



Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

1400 South 19th Avenue
Bozeman, MT 59718-5496

Greetings,

Thank you for taking the time to attend the recent bison scoping meeting that was held in Billings. We estimate that approximately 80 individuals attended this meeting. Public scoping is an initial step in the development of a programmatic environmental impact statement that will examine the future of bison in Montana as wildlife. Attached you will find a compilation of all of the comments as they were recorded during the recent meeting in Billings. We have transcribed the comments that were submitted during the meeting exactly as they were recorded. There are a few instances where the handwriting was not clear and the comments reflect this. Please review the comments and let us know if there are additional comments you would like to submit. Fish, Wildlife, & Parks will be accepting public comments via regular mail, e-mail, or online through June 25th, 2012. The comments that were captured at each of the regional meetings and those submitted outside of the meetings will be available for review on the Fish, Wildlife & Parks website following the closure of the comment period.

We would like to thank you again for attending the recent meeting and hope that you will remain part of this process as Fish, Wildlife & Parks moves forward with the development of the programmatic environmental impact statement.

Sincerely,

Arnold Dood and Montana Fish, Wildlife, & Parks

To Submit Comments or Gain More Information

<i>FWP Website:</i> http://fwp.mt.gov/fishAndWildlife/management/bison/future.html#scoping	<i>Written Comments:</i> MT FWP Bison Plan Scoping ATTN: Arnold Dood 1400 South 19 th Ave Bozeman, MT 59718	<i>E-mail Comments:</i> Bison_Management@ mt.gov
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Billings Public Scoping Meeting May 21st, 2012

Issues and Concerns:

- Management can be worked out
- Question of who is going to feed them in bad winters
- Concern over abuse, illegal take of bison herds
- Has to be a management plan for if drifts get high – weather factor has to be evaluation – do not risk human life managing bison. (floods etc)
- If a fire goes through a captive area, tough winter has to be addressed in proposed. Will they be fed, moved?
 - If natural do you feed or hunt?
- Hire enough trained bison personnel to manage the herd effectively
- Focus on
 - Private prop rights
 - Disease transmission
 - Potential for damage to crops by free-ranging bison
- Won't be able to keep them within the boundaries that FWP designates
- Cattle, horses, and bison – horses have lead mare, boss cow, bison lead cow controls whole herd – when lead wants to go where she wants herd follows – if harvest her then can get one that stays around – it is away to control the herd – if harvest a lead cow that runs through fence it can change herd behavior – based on personal experience
- Where ever they go there have to be forces big enough & bad enough to keep them in if they escape money has to be available to compensate for damage
 - Whoever is going to own them has to be responsible
- How can you have free ranging herd limited to one area
- Buffalo won't be limited to a single location – they can move a long distance
- Bison are hard to control – fence might not work.
- Will any method be employed to keep bison on public land?
- Human safety – bison are huge – Helena has a problem w/ deer billings does not want bison running around in town
- Bull cattle/dogs can kill people
- If I hit a cow I have to pay for the cow – more cars in YNP attacked by elk than bison
- Safety issue on highways with buffalo
- Concern with danger of free roaming animals to people and domestic animals
- Potential collision problems with vehicles.
- Concerned about transportation of bison. Safety concerns here. How are these large hazards?
- Concerned about the possible violation of the clean and healthful environment clause of the Constitution. The damaged done 2 yrs. ago in Gardiner was a threat to young children.
- Safety when Moving Bison.
- Public safety – traffic
- Bison chase horses & 4 wheels
- If bison get on the road & some one gets hurt or killed who is responsible who will put up bond
- Bison bring unique challenges for public safety and infrastructure
- Concern with fencing – what will bison do to fences what will bison fences do to movement of other wildlife
- Fencing costs impossible, adjacent to CMR - & ranchers can't afford those fencing costs.
- Not denying bison only want fence
- Impossible to fence.
- If they are going to confine them what will that expense be (start-up costs and ongoing costs)?
- Concern over treatment of bison, specifically to confinement
- Is there talk of fencing the bison
- What About fences
 - Fence 'em in or out.
 - Heavy Fences Needed –
 - Even then they'll get out.

