacy over livestock in ecosystem management decisions

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#### BARRIERS/SOLUTIONS

Participants identified several barriers to successful implementation and unanswered questions:

- Many Wyoming HMA's are checker boards, with a blend of private, state, and BLM land
- Litigation from livestock or advocate groups. There is concern litigation is inevitable, regardless of action taken.
- There is a subset of advocates who oppose fertility control
- Public perception of fertility control requires education
- Need for additional resources for both holding space and holding capacity. This also helps to keep horses healthy and avoid disease outbreaks.
- Holding costs are only going to increase.
- AML concerns. Why are we not talking about adjusting AUM's to make AML more suitable for horses primacy?
- There are significant issues with trust among all organizations on both sides of this issue
- As with many western natural resource issues, the divide between local vs. nonlocal perceptions about horses is wide.
- Scientist language barriers. Lots of data, terminology, messaging, etc. needs to be consumable by the public

The Wyoming Group also identified additional contentious issues and questions but did not discuss them in any detail:

- Role of native carnivores
- What constitutes management? Specifically?
- Can captured horses be reintroduced to the wild? If they are non-reproducing?



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## WORKING GROUP

Alexander Sas-Jaworsky.....	Wild Horse Preservation Society
Dominique Wood.....	Bureau of Land Management
Hayden Ballard.....	Public Lands Coordinating Office
David Stoner .....	Utah State University
Mark Boshell .....	Public Lands Coordinating Office
Bob Lanka .....	Wildlife Society
Dawn Johnson .....	A*W*E: Advocates for Wild Equines
Erik Molvar .....	Western Watersheds Project
Kayla Grams .....	The Science and Conservation Center
Laura Snell .....	UCCE Modoc-Extension
Jacob Benson .....	BLM
Jeff Beck.....	University of Wyoming
Jacob Martin.....	Preston Nutter Ranch
June Wendlandt .....	BLM
Justin Williams .....	Wyoming Department of Agriculture
Linda Cope.....	Wyoming Department of Agriculture
Natalie Lirette .....	BLM
Niels Hansen.....	Public Lands Council
Ryan Bradshaw.....	BLM
Scott Fluer.....	BLM
Todd Graham .....	Wyoming Game and Fish Department
Kyle Wilson.....	Senator Romneys office

## USFS

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### PROCESS

The USFS working group focused initial efforts on defining and building trust among competing interests. They discussed how challenging it is to demonstrate trust outside of transparency and specific actions. They discussed the importance of getting stakeholders on the ground to work together and validate the facts and management actions.

Brainstorming on how to engage more partners produced ideas such as taking partners on flyovers to conduct surveys, engaging high school students for data collection, cordoning a portion of an HMA to open it for public viewing, tours of short-term holding facilities, and utilizing public volunteers to catalogue animals or to do fence repair and cleanup.

The guiding principle the group discussed was how critical it is to show people how a decision is made, especially with contentious issues. Public transparency is essential. In the spirit of that transparency this group talked openly about their own disagreements on difficult issues and found they did not have any “non-negotiable” items. Some advocates came to the summit thinking this was a national problem requiring national solutions but adapted to a preference for locally designed approaches and strategy. All participants tried to keep an open mind, be willing to test hypotheses,



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and work within a realistic framework. The process goal was to keep an open space where members could be creative. They broke into subgroups to formulate their problem statements and didn't settle on an AML for modeling until after the problem statements were formulated.

Participants were positive about the opportunity to learn from different perspectives and required a solution be proposed for each barrier identified.

The four subgroups worked to formulate a problem statement and identified key elements as noted below:

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#### RED GROUP:

- Lack of public understanding
- Starving horses/ animals
- Negative human interactions / nuisance
- Degraded ecosystem
  - Wildlife / veg/ H2O quality to quantity / soils
- Forage and resource competition
- Difficulty visualizing large #s (populations / acreages)

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#### BLACK GROUP:

- \*Funding\* /\*NEPA\*
- Manpower / staffing
- Human perception vs reality
- Ecological unstable (ecosystem)
- Lack of scientific monitoring / studies, traceability
- Decrease adoption #s
- Volunteer coordination
- Administration
- Litigation
- Communication / collaboration
- Technology

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#### GREEN GROUP:

- Overpopulation/ecosystem balance
- Stakeholder
- Holistic approach
- Social cultural genetics
- Humane component



- Truth
- Knowledge of bureaucracy
- Compassion
- Cooperation
- Transport

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BLUE GROUP:

- Fencing (exclusion and inclusion)
- Law restrictions
- Wildlife population impacts
- Livestock population impacts
- What is appropriate AML?
- Ecosystem conversion
- Timber and other vegetative coverage
- Current effectiveness and availability of contraception
- Evolving climate change

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ISSUES/OBJECTIVES

The group reconvened and selected Modoc National Forest in NE California for consideration as a demonstration project for modeling (<https://www.fs.usda.gov/wild-horse-burro/territories/DevilsGardenPlateau.shtml>). This area is currently in litigation. Wild horse territory only. Management requires gathering 500 horses per year until AML is achieved. It is the horse largest territory under the jurisdiction of the United States Forest Service.

The group determined their problem statements pointed to specific objectives:

- Achieve AML in 2 years
- Maintain AML for 5 years
- Develop a reporting system for documenting humane treatment improvements
- Remove \$1 sale option
- Improve 150 ac / yr habitat
  - Reduce ventenata cover
- Treat 150 mares with fertility control and monitor via volunteers

Additional objectives for demonstration projects included:

NAME	OBJECTIVE
<b>Management of public perception</b>	▸ Development of collaboration / compromise



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	› Stakeholder engagement
<b>Holistic management</b>	› Prioritize holistic philosophy › Multi-use objectives › Wildlife health, long-term impacts
<b>Climate change impacts &amp; response</b>	› Promote ecosystem resilience
<b>Sustained yield of the land</b>	› Multi-use of the entire US to include human, non-human and ecological health

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The group was creative in deciding upon several possible demonstration project ideas for agency consideration:

- Separate volunteer teams for separate projects (e.g., field monitoring, water development, darting, etc.)
- Revenue-generated volunteer experiences
- Saturation census (done all in one day by both on-the-ground and aerial observers)
- Auto darting mechanism
- At-risk youth work projects (or incarcerated populations)
- Demonstration of RAP (Rangeland Analysis Platform) (kiosk)
- Water improvements
- On-going census (via volunteers)
- Interconnected briefing where participants brief on non-traditional issues (e.g., FREES participants) (walk in each other's shoes)
- Boots on the ground for animal and ecosystem health tour
- Tik Tok challenge
- Roving educational tours
- Round table with youth
- Facebook live tour and tied in with the boots on the ground
- Tie into existing school curriculum
- Demonstration of citizen science
  - › Addresses:
    - Public perception
    - Increasing on-the-ground knowledge
    - Increase collaboration
    - Standardize data collection with cooperative monitoring agreement
- Recruit groups for easy-to-implement projects
  - › Fence cleanup
  - › Vegetation monitoring



- Water source development
- Cataloging animals
- Population management
  - Work within current litigation constraints
  - Removals and Gonecon (but could not accurately model remote darting scenario)

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## BARRIERS/SOLUTIONS

The working group also identified several barriers to implementation of their several project ideas. Additionally, they identified at least one potential solution for each barrier:

BARRIERS	SOLUTIONS
<b>Congress</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▸ Education</li><li>▸ Vote</li></ul>
<b>Feds can't lobby</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▸ Partners</li></ul>
<b>[In]Sufficient personnel</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▸ Volunteers/NGO IGAs</li></ul>
<b>Inaccessible herds</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▸ Range riders w/helicopters on call</li><li>▸ Drones</li><li>▸ Predators</li><li>▸ Let them be</li><li>▸ Break into smaller chunks</li><li>▸ Accepting range of methods</li></ul>
<b>Policy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▸ Leadership partnerships</li><li>▸ Amendments</li><li>▸ Partners</li><li>▸ Public engagement</li></ul>
<b>Annual appropriation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▸ Multiyear funding for agencies</li></ul>
<b>Public perception</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▸ Two-way goodwill</li><li>▸ Public employee accessibility</li><li>▸ Work actively together</li><li>▸ Build each other up</li><li>▸ Reciprocate</li></ul>
<b>Litigation/FOIA</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▸ Direct communication with agencies</li><li>▸ Pursue relationships</li></ul>



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- Documentation accessibility (cliff notes)
  - Translation from gov to b
- 

