

NPS Management Recommendation Winter 2021-2022

COMMONALITIES:

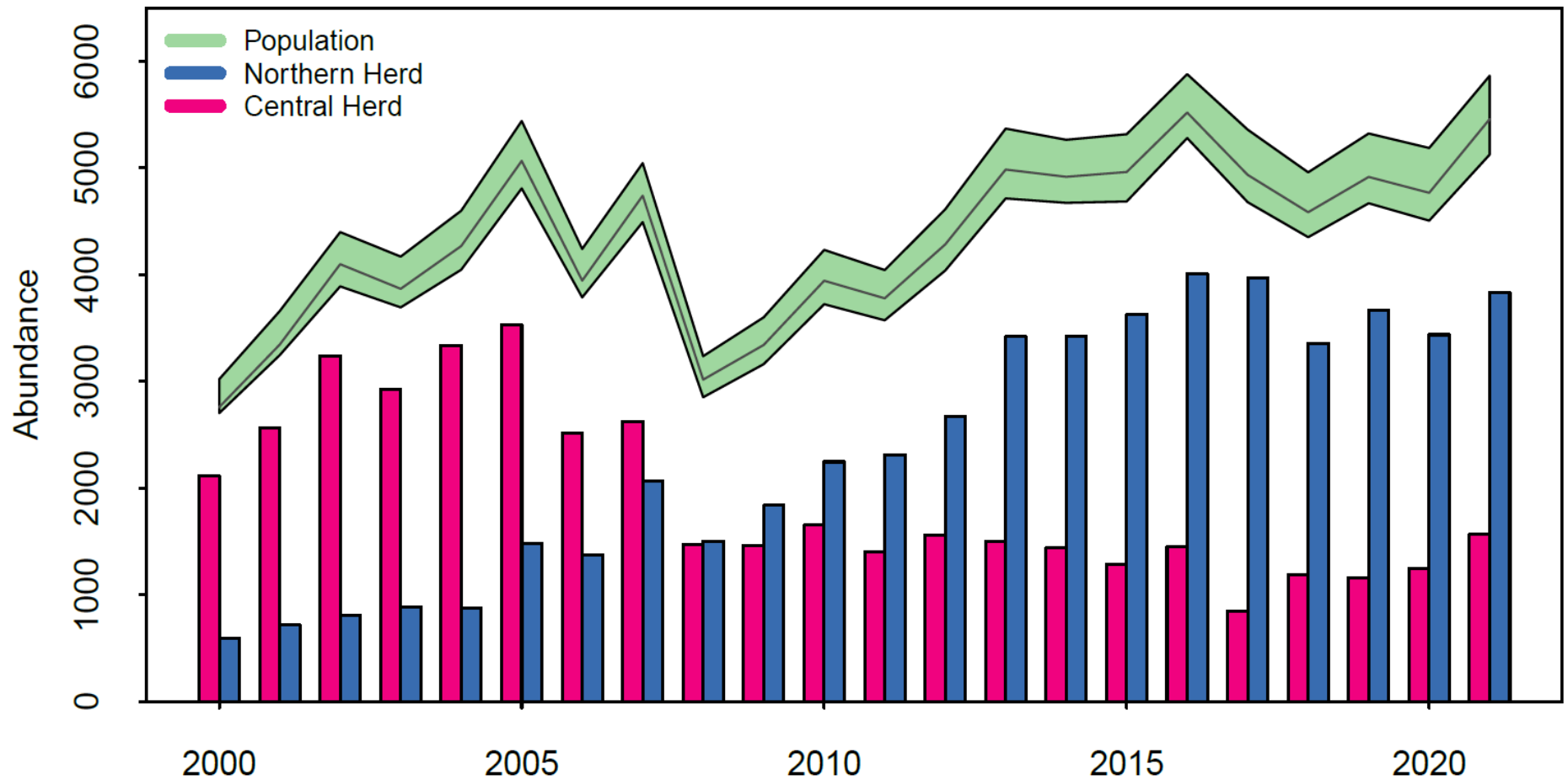
IBMP partners and Tribal Nations to preserve a viable population of wild migratory bison, while maintaining human safety, a low risk of brucellosis transmission, minimal property damage, and federal trust responsibilities to tribes

