



# 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 Miles City. We estimate that approximately 140 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 Miles City. 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 25<sup>th</sup>, 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**

<b><i>FWP Website:</i></b> <a href="http://fwp.mt.gov/fishAndWildlife/management/bison/future.html#scoping">http://fwp.mt.gov/fishAndWildlife/management/bison/future.html#scoping</a>	<b><i>Written Comments:</i></b> MT FWP Bison Plan Scoping ATTN: Arnold Dood 1400 South 19 <sup>th</sup> Ave Bozeman, MT 59718	<b><i>E-mail Comments:</i></b> Bison_Management@ mt.gov
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# Miles City Public Scoping Meeting May 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2012

## Issues and Concerns:

- Don't want bison management to end up looking like BLM horse management
- What will state do with problem bison, relocate, exterminate?
- Afraid government program may be good idea but will not be followed by individuals hired to enact program.
- When they get out, what action can ranchers take? Can we shoot them? Can we keep the meat? If we can't shoot, who will? How long will it take? Can we haze them with ATVs?
- Management
- Once they get here, people will stop you from management. This is ridiculous, they are not like other wildlife.
- Don't want bison management in Montana to look like bison management in Yellowstone Park.
- Turning them loose elsewhere is just going to cause an uncontrollable mess
- Can we honestly manage Bison. Yellowstone is an example that poor management.
- Even if you develop the world's best management plan are the bison gonna go along with it
- What will be done if fire, drought eliminates state's property that bison range on?
- Yellowstone bison overpopulated, leave the park, & conflict w/ neighbors. I see the same thing happening elsewhere.
- Disease & Fences
- Whole different issue – keeping contained on public property or turning them loose
- Any plan must include total confinement, disease treatment, vaccination, population control, and allow for landowners to eliminate all escaped bison & bison must be chipped or tagged or identified in some way.
- Free roaming and management are opposite
- No one would be against managed bison herd. But free ranging would cause problems.
- Will state need additional water rights to water bison
- What happens in the winter when they crowd onto the feed ground?
- If release, bison should be fenced and managed properly. Movement would need to be controlled and managed.
- Hard to control – they will go where they want to go.
- During dry years bison will move to urban areas for green grass grazing i.e. lawns, gardens)
- If FWP is charged with managing a bison hunting season, on a free-ranging herd, has any study been done on how it will affect bison movements? What happens w/this free-ranging herd? How far will they run?
- What happens in drought years – move them out
- How will human safety & damage issues be handled in towns, populated areas?
- How are they going to keep them off the highways? How did animals come to have more rights than humans?
- If you don't harass them they are not dangerous, I have worked for people that have cattle & bison.
- They are dangerous. Been on two places that had both & they got rid of the buffalo.
- Safety concerns to people and livestock.
- Auto insurance will go up with bison impacts.
- Domestic bison have demonstrated they are tremendously athletic and dangerous to handle.
- Hazards to local people on interstates or roads.
- Safety concerns for people recreating in prairie.
- Liability is a concern – vehicle collisions. I don't want to hit bison!
- Safety concern – old bulls that leave herd are dangerous to everything, stock and human.
- Dangerous
- Safety – I drive 70 miles round trip to work every day + hit a deer every year. It usually totals my car; a bison would total me.
- Safety while walking or being close to bison.
- Who's responsible when they get hit on highway
- Public safety can be an issue and bison are dangerous to horses
- If bison are free roaming handicap will not have a chance.
- Fencing required for other wildlife . . . buffalo will step right over. These fences are bordering private property. It is expensive to build & maintain.

