

Summary Report from Interagency Bison Management Plan Meeting April 8-9, 2009

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The following summary report reflects activities at the April 8th and 9th meeting of the IBMP partners, held at Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks in Bozeman and hosted by MFWP. This report comes from the notes and flip chart records of facilitator Scott Bischke. The report contains a *Facilitator's Draft* watermark to recognize that as presented the IBMP partners have not reviewed these notes and accepted the facilitator's recollection/interpretation of events. Attendees included IBMP partners Jerry Diemer (APHIS), Mary Erickson (GNF), Pat Flowers (MFWP), Suzanne Lewis (YNP), Marty Zaluski (MDoL); ~20 staff members present from across IBMP organizations each day; ~20 members of the public each day. Scanned attendance and speaker sign-up sheets are available from the facilitator.

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Partial list of Abbreviations

- AM—Adaptive management
- APHIS—Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service
- CM—Christian Mackay
- GAO—Government Accountability Office
- GNF—Gallatin National Forest
- GP—Glenn Plumb
- GYA—Greater Yellowstone Area
- ITBC— Inter-Tribal Bison Cooperative
- JD—Jerry Diemer
- MBoL—Montana Board of Livestock
- MDOL—Montana Department of Livestock
- ME—Mary Erickson
- MFWP—Montana Fish Wildlife and parks
- MSU—Montana State University
- MZ—Marty Zaluski
- NEPA—National Environmental Policy Act
- NGO—non-governmental organizations
- NPS—National Park Service
- PF—Pat Flowers
- PIOs—Public Information Officers
- RC—Ryan Clarke
- RoD—Record of Decision
- RTR—Royal Teton Ranch
- SEIS—supplemental EIS
- SL—Suzanne Lewis
- YNP—Yellowstone National Park

Action items identified on April 8th and 9th

#	Who	What	By when
1	X Steve M	Send strawman web feedback data collection technique to Partners	Ap 9, Thu
2	Scott B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • X Send Steve M partner notes on web feedback request from Partners • Send collected presentations to Steve Merritt for posting on IBMP.info; Steve posts • Included SL "Status of open audit..." report 	Ap 14, Tue
3	PIOs w/ Steve M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete IBMP.info test site deployment (help from PIOs) • Revamp web site feedback request to users based on Partner discussion • Place feedback request from users on the web 	Ap 14, Tue
4	PIOs	Complete collection of user input for website; collate, analyze for next Partner phone conference (June 16); design potential new web GUI that incorporates user survey	May 15, Fri
5	Partners	Next phone conference: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. PIOs—User feedback on web site modification; show new design to Partners 2. Partners review, OK new website design based on user feedback (if yes, PIOs deploy) 3. Make determination on whether PIOs write SOW for contractor to run IBMP.info 	Jun 16 2-4 PM
6	PJ W	Add Julie Cunningham FWP to Technical Committee	immediate
7	Glenn P Steve M	Begin sending bi-weekly report to DoL for posting, both numeric and narrative (Lead agency—next is DoL—will continue to collect, collate, and post numeric and narrative reports next year)	immediate
8	X Partners	Provide NPS feedback on quantitative reporting spreadsheet Glenn presented 4/8	Ap 9, Thu
9	Pat F	Check with FWP and RTR attorneys to see if agreement can be posted to IBMP.info, even if some redacting is required); if yes, send to DoL for posting	Ap 30, Thu

