

# Summary Report from the Interagency Bison Management Plan Meeting August 6, 2015



**First draft presented 10 August 2015 by meeting facilitator Scott Bischke**

The following summary report reflects activities at the August 6, 2015 meeting of the Interagency Bison Management Plan (IBMP) Partners, held at the Clearwater Casino and Resort in Lapwai, ID. This report comes from the notes of facilitator Scott Bischke<sup>1</sup>. The report will be marked “Draft” until formal Partner agreement before the start of their next meeting. The eight Partner attendees were Don Herriott (APHIS), Leonard Gray (CSKT), Rob Tierney (MBOL), Martin Zaluski (MDOL), Sam Sheppard (MFWP), Quincy Ellenwood (NPT), Daniel Wenk (NPS-YNP), and Mary Erickson (USFS-CGNF). Partner ITBC was not in attendance. In addition to those at the deliberative table, ~20 staff members from across IBMP organizations and ~30 members of the public were present at various times during the day.

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## Action items identified

**Table 1.—Action items identified during this meeting**

#	Who	What	By when
1	SB	Post May 2015 meeting notes to IBMP.info as final	ASAP
2	Carl Scheeler	Convene four sovereign tribal entities to discuss possible alternative hunt management scenarios for Beattie Gulch that would be acceptable to all tribal entities.	Return thoughts to Partners at least two weeks before next IBMP
3	CSKT, NPT	Both the NPT and the CSKT requested one month to report back to NPS regarding their review of the removal recommendation.	By Sep 15
4	NPS	NPS stated that it would turn around the first draft of the 2016 Winter Ops Plan within two weeks of hearing back from the CSKT and NPT (see action item 3)	By Oct 1
5	SB	The facilitator was instructed to send out a request for Partners to fill in information from the current AM Plan where their group or agency is called out as the lead for a specific management action.	In Sep

## August 5<sup>th</sup> salmon dinner

The Nez Perce Tribe provided a pre-meeting dinner mixer for Partners, staff, and members of the public. The dinner included ceremonial Chinook salmon caught by Nez Perce fishermen in the Columbia River. The Tribe reserves the salmon for use at special occasions.

Tribal Chaplain Leotis McCormack provided the opening invocation in the native Nez Perce tongue, followed by a welcome to the ~30 people assembled. He noted that while the next day's meeting would likely be filled with strong ideas, that tonight was about fellowship. May we come together in friendship, he said, to better understand each other. Quincy Ellenwood, a member of the Nez Perce Tribal Executive Committee (NPTEC), also provided a welcome and some opening thoughts. He said that one should always keep your people in your mind and in your heart. Another NPTEC member, Mary Jane Miles, described catching her first salmon, and how she gave it to her Mother because among the Nez Perce, the first catch is always given away.



*Figure 1.—Nez Perce Tribal Executive Committee member Quincy Ellenwood welcomes Partners, staff, and the public to a pre-meeting salmon dinner put on by the Tribe. The dinner included ceremonial Chinook salmon caught by Nez Perce fishermen in the Columbia River.*

## **Aug 6<sup>th</sup> IBMP meeting opening prayer and welcome**

Bill Picard, Vice Chair of the Nez Perce Tribal Executive Committee, provided an opening prayer in the native Nez Perce tongue for the meeting, followed by a welcome and some opening remarks. Bill asked that the group work for the good of the people. He noted that the NPT were large enough tribe that they were not confederated with other tribes but instead were organized unto themselves.

Bill said that it is important to realize that past treaties are often incorrectly stated as giving the NPT rights; instead he said those treaties have taken away rights (for example, in some cases the freedom for tribal members to hunt and fish at their will). In looking back to the 1800s and treaties signed therein, Bill asked those in the room who only speak English to consider how easy it would be for them to negotiate in the language of the Nez Perce, yet that is exactly what the Nez Perce of the time were asked to do in English. But regardless, a thought that should be kept in mind is that the treaty of 1855 pre-dates the establishment of YNP.

Bill described the war of 1877, wherein the Nez Perce multiple times out maneuvered the US Army only eventually to surrender in Montana's Bear Paws. Chief Joseph did not say "I am beaten" upon surrender, Bill said, but instead that he was worried about his family and his people. Some went with Whitebird to Canada. For us these are not just interesting people or this is not just a "good story", Bill said, instead these are our families, names we live with today. I am a descendent of the Whitebird band, he noted.

Today people hunt for trophies for the wall, he said. But the Nez Perce hunt for survival. I can remember my grandfather would say if you were holding up a fish to show it off, "Quit playing with your food."

The Nez Perce, Bill said, are known for their good hearts and their willingness to work with people. Without the Nez Perce, he said, Lewis and Clark would have died. Bill finished with a long story about the fighting prowess of the Nez Perce that left the room in laughter. You think better, do better when you take some time to laugh, he concluded with a smile.



Figure 2.—Vice Chair of the Nez Perce Tribal Executive Committee, Bill Picard, provided an opening prayer for the meeting, followed by a welcome to the Partners, staff, and public.

## **Agreeing to previous meeting minutes; ITBC absence**

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The facilitator asked if there were any objections or changes to the draft meeting report from the May 2015 IBMP meeting, and noted the report has been available in draft for review since shortly after the May meeting. No objections were brought forth. Thus the facilitator, per Partner Protocols, is to post the May 2015 meeting notes to IBMP.info as “final” (\*\* action item 1).

The facilitator also recognized that Partner ITBC was not in attendance at this meeting and that the Partner Protocols describe what to do in such a case. The following is an excerpt from the Partner Protocols:

*... Each of the nine Partner organizations has one vote in multi-agency decisions. The Partners seek consensus (100%) for all decisions that they make as a group. For face-to-face meetings, votes are done with simple thumbs up or down, or in response to the question, “Are there any objections to the proposal on the table?” No objections equals consensus; i.e., consensus can be achieved if a Partner chooses to abstain from a vote. If a Partner is not represented, then it is assumed that they have no objection and hence consensus can still be achieved....*

## **Formative Nez Perce oral traditions and the relationship with bison**

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Josiah Blackeagle Pinkham, a Nez Perce Ethnographer and part of the Nez Perce Tribe Cultural Resources Program, spoke of Nez Perce oral traditions as a way that the tribe keeps their history alive. He started by saying that it is always a challenge to condense 10,000 years into an hour long presentation (laughter), but he would do his best!

Josiah provided a number of stories integral to the Nez Perce culture. One of those—turtle and bull—speaks to the value of working as a team and working intelligently, a point mirrored by the day’s IBMP gathering. Another, Wiitmipn’iime, is the Nez Perce creation story. The animal people came together and knowing that man was coming, and that he had few skills and would surely die, had to decide what to do. Starting with the salmon, who said it would every year give up its body to feed humans, one-by-one many of the animal people offered something of themselves or their knowledge so that humans could survive and thrive. That story, Josiah said, helps keep the tribe grounded in the idea that they are at the bottom of the food chain not the top, that they require the animal people to survive. It is also a story that helps link them to their elder people.