- Proper fencing keeps them in
- It is not a free ranging herd if they are fenced . . . are we fencing in or out? Who is paying if we have to fence out? How are landowners supposed to afford this?
- Keeping bison where they need to be.
  - Bison don't need to be.
- Whose gonna fix the fence.
- Time and money into livestock, fencing
- Containment measures -- none discussed in planning docs
- Fencing issues. If we build a fence to stop bison it will exclude all other wildlife. Already an issue with antelope.
- Are we not creating a game farm with bison proof fencing?
- FWP doesn't have the financial resources to build the fence that's necessary.
- Some of the signs say bison will not be terrible on fences. I don't believe it.
- If a Bison can see through something they'll go thru it---can't do it (keep them in)
- Disagree that bison move the same as deer, elk, moose (p. 2 Exec summary)
- I fix a lot of fence behind elk. I don't want to fix fence behind bison.
- Where will \$ come from to fix fences damaged by bison.
- 20 yrs exp tell me free-ranging bison will break down fence
- Containment.
- What are fencing costs to producer or FWP? Who will pay and how?
- How will you make sure Bison have don't disease & who pays for vaccination, can you vaccinate?
- Concerned about health issues w/ cattle.
- Is there going to be quarantine plan?
- Afraid MT free ranging may affect other states and if they do who is legally liable for disease transmission & subsequent loss of disease free status.
- Health concerns w/interaction between cattle + bison. Primarily brucellosis + others. Do they have a plan to manage health concerns or expect neighbors to take the risk?
- How will you monitor disease if they are free-ranging?
- Deal w/Elk brucellosis first before taking on something else.
- Health Issues
- Where sheep graze, bison die.
- What happens if disease wipes out whole herd
- Wildlife hording, or concentration on crops or other food sources can cause increased disease transmission.
- Disease issue as it relates to livestock & human
- Agriculture is MTs largest industry, with livestock representing the largest % of that industry. A brucellosis outbreak would cause a loss of brucellosis free status and the loss of our ability to export our cattle without extensive vet health inspection
- Strain of brucellosis vaccine is only 50% effective
- FWP should explore all possible populations including those outside of Yellowstone Park to reduce concerns of brucellosis
- Worried about the disease issues.
- Brucellosis causes ungulate fever (which people get). How will you handle that?
- Disease issues
  - Vaccinate cattle against brucellosis - w/ bison no disease control
- Disease – wild bison w/ confirmed brucellosis – what is going to be done?
  - Government expects private landowner to take on responsibility
- Biggest issue for rancher's loss of livelihood because of disease.
- Brucellosis is a concern. Leave bison in YNP.
- Risk of losing brucellosis free status.
- I do not think w/100% certainty they can be sure the bison will be disease-free.
- Buffer zone – keeps growing
  - If problem (disease) had been taken care of 10-15 yrs ago- would not be an issue

- NEED REALISTIC APPROACH
- If this had been taken care of might not now have transmission to elk.
- Disease worries
- Bison are highly infective (brucellosis), vaccinations are not working to eliminate disease. MT's # 1 in cattle seed stock.
- Monitoring through hunter harvest will only show after infected.
- What happens when sick cross state lines and infect their cattle? Who pays?
- What if Montana loses Brucellosis free status? Who will pay reimbursements compensation the producers
- Health issues/disease.
- Can still carry brucellosis even though test neg?
- What happens when one tests positive in herd – kill them all?
- How will bison continue to be monitored for disease?...especially those that can be transferred to livestock. Especially those diseases that can be transferred to livestock. What will happen if it is determined bison do become infected?...will they be culled? Related to hunter test kits...what if they are NOT hunted?...and those test kits can be unreliable. These are all reasons why ranchers are concerned and opposed to the establishment of wild, free-roaming bison on the Montana landscape.
- How do we maintain shots, disease, ID Tags
  - Comply – be the same as ranchers do with livestock and operations
  - Everyone on level playing field
  - Testing for disease with elk, livestock, etc.
- FWP doesn't have good track record of keeping disease out of wildlife i.e. elk in W. MT
- Will there be steps to keep bison disease free? (Vaccines, etc)
- Brucellosis spread by wild bison & elk causes issues for ranchers.
- How do you get genetic variation from a closed pool?
- What if cattle breed buffalo – then they are not genetically pure.
- How will genetic diversity be maintained?
- How do they know genetics of herds
- What do FWP consider restored free-range bison genetically functional?
- How would you like to wake up to 1,000 cows in your front yard (1,000 is the recommended # for genetics)
  - How did they come up with 1,000?
- Will opportunity to hunt Bison be worth the trouble to have them?
- Will not have repeat customers for bison hunting.
- Will there be long-term demand for hunting bison.
- Feel it would be similar to “hunting” domestic livestock.
- Would Bison hunting experience be satisfying?
- Private operations have not made bison hunting profitable why does the state think they can?
- Q: Will there be a hunting season on free-ranging bison? And will the money be used for their management?
- MT hunters deserve a fair chase bison hunting opportunity
- I think there is enough hunting opportunity currently (i.e. Yellowstone herd, private herds)
- People aren't going to want to hunt every year
  - They're not that good of eatin'
- Hunting – Bison hunting will cause lawsuits.
- How many licenses can you sell on 400? 1000?
- Hunting of bison has previously been disrupted or cancelled by judges and lawsuits. There is no guarantee that hunting of bison will be allowed on a regular basis. Without regular hunting, management of numbers will be impossible. If hunting is not allowed as a management tool, what other mgmt practices can FWP provide?
  - MT hunters currently have a fair chase bison hunting opportunity
- In drought years are they going to put out more hunting licenses to lower bison numbers because they will be competing for veg. on private and public leased land?
- Hunters impact bison movements & habits.
- Hunting would need to be managed.