- Will there be any confinement boundaries on free “roaming herds”
- How can we have free-roaming bison? What will they do to fences?
- Only way to manage bison will be through use of game-farm like system – very contained. Further game farms are banned.
- Want bison fenced
- Wouldn't bison break out of fences?
- Bison should be 100% disease free and that YNP should do their part in making all bison disease free
- Disease testing is not 100%- How do you generate disease free animals
- Will bison be vaccinated for brucellosis - & their offspring – disease concerns? – As livestock operators have. Is the test & vaccine for brucellosis 100% effective?
- Will testing occur for brucellosis & other diseases and for how long before they are considered for release?
- Transmission (disease)
- Does brucellosis affect the meat?
- Brucellosis never been documents transmittal to cattle, but we have seen transmittal from elk to cattle. Appears to be transmittal between elk & bison.
- What will be the disease prevention and monitoring program?
- Disease –
 - Overblown – Elk bigger Reservoir of Brucellosis & Tuberculosis.
 - Don't concentrate 'em –
 - Bison 50% sero-positive, Elk 3-5%
 - What plan to continue testing Bison for Brucellosis?? Who's responsible for cattle loses?
- How will the condition of the range regarding disease be determined before bison are released?
- Is the science that says that bison that are sero-negative 100% certain that they are not carriers?
- Who will pay for disease testing facilities, etc?
- Will there be continued testing of free ranging bison to see if they are still disease-free?
- Bison should be tested annually for disease similar to what is required for livestock
- Annual testing should be required to insure they are still disease free
- Concern over trichomoniasis– it has been brought in in the past and caused damage –
- W/ YNP bison the DOL should have to work w/ FWP because of the right herd rule –
 - Bison should be tested to protect everyone bison & cattle
- Disease impact – how will FWP manage disease impact
- Concern spread of disease to livestock – what don't we know about bison diseases. Who would be responsible for cost of disease
- Viability & persistence of brucellosis in the soil & environment?
- How to keep bison & other wildlife disease free
- More concerned about mad cow disease than about brucellosis
 - The herd brought down from Canada → cows in CA have history but there was no up roar
 - The herds of Fort Belknap care tested regularly
 - Ordinance that cattle on the reservation have to be tested regularly
- Major concern with brucellosis and loosing bruc. free status
- Concern with spread of brucellosis between wild animals – elk – bison – etc
- Problem with additional management and handling of cattle in brucellosis management when by Yellowstone
- Brucellosis-free is not 100% certain. Other diseases include Johnes disease
- Genetic purity – doesn't think YNP bison and genetically different from other bison
- A lot of bison have cattle genes---eventually if we stop breeding bison to domestic cattle the introgression will go away over time
- Free-range bison birth control would interfere with genetics
 - Falls into domestic side of bison mgmt
 - Distrust of this
- Herd size should not be determined by only genetics, look at range conditions water etc
- Viable Genetic Base – Mix & Match
- Have the results of genetic testing of quarantine feasibility study bison been released

- FWP should use other genetic stock – not just YNP bison
- Hunters deserve a bison hunting opportunity that is not a high fence hunt, but rather a “fair-chase” opportunity
- Will we need another block management program to provide hunting access – who will pay for it?
- Managing bison numbers through hunting will be legally challenged over and over – who will pay for litigation cost?
- Put a hunting season for bison in place
- If bison are put on CMR as wildlife – how will FWP regulate hunting
 - CMR can stop hunting
 - We can’t hunt lions, etc.
 - They write their own rules
- Hunting pressure will move Bison
- Yukon – Pressure doesn’t move ‘em.
- Without hunting pressure, can’t control #
- Will there be a hunting season on free roaming bison
- Hunters must be part of the solution to managing bison numbers/problems
- Legal battles will prevent hunting of bison if they were established – herds would get out of control
- How many acres will be needed to support genetically viable populations of bison?
- How does FWP designate an area and is FWP going to help pay for the existing leases (land leases).
- Develop some method to slaughter excess bison once they get established
- How many bison are we talking about here? Per herd, per location? How many are there to move right now. How many are we managing/not managing now?
- Will there be mgt. quotas, and what will be done to control bison numbers?
- How do you know how many animals until you have the land?
- How will FWP Manage # of Bison – what will FWP do different – keep from overrunning MT
- How will numbers be controlled
- Population control → hunting (look at wolves)
 - Realize it’s different – litigation could result in a booming population
 - We need to control that litigation → ties up mgmt
- Are personal property problems that come up but FWP has experience in problems w/ elk etc on private property
- Could a landowner kill a bison if it was causing a problem
- Private property rights. Free roaming animal. Who will pay for torn fences and lost grazing? Landowners will tell you they don’t want them. They don’t want them going through their land.
- Govt considering landscape as it was back in 1800’s. (No fences etc) Lot of property owners putting time and money into making a living and improvements to land. Utilize park – fence in the bison & wolves there. If govt is going to run a ranch, they need to be responsible for the land.
- Concern over impacts of free-roaming bison on private property
- This is agenda 21
- What is FWP asking private landowners to shoulder the burden of bison?
- Bought land with no bison so no initial obligation (such as with existing wildlife obligation (such as with existing wildlife like deer & elk), but will now be obligated to tolerate bison
- Private owners (in holdings) → who will they be effected
 - e.g. mineral rights, whatever property rights
- No matter where you put these bison they will eventually wind up on private land – fencing, etc
- Concern with additional headaches and losses landowners would suffer with another game species on the landscape
- Many private landowners help maintain elk, deer, etc
 - Don’t want bison as another species for agriculture to feed and manage as a by-product of the operations we run
- Impacts of bison moving across Ag. fields would be a disaster
- Concern about property damage and conflict with agricultural crops.
- What recourse will private landowners have for damage caused by bison?
- Damage
- 400 bison would cause more damage than even 400 elk
- Impact on Existing Landowners? –