CONSERVATION OBJECTIVES

1. Sustain a viable, wild population
2. Remove fewer than 25% of the population and less than 1,000 animals per winter when possible
3. Maintain more than 1,000 bison in the central and northern herds
4. Maintain a balanced sex ratio
5. Maintain an age structure of about 70% adults and 30% younger animals

Current Status

- About 5,450 bison currently



Current Status

Herds

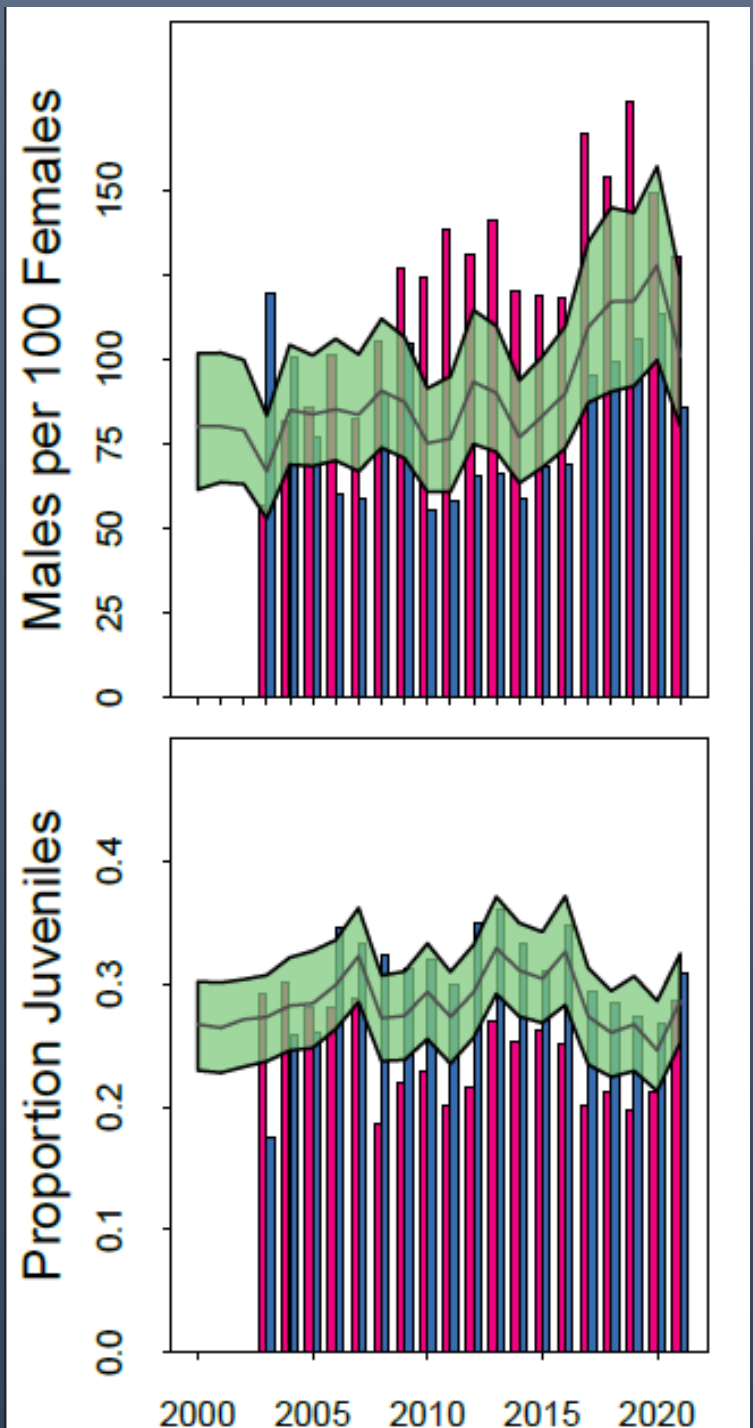
- Air counts near 4,100 northern herd and 1,300 central herd