In another story, Haacwal Peleeyniin, a lost boy is raised by grizzlies. When the boy inevitably returns to the human world, he takes knowledge to the people about gathering foods but is sworn by the grizzlies to keep secret a special trail network which they have shared with him. He honors this pledge, but eventually

reveals some of what he knows of the trails and the humans take advantage of that knowledge to the bear's detriment.

In the story of Coqoycoqoy, a buffalo teaches a child how to make a buffalo hide teepee. Josiah had a buffalo hide that he invited all to come up and heft and feel. He subsequently discussed how teepees are put up, the teamwork required, and again reinforced the importance of collaboration in working toward shared goals.

Josiah closed by describing both the spatial and temporal extent of the Nez Perce territory. The tribe ranged from the Willamete River in Oregon to Yellowstone National Park. Josiah's full presentation can be found at <http://www.ibmp.info/Library/20150806/20150806.php>.



*Figure 3.—Josiah Pinkham addressed the IBMP Partners, staff, and public regarding Nez Perce oral traditions and the tribe's relationship to bison.*

## **Considering new paradigms for Yellowstone bison and habitat management**

Tribal entities were invited to share philosophies, ideas, and recommendations for managing Yellowstone bison and their habitats given current conditions.

### **CSKT**

Steph Gillin noted that CSKT holds reserved rights under the Stevens treaty. She said that for the CSKT the primary foci are

- Habitat improvement—recall that such work benefits other wildlife along with bison
- Expanded use of existing habitat
- Restoring fire on the landscape—the CSKT would like to see trials made with limited burns with follow on study of how the bison use these regenerating areas. SG suggesting returning to the work of Dr. Fuhlendorf of Oklahoma State University, as presented at the July 2013 IBMP meeting and also existing experience with burned landscapes near West Yellowstone. The CSKT believe, Steph said, that if you burn it they will come.

In addition, the CSKT see several other topics of importance with respect to YELL bison management:

- Hunting should be the primary method of population control.
- The CSKT recommend not shipping bison out of the YNP area for processing. They believe there is too much loss of meat. Instead, one option would be to have terminal pastures for harvest on site resulting in less waste of meat.
- Movement of northern herd to the central herd

- Restoring habitat in and around the Beatty Gulch area
- Working with cooperating agencies to help resolve issues in Beatty Gulch
- The CSKT would like to be able to retrieve hunted, shot bison that return into the Park before dying. This activity, they recognize, might be decided case-by-case, and they would expect that the hunter would be required to have a warden accompany them into the Park.

Stephanie’s full presentation can be found at <http://www.ibmp.info/Library/20150806/20150806.php>

## **NPT**

Quincy Ellenwood, Chair of Natural Resources Committee NPTEC, provided thoughts on Yellowstone bison management from the NPT perspective (note: Quincy’s presentation did not include slides). Quincy said that a driving force in the NPT approach is how are we going to listen to our ancestors. The meat is very important to us, he said, even the DOI recognizes bison meat as the best natural protein you can get.

When will we listen to the bison, Quincy asked, and let them roam free? Why are they considered to be less important than livestock? We want to have more land for the bison to roam in and more land for our people to hunt on.

We don’t agree with the proposed alternatives for hunting in Beattie Gulch (see later in this report), Quincy said. If you close the Beattie Gulch area, then it seems like an expansion of YNP. Are these alternatives policy or science driven? Where did the population goal of 3500 come from? Was it because of policy or science?

We believe that actions should involve the best science and respect the needs of wild bison, encompass population dynamics, habitat use, and migration needs; plus value Native cultural hunting traditions. There should be no hazing, and no ship and slaughter. Hunting should be the only control on population. We support habitat restoration.

Any changes, the NPT believe, should be done on a federal level, not a state level. This should be government-to-government negotiations.

## **DISCUSSION**

### ***Treaty hunting tribes***

The non-Partner, treaty hunting tribes were asked to weigh in with their thoughts before opening the discussion to Partners and staff.

*CTUIR.*—Carl Scheeler added several thoughts from the CTUIR perspective. He said that Beattie Gulch is a habitat issue, with artificial lines that allow and prevent hunting. We need improved habitat quality both inside and outside the Park. The CTUIR like the idea of reintroducing or using fire on the landscape. With respect to the question of when cattle became more important than bison, Carl offered that it was an issue of forage allocation and that the focus on cattle has resulted in tribal access to a treaty-reserved resource. The CTUIR support both access to bison that go into the Park after being shot, and to discussing possible tribal hunting in the Park. They recognize Beattie Gulch as a bottleneck and that the problems inherent in the bottleneck (e.g., public safety, firing line) need to be resolved.

*ShoBan.*—Leander Watson of the Shoshone-Bannock stated that the tribes want no ship and slaughter. They disagree with an artificial limit to population of Yellowstone bison and believe there should be no population goal at all, he said. The genetic connectivity of the Northern and Central herds should be acknowledged and maintained. We want to harvest animals, he said.

### ***Partner discussion***

The Partners spent an extended time discussing the ideas presented on the floor by the four tribal groups present. The following summary groups the items discussed into topics that received repeated coverage. Note that later in the day the Partners had a session specifically about Beattie Gulch (see section titled, “Update on hunt issues related to the Beattie Gulch area”), though much of this discussion centered on the area, as well.

- *Private property in Beattie Gulch area.*—Could these owners be bought out? If not, could we work with land trusts or similar to buy as yet open private lands to stop further development and keep as much land as possible open for bison migration and hunting? Could we solve the bottleneck at Beattie Gulch by purchasing the lands from the county road to the Yellowstone River?
- *On boundaries.*—We have too many boundaries, both in time and in space. These boundaries are artificial and as such, can be changed. But a counterpoint is that those boundaries are needed to protect public safety, to manage bison populations, to address current law, and more.
- *Whose issue is it?*—On multiple occasions the point was brought forward that hunters, particularly tribal hunters, are always the ones that have to give something up. The statement that private landowners in the Beattie Gulch area don't have to give anything up was made several times, as well as that those private landowners need to recognize that they chose to be there whereas the hunters have effectively nowhere else to go.
- *Hunting in the Park.*—Allowing hunting in the Park was mentioned a number of times (by tribes and by state of Montana) as a way to aid in hunter harvest, alleviate the Beattie Gulch bottleneck issues, decrease public safety concerns, meet tribal hunting needs and desires, still allow hunting when mild winter weather does not force bison out of the Park, and so on. As he has before, DW noted the public outcry that would result, and that no hunting in YNP is not a “policy”, as many keep saying, but a law. He said that he does not have decision authority as Park Superintendent to allow hunting in YNP. The only way to move ahead with hunting in the Park is for the tribes to enter into government-to-government negotiations. The first step is for the those who have suggested this action (tribes and the state of Montana) to formally request (in a letter to the National Park Service) that hunting be allowed in the park (MZ noted that he agreed, any petition from the state to this effect would have to come from the governor, not the Montana State Veterinarian). A discussion about retrieval inside the Park is possible, DW said. But also we need to look in three or four directions—we also need to consider starting to treat bison like wildlife that are free to roam as they please.
- *Moving the hunt further from the border of YNP.*—As already established, issues at the North side boundary, particularly in the Beattie Gulch area, include the firing line (safety, resulting in bison returning to inside the Park), gut piles, public safety, and more. Hunting at the park boundary prevents dispersal in to the rest of the area available for bison outside the park until hunting concludes.
- *Forest Service.*—Has actively retired grazing permits of Forest Service lands so that is not an impediment to bison movement onto those lands outside the Park. The USFS sees two goals that need to be balanced: doing right by the tribes and maintaining public safety.
- *Bison population.*—Many comments were put forward with respect to why there is a population goal for bison (see next section titled “Methods for forecasting the timing...”).

