

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 Glasgow. We estimate that approximately 130 individuals attended this meeting. I want to apologize to everyone that attended that had an expectation that the meeting was a public hearing. In hindsight, we should have done some things differently in our news releases and our outreach prior to the meeting. The meeting was intended to be a public scoping meeting and we were attempting to get input from all who attended.

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 <u>as they were recorded</u> during the recent meeting in Glasgow. 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

FWP Website:	Written Comments:	E-mail Comments:
http://fwp.mt.gov/fishAndWildlife/	MT FWP Bison Plan Scoping	Bison_Management@
management/bison/future.html#scoping	ATTN: Arnold Dood	mt.gov
	1400 South 19th Ave	
	Bozeman, MT 59718	

Glasgow Public Scoping Meeting May 16th, 2012

Issues and Concerns:

- What are the responses of management agency regarding humane issues? Feed? Abundance of predators?
- The buffalo would present many potential risks, including fence repair, interbreeding of cattle (we know this to be true from the issues in locating genetically pure bison), . . . forage loss, Disease possibilities including: undulant fever in humans and human endangerment.
- When they take a hands off approach, worked 100's years ago. Doesn't work now.
- Responsible for bison \$/property/control
- When choose location fencing/migration/current leases
- Once bison are in (through fence) who is responsible for getting them out. Safety concerns in doing so.
- Where are bison going to go during drought years
- Management Intensity
 - o Manage as wildlife population
 - o Enhanced management plan
 - o What means are we to use to meet objectives?
- Hard to manage Grass/Mend Fences
- I think it'll require a lot more enforcement from Montana Fish Wildlife & Parks (FWP) & Montana Department of Livestock (DOL)
- Very concern about how the free-roaming bison will be controlled, by the nature of the beast
- In case of adverse weather i.e. drought, is FWP prepared or willing to reduce or liquidate the free roaming herd.
- Will bison have to check in at the border when they migrate to Canada?
- If you introduce to Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge (CMR) how do you control free roaming?
- When drought hits, bison will move
- How are we going to contain them to their space?
- Are they going to be able to use mechanical means to gather buffalo?
- Buffalo will not stay where they are put
- Being there is <u>not</u> a satisfying and bombproof method to control the roaming bison that leave Yellowstone National Park (YNP), what would be different with these herds.
 - o Ex: One year the public hunts them then the next year wardens shoot them, then next year they use horses to harass and drive back into the Park.
- Need to consider public safety and public education hunter education
- Public safety Ran the defend property
- Talk of bison on CMR Hunters concerns on safety (waking in the dark)
- Human safety
- Are there any safety concerns regarding buffalo? Archery hunters
- Human Safety . . . Folks recreating in the out-of-door could be endangered
- If they are free roaming and you get into a traffic accident with one, you killed. This issue for me is safety.
- Fencing Bison will damage private fences
- How will we fence them out?
- If they are contained who is responsible for fence?
- Fencing issues. Private landowners property.
- How are they going to keep them contained?

- Even elk can destroy a fence, which the FWP Background information on issues of concern handout states Elk are comparable to Bison.
- Escaped bison cannot be herded
- How is FWP going to contain bison? Who will pay for all the fencing? Who will maintain them?
- Need to fence bison in
- They are dirty son-of-a-guns on fences
- Containment of bison is a major concern.
- Who will build and maintain fences?
- There is not a fence in south Phillips County that can keep a buffalo in. Including on the American Prairie Reserve. They will walk through fencing
- This is cattle producing area... concern about brucellosis free status. Park issues. Why isn't FWP concerned about disease issues and spread in this area?
- Cost of disease issues on ranching operations
- Disease issues
- What is known about sleepers? Bangs
- What are they going to do to protect the ranchers if brucellosis shows up?
- How are they going to take care of disease?
- How do we control disease transmission (especially Bangs)
- Elk/Cattle/Buffalo co-mingling. How does that play out
- How are they going to test the buffalo (disease)?
- Need to have process for keeping them disease free
- Concern that buffalo will spread disease to Missouri River Breaks elk herd & other elk herds in Region 6 (NE MT) plus all livestock in area
- Disease transmission tuberculosis transfer to livestock, has occurred in Canada (is this true)
- The effects of brucellosis on humans have not been brought forth, not just an agricultural disease.
- One of the biggest issues is disease.
- Keep them vaccinated and on their own land.
- There are Europe nations that will not buy Montana beef because of brucellosis now!
- Brucellosis is a concern.
- Contamination of test kits with hunters. If it takes 2 weeks to get results- what has happened with the gut-pile during that time?
- Being we don't still have a clear understanding of brucellosis, why are we releasing this animal across the State?
- Concern of threats to livestock from brucellosis, ranchers have to liquidate positive herds
- What happens if wild bison got brucellosis
- Can you get mad cow in bison?
- Faced with difficulty of managing genetics of cow herd with added complications of bison as well as disease
- In 1940's we had brucellosis + had to test cattle ride herd prevent herd mixing. Do not want this again!
- Brucellosis
- How are we going to know if they are going to stay genetically pure?
- How are they going to maintain good genetics?
- Maintain genetic diversity: with new editions? or with existing individuals?
- Need to provide the documentation proving purity all origin & comparison w/others
- How do you keep bison and cows from crossing?