- When homesteaded – no Bison – Land Sold – Established value w/o Bison
- Bison Use all forage –
 - Livestock; Croplands – Golden Triangle; Wildlife – All of it – species of concern, too.
- FWP should develop a compensation plan that could be used to address problems.
- How will private landowners be compensated for damage done by bison? - Just one more cost to the landowner
- Who is responsible for damage
- No payment for wildlife damage
- Conversation is often either bison or no bison rather than how to have bison & livestock managed together. Examples in Henry Mtns in Utah.
- How will you keep wild buffalo separated from domestic buffalo – how will you maintain genetics of wild herd
- How will co-mingling of domestic and wild bison be addressed?
- There should be a plan to prevent co-mingling of domestic and wild bison
- Domestic the fewer concerns they have bison are not the issue
- Competition – domestic bison producers have to compete w/ wild bison and their commercial bison have less value
- Who will be responsible for spread of weeds by free ranging animals
- Invasive weeds will increase with bison wallowing patterns – cost will be prohibitive. Weeds will continue to increase, across the state.
- Having free ranging herd would encourage spread of wolves following them
- Grazing Bison reduce grass fire danger.
- Stream Banks – Impact worse than Cattle
- Will buffalo compete with native wildlife
- If develop fences big enough to keep bison in designated areas how will it impact the migration of other wildlife animals
 - How many deer, elk etc would need to remain in the captive area to maintain genetics and how would new genetics be brought in
- Impact on forage for other wildlife
- No way we can farm w/ free-roaming bison around
- Ag. Livestock operators will be negatively affected.
- Farmers/ranchers are primary economic drivers in the states economy - & will be negatively affected & FWP should not be adversaries to Ag. producers.
- Overall costs of bison reintroduction – fences, property loss/ damage to private landowners.
- Having another mouth to feed (wildlife) would put additional financial burden on private. landowners/farmers
- Economics Part of EIS? –
 - Should!
- Extreme impact on local people if they are introduced somewhere on other States
- MT Absorbs Cost of Meeting Expectations of out-of-state interests
- Ag is #1 industry in MT to jeopardize it by introducing free-roaming bison is insane
- Concern over outside markets and cattle transport from state to state
- Ranchers/farmers share an undue burden helping feed people – imports costs are already high
- As environmental group has gone up in MT economy has gone down
- Loss of tax revenue by putting bison out – letting 30-40 people hunt
- Agricultural industry are the only people who have a monetary stake in this.
- Ag is #1 industry why jeopardize it?
- What will the impact be on the commodity market if a free ranging herd
 - Has FWP contacted other state to see if there will be an impact on cattle & cattle product
- Forage competition with livestock – less income for ranchers, less taxes generated.
- Enhance opportunities for commercial bison mgt & not negatively affect those commercial bison operations
- Farmer/rancher businesses are on the line here. Bison incidents will occur and don't always get paid for. Why jeopardize rancher/farmers operations? 9/10 times they won't get reimbursed. Why should taxpayers foot the bill for this? Agriculture (cattle, wheat, sheep, every ag. business) affected. Ag is #1 industry in MT . . . it should NOT be jeopardized.
- Opportunity cost:

- We need cost benefit analysis
 - Take land out of public ownership for bison
- (p. 121) local people tend to not want free-ranging bison
 - Less of an economic impact the bison has on someone
- FWP could promote tourism w/ a free ranging bison herd
 - Could benefit local community through tourism
 - Could be joint management w/ other partners (Feds, ranchers, tribes) especially in an area such as CMR
- Demand for food & fiber for humans will increase in the future with the same land base. Would pop. will double by 2050.
- What are people who want free-roaming bison giving up or losing
- Management Plan should cover everyone in the State – everyone is the same
- Cost – benefit
 - What is the cost to FWP when private landowners shut down hunting
- Landowners are serious
 - This issue has the potential to ruin relationship w/ put landowners & FWP – no hunting on private lands
- Possibility to shut down hunting on private lands/ particularly production lands
- Are there soil conservationists that can come in to examine potential areas – FWP should look at the range impact between different types of grazing (bison/cattle/ungrazed)
- Make sure don't have too many AUM's for grass – if giving hunting permits make sure quota is getting filled so it is not over grazed
- How will the land be designated? Who will be responsible for management and who will pay for it?
- Forage impact – if free-roaming has an adequate amount of research been done on the impact to forage
- No existing leaseholder should lose their leases (private or public).
- Any roads & trails w/ in areas should remain open an accessible to all people – no roads/trails should be closed for project if it is on public land
- Grazing allotments are important economically and are quantified by AUM for livestock not wildlife. As bison #'s increase, livestock AUM's will be decreased.
- Impact on forage for domestic livestock
- Forage is finite and changes per year
- We lose opportunities. For oil/gas/prod/etc.
 - Losing income from cattle prod.
- How will it affect # AUMs on a BLM, USFS property – already consider existing wildlife – bison now added – what will it do to the lease?
- Access into the CMR is very limited - & federal control will make management difficult – some accesses thru private land will be required.
- Concern over bison becoming extinct especially since ones in YNP are the purest herd – FWP should manage them as wildlife
 - FWP has a lot of experience on problems that came up from existing wildlife
- Concern that we have no small free-ranging bison and it seems we should to protect against extinction – need
 - In MT just have Turners & YNP & APR
 - To hedge against extinction should add more
- On website literature, elude to endangered species but with 400,000 – not so. Leave bison management to commercial interests & let them lead in this effort.
- Concern that “wild” bison could be listed as an endangered species?
- Bison are not a T&E species
- Concern over classification on whether they are domestic or wild.
- These bison cannot be classified as wildlife
- Key is should be managed as wildlife free roaming – should be managed by FWP & Fish & Wildlife
- Should be considered wildlife and therefore fence should not be an issue
- Reevaluating bison as wildlife – folks view bison as livestock & domesticated – not as wild bison. No one wants a plan that negatively effects Ag. producers. There must be a place in MT for bison.
- Classify all bison as livestock