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#### WORKING GROUP

Shannon Neibergs .....	Washington State University
Britta Starke .....	Advocates for Wild Equine
Hildy Angius .....	Mohave County
Eric Davis .....	USFS Program Lead
Codi Backen.....	Utah State University
Demetris Sanders .....	BLM
Jonathan Anderson.....	BLM
Kathryn Neess.....	Oregon State University
Brennan Bone .....	Berryman Institute
Kylie Caraher .....	USDA Forest Service
Chris Becker.....	Salt River Wild Horse Management Group
Cindy Bullock .....	Chris Stewart's office
Theresa Drotar .....	USFS
Aimée Henderson .....	Miami University/ American Conservation Experience: EPIC-USFS
Simone Netherlands.....	Salt River Wild Horse Management Group
Megan Print.....	USDA Forest Service
Scott Beckstead .....	Center for a Humane Economy
Terry A Messmer.....	Berryman Institute/Utah State University
Sigrid Johannes .....	Public Lands Council-National Cattle Beef Association
Tolani Francisco.....	Forest Service



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# Appendix 1: Summit Program and Sponsors





# FREES SUMMIT 2022

## *Community Connections*

October 12-14, 2022

St. George, Utah

The 2022 Summit has been organized by the Free-roaming Equid and Ecosystem Sustainability network. (FREES; <https://extension.usu.edu/freesnetwork/>) The Summit is about the sustainable management of free-roaming equids and all the lands where they occur. Free-roaming equids include wild horses and burros (WHBs) as defined by the 1971 Act as well as free-roaming horses and burros not covered by the Act.

At this year's Summit, US Geological Survey (USGS) will present a new management tool called *PopEquus*. This is a tool that can be used to model population trends in specific areas and various management strategies that include removal, fertility control, and no management. At the Summit, breakout groups will convene to collaboratively develop ideas for the management of selected areas using the tool. The tool is not designed to mandate a preferred management strategy but more so to inform participants of the management realities including the costs and consequences of selected strategies.

## SUMMIT RULES FOR ALL PARTICIPANTS

- 1) Comments and discussions will be facilitated to help ensure that everyone has an opportunity to speak and be heard. Please take this opportunity and be engaged! The more we collaborate and build relationships, the better the Summit and future of working together will be. Get outside of your comfort zone and meet others with different ideas!
- 2) All attendees show mutual respect. Grandstanding, yelling, or other disrespectful behavior is not allowed.
- 3) Please always wear your name tags while participating in the Summit. Summit security will verify participants.
- 4) Refrain from using cell phones. Please step outside for calls.
- 5) Within the meeting room, attendees may not display signs, placards, or other items without the consent of Summit planners or the facilitator.
- 6) Social Media Use – Participants may post thoughts and ideas from the Summit and are encouraged to do so. Inflammatory or adversarial posts are strongly discouraged. Please do not post the thoughts or statements made by others – these are usually taken out of context. The theme of this conference is collaboration and effective communication. Attacking presenters or participants via social media damages the collective effort, the animals, and the resources we are all passionately trying to protect.



- 7) This is not a debate and people will have varying opinions. We value all opinions. If there are inaccuracies, we ask that you address them in a constructive and respectful conversation. These conversations may need to take place at different and more appropriate times during the Summit. Work with the facilitator if you have questions about dialogue.
- 8) No attendees will be allowed to record the Summit proceedings.
- 9) Media will check in at the registration table and will be guided to the space designated for cameras or to those Summit conveners designated to help with media.
- 10) The Summit conveners and hosts seek your input about how to make this event successful and in planning future related events. Please provide feedback through meeting Qualtrics evaluations links which will be provided at the registration desk.
- 11) Your safety and welfare are essential. Notify the facilitator or Summit conveners immediately if you have any concerns.
- 12) Meeting disruption or poor behavior may result in being asked to leave by the facilitator and escorted off the premise by security. If asked to leave, disruptive persons will not be allowed to return to the Summit.
- 13) Summit organizers have contracted with the St. George Police Department to provide additional on-site security. If you observe an activity that may warrant security, please contact the registration desk and they will inform security.

If you are feeling sick or have encountered someone who has tested positive for COVID, self-isolate and stay home.



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**Free-roaming Equid Summit – Community Connections – Hilton Garden Inn, St. George, Utah**

**Tuesday, October 11, 2022, Pre-Summit**

**3:00-7:00 PM Summit Registration and Exhibit Set-up - Mojave Ballroom - Pre-Function Area - Utah State University Events Services**

**Day 1 - Wednesday, October 12, 2022 (On-site and live-streaming)**

**7:00 AM-8:00 AM Continental Breakfast – Mojave Ballroom – Pre-function Area**

**7:00 AM – 5:00 PM Registration – Mojave Ballroom – Pre-function Area**

**8:00 Welcome- Utah Governor Spencer Cox – Mojave Ballroom**

Redge Johnson, Executive Director, Utah Public Lands Coordinating Office

David Jenkins, Assistant Director for Resources and Planning, Bureau of Land Management

**8:30 Summit Overview-The Ground Rules-FREES - Langdon Group – Mojave Ballroom**

**8:45 Free-roaming Equid and WHB Program Updates – Mojave Ballroom**

BLM-Scott Fluor, Deputy Division Chief WHB (Acting)

USFS-Teresa Drotar, National Wild Horse, and Burro Program Manager

**9:45 Break– Mojave Ballroom Pre-function Area**

**10:00 Free-roaming Equids and the American Mind (Panel) – Mojave Ballroom**

**10:00 Stakeholder Knowledge and Perceptions of Free-Roaming Equids and Their Management-Nicki Frey, Utah State University Extension**

**10:20 Enhancing stakeholder engagement to achieve the sustainable management of free-roaming equids-Celeste Carlisle, Return to Freedom**

**10:40 Wyoming's Wild Horse Ranch: A Social-Ecological Experiment-Alex Sas-Jaworsky II, Wyoming Wild Horse Preservation Society, and Derek Scasta, University of Wyoming Extension**

**11:00 Partnerships Create Success on the Devil's Garden Plateau-Laura Snell, University of California Cooperative Extension-Modoc County**

**11:20 Healthy Lands and Healthy Horses-Community Outreach Events that Promote Lasting Change-Jessie Hadfield, Utah State University Extension**

**11:40 Questions**

**12:00 Lunch – Mojave Ballroom**

**1:00 Free-roaming Equids and the Ecosystem (Panel) – Mojave Ballroom**

**1:00 Dehydration and mortality of feral horses and burros: a systematic review of reported deaths-Derek Scasta, University of Wyoming Extension and Eric Thacker, Utah State University (Virtual)**

**1:20 Non-native Ungulate Impacts on Greater Sage-grouse Late Brood Rearing Habitat in the Great Basin, USA. Melissa Chelak, Utah State University; Steve Peterson, Brigham Young University, and Mikiah Carver McGinn, North Carolina State University**

**1:40 Cattle and Horses: Wet Meadows and Riparian Functions-Sherm Swanson, University of Nevada-Reno**

**2:00 Can cougars eat their way to AML? -Dave Stoner and Peter Iacono, Utah State University**

**2:20 Questions**

**2:30 Break – Mojave Ballroom Pre-function Area**



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**2:45 Free-roaming Equids-Fertility Management, Human Perception, and Decision Tools (Panel) – Mojave Ballroom**

**2:45** Fertility Control and the Management of Free-roaming Equid Populations- Ursula Bechert, DVM, Ph.D., SpayVac-for-Wildlife, Inc., and the University of Pennsylvania. (Virtual)

**3:15** Public perceptions of fertility control to manage free-roaming equid populations-Nicki Frey, Utah State University Extension

**3:45** Why the BLM supported the development of the *PopEquus* model? -Paul Griffin, Wild Horse, and Burro Research Coordinator at Bureau of Land Management

**3:50** Equid Ecology and the *PopEquus* model: supporting decision makers and the management of free-roaming equids- Kate Schoenecker and Brian Folt -- U.S. Geological Survey, Fort Collins Science Center.