- Yellowstone National Park bison share ancestors with at least 3 herds considered introgressed. So they are all either one thing or the other.
- There is a myth that there are some bison somewhere with exact genetics of bison from 1882. Living creatures evolve and change. Looking at 4 mutations per copy event, 30 copy events per generation, approximately 8-9 generations. They are different. They will keep changing and the hang up on some sequences that are supposedly cattle are non-issue and a disservice to a living species.
- We want to see the actual DNA string test results that show the actual DNA markers.
- Feel we spent a lot of dollars on genetics on bison.
- Why should a landowner agree to hunting when they are forced upon us? Program says they have to have buffalo
- How many before hunting season?
- How will we get a bison (hunted) out of the CMR? It is hard enough getting a deer out (topography).
- You mention management with hunting. That system doesn't work with elk. FWP is naïve if we think we can control with hunting.
- Hunting of these free roaming bison is going to bring in a type of hunter that we really don't want.
- Are we ever going to have a huntable herd (Not reality)
- Land for bison will decrease hunter opportunity
- What'll they do when decide to hunt but environmentalists try/do stop it.
 - o If they don't hunt, they'll be overpopulated
- May lead to loss of hunting due to cooperators dropping out of Block Management
- No need to reintroduce animals to the wild for hunting
- So if the State spends all the time and money to release/introduce bison on the land . . . why are we hunting them?
- Who's truly going to benefit from a huntable herd of bison?
- What would be wrong with hunting existing commercial bison herds (You already can ex. Turner's Herd)
- What is this going to do to hunting access?
- Are we going to be able to hunt around these bison?
- If buffalo come, landowners will deny hunters.
 - o If deny hunters, how are you going to address over abundance of deer, antelope, elk, etc..
- Need to address what is "Fair chase" regarding Buffalo
 - Need to have education for hunters
 - o Need to address possible mechanical retrieval
 - o Don't understand who is behind the huntable herd
- As Bison increase how are we going to manage the numbers, hunt, sell,
- #s of bison/herd
 - o Yellowstone example
 - o Management of herd
- Once bison here, controlling the population. i.e. Wolves. Tied up in litigation while bison continue to reproduce.
- Population control/stay within population objectives What steps beyond hunting can the department do
- Population control Are they going to hunt them? Bring them into butcher?
 - o What is Plan "B" and "C" for population control
- Is there a population goal?
- How are they going to control the population?

- Once established how will they be counted?
- Why don't they rubber band when calves hit the ground. Herd control.
- We only supposed to have 700 elk out south, now we have 5,000+. What about bison, will this happen?
- How will private land incorporated?
- Property damage, property rights, damage by bison
- Interaction with private property
- Added expense to producers to fence bison out!!
- Property damage, property rights, damage by bison
- Bison will not be managed on the Reservations and Wildlife Refuge thus will trespass on private land. . .
- Property damage, property rights, damage by bison
- Don't agree with what American Prairie Reserve is doing but did buy land. How do you protect private property rights? If public wants it how do you protect private property compensation, who owns them?
- FWP has to be concerned about property damage. They are going to be pasture? Why are we talking about this, they (bison) are going to be here anyways.
- What is going to be tolerable for the destruction the animals cause crops, fences, private ground, shelter belts.
- How are they going to keep buffalo out of hay, pasture, private land damage.
- Property damage, property rights, damage by bison
- Bison won't stay on Public land, will move to more desirable private land and will become landowners problem
- Economic impact on private landowners due to wildlife grazing (current) and impacts that will come with Bison.
- Property damage, property rights, damage by bison
- Bison will come onto private land now the landowner will have to be responsible for the added expense at additional wildlife i.e. Bison.
- Private owned wells how do keep bison from drinking out of private wells?
- How will they be kept off of private lands and grazing allotments?
- Property damage, property rights, damage by bison
- Need to take into consideration all private property owners in affected area
- Property damage, property rights, damage by bison
- Liability of Free Roaming Bison etc. . . Car accidents/property damage
- Who will keep bison out of winter fed?
- I believe NE MT is the largest pulse crops in USA bison will not just graze on grass they will go in right to there first.
- Property damage, property rights, damage by bison
- Will the bison if free roaming be all across the landscape? How do we protect wheat and alfalfa?
- If we have issues with bison (on property) what action can we take?
- It's my livelihood. In a ranch. The price is going to down it's the (illegible)
- of thirty cows of (*illegible*) We get stuck for the \$ for wildlife danger.
- They will use water put on the landscape used for the cattle. That we put out here for cattle. by cattle. Unless we have free roaming bison they will be use our water.
- Compensation for damage Who is responsible
- Whose financially responsibility for damage. . . grass, private land, crops. Someone needs to be responsible
- Who would be responsible for the cost of "humane" issues?
- Why not bond the buffalo State would hold the bond Damages are paid automatically
- Who pays for damages caused by buffalo What constitutes damage? Is disease spread damage?