10	Partners, SB	Supply notes on public comments re: public working group to Scott to compile, send to Larry Fisher/Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution (ICER)	Ap 9, Thu
11	Mary E	Schedule call for Larry Fisher/ICER with request for IECR case studies (what worked, what did not; presentation via phone video conferencing) under the following scenarios: 1. Governor-appointed state groups 2. hybrid state/federal collaborative groups 3. FACA 4. supplemental EIS outcomes	May15 2-5 PM
12	Partners	Based on Larry F's phone presentation (11), Partners select desired method for public engagement (FACA, hybrid state/federal group, other). If governor appointed working group is selected assign task to meet with governor's representative	?
13	Mary E	Request to Larry Fisher/IECR for quote on <u>process for creating</u> charter for new public engagement process selected in (12). (Also for full engagement of IECR?)	?
14	Partners	Based on (11)-(13), commit funds to creating charter for new public engagement process and engage IECR or similar to begin work.	?
15	Technical Committee	Technical Committee reports on short term opportunities for new AM techniques including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Increased habitat o Moving quarantined animals to willing tribes o Terminal activities: slaughter, tribal hunting and/or relocation, other? 	For Aug meeting
16	Majel Russell (ITBC)	Provide Suzanne Lewis of YNP with a list of tribal issues within 1 week, as well as one or more old ITBC bison-related proposals (e.g., from Fort Belknap in ~1994/5 and ~2002/3) that were never acted upon.	Ap 17
17	Suzanne L	Draft a Partners' letter to the ITBC making a formal request for a meeting and then get concurrence from Partners before sending out to the ITBC. The letter will include a purposes statement. (Per discussion with ITBC representative Ervin Carlson and ITBC attorney Majel Russell, the Partners will meet with the ITBC from 8:30 – 11:30 on August 11 th).	Draft letter April 24; letter to ITBC—no date set
18	Suzanne L	NPS will act as lead to send to create a letter or white paper on the SEIS issue in response to NRDC request for supplemental EIS. NPS will begin the draft on behalf of the Partners, then send to the Partners to collect feedback for creating the final response.	No date assigned for completion
19	Pat F Marty Z	Present Neil Anderson email describing RTR Zone 2 actions	For Aug meeting

Meeting summary notes

Due to multiple facilitator activities, the notes presented are not comprehensive but hit some highlights of Partner discussions. For the most part, interested parties are asked to see the IBMP web site (www.ibmp.info) where briefings and other documents created at this meeting are posted.

PARTNER REPORT OUT

Brief reports from the Partners on current on-the-ground operations and developments since the last IBMP meeting. Highlights from these discussions included:

- **APHIS** provided a report on the Bison Quarantine Feasibility Study and reported on sending the first brucellosis free bison to outside the GYA (Wind River Reservation, WY) from quarantine facilities. Wind River Tribe is planning on managing the herd as wildlife. The APHIS briefing statement can be found on IBMP.info.
- **YNP**—Small groups of bison moving outside the Park. Few incidents thus far either North or West side of the Park. Tim Reid noted that upper ridges are windswept and open and that the bison are chasing country as it emerges.
- **DOL**—No capture operations North or West to date. Daily monitoring on-going. Some small groups have moved outside the Park on the North side; some on Horse Butte two weeks ago but returned to the Park. Some bison recently near Duck Creek. All in all minor or no issues; all looks good.
- **FWP**—April 15th is the return date for bison outside the north side of the Park but none are out. One bison harvested in Eagle Creek. Already taking applications for hunting next year due to new law passed by Montana Legislature (see legislative section of this report). Treaty rights decision with Tribes expected in the next 6-9 months.
- **GNF**—No bison out on North or West.

STATUS OF IBMP.INFO

Al Nash provided an update on a test (yet-to-be-deployed) page on IBMP.info that the PIOs created to allow more ready searching and access to IBMP information. They asked for and received impact (positive) from the Partners. The Partners asked questions about the potential for such items as new or improved search capabilities, mapping, near real-time data or reports, feedback from users, and the cost implement such new features. There was also some discussion about eventually moving the website to a third party, particularly as it (if it) moves from a data repository as it is now to (potentially) a more interactive site.

Much discussion centered on potential future changes to IBMP.info to assure IBMP transparency. After the generation of a number of good ideas, it was proposed that we ask the users themselves—via website questionnaire—what change they wanted to see. Steve Merritt was tasked with coming up with a strawman user survey that was discussed on April 8th by the Partners. The Partners provided some line editing of Steve's strawman user survey, then concluded that it would be best to simply allow the PIOs to best define the survey based on the input they heard (the Partner edited survey was forwarded to the PIOs for use in their discussions).

IBMP REPORTS

YNP provided a briefing statement on responding to GAO recommendations. The Park repeated some of the pertinent dates, and noted that it is trying to set up a well organized document, with regular methods for Partner data input, that can be used by other lead agencies in subsequent years without the need to reinvent the wheel. The briefing statement was a repeat of that provided at the Dec 17/18 meetings and can be found at IBMP.info.