**4:20** Questions

**4:30 Breakout Groups- Overview, Ground Rules, and Expectations - The Langdon Group – Mojave Ballroom**

**5:00** Adjourn

**6:00 Reception and Dinner – Mojave Ballroom**

**Day 2 - Thursday, October 13, 2022 - 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Demonstration Project Development Breakout Sessions (On-site only). – Mojave Ballroom**

For the Summit breakouts sessions, we are defining a demonstration project(s) as – a defined area such as a herd management area or (HMA), horse or burro territory (HT), or another area where current estimates of a free-roaming equid and/or wild horse and burro (WHB) populations are available and there exists some information regarding the desired population state such as an appropriate management level. These demonstration projects will provide participants with strategies TO prioritize free-roaming equid and WHB management and develop strategic partnerships. Summit participants will be assigned to one of five breakout groups to develop the concepts for demonstration projects. The breakout group participants have been designated by a colored dot on the back of your name tag. The breakout group by state or USFS, the color of the dot, and breakout room are as follows: **1) Utah – Yellow (Mariposa) 2) Nevada – Red (Cliffrose), 3) Wyoming – Blue (Primrose), 4) Colorado – Green (Sego), and USFS – Tan (Sage). Participants who desire to be assigned to a different group must contact Dan Adams, The Langdon Group, to request a change.** Your breakout group will work with two facilitators and an expert in the new *PopEquus* tool created by the USGS for the BLM. Your breakout group will go through a process of seeking to understand the other interests represented in our group and will then move towards a discussion of HMA's and HTs and potential projects that could be developed and implemented in partnership with the USFS, BLM, or another agency. Your breakout group will then utilize the *PopEquus* tool to have an objective discussion about the area and incorporate diverse public values in discussing demonstration projects that achieve sustainability through potential demonstration project(s). Breakout groups will not only work on potential demonstration projects, but they will also listen and hear other perspectives. Participants are strongly encouraged to get creative and play with thoughts and ideas.

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DAY 2 – AGENDA

Convene in the Mojave Ballroom and be ready to go at 8:00 a.m.

**8:00 AM Welcome and Instructions – Dan Adams, The Langdon Group – Mojave Ballroom**



**8:10** Review of *PopEquus* Tool, *PopEquus* Coordinator Role, and Table 1 in Human-Wildlife Interactions (page. Table 1 Objectives represent diverse societal values to be maximized (or minimized) during the management of free-roaming populations. – Dr. Kate Schoenecker, USGS

**8:20** Review of BLM/USFS Resource Staff Roles – Scott Fluer, BLM; Eric Davis, USFS Assistant Director, Rangelands and Restoration

**8:30** Questions

**8:45** Move to Breakout Rooms - Utah/Yellow – Mariposa Room; Wyoming/Red – Cliffrose Room; Nevada/Blue – Primrose Room; Colorado/Green – Segoe Room; USFS/Tan – Sage Room

**8:45** Breakouts Begin

- Review Ground Rules
- Introductions and Expectations – What do you and your organization want to get out of this process?
- Group Discussion – What do you have in common with members of your breakout group and what is non-negotiable?
- Identify Spokesperson(s)
- Human-Wildlife Interaction - Table 1 Discussion (from USGS paper)
  - What else would people add beyond the list in Table 1?

**10:00** Break – Mojave Ballroom Pre-function Area

**10:30** Problem Statement and HMA/HT

- Develop Problem Statement.
  - What problem are you trying to solve?
- Group Discussion – HMA's and HTs (See Matrix provided)
- Group Selection of HMA/HT
- Group Discussion – Demonstration of project ideas for specific HMA/HT

**12:00** Break for Lunch – Mojave Ballroom

**1:00** *PopEquus*

- Run *PopEquus*
- Group Discussion – *PopEquus* tool results and perspective on HMA/HT and potential demonstration project(s). What did you learn? Did your perspective change?
- Group Discussion – What ideas can be carried forward as a demonstration project(s)?

**2:30** Break – Mojave Ballroom Pre-function Area

**3:00** Reality Check – Keys to Successful Implementation of Demonstration Project

- Group Discussion - What will prevent the successful implementation of demonstration projects and how can we address those obstacles? How can we implement projects more effectively than in the past?

**4:00** Produce Day 3 Narrative

- Overview of Group Process
- Which HMA/HMT and what projects did you identify?

**5:00** Adjourn - Dinner on your own

**Day 3 - Friday, October 14, 2022 - 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Demonstration Project Development - Breakout Group Reports (On-site and live streaming) (Mojave Ballroom)**

Each breakout group will document their experience and their ideas for demonstration projects and on Day 3, share that information with the large group. The large group can then share additional feedback and share helpful ideas for the implementation of successful demonstration projects. All groups will also identify potential barriers to the successful implementation of projects and discuss solutions and ideas to overcome the impasse. The demonstration projects



developed at the Summit are not intended to create a mandate for the agencies to follow, but rather, create a blueprint of how to better develop implementable solutions with diverse stakeholders and interests in partnership with agencies in the sustainable management of free-roaming equids.

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## DAY 3 – AGENDA

Convene in the Mojave Ballroom and be ready to go at 8:00 a.m.

**8:00 AM Welcome** – Dan Adams, The Langdon Group

- Comments on Day 2 and Instructions for Day 3

**8:15** Utah

**8:45** Wyoming

**9:15** Nevada

**9:45** Colorado

**10:15** Break – Mojave Ballroom – Pre-function Area

**10:30** USFS

**11:00** Breakout Group Panel

- Facilitators and spokespersons share observations of what worked and what did not work in their breakouts.
- Group discussion about thoughts and ideas to add to what was shared by each breakout group.
- Further discussion about what are the things that will prevent the successful implementation of demonstration projects? How can these issues be addressed?

**11:45** The Next Action Steps – Dan Adams, The Langdon Group

- FREES 2023 and Demonstration Project Report Back – What did people do to follow up on the 2022 Summit?

**12:00** Adjourn - Sack Lunch Provided – Mojave Ballroom Pre-function Area

### Event Space

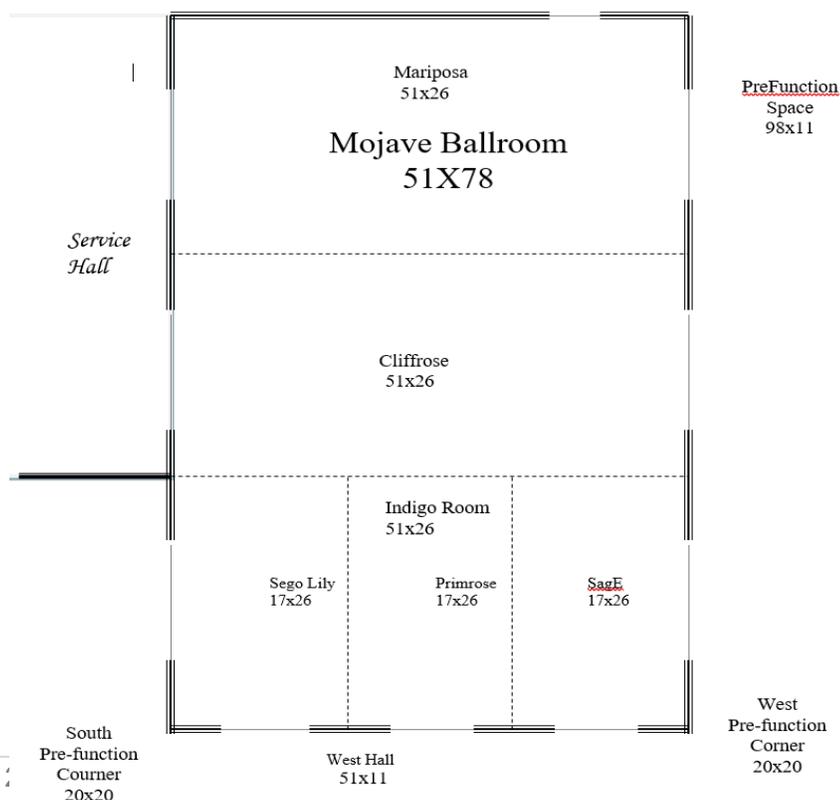




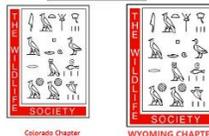
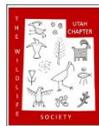
Table 1. Objectives that represent diverse societal values to be maximized (or minimized) during management of feral horse (*Equus caballus*) populations. Assessment metrics provide clear, measurable attributes to evaluate the performance of alternatives with respect to each objective.

(Folt, B., K. A. Schoenecker, and S. Ekernas. 2022. Multi-objective Modeling as a Decision-support Tool for Feral Horse Management. *Human-Wildlife Interactions* 16(2) In-press.