- Hunting would be challenged if bison were controlled. Could not turn hunters loose with a Bison tag. Hunts would need to be managed.
- How would MFWP manage bison hunters? There needs to be hunter plans in place.
- Is the plan for the whole state of Montana? State land? Public land? What?
- There is no room for bison. How can you manage any population without room?
- If 1,000 bison need to be maintained with hunting giving a lack of large blocks of open land in Montana.
- Will they go on state owned land or private leases
- There was boards talking about numbers required for a genetically viable herd. They quoted as saying they needed 1,000 head for their genetic viability. Where in this plan are they going to put 1,000 bison? The CMR allotments wouldn't support 1,000 head. Where is the State going to put 1,000 head? How are you going to move them?
- Who came up with proposed dumping/infestation sites?
- Can they have informant public? How was each site selected?
- Public lands they have selected are non-productive that is uninhabitable for bison. They will not stay because of lack of forage and water. Will go to private lands.
- Sec. Interior 10 years ago introduce wolves "no problem" 100 wolves in MT → now 1700 in MT. Firm plan on how many bison and what will be done with average.
  - Concern that a number is set (see wolves) and then that number ignored
  - Political influence overrules good thinking
- If they start this – concern over management of numbers
  - Concern over control of numbers
- Manageable/huntable population should be a goal – manage numbers
- In a dry year, how will #'s be controlled
- How many will actually be released?
- How will they control the population? How long will it be before bison go the way of wild horses, environmental tie their hands w/ lawsuits, & BLM is forced to go against their own land management objectives?
- Who is going to control #s.
- Private Property owners are losing our voice – There were bills in legislation & governor vetoed every one.
- Bison limit private landowners property rights.
- All wildlife programs are a mechanism for taking, aka a land control issue – private property issue.
- If there are buffalo, private & public property will be taken.
- Resources to take care of bison – this will affect private property & our rights
- If we do get bison in livestock & have problems – what is our recourse? What is recourse on property damage?
- Concern that eminent domain will be used.
- Some of these plans put the rancher into a position of having to break the law to protect his property
- Don't want to see them spill over onto private land
- Free ranging bison should not infringe on private property rights.
- Private property - bison can't tell difference between public + private. Private land is in better shape. Landowners are already supporting other wildlife.
- Landowners should not be expected to shoulder responsibility for bison mgmt
- Bison plan is a lack of respect to landowners, countries food sources, this is a slap in the face.
- Will I go to jail for protecting my crops, livestock + improvements + family from bison conflicts? What does a warden do to me when I harass the bison away to protect my hayfield?
- Free range is no longer available, for 100 years this has changed; private landowners will take the burden.
- Article 2 section 9 of MT constitution – private land taking & damages must be compensated to the full extent of the loss.
- Landowner concerns are the primary issue, going to have to be dealt with on an individual basis until effected landowners feel they are being taken care
- As private property owners – do we have control
- I don't need bison intermingling with my cattle. Who's responsible for the damage they will do...destruction of property, brucellosis.