## **Methods for forecasting the timing and extent of bison migration to the north and west boundaries of Yellowstone National Park**

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Chris Geremia of NPS described how the NPS tracks and models bison migration within and outside of YNP. Some of the information, he said, had been reported before but he believed it worthwhile to reiterate to the IBMP and public. Chris's full presentation can be found at <http://www.ibmp.info/Library/20150806/20150806.php>. Key points are summarized here.

Chris reminded Partners that the 3000 to 3500 population limit came at least in part from a National Research Council report from 1998 titled “Brucellosis in the Greater Yellowstone Area”. That report analyzed culls from 1968-1997 and found that almost no removal of bison was required when the population was under 3000 animals. Further they found that above 3000 animals, removal rates were related to snow (in general greater snows inside the Park lead to more bison migrating out of the Park and greater numbers of bison then culled).

Chris further described the two primary breeding herds—North (especially Lamar Valley) and Central (especially Hayden Valley)—that bison typically segregate into during summer. In winter, bison in northern Yellowstone migrate into the Northern Management Area (Gardner Basin) while bison in central Yellowstone

migrate toward both the Western Management Area (Hebgen Basin) and the Northern Management Area. The reverse migration occurs in the spring.

The Park has undertaken research, using resource selection models, to predict the number of bison in each wintering area at any time during the year based on conditions (snow, green vegetation). That work has shown that...

- ...these items are common to all Central Range wintering areas
  - Movements coordinated – big numbers migrate at same time... that’s how bison move
  - Summer, transitional, and winter areas separated by narrow corridors and large gradients
  - Similar timing and magnitude of movements among years
  - Strong indication of learning
- ...these items are common to all Northern Range wintering areas
  - Movements coordinated
  - Smooth ‘environmental’ gradient among wintering areas allows back-and-forth movements
  - Large annual fluctuations in timing and extent of movements related to snow and herd sizes

Chris described modeling and observational thoughts regarding movement drivers to and from the two management areas outside the Park:

- After hazing was reduced in 2006, bison began to move to the Western Management Area when there were increases in (a) snow (or snow water equivalent) in Hayden Valley, and (b) peak green vegetation near West Yellowstone. They move back toward Hayden Valley as green up occurs in that area.
- Bison move toward the Northern Management Area when there are increases in (a) snow (or snow water equivalent) in the Lamar Valley, (b) total population size, and (c) snow covered area on the Blacktail Deer Plateau.

To conclude, Chris offered seven observations/predictions for Partner consideration:

- (1) Expect up to 1,000 bison fluctuating in and out of the Northern Management Zone with numbers increasing dramatically during February and March under predicted El Nino conditions.
- (2) Be prepared for up to 2,000 bison if winter is more severe than anticipated and near average
- (3) Expect up to 500 bison moving into the Western Management Area during April - June
- (4) Learning, experience, and spring green-up are what matters in predicting the timing/extent of migrations to the Western Management Area
- (5) Snow and Central/Northern Herd sizes are what matters in predicting the timing/extent of migrations to the Northern Management Area
- (6) There is not a reasonable population threshold below which bison would remain in the park – due to expanded tolerance, learning, hunting, high population abundance & big snows
- (7) Current abundance supports annual hunts and some culling to maintain a relatively stable bison population
- (8) Providing bison more access to areas outside Yellowstone would facilitate more learning and increased hunting opportunities

## **Bison removal recommendations for the winter of 2015/16**

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Chris Geremia of NPS described NPS population modeling efforts and their ramifications to bison removal needs under the IBMP. Chris’s full presentation can be found at <http://www.ibmp.info/Library/20150806/20150806.php> . Key points are summarized here.

Chris began by setting forth five bison management objectives proposed for building into the Winter 2016 Ops Plan:

- End-of-winter target of 3,000 animals
- Maintain similar proportions of males and females (neither sex>60%)
- Maintain age structure near 70% adults and 30% calves and yearlings
- Use hunting as a primary means of removal



- Reduce large culls

The NPS uses an integrated population model to assess current conditions and the ability to meet the objectives just noted. The model is tested under different management alternatives. Population and individual data are developed using multiple methods:

- Population Level Data:
  - Aerial survey in June to count calves
  - 3-4 aerial surveys June-August to count the population
  - Ground composition surveys to classify calves, yearling (juvenile) males and females, and adult males and females
  - Census of winter removals by age and sex categories
- Individual Level Data: Capture-Recapture Study: 30-60 adult female bison fit with collars and monitored for
  - Annual Survival
  - Reproductive Rate
  - Brucellosis Exposure, Transmission & Recovery
  - Herd Dispersal

Chris reviewed both the NPS-recommended, and Partner approved, removals for the 2014-15 season. Total recommended removals actual (737) by all means were less than those recommended (800-900). He also showed that since 2012 state and tribal harvest has taken 803 animals and that since 2014 consignment to research and meat processing facilities has taken 836 animals.

Following this review, Chris provided the following take home messages:

- Since winter 2012-2013: Harvests = 49% (775) and consignments = 51% (803) of removals
- Harvests of 200-350 animals are insufficient to offset growth under current conditions
- Combination of harvest and culls (total removal 650-750) has resulted in a stable bison population
- Harvest composition: biased towards males (63%) and near targeted age structure (14% calves)
- Consignment composition: heavily biased towards females (71%) and calves (28%)

In reviewing population abundance since 2000, Chris provided aerial count data showing the Park has had a stable bison population at around 4,900-5,000 since summer 2013. That population structure is sitting at 46% male, 54% female and is thus approaching the desired 1:1 state. Counts also reveal that in the last ten years the Northern Herd has grown larger than the Central Herd for the first time since at least 1970. The Central Herd is declining in size while the Northern Herd is growing.