Name	Objective	Rationale	Assessment metric
Ecosystem health objective	Maximize ecosystem health	If increasing horse population density causes negative effects on overall ecosystems, then management decisions might seek to prevent excessively large horse populations	The number of horses in a population can be used as a proxy for ecosystem health, which should be maximized when horse populations are within target population size ranges (i.e., AML)
Horse health objective	Maximize horse health	If high population density of horses causes resource limitation that drives decreased horse health, then management decisions might seek to prevent excessively large populations	The number of horses in a population can be used as a proxy for horse health, which should be maximized when populations are within target population size ranges (i.e., AML)
Horse behavior objective	Minimize effects on horse behavior and social structure	If gathers, removals, and treatments disrupt horse behavior and/or social structure, management decisions might seek to minimize the amount of management performed	The number of horses gathered, removed, and treated in populations can be used as a proxy for effects on horse behavior/social structure, which should be minimized
Management cost objective	Minimize the cost of management	Because resources are limited and management actions (gathers, removals, and treatments) are costly, management decisions might seek to minimize costs incurred by management	The number of horses gathered, removed, and treated in a population can be used as a proxy for cost, which should be minimized

### Sponsors/Supporters





## Appendix 2: Daily Evaluation Reports

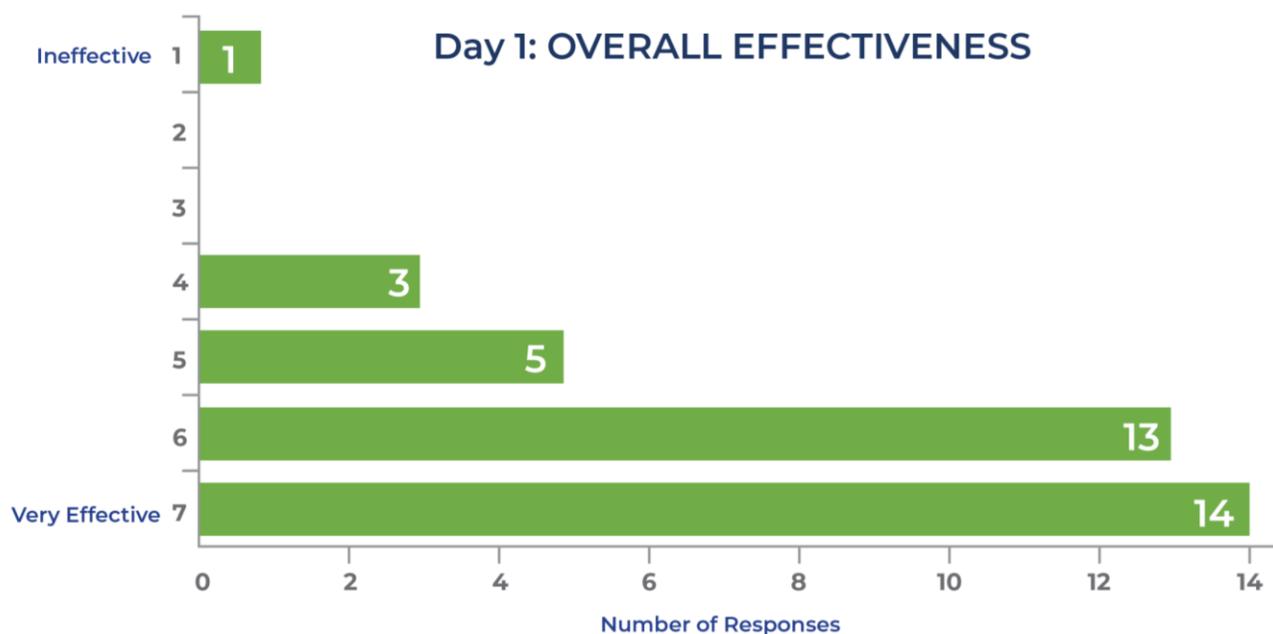




## DAY ONE RESULTS

### QUESTION 1

Please rate the overall effectiveness of the Summit today. Scale will be 1-7, 1 being ineffective, 7 being very effective.



### Comments:

- Just a long day of PowerPoint burnout. Information presented was good and relevant, just a lot of sitting. Maybe folks switch tables and a very short activity. For example, small sticky notes could be placed on tables, and everyone could share a hobby. Later all the sticky notes could be displayed on a larger board in the registration area.
- Great talks from different angles and perspectives
- Great mix of topics and speakers. I especially appreciate the effort to include a high proportion of peer-reviewed work.
- FREES is awesome Summit
- Some great presentations
- Got behind on the program and needed to abbreviate my presentation
- Loved all the great science and management talks.
- The program included basic information, a variety of studies on horses, and an introduction to the new population tool,
- The papers were great! Good content
- The information presented was very informative. I liked the way everyone stayed on track.
- The tone and intent of the summit was set early on. The research presented was relative to the topic and encouraged exploration of new ideas.



- Well organized agenda, and it stayed on time
- Great program and the flow was well thought out
- Repeat info from period summits
- Presenters could have been more well-rounded to express views of all stakeholders.
- Informative and relevant
- I really enjoyed the speakers and thought most of them did a good job and used time appropriately
- I really liked the presentations. The large screen image quality was poor. Not your fault, rather the equipment of the hotel.
- The topics were well thought out, the day moved along nicely.
- I found the summit to be informative; however, there were too many speakers back-to-back. I felt there was not much time for questions and by the afternoon many in the audience couldn't fully focus. It would have been more beneficial to have half day speakers with half day discussions/ break outs.
- So far so good. Great to set the stage with the information sharing today.
- This afternoon's presentations were very good and relevant
- virtual presentations severely limited the intended interaction and dialogue
- A lot of valuable information was relayed today.
- Everything was great.
- Lots of information
- Effectiveness is dependent on public response which is not measurable at this time. I felt the talks were very informative for me and though most of the information provided was already known to me, there were a few new items I learned and retained

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## QUESTION 2

Were you given adequate opportunity to provide input and was your input heard and understood?

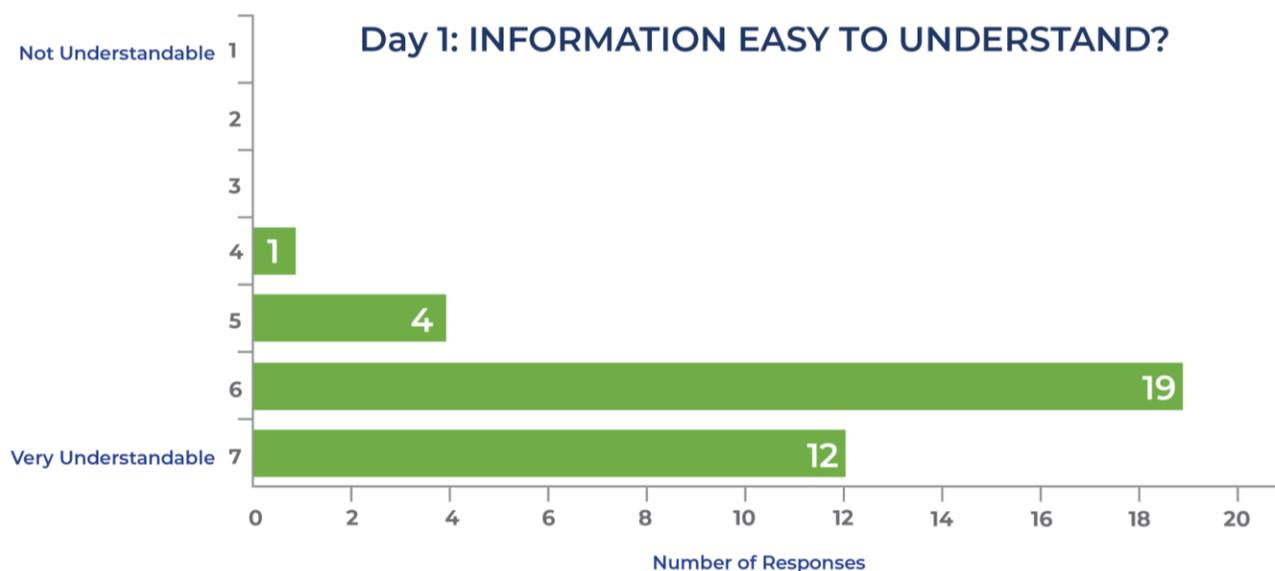
- Yes (x22)
- Mostly, but had numerous questions from attendees regarding the abbreviated presentation and it was unclear whether the online version stayed in sync with the onsite version of the presentation.
- I was online.
- There was plenty of break and question time provided
- Many opportunities were offered to ask questions and dialogue with the presenters.
- Little audience participation. Q&A sacrificed due to over-presenting. Splitting room into Day 2 groups from the outset might have stimulated dialogue.
- Sometimes
- No
- Yes, but looking forward to day 2
- Kind of, there was open questions for some panelists and there was some time for discussion with individuals during breaks but I felt that no actual discussion occurred today.
- There was time for questions but not necessarily "input".

- Yes, all good
- No. I am attending this conference online and there are no methods for voicing an opinion or commenting on presentations or asking questions.

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### QUESTION 3

Was the information provided during Day 1 easy to understand? Scale will be 1-7, 1 being not understandable, 7 being very understandable.



