

the same drug to help control horse populations but worry the agency could resort to measures like spaying mares.

"Right now, I mean, you'll find the groups that endorse the plan," said Suzanne Roy, executive director of AWHC. "They say, 'We don't believe the BLM can do spaying because we don't believe it's safe and humane.' But if the BLM says it's safe and humane, then that's who's deciding. There's no restrictions on it."

"The Path Forward plan is a general kind of an idea, is what I'm seeing," added Greg Hendricks, AWHC's director of field operations. "The issues that I think many of us have ... is that the plan lacks the details that protect the horses. And one of the elements, obviously—when they talk about some type of population control, that's a really general statement, and a lot of things can fall into that. Without some kind of definition of what they're going with, what they're considering, they could put all kinds of things on the table that would affect horse behavior and horse hormones and potentially be negative toward the horses' health, like new treatments that haven't been tested appropriately."

Deb Walker, the group's Nevada field representative summed up her own objections, saying, "It's just not written tight enough to make me feel like the horses and burros are going to be taken care of appropriately—on the range or in holding."

But representatives from the BLM's Wild Horse and Burro Program have indicated that these concerns may be premature.

"The BLM is actually still reviewing that plan that was submitted," said Jason Lutterman, a national spokesperson for the program. "You know, I think it aligns a lot with what the BLM has been doing and plans to do, but we're still reviewing that right now."

"Also, that hasn't been signed yet," said Jenny Lesieutre, the program's Nevada spokesperson. "So that's the current language in there. That's important to note—that, until it's signed, that \$35 million is just what's being presented."

Lesieutre also pointed out that the agency's management of wild horses—including things like gathering them from the range and administering fertility control—requires a public process mandated by the National Environmental Protection Agency (NEPA).

"Bottom line, all gather plans go through the NEPA process," she said. "So, it's very clear per gather, by gather what kind of population suppression that is utilized per that area—is or isn't utilized. So, a NEPA process is done through the public input process, and therefore that's what we have to stick to. So, although the concern may be there, currently, it's only approved suppression techniques."

On Sept. 26, the Senate sent a seven-week continuing resolution to the president's desk, delaying the possibility of another government shutdown—and very likely answers to questions surrounding the Path Forward plan—until Nov. 21.

Learn more about the Path Forward plan here: bit.ly/2ogneb8.

Dark politics



During his first campaign stop in Northern Nevada on Saturday, Sept. 28, Pete Buttigieg's rally at Sparks High School was interrupted by a power outage during a question-and-answer segment toward the end of his speech. Projecting loudly to the crowd, some of whom used their cell phones' flashlights to illuminate the stage, Buttigieg said, "Well, this is how they did politics back in the old days."

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