Chris described that the NPS ran three modeling alternatives for bison removals for the winter of 2015-16: removal of 900, 1000, or 1100 animals by all means, and with defined goals for males, females, and calves. For each removal scenario, the NPS modeled the end of winter population, the size of the 2016 calf crop, and the projected resulting population in June/July 2016. From the modeled scenario outcomes, the NPS recommends that the 2016 Winter Operations Plan be built with the following constraints:

- Recommend total removal of 1,000 bison
- Focus removals in the Northern Management Area
- Limit harvests in Western Management Area to <25 adult males
- Aim: Hunter harvest of 400 animals & 600 removed through consignments
- Harvest composition near annual average of 63% male
- NPS will likely meet the calf removal objective before the female removal objective through consignments
- NPS working with 4-5 partners on logistics of consignments to processing plants

## **Partner briefings/updates—status of ongoing activities related to Yellowstone bison & brucellosis**

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### ***Status of new Bison Management Plan/EIS—Jennifer Carpenter***

- NPS-State of Montana are co-leads on plan with five cooperating agencies: CSKT, CTUIR, ITBC, NPT, USFS)
- A public scoping period was held March through June of this year. NPS received 3500 individual responses. These are being compiled for review. NPS will report at the next IBMP meeting regarding the results of the public comment analysis.
- Next is the development of the full EIS.
- NPS is engaged in government to government discussions with tribal entities. They have already spoken with the ShoBan and CSKT and will be meeting with the NPT on 7 August.

### ***Status of NPS Quarantine EA—Jennifer Carpenter***

- What—The Use of Quarantine to Identify Brucellosis-free Yellowstone Bison for Relocation Elsewhere
- Environmental Assessment evaluates establishing quarantine program for bison at one or more facilities within YNP, on tribal lands, or elsewhere
- Public scoping completed fall 2014
- Draft EA remains under internal DOI review
- Public release of EA expected before next IBMP meeting

### ***Status of State-wide Bison Management Plan—Sam Sheppard***

Public meetings are underway. There will be eight altogether.

### ***Status of MEPA process for year-round tolerance of bison on west side—Sam Sheppard***

Sam stated that the EA remains in process. He said that while the timing may be slow for some, the state wants to get the right answer, not the expedient one.

### ***Update on NAS review of brucellosis in wildlife in the GYA—Don Herriott***

The National Academy of Sciences panel has been selected and had its first meeting in early July. It will have its second meeting in September and third meeting in November. Meeting notes and project announcements are available to anyone on the NAS website, plus anyone can sign up to be on the mailing list for the review of brucellosis in wildlife. (note: the facilitator provides this URL for the NAS review: <http://dels.nas.edu/Study-In-Progress/Revisiting-Brucellosis-Greater-Yellowstone/DELS-BANR-14-03?bname=banr>).

### ***Update on bison deaths of formerly quarantined YELL bison at Ft Belknap reservation— Marty Zaluski***

The Fort Belknap tribe lost 19 bison in early July. No definitive cause is known at this time. Tissue sampling has been done and tissues have been analyzed for such toxins as anthrax and heavy metals. The analyses are on-going but nothing conclusive has resulted to date. MDOL plans to meet with the tribal veterinarian in the days ahead to further assess the situation. Mary said it is possible that the disease or killing agent may never be known.

### ***Update on bison killed in Island Park, Idaho—Rob Tierney***

Rob said that on July 15<sup>th</sup> MDOL removed a bison that had been in West Yellowstone. Meat from that animal was provided to the West Yellowstone food bank. On July 16<sup>th</sup> one bison was removed in Idaho by Idaho officials. On August 5<sup>th</sup> MDOL removed a bison that had been mingling with cattle. Meat from that animal was provided to the Ennis food bank.

## **Bison hunt meeting summary**

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SS provided a short summary of the hunt meeting that occurred following the April 2015 IBMP meeting. He said that subcommittee was formed to meet after that meeting and work on issues of Beattie

Gulch (see next topic). Sam noted that if you peel back enough layers, it's apparent that all parties want the same thing. Included in those shared values, he said, are a good hunt, culturally satisfying, that is safe for the hunters and public.

## Update on hunt issues related to the Beattie Gulch area

Walt Allen provide the Partners with five alternatives for managing the hunt in Beattie Gulch. He noted some discussion with other Partner staff, as well as made a reference to Carl Scheeler's 2014 white paper "Addressing the Challenges of Sharing a Safe, Sensitive and Successful harvest of Bison on Public Lands Adjacent to Yellowstone National Park". The five alternatives, described narratively below, are

- (1) Alternative #1 : No Hunt Closure (no shooting/field dressing/attractants)
- (2) Alternative #2 : Alternative #1 w/**no hazing** (as *specifically* related only to the hunt)
- (3) Alternative #3 : Total Beattie Gulch closure
- (4) Alternative #4 : Designed & Adaptive constraints at Beattie Gulch
- (5) Alternative #5 : "Fence-off" Alternative #1 Closure

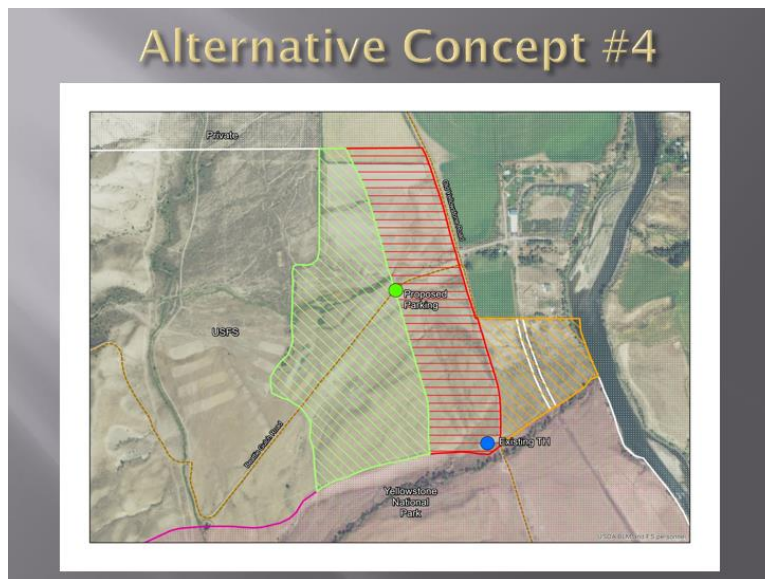


Figure 4.—An example of one of five alternatives for managing the hunt in the Beattie Gulch area, as presented to the IBMP Partners by Walt Allen. Walt's full presentation, with all five alternatives that were discussed, can be found at <http://www.ibmp.info/Library/20150806/20150806.php>.