- Who is liable for damages to landowners property/crops/fencing etc.
- Who's going to pay for the damages by the free roaming herd?
- Is there going to be reimbursement to lost crops and pasture?
- Mixing of livestock (cow) with livestock compensation
- How are AUM's to be regulated if bison are present on same ground
- Needs to be consideration of all aspects of buffalo/livestock interaction
- What is level of acceptance of buffalo/livestock interaction?
- If bison are classified as wildlife will destroy the domestic bison industry "like the elk"
- Being there are already bison carrying cattle genes (Ex: Beefalo) I have concern that bison will breed with my cattle . . . even though FWP brochure states the opposite
- How do you keep wild and domestic animals separate??
- Crossing between cattle and bison may not occur naturally but crossing is different than breeding. There are known bulls harassing cows and the problems are sexually transmitted diseases and loss of calf and/or cow. When they do cross, calf dies and may take cow with them.
- They will breed cattle. They will cross breed.
- Predation of bison will be from hunters not bears if brought into an area where bears are not present.
 - o What is success rate at bears taking down bison?
- More focus on grazing resource.
- Damage to riparian areas
- Bison will degrade environment soils, range, etc.
- Spreading weeds.
- Ex. If goal is 1,000 bison, what is the required land to sustain?
- There still is permanent damage to landscape from when bison were free roaming before 100s of years ago.
- Introduction of bison will destroy the ecosystem, like Brine Shrimp/Salmon
- Bison will negatively affect vegetation, soils (erosion), etc.
- Causing extreme damage to riparian areas again.
- What is the impact of buffalo on riparian area/landscape
- YNP Bison are starving & will in NE MT
- What kind of an economic impact will it have on our community?
- \$ brought in/tourism
- Economic impacts on Montana's #1 industry . . . agriculture
- What and how many new jobs and new businesses will be created from the free ranging bison herds?
- When are they going to do an economic impact study on this bison issue?
- If they do reintroduce bison how is FWP going to convince other nations to buy our Montana beef?
- I'm a cattle rancher. I'm trying to sell a product.
- If you put 1,000 head in south Phillips County, we have reasons for (*illegible*) we do manage vol. We look at the landscape to see where we will move our cattle with bison there it's going to cut into our numbers. We wish they cut the numbers, it can't be the bison it will be us. We pay for that federal land. People don't want to hear that but we do (Emph= feel endangered). It's a (*illegible*) down effect we don't see a profit so we don't pay as much-- it will have an economic impact. Tourism isn't going to save us.
- If we have more buffalo, it will reduce the # of humans we can feed expecting 392 million U.S. citizens and a world population of 9.3 Billion by the year 2050, this is according to Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack.

- Most locals are a result of homesteaders in the last 100 years. If FWP is trying to establish bison based on this history, what does FWP plan to do about us (the people)
- Leave us alone
- There is more than just the private property damage. In winter tough winter they have destroyed (*illegible*) fences. It's tough to make a living it's not always about the \$. It's (*illegible*) that we don't need to move on. It takes takes away from my family, my grandchildren to defend my livelihood to others that don't understand our industry. They don't understand where our food comes from.
- How is my sovereignty as an individual different than of a tribal member?
- Let the working people work
- It's not just a \$ issue or economics, it's a food issue too. World population is exploding, food has to come from somewhere. Will bison replace potential loss of grain, livestock, etc? What that will go out the food chain?
- How many have withdrawn from Block Management due to bison issues.
- Liability issues from bison tearing down fences, allowing one rancher's cattle to intermingle with neighboring ranchers cattle for example some one with specialized breeding
- Bison will affect our ranching heritage will not allow future generations to ranch
- Will put stress on delicate neighbor relationships
- Many of the referenced national and international NGOs have as their goal, the removal of 5th and 6th generation Montana families from the land. Wild bison are a tool to do that and destroy century old cultural developed in harmony with the environment. Wild, not domestic bison will ultimately harm rural Montana, Montana families, wildlife, range environment and even the bison themselves. Will be a sad legacy of destruction for FWP.
- Negative impacts not only on private land, but also public land recreation areas
- American Prairie Reserve bison are disease free if suddenly bison are declared public wildlife American Prairie Reserve would be calling to donate our land to the state of Montana.
- Tourism not a reality
 - o Won't see the bison
 - o Won't know the difference between wild domestic
- Impact to landowner relations
 - o FWP will have an adversarial relationship
- Why would we want to put \$ in their pocket when all they will do is take it out of ours (landowners)
 - o Because if FWP sells a million tags there will be no where to use them (no place to hunt)
- Landowner response of limiting or completely shutting off access to private lands for recreation.
 - o Pulling out of BMA program.
- Will allow hunting on my block management land this year but will encourage hunters to contact FWP about the land owner dissatisfaction with the agency.
- Block management will not survive if buffalo comes here. Ranchers will pull out.
- Landowners considering shutting down hunting until they say they aren't going to put them out
 - What will this cost to current hunting relationships?
- How much Block Management will we lose? If we anger the Ag community
- We I see this going is private land will be taken away from the hunter due to FWP arrogance. If this process continues, the out of state access available to hunting will be diminished greatly.
- If FWP can put Bison on our (rangeland) why can't we put cows in the Helena FWP Headquarters?
- Ranchers are scared. Don't believe the federal government will let us live here if bison come. <u>MAJOR CONCERN.</u>

