

## Public meeting of the Interagency Bison Management Plan Partners



**DECEMBER 3, 2019**

**LEAD PARTNER & HOST FOR THIS MEETING: ANIMAL & PLANT HEALTH INSPECTION SERVICE  
(CONTACT—SCOTT BISCHKE, FACILITATOR, [406] 582-4442)**

**P. Ryan Clarke:** Senior Staff Veterinarian, Veterinary Services; Animal & Plant Health Inspection Service

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

**Ervin Carlson:** President; Inter Tribal Buffalo Council

**Mark Deleray:** Region 3 Supervisor; MT Fish, Wildlife, & Parks

**Mike Honeycutt:** Executive Officer; Montana Board of Livestock

**Marty Zaluski:** State Veterinarian; MT Department of Livestock

**Cam Sholly:** Superintendent, NPS—Yellowstone National Park

**Quincy Ellenwood,** Chairman of the Nez Perce Tribe Fish & Wildlife Commission

**Mary Erickson:** Forest Supervisor; USFS—Custer-Gallatin National Forest



Meeting location:  
**Holiday Inn West,  
West Yellowstone, MT**

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For room reservations call  
(406) 646-7365.

Special rates available for  
Partners & staff (ask for the  
“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 as Partners 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 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.

## Tuesday, December 3<sup>rd</sup>

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

*Note: maps to support meeting are available online at [ibmp.info/library.php](http://ibmp.info/library.php)*

Start	Speaker	Topic
7:30	All	<b>Room opens</b> Coffee and tea provided
8:00	Scott Bischke, facilitator; all present	<b>Welcome, meeting overview</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introductions of all present</li> <li>• Meeting logistics, format, process, expectations, any agenda modifications?</li> <li>• A brief IBMP timeline</li> <li>• Verification of Partner acceptance of last meeting report</li> </ul>
8:20	Rebecca Frye	<b>Bear safety and bison carcasses resulting from hunting</b> A report back from an action item from last meeting addressing the question: How many carcasses are too many when considering both human and bear safety?
8:30	1) Michael Thom 2) BCC, GYC, Steve Primm	<b>Improving IBMP effectiveness topic of agreed interest: Improving safety, quality of the north side hunt/improving boundary issues.</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Report on action item from last meeting to compile, including in map format, all regulations from all groups impacting North Side hunting</li> <li>2) Partner-invited presentation from BCC and GYC regarding their findings on potential methods for dealing with carcasses using a dumpster &amp; composting management strategy. Could such a strategy be employed as an IBMP management tool?</li> </ol>
9:30	1) Mary Erickson, 2) Tom McDonald	<b>Improving IBMP effectiveness topic of agreed interest: Improve utilization of expanded bison habitat, especially in new West side tolerance area.</b> Topics to include, but not limited to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Discussion—as noted at Jul 31 IBMP meeting—of creating a subcommittee to develop a potential habitat manipulation plan for the West Side. Potential group to be created could a) make use of Dr. Marlowe recommendations, b) include an NGO rep(s); 2) proposal for all hunt agencies to temporarily close off bison hunting in the Taylor Fork expansion area until a population is found there that can withstand or needs hunting pressure</li> </ol>
9:40	***	<b>Break (here or as called for by the Partners)</b>
10:00	As noted	<b>Improving IBMP effectiveness topic of agreed interest: Bison quarantine and translocation.</b> Topics to include three updates, if any, plus a discussion item: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Update:</b> (Chris Geremia) Bison quarantine at Stephens Creek</li> <li>2. <b>Update:</b> (APHIS) Bison transfers to Fort Peck</li> <li>3. <b>Update:</b> (ITBC) Bison status at Fort Peck</li> <li>4. <b>Discussion:</b> (RC to kickoff) Given recent changes, including APHIS commitment to maintain presence in Gardiner Basin, what is the future of quarantine as an IBMP management tool? &lt;&lt; Partners requested this item be added to the Dec 3 agenda at their Apr &amp; Jul meetings. Issues mentioned included: a) What does the future look like? b) What roles will each Partner play? c) Who funds the quarantine program? d) Where is it located? e) How will the flow of animals work? (e.g., Where held, tested, &amp;/or moved? How many? Bottlenecks?) &gt;&gt;</li> </ol>
10:20	Brant Schumaker, DVM, PhD U of Wyoming	<b>Recent developments in <i>Brucella</i>-related research</b> Including the intended use of the newly developed PCR (polymerase chain reaction) technique for DNA testing and potential uses for Yellowstone bison study
11:20	Mark Deleray	<b>Human impact on bison behavior</b> Partners requested this update be added to their Dec 3 meeting agenda following Julie Cunningham's Jul 31 presentation about the impact of hunting on elk behavior.
11:30	NPS	<b>Report NPS bison count and removal recommendations</b> Presentation only without Q&A. Discussion to follow lunch.
12	***	<b>Lunch (on your own)</b>