Many concerns have been voiced among Partners, staff, public, and hunters about the problems of hunting in Beattie Gulch. Walt said two are preeminent:

- Public safety/relations—issues of public and nearby resident safety in stream of gunfire, traffic snarls, visceral impact of bison being killed and remains being left behind, grizzlies feeding on carcasses
- Firing line effect (occurs just as bison step out of YNP and into Beattie Gulch)— driving bison back into the Park where they can't be hunted and preventing dispersal to a larger area available to bison throughout northern portion of the Gardiner Basin

The alternatives that Walt presented seek to remedy or at least decrease these issues through total hunting closure in Beattie Gulch, closures next to the county road, fences to drive bison away from private property, setting up temporal closures throughout the season to allow bison to get past the Beattie Gulch pinch

point, and similar issues. He made clear he was presenting these ideas for Partner discussion, and was not at a point of himself and/or others submitting an adaptive management change.

Many concerns and much feedback was forthcoming from Partners and staff regarding the alternatives, including:

- Closures along the county road simply shift the bottleneck uphill—it may help local homeowners but the bottleneck coming out of YNP still exists
- Changing the parking location could be a good idea to get cars and hunters away from the county road a bit more.
- How do we determine how many days of hunting stoppage is required for bison to move through the Beattie Gulch area? And even if we come up with a reasonable guesstimate, isn't the migration push out of the Park weather dependent and thus bison might not even be heading out when we have our temporal closure.
- How could a temporal closure work if some parties don't agree to it? Some noted that they are unlikely to agree to giving up hunt time since it is their right. Also, some travel great distances to hunt and need to be free to come and go as they see fit and as fits their schedules.
- If we can't figure out some way to improve hunting in Beattie Gulch, what are we going to do if other tribes are able to successfully exercise claimed treaty hunting rights?
- If we simply move the firing line up to the bridge, have we really accomplished anything?
- Why is it that the hunters are always asked to give something up? Why can't the local landowners give something up? Don't they know that they have built on a place of wildlife and hence hunting?
- Any change needs to establish on-going escapement of bison for hunting outside YNP.
- I don't want the short term, "this year" solution that we are talking about. I am thinking of the 50-year solution.
- Can we work with Land Trusts and others to buy up any remaining land, even buy out current owners, to help stop development in this area and thereby decrease conflict?

The Partners continued with the discussion but could not reach consensus. Treaty tribes were reluctant to agree to any limitation on their hunting rights in time or space. SS noted that one alternative was to do nothing and return to the same scenario that so many are unhappy with from last year. It can be done, he said, but comes at a big cost.

ME asked for Tribal suggestions, even voluntary, for alternative management of the Beattie Gulch area. The discussion continued but eventually settled out on a plan for the four sovereign tribal groups to meet, as convened by Carl Scheeler, to discuss possible alternative hunt management scenarios in Beattie Gulch (\*\*action item 2). They agreed to return with these ideas at the next IBMP meeting or sooner. SS said that it was still theoretically possible, assuming an agreed upon approach was found, to push through an emergency regulation change with the FWP Commission for the 2015/16 hunt. CS noted that it might be difficult to come up with and implement a new hunting scheme for Beattie Gulch in time for the 2015/16 hunting season.

Walt's full presentation can be found at <http://www.ibmp.info/Library/20150806/20150806.php>.

## **Adaptive management (AM) proposals**

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### **ADMINISTRATIVE AM CHANGE**

The Partners discussed and approved a single adaptive management proposal. That proposal, being recognized as administrative in nature, did not require Partner signature. The proposal, minus appendices, is presented here. The full proposal can be found on the adaptive management page on the IBMP website (<http://www.ibmp.info/adaptivemgmt.php>).

*July 17, 2015*

*MEMORANDUM*

To: *Managers of the Interagency Bison Management Plan*  
From: *National Park Service, Yellowstone National Park, Bison Management Team*  
Subject: *Reformatting the Annual Report to Improve Readability and Lessen Redundancy*

*Background and Issues:*

*In 2008, the federal and state agencies involved with the Interagency Bison Management Plan created measurable objectives in an adaptive management plan and developed a specific monitoring program to assess scientific and management questions. Since 2009, these agencies and their tribal partners have issued annual reports that included narrative summaries to address the effects and effectiveness of each management action in the adaptive management plan. These reports are structured to sequentially provide information on each management action.*

*Over the years, these reports have become more cumbersome, with redundant information under several management actions, lengthy lists of bison locations, property and safety complaints, and hazing events, and added sections on progress by subcommittees and recommendations from the Citizen's Working Group. The organization of the report by management actions rather than key topics/subjects and its increasing length (99 pages in 2014) has made it difficult to read and readily access key information.*

*In addition, there are issues with how to: 1) deal with management actions that have been completed; 2) lessen the point-counterpoint arguments among agencies that now permeate the report; 3) document progress and completion of tasks and recommendations by subcommittees and the Citizen's Working Group; 4) document public engagement; and 5) complete the technical review and reporting process in a timely manner.*

*Requested Administrative Change:*

*To alleviate the issues outlined above, we recommend reformatting the report with subheadings based on relevant topics/subjects instead of management actions from the adaptive management plan. The management objectives and actions can be provided in an appendix to the report or online. Also, we recommend streamlining the report to key findings under each subheading, with supporting information provided online at the [ibmp.info](http://ibmp.info) website.*

*We propose the following report template (and lead agencies for reporting) to generate comments, ideas, and feedback. Each subsection could have a short paragraph describing why the activity/monitoring is conducted (i.e., management objective), followed by the key summary information for the reporting year. Figures and tables could be used sparingly to more effectively convey some information (e.g., trends in counts).*

- 1. Background*
- 2. Objectives*
  - Demographic, disease, distributional, ecological, genetic (All)*
- 3. Pre-winter Status and Trends*
  - Bison count and age-sex classification by central and northern region (NPS)*
  - Cattle locations in Gardiner and Hebgen basins (MDOL)*
- 4. Operations Plan*
  - Removal recommendations (NPS as modified by consensus)*
  - Bison migration forecasts (NPS)*
  - Summary of any changes from previous years (Lead Agency)*
- 5. Bison migration and distribution*
  - Northern and western management areas (NPS, MDOL, MFWP)*
  - Trends through winter (NPS, MFWP)*
  - Incidents of commingling with cattle (MDOL)*
- 6. Hunting*
  - Public (by management area and age-sex; MFWP)*
  - Treaty (by Tribe, management area, and age-sex; CSKT, Nez Perce, Shoshone-Bannock, Umatilla)*
  - Effectiveness and issues (All, including NPS and USFS)*

7. *Culling*

- *Timeframe and numbers (northern and western management areas; NPS and possibly MDOL)*
- *Distribution of captured animals (NPS and possibly MDOL)*
- *Capture/processing mortalities (NPS and possibly MDOL)*