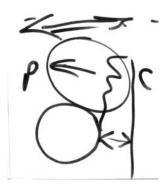
- We got the wolves we got the sage grouse been protected. All this erodes away our property rights. It's all about the land grab.
- Private landowners provide habitat---Landowners provide that
- Time proven recipe to have ranchers managing the ground, through generations at stewardship.
 - o Free roaming bison would have a negative impact on the above statement.
- May need to take BLM and use for buffalo instead of livestock
- Farmers and ranchers are more of the environmentalists than the so-called environmentalists because it's our livelihood.
- In some documents bison are listed as threatened. If let out, what is status?
- Who animal is it? (Compensation)
- Phillips and Valley County resolution considers bison livestock. So why is FWP considering them wildlife?
- MCA Code 87-6-101 --Why are we ignoring this code? None of these bison are wild. They have all been captive.
- Not livestock wildlife
- Issue they are not domestic
- State try to manage bison as livestock
- Classification of bison being wildlife or domestic livestock has to be one or the other, domestic bison will not stay away from wild bison.
- Bison should be classified as livestock because they will be moving between counties where livestock inspector would need to inspect.
- American Prairie Reserve would like their bison to eventually be moved to State for management as wildlife.
 - o Is there a process from moving them from domestic to wild. Magic wand?
- How are we going to tell the difference between wild/domestic
- Need to address wild vs. domestic buffalo
- Bison should not be wildlife
- When is the decision on bison as wildlife
- The only solution is domestic bison.
- We have domestic bison conservation and it works. National bison range, Blackfoot, domestic bison is not about whether or not you can put a halter on. They stay in their range, basic bare bones disease control that works (they don't spread disease).
- With domestic bison management, someone is responsible for them.
- How are you going to determine between livestock, bison, and wild bison?
- Does free roaming mean that bison designation will change from domesticated land animal to wildlife? If they have the same rights of wildlife, what rights do we citizens of Montana have?
- How does agency define free roaming?
- Definition of free roaming fencing/boundary
- If boundary what are options
- What's the definition of Free Roaming?
- How would the FWP manage these bison, nongame or game species?
- Who has the responsibility?
- Bison are not predator
- The State needs a strategic Plan on <u>all</u> species as to what species should be free released roaming and should not. Ex: Grizzly Bear <u>vs.</u> Bison

- What guidelines/laws will there be to keep FWP to follow and enforce a Management Plan . . . they don't follow their Management Plans they already have
- Who owns these critters? State, people, Federal Govt?
- Who would be the ultimate authority on the decision making plan?
- FWP would need to adapt a different wildlife policy than they have for other ungulates, taking into consideration location and population objectives
- If Bison are a "species of concern why is the State (FWP) involved
- If FWP creates a small population of wild bison that population could fall under the jurisdiction of the endangered species act.
- This threatened status, how many numbers do we need before we can manage them as a game animal and have a hunting season.
- Do we not already have huntable bison in the state of Montana? If we don't, is it to thanks to the national and international Nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) that the scoping document says are pushing the wild bison?
- Will the bison affect or cause the environmentalists to sue and say you can't hunt there anymore?
- How are different jurisdictions (tribal and Montana) going to correlate on potential problems when species (state owned) travel between public/private (Montana) and sovereign ground
- If breaking the law by bring the tribes the buffalo whats the law for shooting the bison and the department's actions if they come off the tribal lands?
- Bison are already in all 50 states? Plenty of bison already
- There is not a shortage of bison in Phillips County looking at a map of where they are it's not as if they will go extinct.
- What's going to be the origin of all these buffalo?
- How is the population going to be established?
- Need to address the cost of getting the buffalo and where would they come from?
- Concern over source of stock for wild bison (similar to wolves from Canada being not the same as what was here)
- If indication of how FWP manages bison at Yellowstone what do we have gain, where's the ranchers hope that FWP will manage bison that they're going to do it right.
- FWP has done poorly in the past with wildlife management... poor track record.
- Agencies track record. Look at Yellowstone's bison #s with regards to a lands carrying capacity.
- FWP doesn't have a track record that they've done anything right
- If a rancher managed their cows the way YNP managed their bison he/she would be out of business
- If FWP manages Bison as they do wolves we are very worried
- Cause of the interim bison relocation we have no faith that our concerns will be addressed.
- Because of wolf introduction, we have no faith that FWP is capable is evaluating environmental consequences of bison.
- What has the FWP ever managed that didn't get out of control? Ex: Wolves, deer, bison, elk, prairie dogs, where does it stop? We need to be able to control what we reintroduce. No chemical controls that pours poison into the ecosystem deadly to aquatic life. If you have a sharp knife and enough nerve, then go for it, but don't poison the state.
- Landowners can't trust FWP, when they (FWP) are headed by one of the smoothest liars (**Arnold Dood**) I have met