- Do not believe bison should be managed as wildlife should be in park or preserve private property owners are on the losing end since FWP is not helping to rebuild fencing/damage from other wildlife – not even come close to coming up w/ \$ needed for private landowner
- Bison should not be classified as wildlife – should be classified as livestock
- Managed under same regulations as livestock
- I'd like to see both cattle and bison managed more humanely.
- What is the drive to do this, why make them wildlife instead of livestock?
- Are wild bison of the same indigenous rights as elk, deer, wolf, antelope?
- Bison need to remain livestock ---not free-ranging. or publically owned
- If become wildlife could be owned by state of MT – private herds would no longer be able to own them if turn into wild life (similar to the elk farms)
- How are “free-ranging” bison to be classified? . . . as wildlife, livestock, what? Can bison be vaccinated and still be classified as wildlife?
- Current law – (2 previous legislation)
 - HB 482 – to give FWP management authority (defeated before it left committee → clear message for bison to remain livestock.)
- When does it become not free-roaming
- Want do they really mean by free-roaming bison. Are they really going to turn them loose? Or, are they going to be put in a confined area?
- Prefer the term “Publicly owned wildlife” as opposed to “free-ranging bison.”
- How does MT constitution (wild life are owned by Montanans) – how does that effect Native American's & their bison if bison are considered as wildlife
- Need to respect the management plans of all private (ex. different tribes) we are all different
- Free-roaming bison needs to be defined by agencies regulating so there are more specific boundaries between park bison
- Who is responsible for removal of problem animals
- How to Enforce Whatever we decide to do?? More resources – How to Pay for it.
- FWP and DOL should work together to develop regulations statewide
 - Since impacts all bison & cattle owners
- Concern – Game and property damage from buffalo – who is responsible
- Where will bison come from
- Where are the bison going to come from?
- If laws & regulations change to allow free-ranging bison. – APR has good stock herd
- Concern that not enough research has been done on the potential impact that bison could do to existing ranchers (ranching in general)
- Very inadequate research done on all impacts Ag, ranching, hunting etc.
- Need to look to those who manage their bison well
- Canada has a lot of bison. How are they handling theirs? We might be able to learn from them?
- Check w/Lolo & SD – Custer Park. How did that work?
- Turner learned about fencing for forage management –
 - Ted has info to share. His manager
- What is biggest issues that ranchers are concerned about.
- I want to learn more about the bison and how free-ranging bison would be managed . . . to address problems. A desired to learn more about how these problems can be addressed. I want to become more involved. A need to work closer with the tribes too.
- Anyone interested in the issue needs more education on bison
- Since wolf management has gone array have low opinion as to how FWP will manage bison.
- I don't trust F&G to properly manage a wild herd
- With the wolf example, how are we to trust bison mgt by FWP
- FWP said “FWP not responsible for property damage other than fencing – not labor we will manage bison the same as FWP manages elk.”

- I have no trust in FWP's ability to manage bison because they have proven they cannot manage wolves, elk numbers, mtn. lions, deer numbers, fish. FWP has a bad track record.
- Wolves Haven't Been Managed
 - Destroying Game.
 - Elk Mgt plan – way over in some Regions –
 - Solutions now to find more land for Bison instead of manage numbers.
 - YNP Mgrs Not Allowed to Manage Bison – Politicians, judges, Enviro – Have more say –
- Low level of trust in FWP because of wolf mismanagement
- It is obvious no one in that dept understands /hears “NO”
- Distrust is there because state government is doing thing w/out plan in place
- Distrust goes back to wolves
- Most of us that have dealt w/ this process before have seen where there is complete opposition but the idea went forward
- Didn't feel heard – enough is enough
- Or the idea presented wasn't actually what you get
- Locally, less support than nationally.
- FWP is not coordinating or cooperating with existing county plans.
- Lawsuits back and forth will never end and as a result not much will likely happen. I think this is going nowhere and it is a big waste of time.
- How did FWP get away with breaking SB 212
- FWP should proceed carefully with the EIS & hopefully work out something where we can have some free-roaming bison
- Who authorized the initiation of the EIS for a wild, free-roaming buffalo herd?
- Need more education and meeting with people of different perspectives
- Wolves were supposed to eat park bison and were reason brought back but the experts were wrong – science is not always right – alternatives need to go beyond science and look at current management
- All ranchers/landowners who live in a proposed areas should be involved in the discussion
- Plan should separate science and politics
- Why do you feel we need to relive history –
 - Different populous, towns.
- Politics too polarized to find workable solution
- Glad to see FWP is looking at this
- A real concern about who is pushing this effort, who's backing this effort? Concerned FWP is trying to appease the “deep pocketed” environment groups and they are pitted directly against agricultural groups, farmers and ranchers. All this comes at the expense of the Ag. industry.
- Who made Decision to Do an EIS?
- Managing a Crisis – This could lead to Solution –
- How were Starred Areas identified –
 - Mtns – they probably won't stay!
- Who is on Study Teams
 - If all Enviro – 4 million Buffalo
- Change of Admin –
 - What happens then?
- Put the bison issue on the ballot. Let the people of MT make this decision.
- Problems that FWP is going to face are not scientific but cultural – FWP has ability to work w/ some but may alienate others. – Bison could become scapegoat for all problems
 - FWP needs to be very sensitive to this and how they interact with all people (both people who want – they have a right too) – majority of people in MT favor bison according to polls – FWP has a responsibility to represent all people)
- If we are at the “beginning” of a bison program – why have we had the quarantine facility for 4 years and why are we already moving bison to the Indian reservations