1:15 PM	Public	<p><b>Call back to order / Introductions of anyone newly present</b> (Scott Bischke)  <b>Public comment</b> -- Typically 2-4 min per person, depending on level of sign-up sheet. The facilitator asks that speakers be respectful.</p>
1:45	Partners, as shown	<p><b>Completing the 2019/20 Winter Operations Plan</b>  <b>* Brief review of current status, issues in creating Winter Ops Plan (RC, 10 min max)</b>  <b>* Partner discussion on completing 2019/20 Winter Ops Plan (balance of time)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify issues</li> <li>• Develop consensus on how to handle any issues</li> <li>• If unable to create consensus on any issues, develop plan on how to answer those issues (requires problem definition, responsible parties, timeline for completion)</li> </ul> <p>&lt;&lt; For reference: <b>Winter Ops Plan outline</b> &gt;&gt;  pg — heading (<i>topics of note; there are others</i>)</p> <hr style="border-top: 1px dashed black;"/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 — Introduction (<i>9 objectives of the IBMP</i>)</li> <li>• 3 — Jurisdiction and Legal Mandates (<i>Tribal hunting updates?</i>)</li> <li>• 3 — Media Relations/Public Information (<i>Tribal additions?</i>)</li> <li>• 3 — Organization (<i>Table 1 is Partner activities matrix</i>)</li> <li>• 4 — Managing Bison Abundance (<i>population, removals—hunt, trap, also see p11</i>)</li> <li>• 4 — Monitoring &amp; Reporting of Bison Movements &amp; Management Activities (<i>safety</i>)</li> <li>• 5 — Bison Distribution (<i>as described in AM Plan, geography, hazing, #s, dates</i>)</li> <li>• 6 — Hunting Bison (<i>5 or 4 or ? tribes, season dates &amp; guidelines</i>)</li> <li>• 8 — Hunt-Trap Coordination Protocol (<i>total removal goal and interim goals by date</i>)</li> <li>• 10 — Hazing Bison (<i>methods, responsibilities, coordination</i>)</li> <li>• 11 — Capturing Bison (<i>why, how, coordinate w/hunt, testing, removal, + next item</i>)</li> <li>• 12 — Shipment to Processing Facilities (<i>transfer to Tribes for slaughter, vaccination, testing, research</i>)</li> <li>• 13 — Lethal Removal of Bison — Risk Management (<i>safety</i>)</li> <li>• 13 — Vaccinating Cattle (<i>vaccination goal for north and west sides</i>)</li> <li>• 14 — Safety (<i>IBMP personnel, private parties</i>)</li> <li>• 14 — Access/Approval to Operate on National Forest System Land (<i>how to</i>)</li> <li>• 14 — Assurance of General Security (<i>facilities, field operations</i>)</li> <li>• 14 — Maintenance of Records and Accountability for Bison Removal (<i>MDOL, NPS</i>)</li> <li>• 15 — Adaptive Management Review, Evaluation, and Modification (<i>updating Plan</i>)</li> </ul>
3:00	***	<b>Break</b> (here or as called for by the Partners pending Winter Ops discussion)
3:20		<p><b>Planning for 2018/19 Winter Operations Plan (continued)</b>  <b>** Close this topic with agreed upon process, timeline, and responsibilities for completing the 2018/20 Winter Ops Plan</b></p>
4:00	As noted	<p><b>Status of ongoing activities related to Yellowstone bison and brucellosis</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Mark—update, if any, on addition of new treaty hunting tribes</li> <li>2. Mary—update on CGNF Forest Plan revision effort</li> <li>3. Mary, Cam—status of new lawsuit regarding Gardner Basin hunting</li> <li>4. Shana Drimal &lt;<i>if anything new to report</i>&gt;—update on bison coexistence/fencing project</li> <li>5. Partners and staff—questions on status of other ongoing activities?</li> </ol>
4:30	Scott Bischke	<p><b>Administrative items: Annual Report timeline, 2020 meetings</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Timeline and process for completing 2019 IBMP Annual Report</li> <li>2. Deciding on 2020 IBMP meetings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ First recall discussion considering a change to the IBMP annual calendar to drop summer meeting, or make it a field trip, and a 2-day fall meeting (or other options)</li> <li>○ Where/when: Spring ____/____ Summer (?) ____/____ Fall ____/____</li> </ul> </li> <li>3. Change of Lead Partner <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Verifying Tribal leadership process for 2020</li> <li>○ Thanks to Ryan and chance for his final words</li> </ul> </li> </ol>
5 PM	***	<b>Adjourn</b> —please travel safely! (help with chair stacking appreciated)