- We have no faith in this planning process.
- Another genius was reintroducing wolves, the bison reintroduction could likely go the same way.
- Arnie Dood was supposed to take our comments at Phillips Co. Livestock Association already, the majority was clearly opposed. This was followed by Arnie informing the Jordan Community that Phillips was "for" bison
- Many unhappy landowners leading to poor relationships w/FWP. Due to bison
- Grazing scientists on FWP staff and less biologists.
- Bison restoration specialist the title does not allow for the possibility of one outcome.
- Survey responses from 2 years ago where never released. Heavily curated.
- How do you deal with the built in biases with FWP to introduce bison in some form? Never seen "NO ACTION" as the preferred alternative.
- Where will this stop once a plan is in place for bison management?
 - o Is the C.M.R. next?
- We want to be heard and we want to believe that we are being heard.
- Mr. Dood's credibility is zero with me. He should understand that. Malta/Jordan meetings that he attended.
- Why does FWP want to worsen relationship with landowners even with this process?
- Worried public comment won't be heard and bison will still become wildlife
- It is against MT law for the process to be bias.
- Fish and Game can't expect to gain trust from locals/landowners when they transport bison to the Fort Peck Reservation, in the middle of the night, without at least notifying the local public/government. This also should include county government and commissioners.
- FWP violated duties to protect people of MT
- 10 Bison≠ 10 Bison It means 1,000
- Joe Maurier and FWP commission need to hear that FWP's credibility is going into the toilet. FWP drives into my driveway, I don't want to deal with them.
- Concern is that information gathered is inaccurate from what the livestock operators in the Henry Mountains report.
 - 1. They report that animals will congregate in winter and spread out in the summer. This is backwards from FWP's version.
 - 2. They are hard on fences.
 - 3. They compete with mule deer for habitat.
 - 4. They have reduced AUM's to account for buffalo in the winter allotments. So, the livestock operator loses.
- FWP posters do not present whole truths to public. Propaganda is misleading
- FWP roles out the Henry Mountain herd as model but you aren't telling the people the whole story. You're telling it from the government viewpoint instead of the population. You say they can coexist then saying they can't.
- Concern that the public scoping documents state that bison can jump 6 feet in the interim- transfer EA stated that 5-foot fences were sufficient for quarantine purposes. We think that these documents in fact, but are made to say whatever the department wants.
- Public scoping meeting mentioned studies that bison do not center foraging activities and fails to mention evidence that they do.
- Public scoping doc potential for overgrazing from large congregations of bison, that is a management question. The answer on the document fails to answer the question. Does not mention management in any way.

- American Prairie Reserve is publishing misinformation in the NY times.
 - o MT FWP is for the reintroduction of buffalo.
 - o They have lots of local support.
 - o They (American Prairie Reserve) reintroduced the blackfooted ferret.
 - o American Prairie Reserve does get help from World Wildlife Fund.
 - o American Prairie Reserve in their articles, little or no public access.
 - o Why the hell isn't MTFWP refusing any of this?
- Why was FWP rude to the county and commissioner?
- Local land use plan says no free roaming bison are a domestic animal
- Place/based jurisdiction
- Why isn't our local government in informed on this before anything happens
- FWP is in violation of MEPA by not coordinating w/counties
- Need local control if buffalo are brought in <u>County Commissioners</u>
- BLM could give FWP all the land to manage. Even better if county managed land
- Conservation Districts of MT need to have stronger voice of stewardship of land in MT
- We ask that FWP coordinate with county plans, ordinances, and resolutions as required by law!!
- What legislative authority does FWP have to even generate this idea? Also, what authority under the constitution of the U.S.A. allows these bison to enter upon my personal private property and appurtenances
- FWP should not be involved in buffalo management, except present situation where buffalo move out of YNP
- Why is the State transporting bison illegally, when the private would be breaking laws to do so?
- Concern is that the process is top to bottom
- Will the EIS look at local economic impact, as well as the budgetary impact to FWP?
- Is FWP going to listen to the concerns of the people who live here and have a livelihood here?
- Why can't we have a vote?
- The public perception is this is a done deal. You are pushing ahead.
- We want question and answer to be published by MTFWP in the Glasgow Courier and other local papers and media!
- Will a truthful summary of this meeting be made public?
- If FWP is not responsible for buffalo, why are we even having hearings to discuss free roaming bison?
- I have a problem with FWP not listening to people. We have had to shut down seeding. It's right in the middle of seeding, but if you can't come you can't bitch.
- People feel defeated by this process. Nuts and bolts already in place.
- We need a scoping and planning process does not go through bison restoration specialist.
- How do we get these comments? <u>THESE</u> comments should be on the web!
- When are all these questions going to be answered?
- Why does it take 3 years? People will lose interest Maybe they want them to.
- Seems to me a top-down approach, R6 in a tough position,
- Citizen of state
 - o Timeline concern with bison
- Should FWP be involved?
- If MTFWP come up with the plan and it doesn't work how is FWP going to back out of that plan?
- I question the integrity of FWP and the overwhelming majority of people will be opposed to this. I don't think it is a democratic process.

