

## Public meeting of the Interagency Bison Management Plan Partners



**NOVEMBER 28, 2018**

**LEAD PARTNER & HOST FOR THIS MEETING: MONTANA FISH, WILDLIFE, & PARKS  
(CONTACT—SCOTT BISCHKE, FACILITATOR, [406] 582-4442)**

**P. Ryan Clarke:** Regional Epidemiologist—GYA, 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

**McCoy Oatman:** Member of the Nez Perce Tribal Executive  
Committee

**Jason Brey:** Acting Deputy Forest Supervisor; USFS—Custer Gallatin  
National Forest



Meeting location:  
**Chico Hot Springs,  
Pray MT**  
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For room reservations call  
(406) 333-4933.

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.

## Wednesday, November 28<sup>th</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>• Remembrance for Pablo Espinoza</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>
8:25	Mark Deleray	<i>Improving IBMP effectiveness topic of agreed interest:</i> <b>Improve utilization of expanded bison habitat, especially in new West side tolerance area</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feedback, consideration of MFWP draft hunting regulation speaking to partial hunting closure on the West Side to allow for bison migration</li> <li>• Opportunity for follow-up on potential habitat manipulation— including for increasing migration corridor along Hwy 191—as discussed without action items at August meeting.</li> </ul>
8:50	NPS, MDOL, APHIS	<i>Improving IBMP effectiveness topic of agreed interest:</i> <b>Bison quarantine and translocation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updates</li> <li>• Status of current bison in quarantine</li> <li>• Status of potential bison transfer to Ft Peck Reservation</li> </ul>
9:15	Tribal Hunt Managers, MFWP	<i>Improving IBMP effectiveness topic of agreed interest:</i> <b>Improving safety, quality of the north side hunt/improving boundary issues</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ FWP proposed closure of Beattie Gulch to state bison hunters</li> <li>○ Tribal hunt MOA</li> <li>○ Expectations of new tribes exercising treaty rights</li> <li>○ Handling of bison carcasses on the North Side</li> <li>○ Actions to facilitate bison migration and distribution across tolerance area</li> </ul>
9:40	***	<b>Break (here or as called for by the Partners)</b>
10:00	Cara Staab, USFS Regional Wildlife Ecologist	<b>Conservation Planning for Bison in the Custer-Gallatin National Forest</b> Overview presentation on the status of bison in the CGNF Forest Plan Revision and the conservation approach
10:45	Pat Wise, Deputy Director Montana Dept of Transportation, Jeff Ebert MDT	<b>Traffic safety considerations associated with bison on the North Side</b> <b>Presentations (30 min) and Q&amp;A (30 min)</b> Among many topics, several key questions to be discussed include: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) What is the process for speed limit change? Can it be seasonal, nighttime?</li> <li>2) If speed limit is decreased, what is the best method to implement &amp; enforce that change? Cattle guards, signage, other?</li> <li>3) Does the general public, not just locals and/or wildlife advocates, want speed reduction?</li> <li>4) What are the best methods of communication between MDT, Park County Sheriff's Office, &amp; IBMP agencies both during and outside of hunting season? How has that changed in given increased bison tolerance in recent years — i.e., potential for bison presence outside the Park year round?</li> <li>5) What about wildlife besides bison? Can a new program to improve highway safety be structured to decrease deaths of deer, elk, and other species as well? Is so, how?</li> <li>6) Are there any lessons that can be applied to similar West Side highway safety issues?</li> </ol>
11:45	***	<b>Lunch (on your own)</b>

1:15 PM	Public	<p><b>Call back to order / Introductions of anyone newly present</b> (Scott Bischke)</p> <p><b>Public comment</b></p> <p>Typically 2-4 min per person, depending on level of sign-up sheet. The facilitator asks that speakers be respectful.</p>
<p><b>Planning for 2018/19 Winter Operations Plan</b></p> <p><b>Review of changes already incorporated into 2018/19 Winter Ops Plan based on August IBMP meeting and subsequent input (15 min)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion, if needed, and agreement to these changes</li> </ul> <p><b>NPS presentation — Recent bison population count and removal target recommendation (40 min presentation, 20 min Q&amp;A)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentation followed by Partner discussion</li> <li>• Ramification of recommendations and decisions for incorporation into Winter Ops Plan</li> </ul> <p><b>For reference: 2017/18 Winter Ops Plan outline</b> pg — heading (<i>topics of note; there are others</i>)</p> <p>-----</p> <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>		
3:10	***	<p><b>Break</b> (<i>here or as called for by the Partners pending Winter Ops discussion</i>)</p> <p><b>Planning for 2018/19 Winter Operations Plan</b> (<i>continued, see discussion items above and concludes with item below</i>)</p>
3:30	(continued)	<p><b>Setting timeline for Partner completion of 2018/19 Winter Ops Plan</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identification, if applicable, of any unresolvable issues and setting action item for determination of how to resolve these issues</li> <li>• Review of Partner electronic signature process</li> <li>• Timeline for completion</li> </ul>
4:15	As noted	<p><b>Status of ongoing activities related to Yellowstone bison and brucellosis</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Scott Bischke — update of Partner Protocols since last IBMP meeting</li> <li>2. Shana Drimal <i>&lt;if anything new to report&gt;</i>—Update on bison coexistence/fencing project</li> <li>3. Partners and staff—Questions on status of other ongoing activities?</li> </ol>

		<b>Administrative items</b>
4:30	Scott Bischke	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review, reminder dates for completing the Winter Ops Plan and Annual reports</li> <li>• Thanks to 2018 IBMP Lead Partner Mark Deleray MFWP and early welcome to 2019 IBMP Lead Partner Ryan Clarke</li> <li>• Deciding on dates and locations for 2019 IBMP meetings             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ ? Spring North Side field trip with focus on bison carcass management (~Mar 1)</li> <li>○ Spring (typically April in West Yellowstone; but North Side field trip mentioned)</li> <li>○ Summer (typically end July, early Aug in Bozeman)</li> <li>○ Fall (typically late November at Chico Hot Springs)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Other items to review or close with?</li> </ul>
5 PM	***	<b>Adjourn—please travel safely!</b>

**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](mailto:scott@emountainworks.com))