Karen Herman
Sky Mountain Wild Horse Sanctuary
Mt. Taylor Mustangs
“When I first heard about injecting wild horses with immunocontraception, I thought it was the stupidest idea ever.”
How We Work for On-Range Management:

Use science on fertility control to inform on-range efforts
Engage in R & D for adaptation, evolution, and innovation
Utilize immediate, mid, & long-term strategies for management
Collaborate & Partner
Work for healthy wild horses & healthy range
March 2009 ~ Carson National Forest
First fertility control treatment for Forest-managed wild horses
Native PZP administered by hand injection
Not the smartest way to go...stress on horses, efficacy, & holding
PZP booster administered by jab stick 2 weeks later
A slightly smarter way to go...reduced stress & potentially more effective administration of PZP
Experimentation with On-Range Treatment Methods
Remote-control darting – the Robo Gun
Double-barreled, remote-control, pan-tilt head, wireless, color video with night vision and laser-sighting
Jarita Mesa Research ~ Results:

Y1 - 79% reduction in reproduction for treated vs. untreated mares

Y2 – 35% reduction in reproduction

• Measurable reduction in fertility for 2 years
• First demonstration of 2 years of reduced fertility with PZP-22 administered by remote dart instead of hand injection
• A strategy for treating elusive, hard-to-access herds on the range
Strategies for On-Range Management

- Utilize multiple treatment methods depending on herd behavior & access on the range
- Use Trap-Treat-Release within 12 hours to ensure access for future treatment
- Utilize in-depth knowledge of bands, band members, & location to treat as many horses as possible
- Use “marker” horses & marker bands to quickly identify treated/untreated mares
- Combine science, on-range experience of herd behavior, herd structure, and diverse treatment methods to maximize treatment scale and efficacy
Reducing Costs & Evaluating Results Via Partners

• Sky Mountain Wild Horse Sanctuary paid all direct PZP-project costs for the first years, & continues to invests in PZP today
• The Humane Society of the U.S. paid all direct PZP costs for the Jarita Mesa trap-treat-release project
• Collaboration with Dr. Rutberg & Tufts U veterinary medicine students produced the efficacy research for Jarita Mesa
Partnerships: Potential Benefits for Effective Management

Diversify funding & provide consistent funds

Collaborate to expand knowledge, create new strategies, & use flexibility & different skill sets

Evaluate outcomes & assess successes & failures to adapt future work
Leading for Partnerships & Toward Management
Leading for a balance of interests, multi use, and the public
Leading with courage to take risks and tolerate ambiguity
Leading with a strategic focus to manage for short and long term results and to address all factors affecting the range
“When I first heard about injecting wild horses with immunococontraception, I thought it was the stupidest idea ever.”
“I’d much rather put a dart in a horse’s butt any day than have to round up that horse, do compliance, and adopt it out.”

Anthony Madrid, Former Carson Forest District Ranger & Wild Horse Coordinator
True Thanks~
Diana Trujillo & Anthony Madrid, U.S. Forest Service
Kayla Grams, Kat Carey & Alexa Ortiz
Allen Rutberg & John Turner
Sylvia Johnson
The Humane Society of the United States
The Carson Forest Team
With Gratitude for the Lives & Work of Dr. Jay Kirkpatrick & Dan Elkins