- I don't know how many times we have to get in front of the FWP and tell them "NO."
- A planning process that listens to people's concerns is not enough. Montanans deserve a plan, which their concerns are actually addressed.
- Why only 1 meeting in this district and more in the others throughout the state?
- Why can't this just be voted on by the public?
- Concern NGO's (American Prairie Reserve) are driving the bison process
- I do not appreciate that "Helena FWP" is putting region 6 staff in an unfair and unpopular position
- If FWP wants to run bison on rancher's traditional range (that includes BLM) then FWP needs to put something on the table.
- Some people got pissed & left. We don't have their comments so it looks like more people are for bison (see picture)



- What kind of assurances can the department provide that a decision isn't already made? Is this an open and objective process?
- I believe that this is all a formality and the Government & FWP has already made up its mind and it doesn't matter what we say!
- Everything is already planned out and push it thru.
- Disappointed! Everything on the wall is pro bison. Does this mean FWP is already made up their mind?
- Gov. looking at Moise, appears to looking for place with excess Yellowstone bison.
- MT FWP has idea/purpose public perception is done deal
- Literature at this meeting is pro bison
 - O Does this mean MT FWP has made up it's mind?
- Looks like cart before horse. Already had meetings. They brought them in prior to planning. Manage.
- Why is this issue so already organized (star on maps, issues identified) everything already planned without input?
- Who makes the final decision to proceed with this?
- Concern out-of-state interest are driving this process
- Why go to places like Bozeman and Missoula where bison are not even going to be?
- Public vote concerning buffalo
- Let locals make decision
- Range scientists making decisions instead of geneticists
 - o Who are these geneticists?

- If a location is picked, will the people living in that location have more say so than those who are not affected by it. Example. It is easy for someone living in the city say they would love to have bison there.
- The people who are from this area should be the ones who get to vote on it Not everyone in the state.
- How & who decides if this is working or not working?
- The people who bison will impact most are in rural areas where we don't have as many people. Our voice overshadowed by urban areas
- Let the decisions be more localized
- What weight will this have... citizens of unaffected regions (Missoula, other places). If you are not in an area for potential reintroduction, why can they even comment?
- Every person who pays livestock taxes should get comment sheet (addresses available) & they should have majority of say because we are the ones who maintain the land.
- Work groups need representatives from all state and federal agencies.
- How will comments from this meeting be weighed with comments from Missoula?
- Issues effected by outcome (why people not affect can decide affect people) location
- Too many environmental groups are too powerful and over-ride local landowners.
- Environmentalist go to Senators/Rep., lobby, and it comes back.
- Who are the people that want bison here? (Are they from MT or NY or?)
- Why is the American Prairie Foundation speaking for MTFWP on their website and not the MTFWP saying what they want to do?
- NGO's giving dollars to FWP that takes (*illegible*) out of predators.
- The monument concerns from 2 years ago are a part of the bison concerns
- Don't Buffalo Me! No Federal Land Grab!
- Feds take public comment from everyone but it only affects us in MT
- Look at Federal control of wolves, Prairie dogs
- We need water rights recognized by DNRC and BLM, department of Interior.
 - o Recognition of our grazing rights legislative. Reformed endangered species act. These are things FWP cannot put on the table. Without these things we must fight FWP all the way.
- Why is federal F&G taking precedence over the state? (FWP) Why isn't the state FWP not in control over their own wildlife? Seems like federal agency is pushing the issue more than the state.
- The land grant issue is of concern to me. Federal govt that are taking our range as a as part of the big open!
- Shouldn't this be a Federal problem & not a State problem
- The hurt of this thing client & non(*illegible*) the bison appear to be a land grab to get this done big open so we're (*illegible*) about this apprehensive about this stuff.
- FWP has management of wildlife on private/public land, how will FWP interact with BLM on overgrazing and affects on cattle leases & other uses on private land?
- Asked about CMR, RMP basically say no plans at this time is FWP decision on bison going to override that.
- CMR CCP says bison introduction is a complex issue required cooperation b/w numerous government agencies and private landowners. But FWP planning process implies FWP intends to go at it alone.
- You need someone to actually manage them. FWP has idea that tribes are going to do it. Those who live on Reservation know they've been managed in past. It's a fantasy for the tribes.
- I want to know they need 1000 buffalo to keep in a fence. Someone had to control them Ft. Peck tribe doesn't feed them.
- Does tribe manage buffalo hay?