Please comment on your response from above:

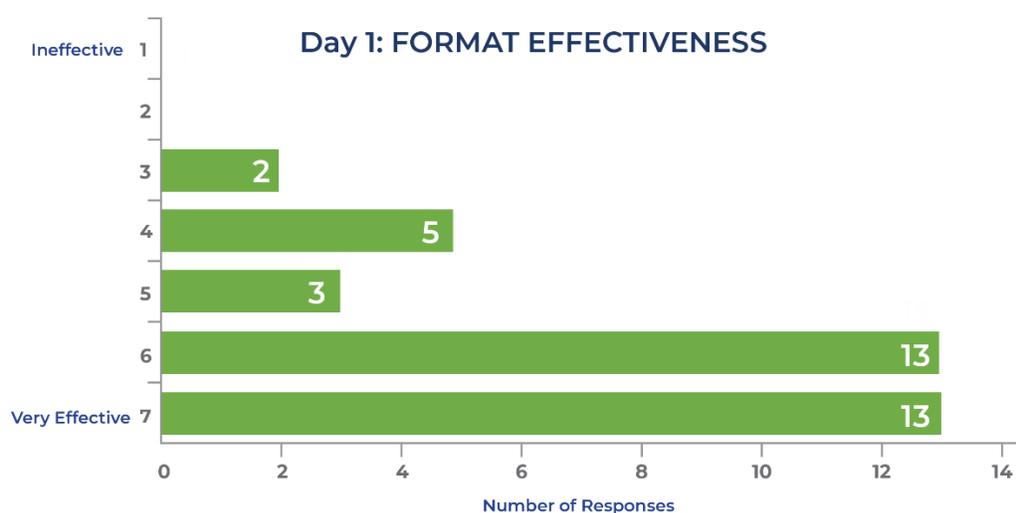
- Very organized
- Problems with the visual aids support (computer projection too dark for the room)
- The information was prepared for a nontechnical public.
- Yes, effective, but the screen was very dull so from a distance some things were not as clear.
- It was fine
- Too many presentations or too long. Screen display is terrible - majority of slides are illegible due to poor lighting conditions.
- For the most part yes - there were one or two talks that were very technical. I understood it, but not sure some of my fellow attendees did
- pretty basic
- The screen on the right-hand side of the room was very difficult to see any detail on so a lot of slide material was lost.
- I feel like a little more time on methods and effectiveness of contraceptive would be nice.
- Lots of info, some beyond any technical experience I have had so hard for me to follow. But those presentations were good at presenting summary slides which were helpful.

- Yes, I found the information informative and easy to understand. I felt some of the presentations were redundant and could have been condensed while other presentations needed more time.
- Today's talks were very interesting and informative.
- Some of this morning's presentations were understandable but maybe hard to connect with whether they were relevant
- I think the information was certainly understandable, but it was presented in a very condensed and rapid format to accommodate all of the presentations. I know there wasn't any more time available, but it would have been nice for each presenter to have a little more time.
- Everything was great.
- Good presentations easy to follow.

---

#### QUESTION 4

Was the format of Day 1 effective? Scale will be 1-7, 1 being ineffective, 7 being very effective.



Please comment on your response from above:

- Information needed to be relayed, but not sure how it could be revised.
- Agenda was appropriate for the topics addressed. Just wished I had 5 more minutes to make the critical points which needed the build-up to make the point
- All is well
- I think and hope most of us could concur and accept the information
- The information was good
- Day was long but on time
- Yes
- How do you define effective?



- 
- The day was quite long to be seated just listening. It might have been more effective to break the day up with some conversational activities. It felt like it was "cramming" all the "info" into one day.
  - Well placed breaks. The dinner would have been nice tomorrow after we have the chance to hear from more people.
  - Some presentations were long and could use help with better quality PowerPoint.
  - Needed to turn lights out in front of room so could see slides. Not sure that some of the no result papers helped much.
  - More breaks in the afternoon, or moments to stand up would have been appreciated. Maybe 1/2 day topics and 1/2 day breakout groups
  - Too many speakers back-to-back with too little question/ answer time for day one.
  - A little cramped and off schedule on the AM
  - The format was good and worked well.
  - Some of this morning's presentations weren't all that necessary
  - The format was fine. There was just a lot of information provided in a short amount of time and not enough time for questions/discussion.
  - Everything was great.
  - Stayed on schedule pretty good
  - All the talks were followed the scientific method and statements were supported by facts.

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#### QUESTION 5

What could we do to improve the quality of the Summit tomorrow?

- Mix up tables. Break up cliques.
- Projector on the right side of the room was dim and out of focus, so addressing that would be an improvement.
- Have a WHBP pre-summit to discuss issues prior to the actual Summit
- Not sure
- I really liked the presentations.
- Smaller breakout sessions should have improved computer projectors
- No idea, its going so well.
- Nothing at the moment
- Not sure
- Make the room less cold
- The projector screen lighting needs to be brightened.
- I cannot think of anything. I thought all needs were covered. A great assortment of presentations.
- Improve the screen display. Assumption is more audience interaction is a function of day 2 format.
- The summit was well done



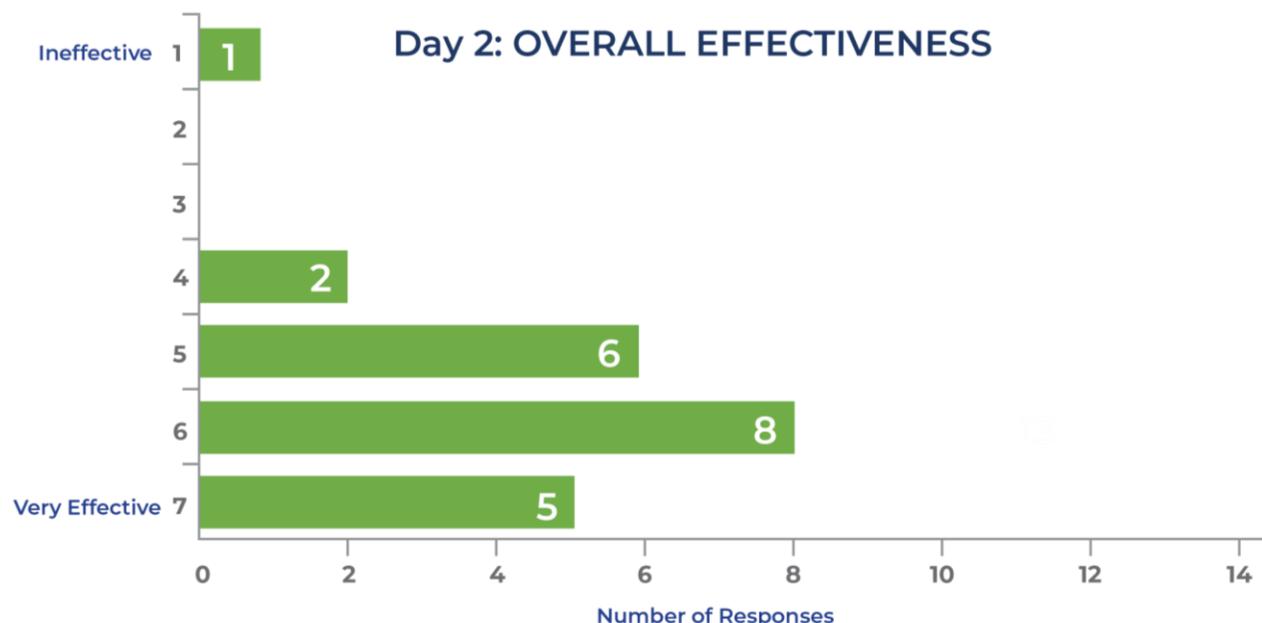
- Good facility, need better lighting for the screen presentations, the print was difficult to read
- Continue to remind people to be respectful so that there is a safe space for people to listen and be heard
- New perspective
- Tomorrow is a different format, so not easy to answer this.
- Warmer room
- Give a little more time during the breaks and so we can come back in and sit before things start again.
- What could we do to improve the quality of the Summit tomorrow?
- More time for discussion
- Tomorrow is a different format gathering as i understand it so independent of how thing done today
- Tomorrow will be a different day so it should be fine
- Not necessarily a comment on improvement for tomorrow, but I am concerned that USFS is one group vs. the other attendants that are separated out by state for the breakouts tomorrow.
- Need hot water and tea at the coffee station
- If at all possible, it would be great to make the screen brighter and clearer on the right side of the room. Also, have more coffee available.
- We'll find out tomorrow
- A/C, too cold
- Allow sufficient (more) time for discussion.
- Today was great
- Nothing
- More time for questions
- The audience is mixed with people educated in the scientific method and those that are not. The first talk should be focused on how research is conducted in a way that encompasses the scientific method, so everyone is on board with how the rest of the talks will flow.