## Meeting support materials

**Table 3.—Annual IBMP calendar**

<b>Jan 1</b>	New Lead Partner assumes duties
<b>Jan - Jun</b>	Core season for IBMP field operations carried out under the Operations Plan
<b>Spring meeting (usually Apr/May)</b>	Review of winter operations to date and begin collecting, if applicable, ideas for adaptive management changes for the following winter.
<b>May-Aug</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) Annual Hunt Managers’ meeting (IBMP Partners + tribes exercising treaty hunting rights).</li> <li>(2) All Partners compile yearly data they are responsible for in prep for Annual Report.</li> <li>(3) 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.</li> <li>(4) Preparation of draft Winter Operations Plan for the following year. Lead Partner sends request to Partners to provide expected changes from previous year’s Winter Ops Plan.</li> </ol>
<b>Summer meeting (generally Aug)</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) Partner planning for completion of individual duties for Annual Report.</li> <li>(2) Reports of subcommittees, if applicable, on proposed new AM activities and continued collection of ideas for adaptive changes for the following winter.</li> <li>(3) Presentation and discussion of draft Winter Operations Plan for the following year. Focus is on those items that will or might change (e.g., to accommodate an adaptive management change).</li> </ol>
<b>Aug/Sep</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) NPS completes annual bison count and classifications. NPS develops models to evaluate the status of the population and provides recommendations for bison conservation and management. The status evaluation and associated recommendations are sent to the other Partners and posted on <a href="http://ibmp.info">ibmp.info</a>.</li> <li>(2) Lead Partner sends draft (showing markup) Winter Ops Plan to Partners. Goal is for the draft to be largely complete, with the exception of ramifications of NPS removal recommendations (discussed at fall meeting).</li> </ol>
<b>Oct/Nov</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) Compilation of Partner write-ups of their sections of the Annual Report.</li> <li>(2) Draft Annual Report completed and circulated for review to Partners.</li> <li>(3) Partners discussions (potentially telecons) regarding issues under consideration in draft Operations Plan for the following year.</li> </ol>
<b>Fall meeting (generally Nov)</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) Partners review Draft Annual Report; commit to complete any remaining items by Dec 31.</li> <li>(2) Partners review and potentially agree to proposed adaptive management changes for the upcoming winter (if applicable, not every year will have AM changes).</li> <li>(3) Final Partner discussion and signature of Operations Plan for the following year.</li> </ol>
<b>Dec</b>	Partners submit any modifications to Draft Annual Report.
<b>Dec 31</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) Previous year’s Annual Report completed and posted to <a href="http://www.ibmp.info">www.ibmp.info</a>.</li> <li>(2) Lead Partner posts revised Operations Plan for the coming winter to <a href="http://www.ibmp.info">www.ibmp.info</a>.</li> </ol>

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