- o If they can't who reimburses private landowners.
- Recommend or why doesn't Peck manage herds like livestock operation relative to available feed.
- Under no action alternative, what happens to Fort Peck bison if they get off reservation? B/C the intertranslocation plan is for 5 years and that's it.
- State vs. Reservation---movement of bison off of Reservation.
- Where does tribal sovereignty fit in to this plan if at all?
- How do different positions affect tribal concerns/sovereignty
- How do tribal concerns/sovereignty affect different positions/concerns being asked?
- Have to sue the Indians for damage reimbursement
- I believe the original tribes were outstanding managers. They were wiped out effectively in 1790 before the whites saw this. I believe the loss of their management was a disaster for the bison. There were disease outbreaks that may have killed millions of animals. The current popular goal nationally and internationally is to repeat that disaster of bison with no managers.
- Blackfoot killed up to 200 at one time for 1,000's of years. That managed the range and the populations.
- What is the department going to do with bad relations between surround landowners and bison from the tribes?
- If the Indians want bison, let them be responsible for the bison on their own land.
- Why were the Yellowstone bison allowed to expand? \rightarrow the intention was originally to not allow this to happen
- This problem will not go away, (Yellowstone bison coming out of Park)
- When is FWP going to control numbers like they should like elk south Valley and Phillips and bison in the Park
- Bison are already causing problems on Yellowstone (grazing etc). So why make the problem even bigger/spreading the problem to other places?
- Looks like they are going to balloon. Too many in Park, bison are directly competing and nothing left to pasture. Now they can't use helicopters due to Grizzley Bears.
- Bison should have been left in the park.
- If too many bison in Yellowstone, slaughter & give to Indians & food bank
- Keep Bison in park and cull the herd to sustainable #'s.
- Why not EIS done prior to move?
- One thing I didn't like was FWP putting bison on Fort Peck like they did. No management plan in place before they moved them. Confined in 2 acre fence and had nothing in order!
 - o In regards to that, an EIS is supposed to be done if it effects the human environment and moving bison effects the human environment.
 - o I've been talking to people in Phillips County in regards to American Prairie Reserve. I most people are opposed, some people are the minority and American Prairie Reserve is the ongoing change offering new economic opportunity. New jobs, new businesses, and new ideas for economic planning for the county. That's not an alternative per say but it suggests a new idea for discussion.
- Whose idea was it, tribes conservation, New Yorkers? Current management, unload in middle of night, poor pastures, noa. Whole things is not transparent, Are they still in small pasture. We wouldn't do to our own livestock. Tribes were suppose to fence, tax payers. I didn't know they already had Bison
- FWP is supposed to get a percentage of offspring.
- Do we really need a study to look at birth control in bison
- How was the CFWCS formed and authorized? Who, What, where, when did this happen?
- Who manages the guaranteed bison from Yellowstone to the tribes?
- Who gets the American Prairie Reserve bison off the CMR? Why haven't they been fined?

- Fort Belknap is not a good neighbor. What happen to the deceased bison in transit?
- We went through a lengthy process that about translocation. Our Governor and your Director moved bison to the reservation. What a plan. They didn't follow SB 212. Your credibility is questionable.
- FWP has given several alternative plans, not one of these plans has a dollar value attached. Where do we find this value?
- As of May 16th, 2012, how much has FWP spent on this process?
- Who's going to pay for visual aids, CD's materials related to all this planning. How does it affect budgets?
- Dollars Who State MTFWP Feds
- National Debt--\$16 Million- Why Bison Now
- FWP views wildlife as revenue.
- Cost of whole process to bring in buffalo or just looking at options for doing this
- Cost for actual management if buffalo are brought in. Who will pay for?
- Money to manage bison would take away from management of other wildlife
- Don't have large enough areas left for buffalo cost would be very high
- Where does \$ come from to establish and manage wild bison
- Where will the money and manpower come from for containment? Fences if they are free roaming?
- Who will pay for fencing
- If cattle numbers go down, \$ goes down for government. Who is going to pay for that?
- If FWP is already having fiscal problems isn't this going to add to it?
- The funding that FWP already receives would be better spent on the wildlife Montana already has!
- How is FWP going to handle the extra responsibilities with an already stressed budget
- Where did this money come from, what fund?
- What is cost per buffalo to the State to relocate and maintain herds?
- Where does the money come from?
- What does this E.I.S. costing the taxpayer? Hotels, printing, personnel, advertising
- Taxpayer cost to set up
- Who's pay for the special fencing for the free roaming bison?
- Will this process be more financially transparent than the general operation of FWP?
- Loss of tax revenue. Says we are losing cattle right. Made up by tourism. Not a big enough draw in Valley. Nothing else to draw them in. Not realistic!
- To note: the entire group, 9 people, have agreed with these comments up to this point
- Group vote for free roaming bison (1 yea and 7 nay)
- Live 1 mile from CMR, not excited to look out window and see Bison
- Why are FWP license plates state exempt?
- What date in history is FWP trying to replicate with these free roaming bison?
- How can we compare Utah to Montana, (illegible) numbers? Example (Buffalo) as a success,
- Fear vs. Reality (perception)
- Bison forced to mountains, they need to be on plains
- Inefficient animals compared to beef, with regard to food and fiber production and less labor required for beef
 vs. bison
- Why does FWP think we all of a sudden need bison free roaming? We have them in the Park.
- Millions of acres at CRP not being renewed. There is a reason for that.
- Economic bison don't reproduce every year poor for meat production.