- Where are the places we can possibly consider free-ranging bison. Where could we put them? Can we work with local groups (tribal, other) to identify concerns? Curious about Billing area in particular. Are FWP working with tribes that already have bison to address potential concerns?
- Those who want EIS already have a solution in mind
- Local experts need to have same weight as experts
- Should be no free roaming buffalo unless it's put to the vote of the people of Montana. Not the nation, but by the people that will be dealing with them.
- Agenda should not be driving plan from top down. Govt driving plan. Plan should come from the people.
- This issue is being pushed by animal rights groups outside the state of Montana. It is a nightmare being pushed upon us.
- Feel environmentalist are pushing this
- People impacted by free-ranging bison have "more-say"
- County sheriff dept commissioners & local govt need to be involved in process and have a lot of weight
- This is just one more example of politicians trying to control the people. They will take 1 mil acres of CMR & say we cannot go in there. Tired of Fed. Government using MT as a test ground. Wants to see Fed Govt try it out on other states 1st. If they are really serious, try it out on other states 1st.
- Bison are not a Mt. problem- rather a federal problem. Federal govt controls CMR, & state FWP will not be able to control or manage.
- Will Feds let the State do this? What makes you think they will allow this? & Who told you to start this effort
- Can we trust a federal bison plan in the CMR when the YNP bison plan isn't followed?
- Multiple agencies – and when something happens it's somebody else's fault
- Safety – buff wander off res and get shot which is problematic
 - Extreme to shoot the tribes bison – they are partially wildlife but also partially domestic
- Allow Tribes to hunt on Bison range & Park
- FWP needs to keep tribal bison separate
- Range assessments have been done for other resizing (Fort Belknap) that says how many bison can be supported
- If the tribes want the bison free of disease and have the ability to manage them, they should be allowed to have them.
- The tribes wanting buffalo to manage is a separate issue from free-roaming bison. Mgmt should start in YNP.
- Give all the bison to Indian Tribes
- Concern about way current YNP is being managed – buffalo have been tested over & over for brucellosis – wander out and get slaughtered – I consider them wildlife – know there are domestic in state – seems that buffalo that are wildlife are at the whim of DOL or FWP. Would like to see the buffalo managed as wildlife
 - Recognize ranch concerns
 - Livestock biggest industry
 - Concern about buffalo – Henry MT herd does coexist – think can be down in MT
- We should be managing existing surplus animals with aggressive hunting program right now
- We already have a bison population in Yellowstone NP – we don't manage well
- Bison stay where they are
- How will bison be managed better outside YNP than inside YNP
- The mismanagement of YNP has resulted in landowners having to "correct it"
- Before considering free-roaming bison need to work on Yellowstone bison problem first in conjunction with the federal government
- Develop a better management plan for Yellowstone Park bison
- No matter what happens current system around park is not working
- Very aggressive Hunting @ Yellowstone Border –
 - Keep 'em in the Park –
 - Rough Country –
- Wants to kill the whole program. Complicated solution to a simple problem. Need to hunt them in Yellowstone Park. This is just creating more problems. Cost / Money 16 T debt. Hunt them when they come out of park. Hunt them w/ park rangers in the park. By spreading them out we are just creating problems.
- How many bison will be left in YNP if they become free roaming