- Tear down fences and damage private property.
- What recourse do landowners have for handling fence damage, escapee's
- How will you address damage to private land.
- Rip roaring blizzard – covers buffalo fence and buffalo get out who is going to get buffalo out of my haystacks?
- Whom is responsible for damages (water sheds, fences, drops, irrigation systems, etc.) taxpayers?
- Who will pay for property damage? Ex: Wolves – Private property loss = lots of hoops.
- Bison will jump into neighbors field and eat his alfalfa
- Where would bison get water? They will end up on private water.
- Damage to fences could be devastating to purebred breeders. If a herd of bison damages a fence, there is secondary damages. Will they be compensated for that? How will they be compensated?
- We don't need them
  - Teardown fences
  - Damage crops
  - Wild animal → destroy crops etc.
- Landowners that neighbor current bison ranch can no longer raise crops because of loss to bison when they find food source.
- Disease & private rights in regards to property damage, who is going to take care of damage
- Zero tolerance for bison on private property should allow shoot on sight or depredation hunts
- Recommend zone management hunting recognizing that further away from the site less impacts on landowners
- Public/Damage liability
- This is a plan to introduce a species, not to manage Yellowstone buffalo. The point is you will introduce a species with public ownership (no liability). We need to have legal recourse for damage.
- Economic loss – just like wolf fund there is no way to fund for losses from bison damages.
- Three neighbors had bison, they could not contain. Who is liable when they allow livestock to roam outside of fences because of bison damaging fences?
- If bison are put out there needs to be some liability/compensation for the damage they do
  - Leave in Park not an issue
- Like to see what type of landowner compensation programs would potentially exist
- What happens when neighbors bull gets in – who do you call, get reimbursed?
- Don't want to be compensated; we don't want them (Bison).
- Meat hunting of bison could conflict w/ ranch-raised beef.
- Will sue if buffalo genes get into pure Angus.
- Concern that fenced in bison programs will adversely affect other wildlife
- Issue of bison breeding cows.
- Breeding cows put people's business at risk.
- Interbreeding with cattle and bison
- What will happen when the bison interbreed with my livestock?
  - Whose is it? (In reference to the above point)
- If bison get into livestock, what is the recourse to resolve problem?
- Breeding w/cattle
- \* Keep bull bison (males) from breeding with domestic cattle.
- Every time bison got into our place (from domestic herds) they were in w/ cattle.
- If bison mix with cows, who is responsible for segregating.
- What is going to happen to folks raising buffalo if they are designated a game animal?
- Private bison ranchers understand + manage the grazing of their bison. MFWP does not manage the grazing of wildlife now. Please leave bison ownership in private hands + do not destroy their business.
- This will affect right to raise domestic bison.
- Bison as a free-roaming hutable herd would take away from private herds (fee hunting, meat production)
- What is the carbon footprint of bison?
- Bison will destroy riparian areas.

- Don't like bison, destroys habitat.
- Re: Buffalo wallows increase increased heterogeneity of the landscape by (*illegible*) patches of diverse vegetation. Does this include invasive species? And noxious weed infestations.
- How will bison affect riparian areas?
- Bison roll, paw + wallow; they destroy riparian areas, + their hair will transfer noxious weeds + undesirable species as far as the roam.
- Where do you put bison herd without degrading water quality and watershed.
- Bison wallows big problems
- We need to develop a breed of buffalo-eating wolves.
- Forest Service range con. & Native American thinks bison will & did overgraze, particularly woody draws, because they are a herd animal.
- Ecological impacts on riparian areas will denude the Yellowstone River basin as documented by Capt Clark and photo documentation from the railroad by Pompeys Pillar
- When Lewis & Clark were in the Great Falls area there was a great disturbance that raised large dust storms
  - I believe it's a start uncontrollable program Yellowstone is an example of the above
- Overgrazing – how will FWP address?
- How will Bison affect other wildlife?
- What do bison eat? Will they be in competition with Antelope & cattle?
- Concerned bison will negatively impact sage grouse habitat.
- Reduce habitat for other wildlife
- Concerns that with the bison wolves will come intentional or not.
- Conflict I have a sage grouse lek fenced off in riparian area. But free roaming buffalo will destroy fence and camp on riparian that is being managed for a potentially listed species → How to maintain an area for sage grouse w/ free roaming bison.
- How will bison affect water quality?
- How would bison affect sage grouse habitat
- Bison taking forage impacting other species/wildlife
- Economics – Trying to pass property down to relatives
- Take land out of tax base.
- Dept ought to conduct serious economic study for this process
- Potentially negative impact to farming operations by bison
- Need an economic impact analysis or study
  - You are tampering with the AG economy – a big sector of the economy of MT
- Impact on lives industry
  - Already areas where cattle sales are restricted
  - New areas of infect may impact the whole state
- Bison will cause lost revenue in many forms – hunting licenses, AG industry, etc. loss of grazing, range permits, decreased cattle herds
- Grass is what we sell, through livestock, when you add a competition (bison) to pasture BLM AUMS– loss of money
- FWP thinks they're above all reproach. Some sportsmen want to boycott & not buy licenses. Due to the Mar 15 deadline – the govt need to be put in their place
- Using the Moise model is expensive. Would create huge taxpayer burden.
- Economics of bison replacement cattle, where do taxes come from. Econ loss to communities from bison.
- Is there more interest in tourism or sportsmen harvesting?
- Unequal costs and payouts if big money paid for a select # of wealthy hunters.
- Tourism & hunting income will not replace agriculture in local communities or in state as a whole.
- I just paid thousands for my state/federal lease → who is going to pay for the forage lost to bison
- Major concern bison will negatively impact Livestock (#1 industry in MT) production
- Threatens livelihood of farmers/ranchers.
- Feels to me like recreation – as state income (hunting)- is being valued more than private income