- Land is the foundation for management.
- Eminent domain?
- One citizen submitted a petition with approximately 1800 signatures opposing free ranging bison
- Why is the replicated date in history when bison were present more important than when they were not on the landscape, such as a million years ago?
- I don't have anything to say issue new to me.
- There are already places in the state such as tribal lands, Yellowstone Park, Matitsi buffalo?, that have free roaming bison!
- Would they go on public land or in Canada?
- Where does returning these animals to their original range fit in?
- Are bison being brought in for human consumption?
- Common Sense
- Why DOL and ask if they are bison. They are slaughtered and the prices go down.
- There are three bumper stickers at the top of this sheet.
 - The first says: "Don't Buffalo Me!, No Federal Land Grab!"
 - The second says: "NO Free Roaming Bison In Montana"
 - The third says: "Take Back Montana; Private Property Rights, Agriculture, Resources, Recreation"

Alternatives:

- I want to go on record as saying I'm against free roaming bison.
- Just do not want bison.
- Flat out no bison not wanted
- #1 alternative = no action. If you can't take care of what you have, why do you want more? I don't understand this.
- "Do Nothing" alternative is the best listed, but only having bison in YNP and reducing their #'s to a healthy grass population is my choice. No free roaming buffalo, all other comments are mute.
- Leave them where they are at
- No wild buffalo, can't manage bison we have
- For FWP to be able to absorb the costs of bison, the best alternative is "No Action"
- No bison property rights
- No bison period.
 - o Just the opposite.
- No buffalo.
 - o Just the opposite
- We don't want them here!
- No Action
- Recommend no action alternative
- PLEASE NO BISON
- No Bison!!
- Looks like FWP have plenty to do with other wildlife. Some controversy over FWP not going on tribes. No Action at all
- Leave buffalo present locations

- No bison
- We don't want the damned things bison here (Montana)
- Is there alternative for none at all? Excluding private & tribal property
 - o Nothing other than private & tribal
- Keep it the way it is but control the #'s better than what's being done
- People in this area do not want buffalo!
- Leave things the way they are Buffalo issue causing lots of problems in this area and distrust of FWP
- Farmers and ranchers do not want this.
- No bison under any circumstances.
- No Bison!!
- Leave bison in YNP & other National Parks for conservation purposes
- No bison period!!
- If you want them contained.
- What about state parks stuff, someone on site checking fences, locking gates, managing them.
- Focus on containment and the boundary fences? Natural?
- We need a plan for containment and possibly return of Canadian bison.
- Free roaming state or designated area/location current wildlife movement
- What about a clinical trial comingle disease and non-disease buffalo w/cattle
- Start small where containment is easy and expand later. Safety/containment/disease can all be tested
- Bison area in Missoula
- State ask US Fish and Wildlife Service/Charles M. Russell Wildlife Area. to place bison on land
- Should introduce bison to Washington DC (or Helena) first
- Should place in rattlesnake, and then take to Washington Stadium to shoot
- Since only a ½ of scoping meetings are in rural eastern MT I would expect ¾ of the releases to be in urban western MT.
- We don't want wild bison in Valley County and McCone County. FWP should confine wild bison to counties that want them.
- Why don't they put them in the Bob Marshall?
- I am support of FWP in this process and glad to see you start it. If bison in Montana aren't designated wildlife we'd be ok with that. If they are – we'd like our landscape to be considered – (American Prairie Reserve) bison are the last big game animal that hasn't been recovered as wild.
- #2 alternative = put the bison west of the Continental Divide. We don't want them in the east.
- 1st Alt put Bison/Tribal Bison/YNP
- FWP could work with owners of domestic bison to manage domestic huntable herds.