## DAY TWO RESULTS

### QUESTION 1

Please rate the overall effectiveness of the Summit today. Scale will be 1-7, 1 being ineffective, 7 being very effective.



Please comment on your answer above:

- Great to get everyone in the same room together! It was awesome having BLM expertise there
- My breakout group was enthusiastic and very well behaved. It was actually really fun.
- The facilitator was a wild horse advocate and was relatively ineffective. Often times the facilitator would interact or allow non negotiables to get discussed. The facilitator was unprepared and lacked neutrality. Members of the group had to guide the conversation back on the task to run the model effectively. Highly recommend for future meetings to have NEUTRAL outside facilitators.
- I was hard to be in a small room with horse advocates all day
- Breakout Summit was very informative and positive
- I thought the focus group allowed for silos to open and also allow stakeholders to understand the complexity and challenges that occur.
- The day was good to get various views talking to each other.
- The breakout session brought us to very good conversations
- I would have liked to be more solution based with the brainstorming
- I thought that the breakout groups were good. However, having all of Forest Service in the same room was a challenge given it limited discussion. I also thought that the way in which the discussion did not focus on solutions was a problem.
- The exercise was valuable to do. Our group spent a lot of time bringing many new members up to speed. Our group was unable to keep to schedule. We also went down a number of rabbit holes.



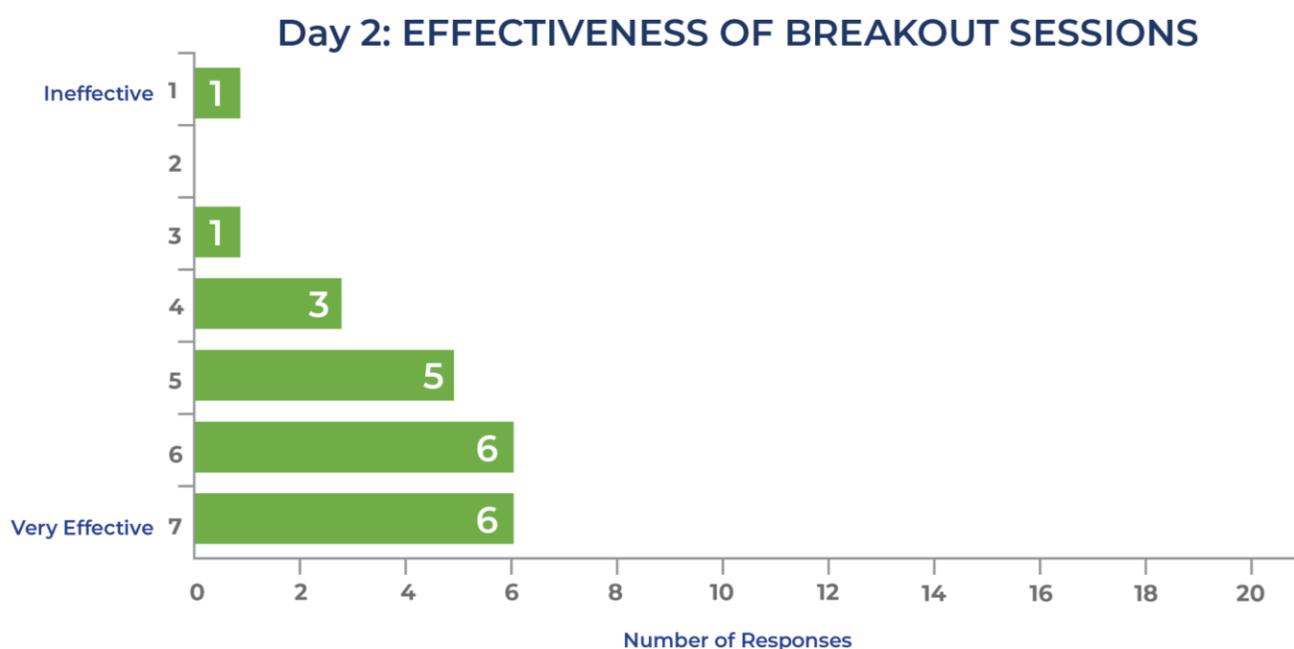
One facilitator injected herself frequently into the conversation and lost effectiveness as a non-biased facilitator

- Everyone tried something that has not been done before. So tough but hopefully so rewarding.
- Great discussion from opposing views.
- Excellent discussions and candid opinions offered in the Wyoming (Blue) group. Excellent facilitators!
- Great day!
- There was no way to attend the breakout groups online, so I could not participate in anything today. My company paid \$150 to attend this conference for 3 days. The organizers really dropped the ball on this part of the conference. Video chat, zoom or something where other online attendees can participate should have been organized.

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## QUESTION 2

Please rate the overall effectiveness of the breakout sessions today.



Please comment on your answer above:

- Some people participated more than others. More common structure across breakout groups may have been helpful
- Although I didn't experience any grandstanding or other poor behavior in my breakout room, I heard from others who did.
- Some people were more engaged than others



- 
- Breakouts are often challenging...but necessary. Groups of humans working on about anything have a tendency to get axel-wrapped. It happened in our group, and I think in most others. Even though this is frustrating, it is also reality...so we need to work through it.
  - There could have been more preparation for the breakout groups by reviewing the parameters of the model prior to break out.
  - Specific goal establishment kept the group focused and prevented outside agendas from interfering in the goals
  - Some invitees are intentionally disrupting discussions and any opportunity to "solve" the WH&B issues
  - One of the facilitators clearly had a 'personal' agenda
  - There is a general lack of understanding of most of what darting as a means of fertility control entails. The modeling tool itself still needs to take a lot more into consideration to be any kind of useful tool to predict true action on a population.
  - The session I was part of was very good
  - Horse advocates are just too focused on their biases at times, which limits productive discussions.
  - I thought some of the conclusions were great and that the breakout sessions had a good start to discussions; however, lower forest service employees/ interns had to limit what they said being in the same room as their bosses.
  - Super tough but really worth it. I learned things I had never even thought of before on this issue.
  - The focus of the discussions stayed on track regarding the common themes and non-negotiable issues. The example HMA selected for Wyoming were modelled in the PopEquus simulator and numerous questions were raised as to the output results which were intended to reflect impact of the input data (program still needs work)
  - Lots of good discussions and people talking to one another and LISTENING! It was amazing.
  - Was unable to attend online! Organizers should have prepared something for online attendees.

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#### QUESTION 3

Were you given adequate opportunity to provide input and was your input heard and understood?

- Yes (x15)
- Yes, I feel that everyone had ample opportunity for input and participation.
- A couple of people intentionally monopolized the breakout session
- To an extent yes, but Forest Service should have been broken up.
- Our group lost focus and was unable most of the time to stay on task
- Yes. The discussions remained civil and personal opinions were respected.

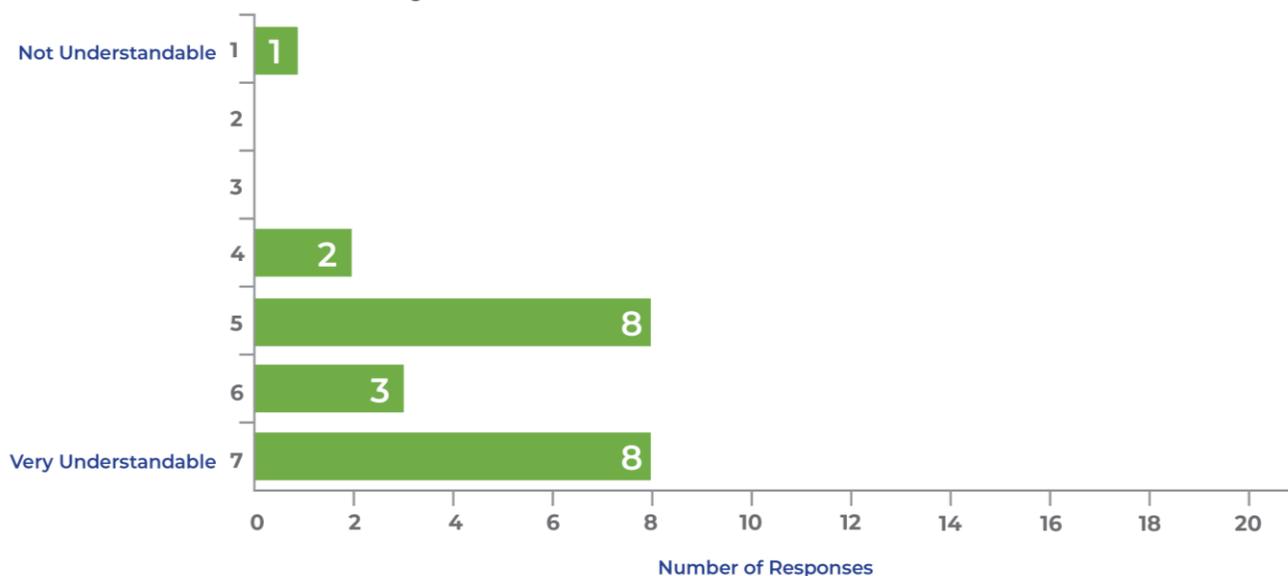
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#### QUESTION 4

Was the information shared during Day 2 easy to understand?



