

## **IBMP Briefing Statement**

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**Agency:** Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks  
**Issue:** Bison Hunt Update  
**Date:** Aug. 6-7, 2008

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### **Background:**

- As authorized by the 2003 Montana Legislature under SB 395 (MCA 87-2-730), FWP conducts annual wild bison hunts.
- The first of these bison hunts was implemented in 2005, with subsequent hunts in 2006 and 2007.

### **Current Status:**

- Entering fourth year of renewed bison hunting in Montana.
- Current structure allows management flexibility to respond to lower or higher numbers of bison leaving YNP.
  - 44 either-sex licenses (guaranteed opportunities) and up to 100 cow/calf conditional licenses.
- Two permits offered to each of 8 Montana Native American Tribes (total of 16).
- Tribal treaty hunts by Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes (CSKT) (NW Montana) and Nez Perce Tribe (NP) (Idaho).
- Total 2007-08 harvest—166
  - State harvest—63 (13 HD385, 50 HD395); CSKT harvest—39 (1 HD 385, 38 HD 395); NP harvest—64 (45 HD385, 19 HD395). Incidental elk harvest by NP—7 (?)
- No violations by state-licensed hunters (although report of state hunter in USFS eagle closure).
- Confederated Salish and Kootenai tribal hunt went smoothly—good cooperation and commitment by CSKT to ensure successful hunt. Nez Perce tribal hunt had various issues and concerns associated with hunter behavior—Nez Perce Tribe is committed to working with the state to address these issues. Out goal is to enter into MOUs with both tribes.
- Interest from Shoshone Bannock Tribe (Idaho) for tribal treaty hunting rights. FWP researching and developing opinion.
- FWP Commission on Aug. 5 approved bison hunt for 2008-09 using nearly the same season structure as 2007-08.
  - Two changes—hunter-orientation and test no longer required (orientation DVD and other educational materials will still be provided to hunters); two cow/calf rosters for up to 100 conditional licenses, one for each HD.

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### **Contact:**

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