



Free Roaming Equids  
and Ecosystem  
Sustainability Network

## POPULATION MANAGEMENT WORKING GROUP

4/20/2021

**Attending:** Eric Thacker, Mark Fraker, Rick Karcich, Ursula Bechert, Mark Boshell, Celeste Carlisle, Brieanah Schwartz, Tolani Francisco, Doug Busselman, Kayla Grams, Dave Stoner, Kimberly Frank, Esther Ruben, Peggy Coleman-Taylor, Sarah King, and Rae Ann Hart

**Next Meeting:** May 20 at 1 PM (Mountain Time)

### **Discussion:**

The meeting started by sharing updates from participants. We have a significant, severe drought covering most of the Western U.S. We are concerned about animals on the range if we don't get some good precipitation this Spring. The new Administration has been lobbied by several groups to limit contraception, especially sterilization, for WHB on-range. We are curious to see how the new Interior Secretary will handle WHB issues. The facility that produces Gonacon is now up and running again after a severe flood damaged their supplies, building, and production capability. No one has heard if the new head of BLM has been announced nor if head of WHB program has been appointed.

Work has continued on the survey to increase collaboration and perhaps data sharing by groups working on WHB data collection. Everyone should have seen the draft and we have made the changes suggested. The draft survey has been entered on Qualtrics and should be ready to send to group next week. This will have a USU header since USU pays for the use of the software by employees. No one thought this would be much of a problem. There will be an opening paragraph explaining this is a survey to increase voluntary collaboration. A link will be sent to meeting participants to test the survey. It's just a dry run of the survey to correct mechanical problems so don't spend time entering real data. Also, do not forward the link to test survey. Send comments to Rae Ann. Once the kinks are worked out, we will send out to the FREES network.

Discussed how to disseminate the survey. If we send through the FREES network, it looks official. If the committee or group members send it out to their collaborators, people might be more willing to participate because they know it is a legitimate project not spam. We could also send out the survey to FREES members with a request to forward to groups they know who are not members of the FREES network. Most were in favor of the last option. We will send out the survey to the FREES network with a request to forward to groups who might be working in Utah and might not be members of the FREES network.

We will review the purpose of the survey in the email and also explain that we are starting with Utah and hope to expand rangewide. Mark B. offered some help from the PLPCO office with the Utah story map and website set up. They have some GIS experts.

There was a question on progress made by an intern to find out information about gather EAs that have addressed fertility control. It would be nice to know what the BLM plans to do. This is a difficult project, but now that classes are winding down, we hope we can get an update in our next meeting.

**Action Items:**

Rae Ann will send out draft notes from March and April meetings for review.

Everyone will test survey when they receive a link from Rae Ann.

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