- Current system of management in place is not working
- Should be better government management of existing bison herds
- Each Justice, Service Club Defenders of Wildlife were present at the meeting in Chinook
- FWP should collect fees from individuals that would like to see bison moved into other areas. Should collect enough \$ so that 10 yrs of projected cost is collected then the project could move fwd – let the private individuals who want to see project fund the full costs
- Who will pay for range impact studies?
- Tourism - state brings in over a billion why not have something like a fed tax that is identified for bison that could be used for bison management
- Have a lot of \$ put into managing wildlife if going to be wildlife then should come from same funds as other wildlife
- Cost – money could be spent better trying to solve world hunger
- Alts have to have a cost base and where the \$ comes from needs to include est. of cost of life, impacts to ag etc. auto loss, medical, can not be experts but from the locals on the ground
- Lawsuits will occur from free-ranging bison which would cost tax payers
- The US is already Broke – how can we afford to get into another pet project – how will it be paid for
- Costs & who pays those costs associated with bison management –taxpayers burdened
- Cost of managing free roaming are too big & are too much of a burden on taxpayers
- Taxpayers are not paying now for wildlife management.
- Concerned about the long-term costs of such a program . . . recognizing FWP is always underfunded.
- Cost of a management program.
- Won't cost the guys from the city a damn thing
 - Other than the cost of going through this process
- Tax to pay for Bison Mgt.
- We need budget from Govt to establish what this will cost. If you are going to build a building you would want to have a budget. Federal Govt providing \$ though grants to tribal agencies, but tribes not held to wildlife plan obligations.
- The buffalo program is another failed program like the wolves. Costing taxpayers millions of dollars. And we don't want excess taxes and any other taxes going into bison management.
- I respect your right to have bison in your backyard, but dam you if you expect me to pay for them.
- Waste of money
- Why should tax payers be on the hook for damages caused by bison
- Who will pay for it? Exactly who?
- License fees must be allocated to something – what will be cut, how much will fees go up?
- Additional FWP personnel required to manage bison – who will pay for it?
- Bison don't need to be managed the experts do!
- Bison are the same animal changing the name will not change their habits
- We need to understand basic history and be able to explain it. That we whites in Europe and Asia had the 5 basic animals that humans could domesticate, which enabled us to take over in Americas and Australia. Cattle and sheep are our saved animals. We can try out some buffalo grazing on the prairie.
- Insane
- How did the bison become more valuable than human life
- If this is such a great idea for MT, what about the other 49 states
- There's a place for everything

Alternatives:

- No action – keep bison private
- No action private ownership – if do proceed need to have allocated funds (in the bank) for game damages
 - Research has to be done for impacts
- Historically, agriculture & wildlife interests worked together to restore wildlife – resulting in restoration of other wildlife species. Explore ways to restore the last big game sp. in MT – CMR may be such a place.
- Prefer Restoration of Free Roam Bison Pop that meets the Preferred herd size recommended by Genetics

- Could an alternative be to correct management of other species before the bison issue is taken on
- No free-roaming bison managed by FWP
- No action let it stay private
- Alternative – send extra Bison to Russia
- Prefer no action alternative – from Ag. producer.
- We have free-roaming bison herd in YNP Leave em’ there!
- Explore management options that increase in intensity in zone mgt. format – with increasing pressure on a near private land. Explore other mgt options depending on landowner tolerance.
- Central Park would be a good place for bison!
- Stillwater County commission wants the NO ACTION alternative chosen.
- All alternative should have some of control of bison movement – bison-proof fences
- Allow Bison Everywhere!
 - Infrastructure
 - Tax base
 - Study impact, towns – individuals, pretend they are here – Because of lack of confidence (tools or will)
 - FWP – to control #
- Give ‘em to other States –
- Missoula – Helena Urban Wildlife
- Establish another (Moise) National Bison Range –
 - Or several –
- How come Pryors Which Already has Horse Problem?
- CMR area – landowners having to deal with bison on top of elk. CMR designed as habitat and grazing
- No place for bison on Federal lands outside national parks.
- No free-roaming buffalo. Tribes are their own. They can do what they want on their lands & FWP should not have any jurisdiction on the tribes. Bison on YNP should be hunted. Ranchers can have buffalo but they have to accept responsibility & liability for having them. Surplus Buffalo on YNP can be trapped and shipped and hunted.
- No free-roaming buffalo. Any buffalo hunt would not fall under jurisdiction of FWP. They would be under the jurisdiction of Dept. of Ag. for Livestock.
- Land already set aside for buffalo on National Park System. Buffalo overgrazing available grounds. Herd size not sustainable. Bison leave NP grounds. Ill-conceived state scheme. Who will see it? No access or visibility in CMR. Nothing good can come of this. Doesn’t want taxpayers \$ going into failed program.
- No action
- No action
- I don’t believe there is a place for bison on state-owned lands.
- Oppose free-ranging bison. (Four tally marks)
 - Not oppose bison altogether
- Want bison to stay wherever they are at
 - No free-ranging
 - Classify as livestock
- Oppose any relocation whatsoever outside of YNP