GP noted that the Park recommends moving reporting to a two-week schedule. Bi-weekly status updates can be posted on IBMP.info to continue Partner transparency efforts. The lead agency can collate these reports as part of the IBMP Annual Report to Congress. GP also provided a spreadsheet showing the data collected and asked for feedback from the Partners. The Partners provided that feedback the next day, making minor adjustments to the information collected.

It was noted that the reports contain both quantitative and narrative aspects. Narrative aspects are informative and will be continued as part of the new two-week reporting schedule.

ROYAL TETON RANCH AGREEMENT

The RTR agreement was signed in January. The majority (~80%) of the funds have been provided. Partner NGOs are expected to provide the rest of the funds by the end of 2009. Pat Flowers agreed to check with RTR and FWP attorneys to see if the RTR agreement could be posted on-line.

Fencing construction is expected to be complete by mid-September 2009.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

Convening independent groups

Positive statements were made regarding putting the onus on the individual interest parties come together themselves to create solutions to the bison/cattle and brucellosis issues. Also, this process could build understanding between the groups. As a sidelight, it would take up far less Partner people power and funding than other methods of public engagement. Concern was voiced that alienation would result if any ideas coming from were dropped, that selection of the groups represented could be a problem, and that if some groups dropped out they would later come back and say, "This isn't a real consensus, some of the most important players aren't even represented."

Partners might learn public goals from this process simply by observing. A statement was made that it would be HUGE to the Partners if the different parties came together and agreed upon a plan, then brought it to the Partners.

FACA

As opposed to the independently convened groups, convening a FACA group would show real Partner commitment (funds, people power) to the public and to the public process. Some sense that this commitment might be more likely to lead to a solution. Statements from some Partners included a) a belief that FACA (or similar with similar commitment) was the only way to drive watershed change and garner broad public support; b) belief that broad support a belief that politics could not solve the issue because politicians are pulled in too many directions.

How to start a FACA process? One small step, as suggested by one of the Partners, would be to go out and get ideas about potential group charter, outcomes, and commitment.

Jim Bailey from the public made the comment that if the governor creates a state working group then the charter should be the future of bison in Montana.

Institute of Environmental Conflict Resolution (IECR) presentation

Larry Fisher from the IECR made a presentation via phone to the Partners regarding the public engagement collaborative process. Larry's talk was a follow on to his findings presented in November at Chico Hot Springs. Slides from Larry's talk can be found on IBMP.info.

With respect to expectations from a public collaborative engagement process, Larry spoke about the realities of resolution of shared social dilemmas, particularly those such as the bison/cattle/brucellosis conflict that is not likely to ever completely go away.

PF asked if there could be some way that collaboration could resolve some parts of the problem. Larry responded that 1) it all depends on your definition of conflict resolution, and 2) that you must recognize that collaboration is a path to common understanding but not necessarily agreement. Collaboration is more about co-learning or co-struggling with reasonable expectations than it is about consensus.

PF further asked Larry why he sees little chance of consensus. Larry responded that far ends of the bell curve are represented and not likely to give up their goals; that there is some very deep science here that makes the issue far more complex than just bison and cattle. But, Larry added, you can create better working relationships and set more reasonable expectations with common understanding; and you can be more efficient—for example you can identify and narrow the areas of disagreement.

Larry noted that numerous issues are unique to the bison/cattle/brucellosis issue including timing seasonal cycles and the unique role possibilities for the tribes.

PF asked if the governor convened a public working group could the feds be bound by it's decisions. ME and SL said no, not without going through NEPA. But, Larry asked, with a working group plan set forth wouldn't it be easier to justify beginning NEPA.

SL said that FACA requires working group consensus and that agencies are then compelled to abide by the outcome. Larry agreed but also noted that collaborative working groups can have outcomes that include areas consensus and non-consensus—they don't have to agree on everything. It all depends on Congressional scoping of the FACA group.

ME requested examples of state/federal collaborative groups. Larry said that he was aware of such cases, but that he had not worked on them.

Larry recommended FACA (federal) or state or state/federal hybrid model working group and said that it is highly likely to be extremely political. SL noted that the more people involved the more money and time will be needed to achieve results.

