Free Roaming Equids
and Ecosystem
Sustainability Network

POPULATION MANAGEMENT WORKING GROUP
2/16/2021

Attending: Eric Thacker, Mark Fraker, Rick Karcich, Kimberly Frank, Kayla Grams, Celeste Carlisle, Brieanah Schwartz, David Stoner, Mark Boshell, Ursula Bechert, Stephanie Boyles-Griffin, and Rae Ann Hart

Next Meeting: March 16 at 1 PM (Mountain Time)

Discussion:

There was a discussion of tasks from the Summit that we are able to work on. We want to follow up on helping groups work together and having a collaboration outlast one certain person. So many projects end when one person moves to a different position or retires. We wanted to use a Utah example of enabling collaboration and then build from there. We could find out who is collecting data and see if they are willing to share and network. We could then make a directory so that when someone wants to work in an area, they can see potential sources for information or help on a project. We could create a map showing HMAs or region. If someone was interested, they could click on the area and see who was working in the area. We could contact groups and ask them to submit information. This would of course be voluntary.

Some things would be applicable to all areas such as the new algorithm being developed to help identify animals from pictures, information on fertility control options, and basic BLM policies. Specific information for an area would include fertility options approved for a specific HMA or state, BLM area EIS and AIM data.

We can help overcome distrust and facilitate collaboration. We can create a container for the information as groups can work together if they want.

We could include a story map for an area where we have information. Mark B. knows someone who could help create a story map. We are starting with Utah since we have the most information and history of collaboration. All 177 HMAs might be overwhelming to start and hard to know how to incorporate information. Once we have Utah's information working well, then we can expand. We would like to put a link to the WINS database if that is accessible. We could also put a link to BLM's data for an area to make it easier for people to use.

We want to focus on FREES goal – to encourage dialog and collaboration where possible. We don't have to hold the data but a directory of who is and has been working in an area helps speed things up for new projects. It would be nice to have access to historical data if someone is willing to submit it.

Starting simple to gage interest and willingness to participate. We want to focus on one region then tighten up our system and go big. It's important to have some success in our practice arena so people will want to participate. Hard to come back from a giant failure. Once we have a satisfactory system, we can expand. It would be nice to report a successful case study to the larger FREES network. We need to remember to include USGS data and publications. We can survey researchers to see what they can provide. Publications ought to be easy to share. We could create an on-line questionnaire form to enter info into the directory. We can also add public BLM data for now. Stephanie has an intern working on what data is available. Once that is done, she will share it with us. This is very tedious work and the intern may not finish by the end of the funding. At least it is a start and we would know what types of information is available. We want to create a perception from different groups that we are encouraging collaboration and creating opportunity. We will explain that a directory of projects is for creating partnerships. Ursula will work on a draft questionnaire to send to the rest of the group.

What is our timeline? How long will this take. Not sure. We will work on the questionnaire draft at our next meeting.

There is a link to the WHB handbook so you can see what is in there. This is a public document that can be shared.

Action Items:

Create a questionnaire to put into a directory of projects for HMAs or regions.

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