## Day 2: INFORMATION EASY TO UNDERSTAND?



Please comment on your answer above:

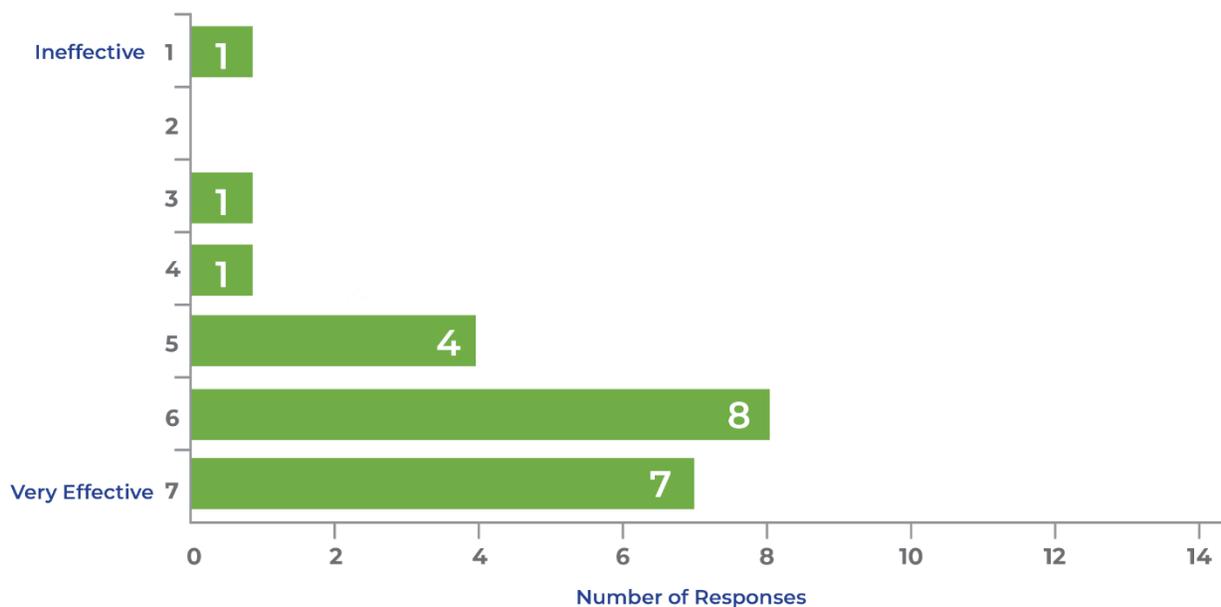
- Everything was explained thoroughly
- The instructions given to the facilitators were a little vague and that made it a bit difficult for me to interpret.
- Sometimes it was hard to understand what was being asked of the audience
- Model parameter review would have been helpful.
- It will take more time to fully understand the PopEquus modeling tool but it was interesting. I also think that it needs to be made very evident that this is a tool for the BLM not the Public
- Technical difficulties with the modelling computer
- The examination of the decision assistant program was very good. We were fortunate to have the developer with us
- Information was easy to understand.
- It was messy but came together at the end when a few key members of the group took leadership roles
- It was tough to understand but the process was worth it.
- The breakout sessions were critical to focus on the issues of a specific state (WY) and new information regarding the problems experienced by the BLM were enlightening.
- I was in Amanda Gearhardt's room -- she was terrific facilitator.
- No, but organizers could have had online attendees participate via zoom.

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### QUESTION 5

Was the format of Day 2 effective? Scale will be 1-7

## Day 2: FORMAT EFFECTIVENESS



Please comment on your answer above:

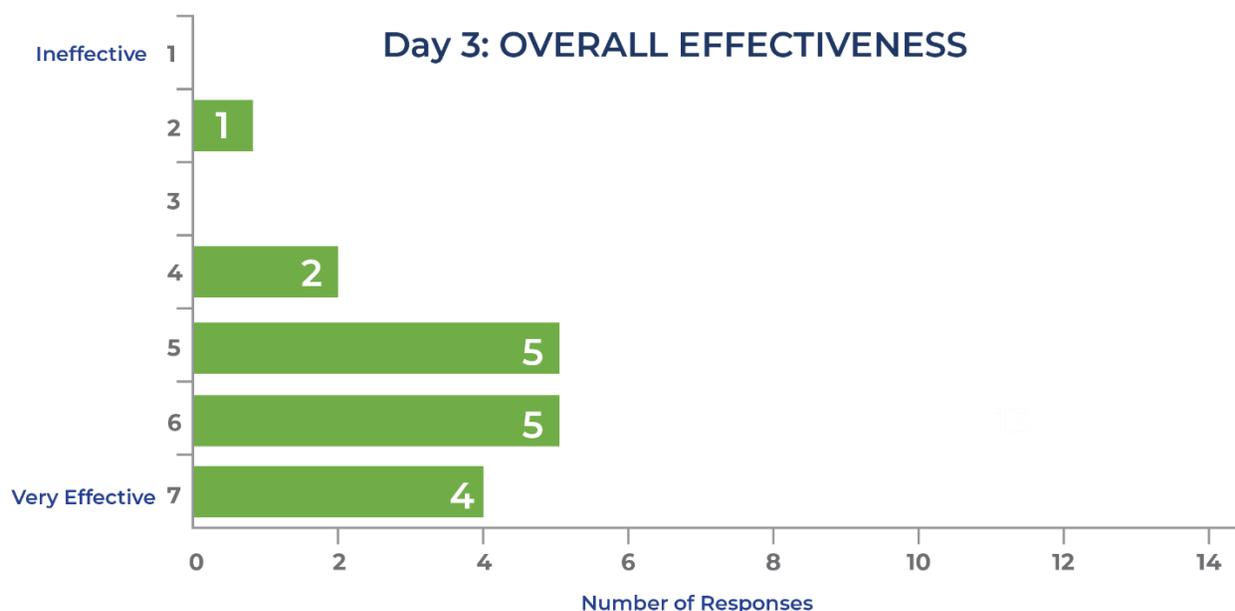
- More training of facilitators might have been helpful
- Breakout groups with hypothetical problems were effective in beginning to channel energies.
- Understandably the groups were diverse, but there are some individuals of advocacy groups who do not or are not willing to shift on positions causing unnecessary conversations which do not help to see how the model works.
- Session facilitators are CRITICAL
- Overall, there was sufficient time given for the breakout groups.
- It was effective for sharing thoughts but not really for the modeling tool.
- Good interchanges
- I don't think we needed a whole day to discuss this.
- Yes, it was effective. It could have been more effective if individuals were made to take a position outside of their organization. Walk in another shoes.
- Stronger non- biased facilitator was needed, in part because we had a number of new members that needed information presented in earlier FREES Summits. A lot of time was devoted to chilling conspiracy theories and educating new members.
- I don't know what more you could have done. Bringing together so many diverse people is so tough.
- Good breakout format
- Ya, well you know this is the first time we did this, so it was a good experiment
- Was not present!



## DAY THREE RESULTS

### QUESTION 1

Please rate the overall effectiveness of the Summit today.



Please comment on your above answer:

- The report outs from each group were so refreshing
- A little redundant from yesterday, but some was informative and thought provoking
- I'm trying to do this meeting Virtually but having a number of technical problems. The sound of the speakers was often "unhearable". Thank goodness for the words across the bottom of the speakers but sometimes, even it was missing. But the Wyoming State Grazing Board, WSGb, appreciates your doing what all you can to help keep the excess BLM horses in front of the public and the Agency, and Congress. Dick LIOPER, Consultant to the WSGB on BLM Section 3 technical issues.
- Great hearing from other groups.
- The inclusiveness, the respect, the broadening of concepts all added to a more hopeful future.
- I appreciated the results and presentations from the groups.
- The Summit was very awesome and put all of the meeting of the minds in one place
- Effective, but there was some soapbox preaching of non- scientific perspectives.
- Great summaries. Issues keep recurring which shows what needs to be addressed to educate members in future FREES meeting. Issues that I heard were: 1) AML how determined and how sheep, cattle, and wildlife use resources on HMA; 2) how being ridged and inflexible is unproductive for horses and working together; 3) address Feral, wild and domestic terminology. The most offended people can't drive everything and be inconsiderate of situations others are involved in, 4) update knowledge of PZP. and Gonecon 5). Address natural predators controlling horse herds. This is turning into another distraction.