Per Larry, possible expectations for an appointed FACA or state/federal hybrid public group:

- 15-30 people
- 2-3 meetings per year (possibly more during the start up phase)
- Need for a capable convener/facilitator (to set protocols, ground rules, agendas, take notes); should be an independent neutral (e.g., the Institute for Conflict Resolution)
- Costs can vary widely
 - Larry suggested a range of \$15,000-50,000 might not be unreasonable for the facilitation aspects.
 - Staff costs: 1-2 staff for data collection, analysis
 - Travel costs: especially if meetings are held distant from participants
 - SL pointed out that there is also a cost of communicating the group's efforts out; Larry noted with website and other info the Institute might charge \$2,000-10,000 per year for this service.
- Time: expect 1-2 years to get going; 2-5 years for real results
- Do you start with a mission? No, Larry says the challenge is creating a mission in the early meetings. (Some discussion came later that even to form a group, the Partners might have to create a "pre-charter.")
- Endpoint: You can put in a sunset/renewal clause that comes into affect based on progress being made
- Action item request for Larry: provide examples of state/federal hybrid collaborative groups including such items as time, resources, costs, what worked/what didn't and why, comparisons to bison issue, etc.

Following Larry's presentation and Partner discussion, the Partner's turned to the public and asked for them to provide their feedback on what they wanted to see in a potential public engagement process. Specifically, the Partners asked the public to address four questions: 1) What process would you select? 2) What would be your/your group's willingness to engage in that public process? 3) What is the shared outcome you would expect and/or desire? 4) Given no budget changes, what would you suggest the Partners drop to accommodate the cost of a new public process around bison/cattle/brucellosis?

Following are selected comments from the public:

- Stephanie Seay (Buffalo Field Campaign [BFC]): Questioned whether Larry Fisher spoke with anyone at BFC (someone said yes, Darrel Geist). Believes that the issue has a broader audience beyond MT. Wants bison to no longer be harassed. Wants to see BFC ideas incorporated. Wants to go outside the IBMP. Statement that the livestock industry is not willing to budge therefore believes for them it is not about the disease. Says BFC definitely will participate.
- Mike Bowersox (BFC)—Speaking as an individual rather than for his organization. Belief that much of comments to date have been lip-service. Partners have no obligation to take public input. Yes, convene broader public group and take their recommendations. Do a supplemental EIS on those recommendations.
- Jim Bailey (Gallatin Wildlife Association [GWA])—Cheapest thing that you can do is rearrange the furniture so that Partners are talking out to the public. Sometimes we can't hear you. Concerned about time (3-5 years) to come to any conclusions from public collaborative process given being over 70 and thus am not willing to give up other methods of applying outside pressure. Leary of this kind of process. Problem with IBMP is the state of MT and the political pressure inherent there. Doesn't feel that stakeholder group will help with other political pressure. If the Governor creates a state working group, the charter should be the future of bison in Montana.
- Glenn Hockett (GWA)—Supports ideas of collaborative group but if structured group is convened wants quick results for on the ground actions. Can't live with the status quo and the timeframes therein. Should be targets—i.e., the Partners should want something done by a certain time and move to act on those goals and collaborative group solutions—it is possible for the collaborative

group to make some stepwise progress. Concern that GWA isn't picked for many groups due to the political process of group selection. Instead invite everyone meet monthly or "a lot". Wants an interest-based group such as was convened in the Madison Valley. If we start where we are then tough to get anywhere in 3-5 years. It would be better to start over with free-roaming bison as the baseline. Likes the idea of a supplemental EIS. Also wants to talk about elk throughout GYA, WY, feed grounds, etc).

