



FREES 2022 Summit

Community Connections

October 12-14, 2022
Hilton Garden Inn St. George, Utah

Early Registration Extended to September 26, 2022

The 2022 Summit is not just about free-roaming equids, it is about the sustainable management of all the lands where they occur. It includes wild horses, and burros (WHBs) as defined by the 1971 Act, free-roaming horses and burros not covered by the Act, native wildlife, and the ecosystems they inhabit.

One thing we all agree on is the contemporary management of free-roaming equids in the US is at a nexus.

At this year's Summit, US Geological Survey 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 "gameplay" 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.

Day One (Oct 12, 2022- 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM): Topics (On-site and virtual)

Welcome-Utah Governor's Office, BLM, USFS, and Navajo Nation

Summit Overview-The Langdon Group

Free-roaming Equid Updates-BLM-Scott Fluer, Deputy Division Chief WHB (Acting) USFS-Teresa Drotar, National Wild Horse, and Burro Program Manager Tribes-Navajo Nation

Free-roaming Equids and the American Mind-Community Connections (Panel)

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 Ranch 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

<https://extension.usu.edu/freesnetwork/next-summit>





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Free-roaming Equid and the Ecosystem

Dehydration and mortality of feral horses and burros: a systematic review of reported deaths-Derek Scasta, University of Wyoming Extension

Non-native Ungulate Impacts on Greater Sage-grouse Late Brood Rearing Habitat in the Great Basin, USA-Melissa Chelak, Utah 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-and Human Values

Fertility Control and the Management of Free-roaming Equid Populations-Ursula Bechert, DVM, Ph.D., SpayVac for Wildlife Inc., and University of Pennsylvania

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

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

Breakout Groups-Overview-Panel Discussion-What to expect in Day 2-Dan Adams, The Langdon Group

Day Two-Breakout Groups (Oct 13, 2022; 8:00 AM -5:00 PM – On-site only)

Breakout groups will participate in an exercise to develop collaborative free-roaming equid demonstration projects on selected management areas. Summit participants can choose to participate in breakout groups that will work with USGS and trained facilitators to use the new PopEquus tool to model management options that could be implemented in demonstration project areas, their costs, and their effect on herd numbers. The tool will also help the groups incorporate diverse public values in implementing demonstration projects that achieve sustainability. These groups will then develop their thoughts about how to better cooperate.

Day Three-Breakout Groups Reports (Oct 14, 2022: 8:00 AM-5:00 PM, Virtual and on-site).

Each group will share their hard work and facilitate a better understanding of the depth and breadth of the issues. The demonstration projects developed at the Summit are not intended to create a mandate for the agencies to follow but more so a blueprint of how to better engage the public at the local level in the sustainable management of free-roaming equids and WHBs.

We have spoken with numerous individuals who are frustrated with talking (or arguing) about how to manage free-roaming equids. They want to do something! This is everyone's opportunity to come together and discuss different ways forward-we each bringing something valuable to the table.

For questions, please contact Terry Messmer at terry.messmer@usu.edu or Angie Jensen at angie.jensen@usu.edu.