Sex Ratio

- 101 females per 100 males
- more males central herd

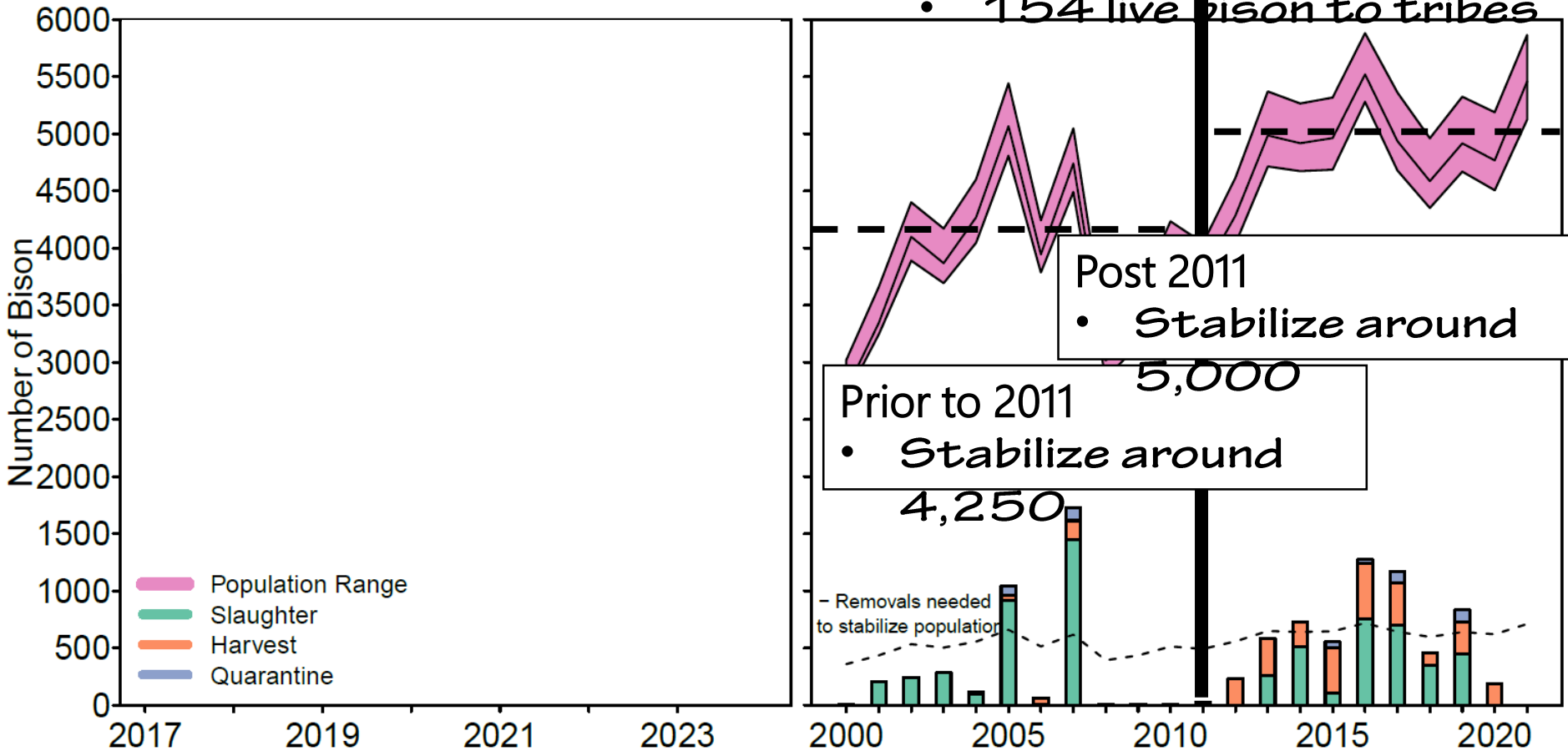
Age Structure

- 29% juvenile & 81% adult



NPS Management Record Winter 2021-2022

- Since 2011
- no bruc. Tx
 - reduced hazing
 - fewer landowner complaints
 - 2,649 harvests



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1. *Remove 600-900 animals (4,300-4,700 at the end-of-winter and 5,200-5,700 after calving)*
2. *No hunting or lethal removals in western conservation areas*
3. *Support federal trust responsibilities to tribes by allowing for hunting opportunities and entering animals into brucellosis quarantine*
4. *Balance captures with state and tribal hunting opportunities*

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6. Captured animals that do not qualify for quarantine could be given to tribal partners for transfer to meat-processing facilities
7. Some captured animals that do not qualify for quarantine could be released to further support hunting opportunities
8. Bison congregating around the capture facility could be moved away
9. Up to 200 additional animals could be harvested or captured in late winter if numbers of bison using Montana conservation areas exceeds tolerance