- Ervin Carlson (Inter-Tribal Bison Cooperative [ITBC])—ITBC representative. If you really want to start over, begin by giving back the land to the Indians. Prefers sit-down roundtable discussion. Runs large groups (for the ITBC, Blackfeet Council) and knows the difficulties inherent if too many people are involved. ITBC wants to be on the working group. GYIBC fell apart because of territoriality/politics.
- Amy McNamara (Greater Yellowstone Coalition [GYC])—Appreciated some good effort from the Partners this fall but missed the mark on public engagement. Want goals and expectations of the process described at the outset. This will help group know this is time well spent. Of the options, prefers the "hybrid" option. Concerned about the independently convened groups due to lack of legitimacy. Needs to be an inclusive group (larger table rather than smaller). Yes, GYC will engage in the public process. Science/risk management—must respect what the science tells us in making decisions and setting actions. Belief that Partners did not follow/act on all the science that was presented this fall. For process to be successful there has to be more engagement of local landowners. Need to address concerns directly. Concerned about a 3-5 year process. Really bad if group thought their first tangible result would be coming 5 years out. Initial success breeds trust. Would support a supplemental EIS.
- Matt Skoakland (Natural Resources Defense Council [NRDC])—NRDC very willing to participate. Wants group to be inclusive, not exclusive. To be successful the group will require clear goals and objectives.
- Barb Cestero (GYC)—Must be clear about decisions you are working toward. Bite off decisions in increments to show progress and success, which will help the group become more cohesive.

Following public input, the Partners continued to debate the idea of creating a public engagement process. Groups created to deal with grizzly bears and Madison Valley ranchland were cited as good examples for highly inclusive (large) collaborative group structures. While it sounds like chaos, these groups sorted themselves out and those that were the most impassioned/driven came.

It was further stated that the feds call the working group set up procedure "scoping". Anyone can come. Being more inclusive is a way to heal but requires great facilitation. You must deal with conflict straight up.

A statement was made that the 3-5 years Larry mentioned was not until first decision or action. Also, it was noted that the working group would still be a public meeting so anyone could come.

A statement was made that one small step would be for the Partners to go out and get some ideas about a charter for expectations/outcomes and commitments for a public collaborative working group. This became an action item for ME, to ask the IECR.

BISON POPULATION MANAGEMENT / BISON POPULATION ABUNDANCE RANGE

A concern was stated that the IBMP has become a method of population management and that instead, the Partners should consider becoming more proactive. A key point from a public perception standpoint is preventing large population swings, particularly with slaughter is required to manage bison populations.

Statement followed that while risk management activities fall under the IBMP, population management issues do not (leading to the question: can we manage risk via population management?). Another statement was made that bison population levels are an issue for the state of MT, but not nearly as important for YNP. The Park stated that they do not seek to have slaughter be the principal removal method for bison.

Some Partner discussion centered on issues keeping the bison population in check (for example lack of currently available habitat) and on what knobs are available to help control population. A statement was made that hunting has not been successful to date and is not responsive to (able to control) large population swings. Further it was stated that decreasing brucellosis prevalence could lead to increasing tolerance of bison outside YNP. A challenge was made that while possibly true, this increased tolerance is not mandated under the IBMP which was then countered by the thought that yes it could be, through the AM process.

Some thoughts stated that bison populations >3000 increase the propensity/likelihood that bison will move out of the Park. An alternative to mass periodic killing, it was suggested, would be to do yearly culls of 100 animals (or appropriate number) to keep population levels more stable. Counter proposals were made that other ways to deal with increased bison populations include 1) create more habitat outside YNP; 2) use the hunt more rigorously as a method to control bison population; 3) transfer to tribes. Also a statement that more issues than population drive winter migration out of the Park (e.g., snow cover, green up, bison acting as opportunistic foragers).

A statement was made that the Partners face two main issues: disease prevalence and available habitat in MT. Decreasing disease prevalence is fundamental to the IBMP—the decision around remote vaccination of bison only agreement made in the IBMP. A question was asked: is vaccination of bison being done to reduce disease prevalence or transmission?

A statement was made that this discussion was essentially Phase III of the IBMP: tolerance of bison commensurate with long term vaccination by NPS and that the commitment was to decrease sero prevalence but with no target % given. As of today, we have tools (hunt, quarantine, transfer to tribes) that were not included in the 2000 Record of Decision.

DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT (EIS) FOR REMOTE VACCINATION DELIVERY

The Park recognizes remote vaccination as a long term commitment and is continuing its good faith process to get the document completed. The Park has done some difficult, thorough work on the content of the draft EIS. The issue is highly complex, both in the science and political realms.

YNP is completing the draft EIS for its own internal review by May 31, 2009; and then for NPS peer review up through Secretary's Office review by July 31, 2009.