- We need to reverse our priorities
- How would proponents like to have their income cut in half? On ft peck a friend went from 500 to 200 head b/c his lease was cut for bison.
- Urban residents will pay for bison they would never see vs. using those tax dollars to pave their streets!
- Fed & state actions should benefit the public constituents, what is the benefit of this?
- Huge negative impacts to state economy.
- MT's GDP is 47<sup>th</sup> in the nation we used to be in top 10 – this is due to environmentalists shutting down mining, timber, now working on agriculture. Enough is enough!
- The economic impact board is inadequate. Ag is the #1 industry in MT – Bison would jeopardize Ag.
- If AG is not #1, tourism will be – is that the plan?
- It's no longer 1803 here in MT. There are long-established farms and ranches now existent who are actually tax paying entities who's tax dollars support MT FWP. Where are these tax dollars going to come from when these operations are forced out of business?
- It has been said bison will be re-introduced on public land...what is to keep them on public land? Even if they can be kept on public land, which many doubt, in MT our state lands are statutorily mandated to raise \$ for the school trust. Bison will add grazing pressure and potentially cause the state to decrease AUM's for livestock grazing hurting not only farmers/ ranchers but public schools. It's unfair to ranchers and bad for schools. The MT legislature did not intend for wildlife to reduce livestock AUM's.
- Not just a landowner issue, it's a livelihood issue
- Assuming we get disease free bison--we get bison that don't jump fences--70-80% of wildlife graze on private land already
  - What is lost from private forage
  - Who pays for it
  - Whose taxes go up
- Not going to produce any wealth, but they are going to take away from folks making an honest living.
- Popular opinion – how many of supporters will travel to eastern MT to see bison.
- We are considered a study ground & play ground to Western Mt & other States – we are the ones that live w/the consequences which affects the business. economy. (We are a brucellosis free state – this is very important to breeders)
- Free ranging bison would negatively effect both current hunting opportunities & landowners
- Agriculture is the #1 driver of MT. economy, why put it at risk (Article 2 Sect. 1). It's not for the good of the people of MT.
- Western MT not impacted like landowners are – people who vote
- Block management will be a thing of the past.
- Landowners in sparsely populated areas do not like being thought of as an acceptable number of people to be removed for purposes such as free ranging bison herds.
- One option would be for private landowners to close their property to all hunting if they plant bison on the CMR. This affects FWP income from license sales.
- 100,000+ people visit MT for it's wildlife including hunters & wildlife viewers and a small isolated bison population should be able to exist
- Reintroduction of bison in SE MT would effect all the people on the ground but not the people paid to have an opinion
  - Ditto above
- Wide open spaces in MT contribute positively to the value of land, but bison reintroduction may not be in the best interest of the landowners
- 100 years ago we didn't have large population center, and we can't restore the plains the way they were
- Rich people from Germany are pouring money into it because they want to turn us into the North American Serengeti
- We cannot think of anything positive about free-ranging bison.
- Is FWP willing to acknowledge taking responsibility for shutting down hunting?
- The hunters will not benefit from bison restoration. Folks are pulling out of BM. Ultimately, sportsmen will suffer.

