

Public meeting of the Interagency Bison Management Plan Partners

August 11, 2010

Montana Fish, Wildlife, & Parks Regional Office; Bozeman, MT

2009/10 Lead Agency: Montana Board of Livestock

Meeting Host: Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks

Contact: Andrea Jones 406.994.6931

IBMP Signatory Representatives

Mary Erickson—Forest Supervisor, Gallatin National Forest

Pat Flowers—Region 3 Supervisor, Montana Fish, Wildlife, & Parks

Suzanne Lewis—Superintendent, Yellowstone National Park

Christian Mackay—Executive Officer, Montana Board of Livestock

Brian McCluskey—Director, Veterinary Services, W. Region Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

Marty Zaluski—State Veterinarian, Montana Department of Livestock

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.

The 2010 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 (e.g., Apr., Aug., Nov.) in 2010 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.

Wednesday, August 11th

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

8:30 AM	Scott Bischke, facilitator; all present	<p>Welcome, meeting overview</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introductions of all present • Meeting logistics, format, process, expectations, agenda modifications (?) • Timeline—where we've been, where we are going
8:45	Partners	<p>Open discussion to share with each other and the general public what was learned during the field trip to local landowners on the West Side. Possible discussion topics: Process of the day; which landowners visited; what locations on the ground; how are their operations impacted by IBMP management; how do their operations impact bison; what would landowner like to see changed; what possible areas (e.g., turn out time, fencing) might the landowner be willing to work with Partners on.</p>
9:45	All Partners (BoL leads)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Debrief operational 2010 season • Discussion of AM changes for 2010/11 • Status and needs for 2009/10 reporting to Congress • Discussion of new Administrative lead (GNF) for 2010/11
10:15	***	<i>Break (here or as called for by Partners)</i>
10:30	All Partners	<i>Continued from above</i>
12:15	***	<i>Lunch</i>
1:15	Brian	<p>Presentation: How APHIS use risk assessment and decision analysis to arrive at management decisions</p> <p>Status of letter sent out to County Commissioners on IBMP Partner willingness to attend public meetings held by the counties. Letter stated Partners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • willingness of Partners to periodically attend county commission meetings and provide IBMP status update (possibly combined Park, Madison, Gallatin) • Request that County Commissioners consider possibility of convening CWG • Request that counties provide a legal case for their standing with the IBMP • Best time for Partner reporting would be early June
2:15	MDOL	<p><i>Partner briefings/update/discussion on...</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Steve—verify that Conrad instituted RSS feed on IBMP.info 2. Ryun—status of weekly bull bison reports 3. Pat—verify that RTR operations checklist (signed last meeting) changed date for return to Yellowstone from April 15th to May 1st 4. Christian—status of MT Stockgrowers lawsuit regarding May 15th turn back date for Horse Butte 5. Mary, PJ—status of lawsuit from environmental organizations & others to stop federal agencies from killing bison 6. Brian—update on the pending interim rule that will revise the current brucellosis program 7. Pat—status of transfer of quarantine animals to Turner and pending lawsuit 8. Pat—Complete review of fencing option along the highway (~1 mile) to push bison toward HB & away from S Fk of the Madison; meet w/ fencing contractor to assess feasibility 9. PJ—status of draft EIS for remote brucellosis vaccination?
2:45	As noted	
3:15	***	<i>Break (here, or as called for by partners)</i>
3:30	Partners	<p>Update on status Citizen's Working Group. Is there a potential to start a CWG in conjunction with the remote vaccination work? Open questions and action items from last meeting: could the tribes (action item #11) or the County Commissioners (action items #7) act as the convener?</p>
4:15	Partners Tom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action item / task list planning • Planning for next meeting (Polson, CSKT hosting) and beyond (where, when, meeting host?)
4:30	Public	Public comment period (4 min per person, depending on level of sign-up sheet)
5	***	<i>Adjourn</i>