The Park presented an IBMP briefing statement detailing—in draft form for the moment—key activities and schedule for completion of the EIS for possible implementation of remote vaccine delivery to bison. See IBMP.info for this document.

ROLE OF INTER-TRIBAL BISON COOPERATIVE

Partners will make formal request to the ITBC for a meeting. SL will draft the letter and then get concurrence from Partners before sending out to the ITBC. The letter will include a purposes statement. Per discussion with ITBC representative Ervin Carlson and ITBC attorney Majel Russell a decision was reached to set the meeting as a prelude to the next IBMP meeting (Aug 11, 12). The Partners will meet with the ITBC from 8:30 – 11:30 on August 11th and push back the start of the IBMP meeting from its normal start time of noon to 1 PM.

Majel Russell committed to providing SL a list of tribal issues within 1 week, as well as one or more old ITBC bison-related proposals (e.g., from Fort Belknap in ~1994/5 and ~2002/3) that were never acted upon.

A statement was made that the Partners need to have a discussion on their authority to transfer bison to the tribes.

MONTANA LEGISLATION REVIEW

The following bills did not make it out of committee, were tabled, were voted down, or otherwise did not become law during the as-yet-completed session of the Montana Legislature:

- HB 253—Wild Buffalo Recovery & Conservation Act of 2009
- SB 213—FWP to manage wildlife to prevent disease transmission to livestock or humans
- SB 337—prohibits FWP from relocating wild bison as a result of the state/federal bison quarantine feasibility study

- HB 253—Wild Buffalo Recovery & Conservation Act of 2009

SB 184 dealing in part with creating special hunting license application date requirements for bison did pass into law. PF expressed some concern that moving up the application dates for the bison hunt might leave some hunters confused or uninformed and thus they might miss applying. FWP is mounting a get-the-word-out campaign to help hunters know that the application date was changed by the passage of SB 184.

Text and legislative history of each bill can be found at [http://laws.leg.mt.gov/laws09/law0203w\\$.startup](http://laws.leg.mt.gov/laws09/law0203w$.startup).

NATURAL RESOURCES DEFENSE COUNCIL REQUEST FOR SUPPLEMENTAL EIS

SL received a letter from NRDC requesting that a supplemental EIS (SEIS). The 2000 Record of Decision states that the Secretary's of Interior and Agriculture would need to sign off on such a request, so NPS has no power to act on the request. However, NPS will act as lead to send to create a letter or white paper on the SEIS issue. NPS will begin the draft on behalf of the Partners, then send to the Partners to collect feedback for creating the final response. No timeframe for completion of the response was declared.

MONTANA BRUCellosIS MANAGEMENT PLAN TO REGAIN CLASS-FREE STATUS

This new program covers seven counties in south/southwest Montana that have some proximity to the GYA. The plan includes the following: risk evaluation, testing, cattle vaccination (adult and calf), fencing, and traceability. It addresses issues of both bison and elk. Testing can be initiated because of many factors, including because of change of ownership, movement, or high risk herds.

Funding for the Plan comes from HB 2 and HB 3, both of which move the money largely through MSU Extension. First funds are expected to flow to the program on ~May 1 with an application for class-free status to be made May 28th. The status review is expected to take ~60 days from May 28th. If successful, it must then be signed off and posted in the Federal Register. MZ said that DoL is expects the brucellosis-free status should be received by the end of 2009, and possibly sooner.

During the week April 13-17 a group from the USDA will complete full state testing and review the Brucellosis Plan to check for completeness. This action is intended to help assure that the Plan, which has already been extensively reviewed, can proceed forward with the best chance to return Montana to brucellosis-free status.

Text of the State of Montana Brucellosis Action Plan can be found at http://liv.mt.gov/Brucellosis/BAP_Final_011309.pdf.

FUTURE IBMP PARTNER MEETING PLANNING

Partners will meet quarterly for business meetings following the model of the seven Fall 2008 meeting series.