- Kill the hunter & hunting heritage being done on private property. We don't want to shut people out but it is out only recourse.
- Landowner's prepared shut down access in response to free roaming bison in Montana
- Close land to public hunting would be my only control.
- Bison program will have big impact to block mgt. program and private lands access & to public lands.
- When they leave the park (YNP), kill them! I don't think FWP knows how many acres of private land will be lost to hunting period.
- Hunting and access will be shut down with this program.
- Where will they hunt if all private land is closed?
- As a landowner this is a slap in face that the state would consider Bison. I have always allowed public hunting and upset to the point of closing ranch because of bison issue. I will work w/ other landowners to close more land to hunting access if this moves forward. Want the hunters to stand up and realize FWP is guilty and instigating.
- Not only BMA, but also no landowner leased to outfitters. No license sales will affect FWP. This will be the single issue to unite landowners against FWP.
- Afraid one of the things this will do is set the hunting opportunity back
  - Shut down resident hunting opportunity--cut it back
- My concern as a sportsman is the AG. folks won't let me hunt anymore due to their opposition.
  - This [see above comment] will also affect local businesses due to lost revenue.
- If billed as opportunity for sportsmen they need to know it may close more private lands. On public land they will be competing w/ other wildlife.
- This will negatively affect hunting. I have left Block management because of Buffalo Issue.
- Ranchers are working together to close property for hunting because of buffalo issue.
- Once this issue of free roam Buffalo is gone, with certainty then ranch will be open for hunting again.
- Is FWP willing to give up a good program like Block management for nonsense like free-roaming Bison?
  - Agree w/ all above. Retired from Dept. Livestock. Bison are unmanageable.
- I think that I may close my ranch to public hunting under Block Mgt if the dept continues to push free roaming bison on the landowners of this state
- We've been in block management for years but we don't have to be
- Is there a large group of landowners that are willing to take on the mgmt of free ranging bison (maybe alternative Block Mgmt program for bison)
- Ranchers take a lot of pride in managing rangelands. Bison create wild problems, facilitate prairie dogs. Who will protect riparian areas?
- I am closer to 70 than anything
  - I spray weeds every summer thanks to CMR
  - Weeds = reduced grazing = bison on private
- Government has proven it is not a good steward of the land
- What happens when bison are introduced on to Fed lands and the Bakken oil deposit is coming west and you have Fed. regulation that standards & guidelines are set on private land pads if the directional drilling hits any federal minerals (oil) w/ bison introduced. Will they say no drilling?
- Can State put bison on State/BLM property with in private properties when landowners have grazing leases?
- I do not believe the BLM would feel that free-ranging bison would have no effect on the number of cattle ranchers' allotments could sustain.
- Take Terry Badlands (example) already present private landowner grazing leases
  - If bison are put there what happens to those private landowner grazing leases
- How will oil and gas development impact a potential bison management plan & vice versa.
- Will this affect state and BLM and FS Cattle grazing leases
- If push for Bison comes from environmentalists, landowners have a voice in use of public lands.
- Landowners are part of public property. Majority here are not in favor of the Bison issue.
- Why do cattle have preference on fed. lands? Taylor grazing Act?
- Where will we put "free ranging bison."? There is no free range in Montana. It's grazed/farmed.

- Against the purchase or transfer of AUMs to secure acreage for running bison takes income away from the local community & lowers the tax base
- When BLM land is overgrazed by bison, you know damn well the first thing to go will be cattle.
- State lands: Bison will have negative financial impacts for schools & teachers
  - Removal of grazing lands will decrease revenues.
- The sensible thing to do would be to use BLM lands as they were intended – public recreation
  - Putting buffalo on would limit public use/opportunity.
- How can BLM manage healthy range lands w/free-ranging bison
- Loss of grass to bison
- Public land already has grazing allotments.
- Bison will compete with other grazers
- If they get dual status & a game animal – Huge Concern Game Animal – sell licenses Domestic Animal – when someone has to be accountable (damages they will incur) (fencing out)
- Needs to be legal definition of whether Bison are wildlife or domestic.
- Bison should remain domestic livestock
- If they do get shoved down our throat they need to be treated like livestock, not wildlife. They need to be classified as livestock. We already have other wildlife affecting haystacks, crops, etc...very destructive. Don't want to put up w/ another large ungulate affecting our livelihood.
- A lot of people have said bison should be classified as livestock. I agree and they should continue to be managed by the Dept. of Livestock as they are under current law.
- I want to reiterate, you need to manage them (bison) as livestock. If FWP doesn't start working with landowners there won't be any place to hunt on privately owned property.
- If Bison are classified as game animal? Will raising them be game farming?
- How will they be treated? Like livestock or elk.
- 3 classifications issue. Why is this different that elk farming. Disease concerns for Bison should be considered when looking at farming wildlife.
- Appears FWP making new rules for 3 classifications to circumvent the animal health concerns.
- They are not wild animals. If you work them in a chute & ear tag them...not wild.
- Legal status
  - Domestic vs. wildlife
  - "Classification changes based on..." p. 3
    - This is not a correct statement – p. 3 EIS summary
  - Domestic vs. wild based on ownership---81-1-101
- What's the definition of free-ranging?
- Define "wild, free-ranging bison"
- They are not wild & cannot be free ranging. It will require a fence like Custer St. Park or T. Roosevelt Nat'l grassland
- What is the definition of free ranging bison?
- MFWP should not use the term "free ranging bison" during discussions.
- MFWP should not use the term "restoration" while talking about bison.
- Does the concept of "free ranging" mean that bison are going to be turned loose with the ability to go anywhere w/ no restrictions?
- How are they classified currently? Livestock or wildlife
- Does free roaming bison mean open range?
- Fenced off R-O-W, are they no longer free roaming?
- MFWP needs to define "wild Bison."
- Wild bison was defined within the inter-agency bison plan that already exists.
- It is not feasible bison designation as wildlife issues w/ fences & property damage
- I don't understand the project. Do you want to allow bison to roam free like deer etc?
- When I think of "free roaming" I think of the 1800's – what is the modern-day definition for Bison? They can't go far without hitting (or destroying) a fence.

