

Public meeting of the Interagency Bison Management Plan Partners



November 20, 2014

Host and Lead Agency for this meeting:

Nez Perce Tribe (contact: Angela Sondena 208-843-2162)

Don Herriott: District Director; Veterinary Services; W. Region
Animal & Plant Health Inspection Service

Leonard Gray: Tribal Council Representative; Confederated Salish
and Kootenai Tribes

Ervin Carlson: President; Inter Tribal Buffalo Council

Sam Sheppard: Region 3 Supervisor; MT Fish, Wildlife, & Parks

Christian Mackay: Executive Officer; Montana Board of Livestock

Marty Zaluski: State Veterinarian; MT Department of Livestock

McCoy Oatman: Treasurer, Nez Perce Tribal Executive Committee

David Hallac: Chief, Yellowstone Center for Resources;

NPS—Yellowstone National Park

Mary Erickson: Forest Supervisor; USFS—Gallatin National Forest



Meeting location:

Chico Hot Springs

Pray, Montana

For room reservations call

(406) 333-4933

Staff—ask for IBMP block

Background

The Federal and State Records of Decision in December 2000 for the Long-Term Interagency Bison Management Plan for Montana and Yellowstone National Park (IBMP) were the result of extensive deliberation and legal proceedings that yielded an unprecedented agreement amongst federal-state agencies (National Park Service, USDA Forest Service, USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Montana Department of Livestock, and Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks). Under the IBMP, these agencies harness their respective skills and operational resources to work cooperatively within an adaptive management framework to conserve a wild, free-ranging bison population while concurrently protecting against transmission of brucellosis from bison to cattle.

Partner agencies are committed to the adaptive management framework of the IBMP, as signified by their signing and publication of an adaptive management plan on December 18, 2008. The plan was the result of a series of seven, two-day working meetings that occurred between August and December, 2008. Tribal members—the Nez Perce, Confederated Salish and Kootenai, and the InterTribal Buffalo Council—were invited to join the deliberative table beginning at the November 2009 Partner meeting.

The IBMP meetings allow the Partners to continue progress toward meeting their shared goal of conserving a wild-free-ranging bison population while concurrently protecting against transmission of brucellosis from bison to cattle. To accomplish this goal the partners plan to meet several times each year in public forum to consider prevailing conditions and review collected data, and then develop and apply short- and long-term adaptive management adjustments to the IBMP.

Thursday, November 20th

**NOTE THAT AGENDA TIMES ARE APPROXIMATE AND FOR PLANNING PURPOSES ONLY—
ACTUAL TIMES MAY VARY DEPENDING ON PARTNER INTERACTION NEEDS**

*Maps to be available at each meeting per Nov09 agreement:
YNP—IBMP zones; APHIS—land ownership; MFWP—elk range*

| | | |
|----------|---|---|
| | | Welcome, meeting overview |
| 8 AM | <i>Scott Bischke, facilitator; all present</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome • Introductions of all present (McCoy Oatman of the NPT is the new Lead Partner) • Meeting logistics, format, process, expectations, any agenda modifications? • Timeline—where we’ve been, where we are going • Partners’ acceptance (?) of last meeting report per Partner Protocols requirement |
| 8:20 | <i>As noted</i> | Field trip debrief |
| | | Status of State of Montana programs |
| 8:30 | <i>Christian Mackay Sam Sheppard</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State of Montana Bison Management Plan • Quarantined bison on Turner lands, including result if RFPs and final disposition of animals • MEPA process for addition of new west side lands open to bison, including MBOL response to MFWP letter or other developments • Governor’s directive not to haze on private property • MDOL future vaccination plans |
| 8:45 | <i>Don Herriot/ Ryan Clarke</i> | National Academy of Sciences Brucellosis in Wildlife in the GYA Study Update |
| 9:00 | <i>Stephanie Gillin with Partner discussion</i> | Discussion and preparation of 2015 Winter IBMP Operations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topics include bison harvest planning; transfer of bison to Tribal groups; shipment of bison for processing; hazing • Process for completing 2014/15 Winter Ops Plan |
| 10:30 | <i>***</i> | Break (here or as called for by the Partners) |
| 10:50 | <i>Nakia Williamson</i> | Bison and the Nez Perce Tribe Nakia is NPT’s Cultural Resource Director |
| 11:50 PM | <i>***</i> | Lunch (on your own) |
| 1:00 PM | <i>Scott Bischke</i> | Call back to order <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introductions of anyone newly present |
| 1:15 | <i>Public</i> | Public comment Typically 2-4 min per person, depending on level of sign-up sheet. The facilitator asks that speakers be respectful. |
| 1:45 | <i>Kyran Kunkel</i> | Bison and the American Prairie Reserve APR bison management goals, challenges, opportunities. Dr. Kunkel is APR’s lead scientist. |
| | | Status of brucellosis-free, post-quarantine bison |
| 2:30 | <i>Jim Stone, Robbie Magnan, Mark Azure</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Past (ITBC): Status of quarantine bison that have already been sent to FT Peck, FT Belknap, including review of their bison programs and their suggestions for a future quarantine program. • Current (MFWP): Status of quarantined bison at Turner Ranch and State of Montana Bison Management Plan (will have discussed under 830 session) |