Summer meeting 11,12 Aug 2009 in Helena (location TBD, likely at state capitol) with NPS as lead agency and host. Reasoning for date selection: IBMP annual report due Aug 1; gives Partners 1+ week to consider report, then get together for AM discussions; gives 60 days for agreements before hand over lead agency role to a new agency (DoL) as of Nov 1. Agenda items identified for the August meeting include:

- Agreement on 2008/09 IBMP Annual Report to Congress
- Technical Committee reports on short term opportunities for new AM techniques including
 - Increased habitat
 - Moving quarantined animals to willing tribes
 - Terminal activities: slaughter, tribal hunting and/or relocation, other?
- Action items from action item list earlier in this report
- Consider Parked Item list at the end of this report

Fall meeting 9,10 Nov 2009 in Livingston at the Best Western (tentative; NPS setting up) with DoL as lead agency. Reasoning for date selection: AHA meeting is in late October so that time booked for many; bison hunt starts Nov 15; Veterans' Day holiday is Nov 11; DOL will be the new lead agency as of Nov 1.

Selected comments from public

The notes on comments are not intended to be complete, but rather representative to the best of the facilitator's ability to capture key statements.

APRIL 8TH

- The IBMP is really about the state of MT.
- Belief that the tribes have not been sufficiently consulted.
- Would like to see a return to a new EIS; the current goal of no transmission has not been met.

APRIL 9TH

- Appreciate hearing the Partners talk about the value of habitat.
- Lots of improvement has been made.
- Important that only 2 landowners with 25 and 35 cattle on the North side. How do we manage risk with these two landowners collaboratively? Huge opportunity for AM.
- Don't expect to get to 0% sero-prevalence.
- Please don't assume that the hunt is a failure.
- The concept of averaging out the slaughter by killing a smaller # bison each year will still not be acceptable to the public.
- Really encouraged but have some level of skepticism.
- Both goals of the Plan are failing.
- Like the idea of a new EIS.
- Really encouraged by the discussion about increased habitat.
- Need to recognize that the West side is no big deal; the North side is tougher.
- Hunting is effective and habitat is key.
- Great to hear DoL say that slaughter is not sustainable for population management.
- For August, ask GWA to make a presentation on habitat
- Maintaining migration corridors is key. Let bison move on their own feet. They should not travel by truck.
- We need the livestock industry to accept some responsibility; management issues should not be dropped fully on wildlife.
- ITBC meeting needs more than ½ day.
- Habitat is key.
- Encourage by the two days of meetings. Look forward to hearing what kind of working group will be formed.
- Need to recognize population swings as an opportunity for the state of MT, not as a problem. Hunting is a legitimate activity year-round and a great economic opportunity for the state.
- Lots of suitable habitat is available.
- IBMP is poised for improvement. Incredible opportunities exist right now—please embrace them.
- Heard some encouraging things these two days.
- IBMP is fundamentally flawed. Missing and not discussed in this meeting were 1) genetic diversity and viability; 2) ecological role of bison.
- New EIS is the best way to get the public involved.
- Management has not worked to date.
- Meeting with the ITBC is a great idea.
- Support hunt but need genetic information to assure that hunts are sustainable.
- Thanks provided to each Partner for their progress this week: for willingness to be more flexible and to discuss habitat. GWA is willing to help.
- Consider Land and Conservation funds—we should tap this for habitat.
- GWA has asked for \$10M for habitat; request to Senators currently pending.
- Please publicize ITBC meeting as a public meeting.

- The concept that *decreasing sero-prevalence = increased tolerance for bison outside Park* should be changed to *decreasing risk to cows = increased tolerance for bison outside Park*. We are already doing this because of elk and brucellosis.
- We have many management tools and should use them. For example fencing, cattle vaccination, time of pasture use, non-fertile cattle, voluntary buyouts, move to habitat, possibility of split state status.
- This was the most encouraging IBMP meeting to date.
- Brucellosis plan is inconsistent with state law.
- A signup sheet on the web site that put user on all email lists (press releases etc from each IBMP Partner agency) would be greatly useful.

Parked items

The following items were “parked” by the Partners to be considered during future meetings:

- From this meeting:
 - Partners need to have a discussion on their authority to transfer bison to the tribes (statement made during discussion of August 11th ITBC meeting).
- From previous meetings:
 - Formalize revised Zone 2 map on the North Side as developed by Partner staff on a field visit November 20, 2008. This is to be part of next year’s AM plan—i.e., moving Zone 2 line to more reasonable on-the-ground conditions.