- 200 Bison broke through their Iowa enclosure & were caught in 5 different countries. That's what you call free ranging.
- Concerns about use of Federal lands and how if they are used will a state management plan lose jurisdiction to manage them
- Who would enforce any laws the would be put in place? – DOL, MFWP, local law enforcement
- MTDOT should be involved with any enforcement or health management
- Does MFWP have any control over bison if they are placed on CMR or other federal refuges?
- Currently not game or predator designated. What is penalty for shooting a nuisance? Pain in our ass.
- Montana game farming is illegal.
- SB 212---Dept may not release, transport, etc.
- Allow legislation to work. If it gets passed we are going to have it. If it doesn't pass – let it die
- Will livestock commission's regulations be used for transport?
- Who has oversight if state bison herd moves onto sovereign
- Whose authority is it to manage bison FWP or Dept. of Ag, Dept. of Livestock?
- Would FWP be allowed to manage a free-ranging herd wherever it is w/out interference from special interest groups through the courts?
- Bison should be managed by Dept of Livestock not MT FWP
- Dept of livestock should continue to oversee disease control of bison
- What's difference between elk game farm and bison game farm?
- Will they fall under open range laws?
- How do you transfer management from IBMP to FWP
- How we doing this without legislation
- SB212 --there needs to be a solid management plan even if it includes no bison
- Are they Federal or State
- Will FWP be manager?
- Multi agencies have authority makes me nervous – one is bad enough--they never agree
- Enough free roaming bison in the state already, they are not endangered, govt can't control the Yellowstone herd already i.e. disease, property damage
- FWP is trying to sell bison restoration to the public but bison are doing fine. They have plenty of space – Yellowstone is 2 million+ acres. And there are existing private herds.
- There is probably close to 50 bison herds in MT already including a public bison herd by the USFWS
- Where will bison come from? Will the dept. purchase turner's Livestock then turn them loose as wildlife.
- In the event of moving forward with reintroduction look into alternative sources for bison
- Where do these bison come from? Are they pure genetically pure.
- Will Dept. look at Custer SP in SD a model
  - If a program starts like this model (arrow to Custer SP) how do you keep from losing control and ability to manage population as environmental groups get involved or administrations with state change?
- Has State looked at Canada's plan?
- Why is Utah plan gold standard?
- How much research has FWP done w/ Henry Mtn Utah and Prince Albert Park Canada
- Encourage looking at proven model Custer SD mgt, get away from idea of free roaming bison
- Dept. should examine other states bison mgt for example Utah, that has a huntable population – has been successful w/ bison & livestock co-inhabiting
- A lot of education that needs to be done by the dept on this issue, because we haven't seen free roaming bison we don't really know the outcome
- Lack of education to public about impact to way of life – general public perceive buffalo as majestic
- They are not maintained or controlled in YNP...what leads you to believe that can be maintained or controlled outside the park if they are free-roaming.
- Biggest concerns of ranchers and hunting community will have with this The Dept. has been derelict in their management of deer/elk; in general season areas & we question why we are to trust FWP to manage bison.
- Concern w/FWP's/Fed's lack of desire to manage.

