

Public meeting of the Interagency Bison Management Plan Partners



April 10, 2014

**Host and Lead Agency for this meeting:
Intertribal Buffalo Council (contact: Jim Stone 605-394-9730)**

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

Pat Flowers: Region 3 Supervisor; MT Fish, Wildlife, & Parks

Christian Mackay: Executive Officer; Montana Board of Livestock

Marty Zaluski: State Veterinarian; MT Department of Livestock

Brooklyn Baptiste: Chairman of the Natural Resources Subcommittee
of the Nez Perce Tribal Executive Committee

Dan Wenk: Superintendent; NPS—Yellowstone National Park

Mary Erickson: Forest Supervisor; USFS—Gallatin National Forest



Meeting location:

Homewood Inn

1023 Baxter Lane, Bozeman, MT

*For room reservations call
(406) 587-8180*

*Special rates available for
Partners & staff (dinner,
breakfast included)*

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, April 10th

**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*

8 AM	<i>Scott Bischke, facilitator; all present</i>	<p>Welcome, meeting overview</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome • Introductions of all present (note Leonard Gray new CSKT lead) • 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>Pat Flowers Christian Mackay</i>	<p>Status of State of Montana programs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Status of previously quarantined bison on Turner lands ○ Status of State of Montana Bison Management Plan ○ MEPA process for addition of new west side lands open to bison
8:45	<i>All Partners</i>	<p>Discussion and update on 2014 Winter IBMP Operations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Bison harvest outcome to date (state, tribal) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Discussion of safety concerns associated with gut piles, bears, small spaces ▪ Discussion to include Carl Scheeler, Wildlife Program Manager, Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation ○ Transfer of bison to Tribal groups ○ Ship and slaughter of bison
9:45	<i>***</i>	Break (here or as called for by the Partners)
10:00	<i>Dave Hallac/ PJ White</i>	Possible quarantine EA by the NPS
10:30	<i>Dave Hallac, Pat Flowers, C. McKay</i>	Announcement of new EIS to evaluate bison management
11:00	<i>Leroy Little Bear (& others)</i>	The linnii Initiative
12:00 PM	<i>***</i>	Lunch—The ITBC is supplying a bison lunch for Partners, staff, and the public here in the Homewood Inn atrium (1st floor). Caterer — Doug Hert and the Bountiful Table
1:10 PM	<i>Scott Bischke</i>	<p>Call back to order</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introductions of anyone newly present
1:15	<i>Public</i>	<p>Public comment</p> <p>Typically 2-4 min per person, depending on level of sign-up sheet. The facilitator asks that speakers are respectful.</p>
1:45	<i>John Treanor</i>	<p>Potential economics study</p> <p>Overview of a proposal from Drs. Randal Rucker & Myles Watts of the MSU's Department of Agricultural Economics for a cost analysis of brucellosis management scenarios and the cost of developing a new vaccine.</p>
2:45	<i>***</i>	Break (here or as called for by the Partners)

	<i>Ervin Carlson (intro)</i>	Per Partner Protocols: Opportunity for introducing potential adaptive management changes.
3:05	(1) <i>NPS/ Partners</i> (2) <i>Scott Bischke</i>	(1) <i>Proposed AM Change:</i> Addition of a monitoring metric to management action 1.4A that provides the numbers of bison harvested by public hunters. (Can Partners complete this via informal/ no signature process?) (2) <i>If time available:</i> AM change compilation to a single document—request for Partner review
3:30	<i>As noted</i>	<p>Seroprevalence reduction—a continuing discussion Possible topics of discussion follow. Partners will determine if they will attempt to cover all of these topics, or a subset of them.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. (update) status of bison remote vaccination EIS (NPS) 2. (update) potential new mandate for brucellosis control in wildlife (APHIS) 3. (update) potential MDOL ramp up on bison vaccination (MDOL); response to questions posed at Nov2013 meeting 4. (focus) brucellosis suppression as an IBMP goal, including discussion of overall value of seroprevalence as a tool for achieving twin IBMP goals (all) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Can we remove some management action possibilities from shared Partner consideration? If yes, ramification to AM Plan?
4:15	<i>As noted</i>	<p>Partner briefings/quick updates on ... (plan <=5 min each unless otherwise noted)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cavin—Update on the North Hebgen habitat restoration project and efforts of the habitat improvement working group 2. Sam (also NGOs)—Update on the bison coexistence/fencing project 3. Germaine—status of continuing efforts on bison education brochures (10 min) 4. Pat, Christian—status of lawsuit regarding expanded bison tolerance on North Side/Gardiner Basin 5. Christian—status of lawsuit against deviation from IBMP on the West Side of YELL 6. Dan—status of lawsuit against helicopter hazing 7. Rebecca—update on Gonacon trials 8. Scott—AM change compilation to a single document—request for Partner review
4:45	<i>Partners</i>	<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 meeting — desire for CSKT field trip? If yes, when, where, what?
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 12-10-13*

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	MDOL	MSGGA	deviation from implementing the IBMP on the West Side of YNP	Case closed	Ruling against MSGGA
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.