



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 the 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.

**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
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 breakout sessions, we are defining a demonstration project(s) as – a defined area such as a herd management area (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.

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 – Sejo 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.

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

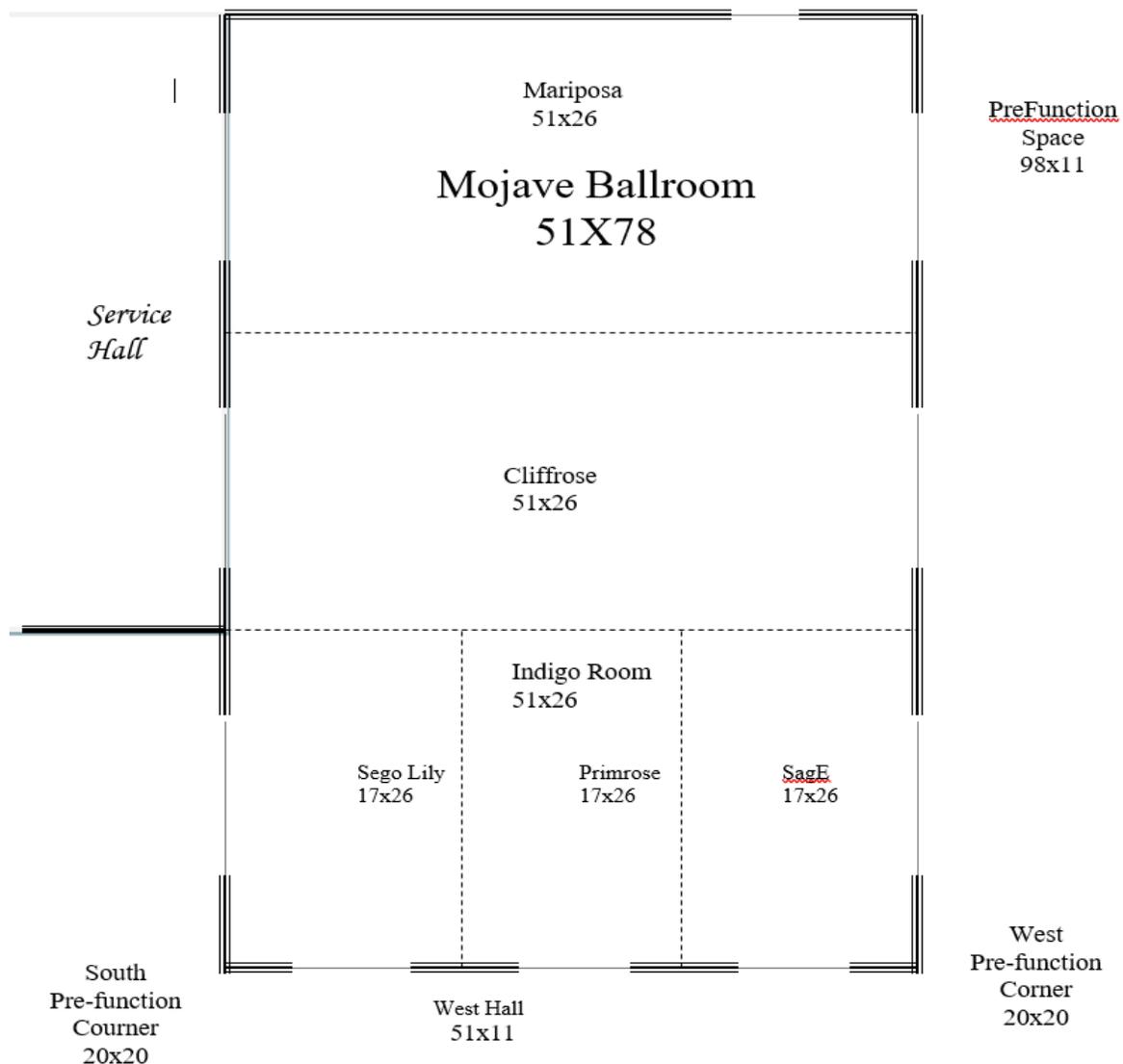
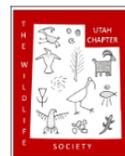


Table 1. Objectives that represent diverse societal values to be maximized (or minimized) during management of feral horse (*Equus caballus*) populations. Assessment metrics provide clear, measurable attributes to evaluate the performance of alternatives with respect to each objective. (Folt, B., K.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



[Shows & Events - Mustang Heritage Foundation](#)

SOUTHERN UTAH TIP CHALLENGE

HURRICANE, UT

OCTOBER 13-15, 2022

Application Deadline: August 1, 2022

Pick up Date: August 12, 2022

Event Manager: Janet Tipton

[Contact Event Manager](#)



The screenshot shows the Mustang Heritage Foundation website. At the top, there is a navigation menu with links for ABOUT, PROGRAMS, SHOWS, ADOPT, LEARN, GET INVOLVED, SHOP, and a DONATE button. Below the navigation is a large image of a brown horse standing in a wooden corral. To the right of the image is a section titled "WHAT WE DO" with the following text: "Nearly 50,000 wild horses and burros have been removed from public lands and are currently in holding pastures and corrals managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). They need our help!" "Mustang Heritage Foundation helps find forever homes for thousands of these horses and burros each year. We're dedicated to removing these animals from BLM holding pens and placing them into homes and private care through innovative programs, events, and education." "We have saved taxpayers an average of \$162 million each year. A wild horse or burro costs the federal government \$25,000 during the lifetime of the animal. Mustang Heritage Foundation not only saves the taxpayer money but most importantly helps provide loving homes for our national treasure - the American Mustang!" Below this text are two statistics: "MORE THAN 20,000 MUSTANGS & BURROS" and "NEARLY 10,000 ADOPTERS & SELLERS".

[Wild Horse and Burro Online Corral \(blm.gov\)](#)



GIVE A GOOD HOME TO A WILD HORSE OR BURRO

3rd Annual Southern Wild Horse & Burro Festival & Adoption

October 14 – 15, 2022

Washington County Regional Park, Hurricane, UT

EVENT DETAILS

Featuring a wild horse show and adoption
13 halter-gentled horses • 2 halter-gentled burros
4 saddle-started horses

All starting at \$125!

October 14
3rd ANNUAL SOUTHERN UTAH WILD HORSE & BURRO FESTIVAL
Wild Horse & Burro Show: 10 a.m. – 10 p.m.
Extreme Trail Challenge: 6 p.m.

October 15
TIP Challenge Freestyle: 8 a.m. – 11 a.m.
Trained Halter-Started Adoption: 11 a.m. – 2 p.m.
Wild Horse & Burro Show: 2 p.m. – 7 p.m.

More information: 435-979-2838 or lreid@blm.gov

The show is for any BLM freeze marked wild horse or burro.

Visit the [Utah Wild Horse and Burro Festival](#) on Facebook to view available animals.

ADOPTION INCENTIVE PROGRAM

Interested in giving a good home to an untrained wild horse or burro? Ask how you can earn up to \$1,000 when you do!

\$125 Minimum fee

U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Wild Horse and Burro Program

[BLM.gov/WHB](#) • (866) 468-7826 •    