8. *Hazing*

- *Summarize events, locations, numbers, timing, etc. (NPS, MDOL)*
- *Put any detailed lists in supporting information on [ibmp.info](http://ibmp.info) website and provide URL in report*
- *Spring haze-back (MDOL)*
- *Same as above*

9. *Brucellosis Testing and Vaccination*

- *Test results (NPS, MDOL)*
- *Vaccination (bison, cattle, elk; NPS, MDOL)*

10. *Post-winter Status and Trends*

- *Bison count and age-sex classification by central and northern region, and trend over time (NPS)*
- *Comparison of removal recommendations with actual removals (number, age, sex, management area; NPS)*
- *Brucellosis outbreaks in cattle in the Gardiner and Hebgen basins (MDOL)*
- *Issues; recommendations for next season (All)*

11. *Human Safety and Property Damage*

- *Summarize human injuries; property damage; highway collisions; other issues (NPS, MFWP)*
- *Put any detailed lists in supporting information on [ibmp.info](http://ibmp.info) website and provide URL in report*

12. *Habitat Assessments and Enhancement*

- *Activities conducted during the reporting year (All)*

13. *Research and Surveillance*

- *Activities completed during the reporting year (All)*
- *Refer people to the complete report on the [ibmp.info](http://ibmp.info) website and provide the URL in the report*

14. *Landowner Engagement*

- *Fencing and compensation (MFWP; possibly USFS)*
- *Devil's Slide Conservation Easement (USFS)*
- *Royal Teton Ranch Bison Management Plan (MFWP, USFS)*
- *Other efforts (All)*

15. *Education and Interpretation*

- *Activities and documents completed during the reporting year (All)*

16. *Stakeholder and Public Engagement*

- *Meetings (Lead Agency)*
- *Field trips (Lead Agency)*
- *Media events (All)*

17. *Adaptive Management Adjustments*

- *Adjustments agreed to through consensus during the reporting year (Lead Agency)*
- *Citations of previous adjustments*

18. *Environmental Compliance, Legislation, and Litigation*

- *Actions and documents initiated and/or completed during the reporting year (All)*

*Appendix A: Management Objectives and Actions (2014 Adaptive Management Plan)*

*Appendix B: Citizens Working Group Recommendations (2011)*

*Appendix C: Northern and Western Management Area Maps*

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## **REVIEW OF PAST CITIZEN INPUT HAVING ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT POTENTIAL**

The facilitator presented a summary of potential IBMP adaptive management changes compiled from Citizen comments during IBMP meetings between August 2011 and May 2015. The earlier date was selected as being the first meeting after the Citizen Working Group (CWG) recommendations were accepted by the Partners. The items pulled forth by the facilitator were those deemed to either have potential for adaptive management consideration, or to be in some other way actionable such as viable changes to IBMP processes. They are presented in subheadings, the first three of four below being those used in the CWG recommendations. A set of Citizen comments from the November 14, 2014 field trip are also included.

### **Habitat**

- (1) Move bison to locations on the Plains to help restore that landscape.
- (2) Use upper Taylor Fork habitat now—it is already available habitat for bison. The only limitation in the IBMP Record of Decision was whether cattle operations are underway, which they are not. The other main issue is highway safety. Thus the issue for allowing bison to migrate into the Taylor Fork drainage is operational, not whether it is allowable.
- (3) Consider moving seronegative bison captured within YNP to the Upper Gallatin still within YNP to help reestablish that habitat with bison. Those bison that move outside of YNP would then be available for tribal hunt.
- (4) Create a primary management area, as we do for grizzly bears.
- (5) Change and improve habitat through rangeland management (plantings) and/or fire.
- (6) We can move bison to lands managed by the USFWS, including the Charles M. Russell and Red Rocks Wildlife Refuges.
- (7) Remove the Stephens Creek facility and rehabilitate that landscape for bison.

### **Population**

- (8) Hunt is fine but stop hunt near YELL boundaries to allow bison to become established deeper into MT.
- (9) Find way to assure that pregnant bison are not shot.
- (10) Transfer excess bison to the tribes who are pleading for them and then let them hunt those bison on their own lands; or to private owners.

### **Risk management**

- (11) Change focus to elk and brucellosis, for example answer the questions (a) Are elk from WY to blame for brucellosis in MT? (b) Does sero-prevalence in elk impact bison and vice versa?
- (12) Continue to improve fencing. Fence bison out of private lands, not into our national park. There are limited cattle; simply fence them in or remove them.
- (13) Make key IBMP goal the decrease of brucellosis transmission risk rather than the decrease in sero-prevalence.
- (14) Natural selection favors disease resistant animals so we need to let natural selection work and not interfere with it by removing the young, more infectious animals.
- (15) Focus on livestock vaccine to keep livestock industry viable.
- (16) Have public vetting of GonaCon.
- (17) Instead of expenditures that do little, spend money on creating an insurance program against brucellosis infection and the damage it might cause to livestock producers.
- (18) Stop leaving carcasses on the ground during the hunt as it presents a risk of brucellosis transmission.

### **New IBMP processes and/or partners**

- (19) Put Partner telecon meeting minutes on website.
- (20) Allow public to engage Partners directly. This could be done after each topic at an IBMP meeting.
- (21) Find ways to increase public input before IBMP decisions are made.
- (22) Institute education program, particularly talking with people of all beliefs, values, and goals “on the ground” to eliminate misinformation and engender mutual understanding.

- (23) For the hunt—coordinate all law enforcement officers, regardless of jurisdiction, to improve hunt safety.
- (24) An offer of USGS services to the IBMP Partners and/or CWG, especially for education services, with a statement that USGS has funds to work with the MSU Film School.
- (25) We need to begin working with the USFWS.
- (26) Request that if Stephens Creek facility is to be used, then the IBMP Partners and Park County should each contribute \$10,000 to a road fund for road upkeep.
- (27) Train agency people to have a “softer” touch when moving bison.
- (28) The Tribes need to make their hunting guidelines public.
- (29) The IBMP needs to better communicate with local Government and law enforcement.
- (30) In Oregon they change salmon fishing seasons on the fly, in reaction to harvest data. Why can't we do that here with the bison hunt?

#### ***Citizen comments from November 2014 field trip in the Gardner Basin***

- (31) Gut pile dumpsters/ Bear Aware project
- (32) Close Beattie Gulch to hunt
- (33) YNP/Tribal management of Stephens Creek area
- (34) Transfer excess north side bison to the west side
- (35) Move bison to larger landscape
- (36) Disperse bison deeper into Montana via week-on, week-off hunt
- (37) Move Stephens Creek trap to Cutler Meadow
- (38) Change habitat restoration to establishing forage plants, not native plants

## **Future activity planning**

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### **DRAFT 2016 WINTER OPS PLAN**

The Partners returned briefly to consider the path forward for the 2016 Winter Ops Plan. The key element for that plan—the level of bison harvest by all means—was presented during Chris Geremia’s talk titled “Bison removal recommendations for the winter of 2015/16” (see above).