- Commenting for day 2&3, our group really had difficulty with a couple very dominant advocates and I felt like we were not able move forward towards actual management. We also had a early career facilitator that derailed us often with questions. Overall, I found the day exhausting and not very successful. I hope I can use the tool later at home to actually dive into it. I think it would have been helpful to have provided the assumptions for the tool before we used it, so we were better prepared.
- Some good information but a lot of repetitions between the different groups.
- Good to hear the different ways the model was used. Was frustrated that the presentation portions were used for private soapbox platforms

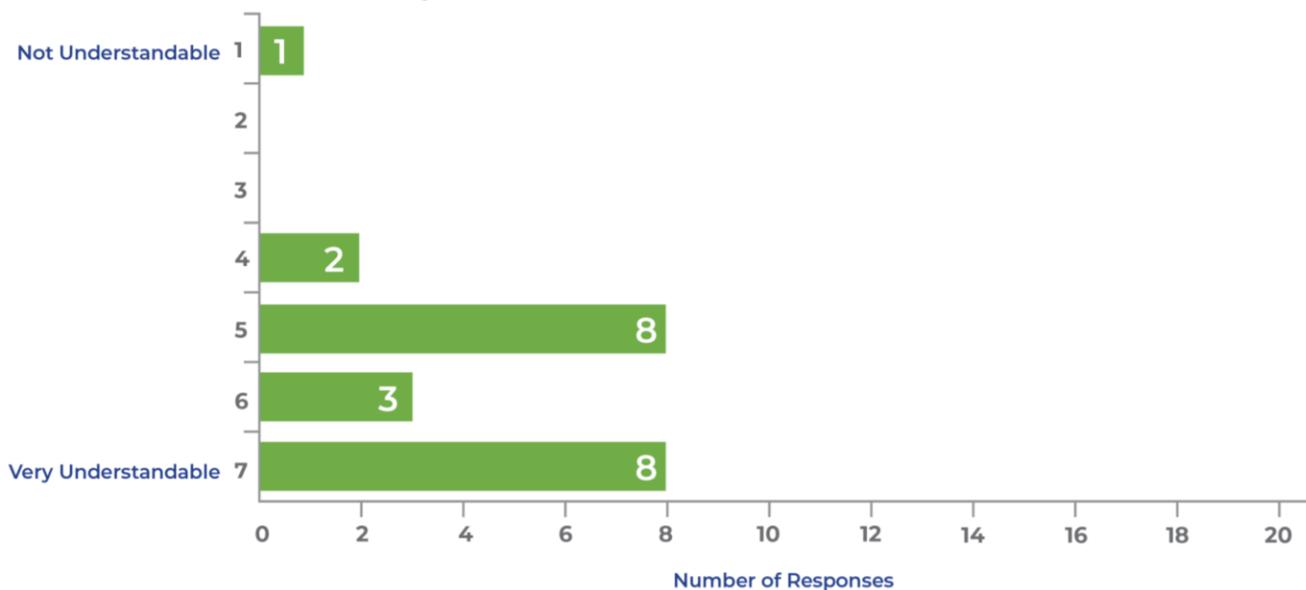
#### QUESTION 2

Were you given adequate opportunity to provide input and was your input heard?

- Yes (x8)
- I'm doing this meeting on my Computer.so question is not relevant.
- I was online so no comment on this question
- Absolutely
- I was given opportunity today to provide input.
- Not really

#### QUESTION 3

### Day 2: INFORMATION EASY TO UNDERSTAND?



Please comment on your above answer:

- I think having multiple voices both from all was the most inciteful
- I'm not sure that a computer model will be of much help.

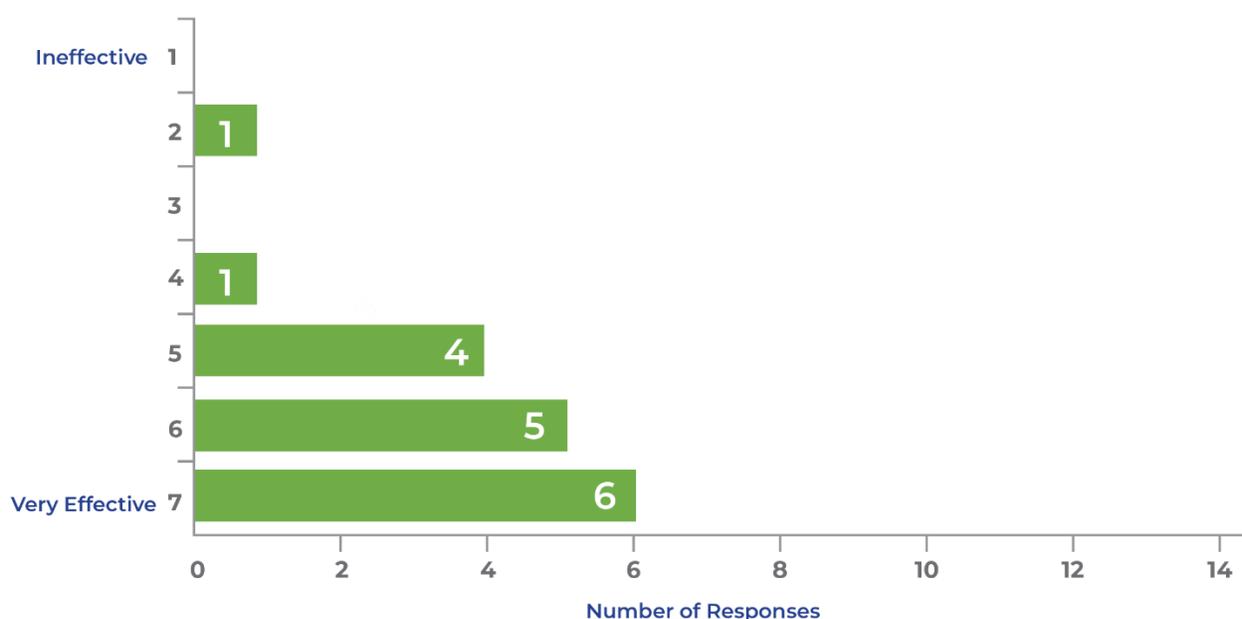
- The reports were so helpful in their variety of comments and respect for each person.
- All information was easily understandable.
- Input and comments were very welcomed
- Easy to understand but a lot of repeated information.

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#### QUESTION 4

Was the format of Day 3 effective? Scale will be 1-7

### Day 3: FORMAT EFFECTIVENESS



Please comment on your above answer:

- Hearing multiple voices
- Since I am online, I can only say Day 3 was very interesting.
- Need to address constant turnover of horse advocates. This prevents them from building knowledge and partnerships. A horse advocate leader said the turnover is intentional to increase exposure.
- Allow individuals to lecture the group. 😞

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#### QUESTION 5

What could we do to improve the quality of the next summit?

- Really talk about the hard subject, death
- More solution-based break out groups. Possibly split up people who could be in others chain of commands because that hinders the freedom to say what you really feel.



- Please hold future meeting, ( which I hope you do have ),in a more convenient and less expensive location
- When negotiating with hotels, get them to offer a government rate. Hotel wanted to charge me over \$500 per night, so I stayed in another hotel offsite from the meeting. Also, try to put next meeting in winter or spring of 2024. Oct is extremely busy for Federal supervisor s.
- Is there any chance of including horse/cow impacts on biodiversity? People talk about healthy lands but there is no definition or description of what that means.
- Include and invite participants across the US. This isn't a western problem. It is a national problem.
- I would like a notification of the next FREES Summit
- Consolidate those breakouts' information
- Anything that can be done to draw more participation from folks who live on and/or make a living on the landscapes with free-roaming equids. In addition to that, once those folks are drawn in, work to keep them engaged. This may include financial assistance and genuine assurances of things getting implemented on the ground as a result of their time invested.
- Addressed above
- Higher internet capacity, it sounded like different facilitators were more successful - maybe more training for facilitators?
- It would have been great to tour some areas in Southern Utah that have wild horses.
- Give better guidelines and hold them to the guidelines