| | | |
|------|-----------------------------------|---|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Future (NPS): Update on possible quarantine EA by the NPS—status, impetus, & issues with possible movement of bison from YNP (to tribes, to states, inside Montana, outside Montana, etc) |
| 3:15 | *** | Break (here or as called for by the Partners) |
| 3:30 | Courtney Frost, Keith Konen | USFS/GNF North Hebgen update habitat restoration project |
| 4:00 | Jodie Canfield | GNF/MSU project to assess rangeland health in Gardiner Basin |
| 4:15 | Scott, Angela | <p>Planning for Annual report completion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Status • Partner review of progress to date. Open questions? • Schedule, process for completion |
| 4:30 | As noted | <p>Partner briefings/quick updates on ... (plan <=5 min each unless otherwise noted)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sam (also NGOs)—Update on the bison coexistence/fencing project 2. Germaine—status of continuing efforts on bison education brochures 3. Dave—status of lawsuit against helicopter hazing 4. Dave, Sam—status of new EIS to evaluate bison management 5. Ryan—update on Gonacon trials 6. Scott—status of AM change compilation to a single document |
| 4:45 | Partners | <p>What's next? Partner planning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any further action items or tasks to record from today? • Planning for next year—meeting locations and dates • Handover from NPT to NPS as Lead Partner for 2015 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Note, per tradeoff this meeting is being held with NPS as local financial and logistical host. In return, the summer 2015 IBMP meeting will be held in Lapwai ID with NPT acting as local financial and logistical host. |
| 5 PM | *** | Adjourn—please travel safely! |

Meeting facilitator Scott Bischke, MountainWorks (scott@emountainworks.com)

Meeting support materials

Table 1.—Summary of current lawsuits surrounding IBMP as of 4-10-14*

| Defendant | | Sued by (Plaintiff) | Reason | Status | |
|-----------|------------------------------|---|---|--|--|
| 1 | YELL, GNF | Alliance for Wild Rockies | helicopter hazing | NOI to appeal to the 9 th Circuit Court | Finding for the IBMP Partners (state, APHIS, USFS, NPS) in District Court; notice of injunction pending appeal |
| 2 | MFWP(?) | CBU | Effort to classify bison as livestock rather than wildlife under state law | Case closed | Ruling against Citizens for Balanced Use |
| 2 | MDOL | MSGA | deviation from implementing the IBMP on the West Side of YNP | Case closed | Ruling against MSGA |
| 3 | State of MT (MDOL, MFWP) | Farm Bureau, Park County Stockgrowers', Park County | Combined lawsuit against implementation of proposed 2011 adaptive changes in Gardiner Basin | Case closed | Case found for the state of MT; increased tolerance allowed. Case appealed to the State Supreme Court. Only Park County remaining in case before the Supreme Court. Supreme Court rejected, saying for appeal as filed by Park County had not been brought up before District Court. |
| 4 | MFWP | GWA, BFC, others? | privatization of a public resource; i.e., sending previously quarantined YELL bison to Turner | Case closed | Summary judgment for the state |
| 5 | USFS, NPS, APHIS, MDOL, YELL | BFC, WW, GWA, others (?) | over their participation in implementation of IBMP; to stop federal agencies from killing bison | Case closed | Finding for the Federal government in the 9 th Circuit Court |

* Note: This table put together by facilitator generally with "on-the-fly" input from Partners. Thus, specific details may not be exact or may be incomplete.

Table 2.—Annual IBMP calendar, as agreed to in Partner Protocols

| | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Jan 1 | New Lead Partner assumes duties |
| Jan – Jun | Core season for IBMP field operations carried out under the Operations Plan |
| Spring meeting (generally May) | Review of winter operations to date and begin collecting, if applicable, ideas for adaptive management changes for the following winter. |
| Jun-Aug | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) All Partners compile yearly data they are responsible for in preparation for Annual Report. (2) As needed, Partner or subcommittee discussions on proposed adaptive management efforts (i.e., operational changes) to be made for following winter given results of previous winter activities. (3) Develop recommendations for harvests/culling for the following winter. (4) Preparation of draft Operations Plan for the following year. |
| Summer meeting (generally Aug) | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Partner planning for completion of individual duties for Annual Report. (2) Reports of subcommittees, if applicable, on proposed new AM activities and continued collection of ideas for adaptive changes for the following winter. (3) Presentation and discussion of draft Operations Plan for the following year (including recommendations for harvests/culling). |
| Oct/Nov | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Compilation of Partner write-ups of their sections of the Annual Report. (2) Draft Annual Report completed and circulated for review to Partners. (3) Partners discussions (potentially telecons) regarding issues under consideration in draft Operations Plan for the following year. |
| Fall meeting (generally Nov) | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Partners review Draft Annual Report; commit to complete any remaining items by Dec 31. (2) Partners review and potentially agree to proposed adaptive management changes for the upcoming winter (if applicable, not every year will have AM changes). (3) Final Partner discussion and signature of Operations Plan for the following year. |
| Dec | Partners submit any modifications to Draft Annual Report. |
| Dec 31 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Previous year's Annual Report completed and posted to www.ibmp.info. (2) Lead Partner posts revised Operations Plan for the coming winter. |