The Partners quickly established that APHIS, MDOL, MFWP NPS, USFS all were in favor with proceeding with the harvest recommendations provided by Chris (removal of 1000 bison). The tribes—Partners CSKT and NPT, as well as treaty tribes CTUIR and ShoBan—all stated disagreement with the plan. Both the NPT and the CSKT requested one month to report back to NPS regarding their review of the removal recommendation (\*\*action item 3). NPS stated that it would turn around the first draft of the 2016 Winter Ops Plan within two weeks of hearing back from the CSKT and NPT (\*\*action item 4).

### **2015 ANNUAL REPORT**

Earlier the Partners agreed to an administrative adaptive management change to streamline the format of their Annual Report (see section above titled “Adaptive management (AM) proposals”). Here, however, APHIS stated their desire that the Annual Report start with responses to their activities under the current Adaptive Management Plan, just as it has been done since 2009. So the information taken in for the Annual Report will be the same, but the method of reporting will differ. The facilitator was instructed to stand by for instructions by the lead agency (\*\*action item 5).

### **FALL MEETING**

At their Fall 2014 meeting, the IBMP Partners set aside November 19<sup>th</sup> for their Fall 2015 meeting and decided on holding it in Pray, Montana at Chico Hot Springs. The Partners also set aside November 18<sup>th</sup> for a possible field trip day. As of this meeting, the Partners have not settled on whether that field trip will occur or not. As with all IBMP Partner meetings, the draft agenda will be published to the IBMP website (at <http://www.ibmp.info/meetings.php>) at least two weeks in advance of the meeting.



## **CLOSING WORDS**

Quincy Ellenwood of NPTEC said that if we look out for the well-being of the bison that things will be better for all. Lead Partner Dan Wenk closed the meeting with a thanks to the Nez Perce Tribe for their hospitality and to all for the comments made at the meeting. The IBMP takes those comments seriously, he said, as we, like all of you, work on trying our best on behalf of the American people, Native Americans, and the bison.

## **Public comment**

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The following notes on public comment to the IBMP Partners are not intended to be complete, but rather reflect the facilitator’s best effort to capture key statements. The facilitator has especially attempted to capture those comments from the public that appeared to be solution oriented and have the potential for inclusion in adaptive management planning and/or process improvement. These items, as well as other potentially actionable public input, are called out with a “\*\*” in the listings that follow.

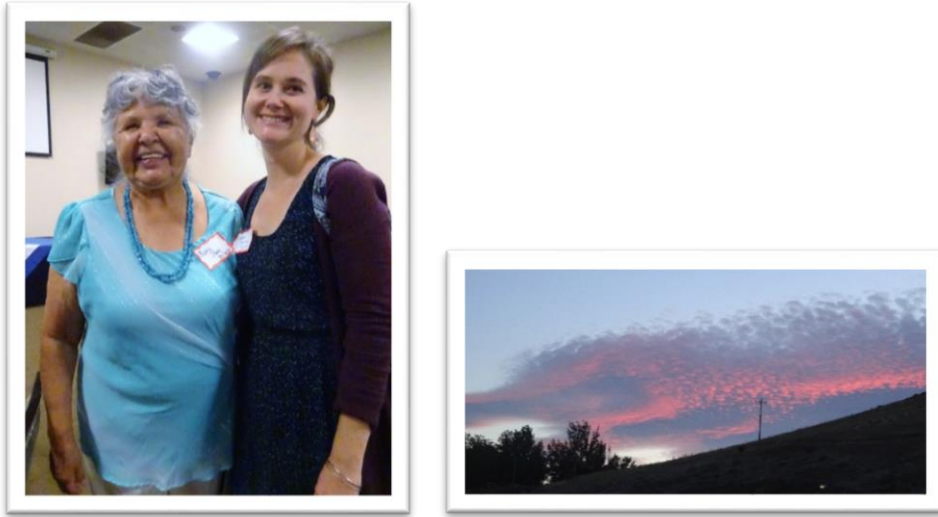
Names associated with comments are available from the facilitator. They are not included here, however, in an effort to focus on the comment rather than the speaker. Line breaks in the bullets indicate a new speaker.

Public comment was taken during the middle of the day in reaction to numerous past public comments about public input being of less value at the end of the day.

- Thanks to the NPT for hosting the meeting, for the food, and all the rest.
- I echo the idea that the idea of hunting in the Park would result in a great deal of push back.
- \*\* Instead we should be thinking of areas outside the Park that are not being utilized. For example, we are still waiting for the West Side EA—we especially want to support Alternative B. No one has yet put forth a reasonable argument against Alternative B.
- It is important to realize that with one swipe of the pen, the governor can open the West Side and eliminate the need for the discussion of hunting inside YNP.
  
- The current situation is detrimental to taking bison.
- We went over on a Thursday and didn’t get anything despite lots of effort and time.
- I want to see no hazing so that we have more bison to hunt.
- Hunt is critical to our people, both culturally and traditionally.
- We need to allocate more animals to the hunt.
  
- I am concerned about the boundary lines. These lines were brought to us by the white people. For a long time Nez Perce people utilized the lands inside YNP for harvesting, high altitude medicines, food, and clothing. So why should be restricted by lines?
- If firearms are now allowed in national parks, then the only thing missing is Nez Perce behind those firearms harvesting bison.
- The treaty says we can go to usual and accustomed areas. For us that is Yellowstone.
- In the War of 1877 they went to YNP in part to hunt.
- We need access to those lands. Policies and rules can be changed.
  
- I agree with the previous two speakers.
- \*\* It is difficult to tell where the hunting zones are—these need to be improved, more clearly defined, and it would help a lot.
- It is tough to travel that far and not get a buffalo. We want to have a successful hunt there.
- I haven’t gotten a buffalo and my father died at 96 without ever getting to hunt a buffalo.
- \*\* There should be no hazing until after the hunt.

- We have lived under the treaties and we have been patient. We have worked with you and your concerns.
- Hunting is in the wrong time of year—we can shoot pregnant buffalo.
- We should be able to go into YNP.
- We are the best managers of the resources. We are a very responsible people.
- The treaty of 1855 allows us to take our buffalo.
  
- I have been on the council three times. The issues were fresh then and remain so.
- This is the red lands.
- We have limits put upon us that are wrong.
- You deal with buffalo but forget about the red man. You look after your constraints but not after the red man.
- The cattle have no spirit and no ties to the land.
- We are part of the land. We are Yellowstone and you cannot deny us our heart, our minds, our eyes.
- Please step aside, I ask you.
  
- \*\* I would like to see the hunting areas well marked. It is difficult to be cited near the boundary. And if our people are cited, they should be tried in federal or tribal court.
- \*\* There should be no hazing, but if you do haze you should haze toward our hunters.
- We should remove the houses by eminent domain.
- We should be able to hunt within YNP. We have an education program.
- I want to acknowledge Herb Jackson and his crew for the salmon.
- I don't want people to forget that when the Nez Perce come to Montana to hunt they provide great economic benefit to the state of Montana.
  
- A prayer of safe travel home for all who are visiting us.
- I was the former chair of Fish & Wildlife for the Tribe.
- Treaty right is a property right under the 5<sup>th</sup> Amendment. Where does that fit? The treaties of 1855 and 1868 were there before the establishment of YNP. Why does YNP and the mining law continue to hold importance but not our treaty rights?
- Why should we as a treaty holder with the United States have to talk to the governor of Montana? Why do we have APHIS and MDOL dictate how we hunt?
- We are given new tolerance zones for bison but they don't use these places for migration.
- Yes to alternative B of the West Side EA for more tolerance but instead we act based upon a brucellosis scare or population limit.
- We can get education tools from Buffalo Field Campaign. I don't want to say they are our partner but they have lots of education ideas.
- Permits make us be non-Indian.
- Very little has changed. You have confined us and Mother Nature to a small area and timeline that we have no control over.
- You want us to pick up carcasses and do things against our treaty rights.
- \*\* If we are truly in a partnership, then don't scrutinize our hunt but instead partner in our hunt.
  
- It is a special occasion to hunt bison, a reliving of something you've done in the past.
- This morning I saw a discussion of 3000 bison as some baseline. When that comes up I ask, what is the carrying capacity? Also, I want to know what is going on with global warming and how it will impact us.
- I feel there is a right to the harvest. We had to go to court for those rights. It is a part of our life and our being.
- If we can't negotiate what will happen, then we will have to adjudicate.

- I have followed bison and bison removal and slaughter doesn't fit well with me. It seems the objective is just to kill them rather than harvest them, as we need.
- I question the number of bison being culled for research and processing.
- What happens to the reports and what are the outcomes? I began to be interested in brucellosis and what it means to Montana. APHIS said that the science is not that precise.
  
- We follow animals when we hunt so there are no boundaries.
- We want to hunt to get enough for our families. We came over from Portland, Oregon to hunt. We did not like seeing bison in pens. We waited but it just didn't happen, we did not get a buffalo.
- \*\* We are concerned about the National Park and state of Montana law enforcement officers—they need to back off. Sometimes they can be rude. They need to understand our treaty hunting rights and that we are a sovereign nation.
- I appreciate this forum, and the words of my fellow brothers and sisters.
  
- We have lots of people who have hunted and fished for many years.
- I went for buffalo. They said you can't shoot each other and it didn't make sense. I am a former police officer and they think I might shoot someone?
- We went to YELL and took the opportunity to take my grandkids to get buffalo to see our culture and our traditions. We spent \$1800 for us three and went back empty handed.
- \*\* When buffalo are slaughtered they should go to elders who have empty freezers.
- We have been here a long time, including through war.
  
- I am of the Chief Joseph band.
- Years ago when my Dad was alive, he said "It is a gift to see life and a gift to take life."
- I am sad that people don't understand the 1855 treaty. I am sad that only two NPTEC members are here—you need to be here.
- I don't believe in hazing. When we hunt, we call it "making a drive".
- It is hard to stand up here and wonder this—will everyone go home and life goes on? We need to respect each other to understand that there is a line and a reason things happen. People are crying; people are laughing. I know that we are all equal, that we are all the same. My heart is sad today because of a death in my family.
  
- I am the only hunter in my family. I try to provide for them.
- It is hard to go over to Montana and have anything to harvest. We need to have that ability. It is a waste of my time and a waste of my money.
- I want to know what per cent of state hunters vs tribal hunters get their bison if you are hazing.
- I am not opposed to opening YNP hunting. It can't be that hard to open. How many visitor could there be in the winter? It would not be that hard to block off an area for hunting.
- \*\* Why can't we get bison transferred to tribal lands?



*Figure 5.—Left: Nez Perce Tribal Executive Committee member Mary Jane Miles and Nez Perce staff attorney Amanda Rogerson. Right: Sunset, Lapwai Idaho, August 5<sup>th</sup> 2015.*

*\*\* Meeting adjourned \*\**

## Abbreviations

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- AJ—Andrea Jones
- AM—Adaptive management
- APHIS—Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service
- BB—Brooklyn Baptiste
- BFC—Buffalo Field Campaign
- CGNF—Custer Gallatin National Forest
- CM—Christian Mackay
- CS—Carl Scheeler
- CSKT—Confederated Salish Kootenai Tribes
- CTUIR—Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation
- CWG—Citizens’ Working Group
- DH—Don Herriot
- DSA—Designated Surveillance Zone
- DW—Dan Wenk
- EA—Environmental Assessment
- EC—Ervin Carlson
- GAO—Government Accountability Office
- GNF—Gallatin National Forest
- GW—Germaine White
- GWA—Gallatin Wildlife Association
- GYA—Greater Yellowstone Area
- ITBC—Inter Tribal Buffalo Council
- JH—John Harrison
- JS—Jim Stone
- LG—Leonard Gray
- MBOL—Montana Board of Livestock
- MD—Marna Daley
- MDOL—Montana Department of Livestock
- MDOT—Montana Department of Transportation
- ME—Mary Erickson
- MEPA—Montana Environmental Policy Act
- MFWP—Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks
- ML—Mike Lopez
- MO—McCoy Oatman
- MOU—Memorandum of Understanding
- MR—Majel Russell
- MSGA—Montana Stockgrowers’ Association
- MSU—Montana State University
- MZ—Marty Zaluski
- NAS—National Academy of Sciences
- NEPA—National Environmental Policy Act
- NGO—Non-governmental organizations
- NP—Nez Perce
- NPS—National Park Service
- NPT—Nez Perce Tribe
- NPTEC—Nez Perce Tribal Executive Committee
- NRC—National Research Council
- NRDC—Natural Resources Defense Council
- Park—Yellowstone National Park
- PIOs—Public Information Officers
- PJ—PJ White
- QE—Quincy Ellenwood
- RC—Ryan Clarke
- ROD—Record of Decision
- RF—Rebecca Frye
- RFP—Request for proposals
- RT—Rob Tierney
- RTR—Royal Teton Ranch
- RW—Rick Wallen
- SB—Scott Bischke
- SEIS—Supplemental EIS
- SG—Stephanie Gillin
- SK—Salish Kootenai
- SS—Sam Sheppard
- TM—Tom McDonald
- USFWS—US Fish and Wildlife Service
- USGS—US Geological Survey
- WMA—state of MT wildlife management areas
- YELL—Yellowstone National Park
- YNP—Yellowstone National Park