- FWP doesn't take care of what they have (i.e. wolves) – why add more to the plate.
- MFWP need to prove they can manage other wildlife first.
- FWP already has hard enough time managing species we have control over
- Does anyone that works for FWP have experience managing a bison ranch?
- This is government run amok. FWP doesn't do a good job managing deer & elk. They should return management to the people on the land
- Inability of public servants to manage without political influence eg. To do what is right rather than politically popular/expedient
  - Wild horses → concern we will end up with bison at a similar place to wild horses → cannot now control wild horse numbers fearful this will be where bison will end up
- Deer & elk management in Jordan area are grossly mismanaged – how does FWP plan on managing bison?
- Legacy of wildlife management should be able to restore bison
- FWP has a public trust responsibility to fully evaluate at least the potential for other bison programs
- FWP's history with Yellowstone bison & wolves has led to lack of trust on the current bison situation.
- State has not proven they can take care of wolves, grizzly bears, etc
- FWP is not going to listen to landowner segment on this issue. Huge concerns about property damage... Who's going to be liable for that damage. FWP has a history of failing to listen to landowners when it comes to wildlife management. Each landowner realized there were indigenous wildlife before property owned, but we don't want a non-compatible species taken out of the landscape for a reason brought back.
- It seems to me like you've already moved bison... when you say you haven't them yet. Seems like the cart is ahead of the horse here... we are having scoping when they've already been moved. FWP has to start working with landowners. FWP – you are totally ignoring landowners on bison and other wildlife issues..., which is resulting in a loss of block mgt. acreage and public hunting on private property.
- It is evident that FWP is working with environmental groups that are in opposition to farmers & ranchers because they were sitting together at the Chinook meeting (Earth Justice, Sierra Club & Defenders of Wildlife).
- We are concerned that you don't listen – like the Terry Badlands Wilderness proposed area. There were 500 comments on a petition that opposed & 0 for it.
- In 2003 in Grand Forks, ND there was a meeting w/ USFWS, FWP, and BLM to name a few. Introduction of bison was discussed and they thought they also had to reintroduce wolves in eastern MT. I have proof of that and this was all going to be done in Prairie County. So we're supposed to trust you now?
- Who prepared the “Executive Summary” handout background information (Issues of concern for MT...)? As a trained range scientist, I've not seen such inconsequential presented as fact. Re: the large site of bison allows for a larger digestion vat, allowing them to utilize lower quality forage.
- Found inaccuracy w/ page 3 under legal status on EIS public scoping document.
- Many ideas “bison” came from people/sources that are not understanding of impacts/issues.
- Disagree with comments about how they are great grazers
- Posters are propaganda & some outright lies. Ranchers know better. Need to present both sides of issue.
- Question legitimacy of science presented in Bison management plan background.
- There is more info on bison management than is portrayed in this room. FWP is presenting certain positive info.
- No coordination between counties and local governments. Your scoping doesn't even know what resolutions or land plans are out there and exist. Delphi technique process you're using is NOT a reliable process... it's used to massage results.
- I'd like to see the State reps. Talk personally to the landowners bordering the CMR or bison reintroduction areas. I think it would have and affect on them.
- Todd Devlin w/ Prairie County Commission... Oppose any introduction of bison in any shape or form in our county or other neighboring counties. I am on the litigation committee for MT Assoc. of Counties, and I will make sure FWP is the first to be sued if bison are put on the MT landscape... any part of MT. I am on the Public Lands Steering Committee for National Assoc. of Counties and in July I will pursue removing PR. DJ monies from Dept. of Interior and moving it to Dept. of Ag. or removing it completely. Bullshit! Get it out of D.O.I.'s hands. There are no √'s and balances.

- How much local control will counties, landowners have over bison.
- Everything involved in this has led to lawsuits (SB 212). This will continue. Too many loose ends.
- Why does Montana have to take Bison that come out of park, send them somewhere else?
- This is against the law.
- I do not like that the State is using the legislature's charge to create a plan for the management of the Yellowstone herd as a tool to create a plan for free-ranging buffalo in other parts of the State.
- Article 3 section 1 – FWP's executive branch – FWP does not have constitutional authority to manage, to change the legal status.
- The ones that are coming up w/this don't give a shit.
- Public process is rushed and being pushed
- Wolf was a federal issue, we took over their problem. With Bison we are initiating this as a state.
- Agree all above. What is assurance all gathered info will be disclosed honestly?
- Who is pushing this? It seems to come out of nowhere.
- Who wrote pamphlet?
- Why won't this idea die?
  - You heard overwhelming negative comment during previous meetings (hearings)
  - You've heard from the people before
- Where did this idea come from?
- Would they put bison on public land if plan fell through
- Object to this format
- Meeting that is advertised to start at 7 shouldn't start until 7
- Bigger venue next spring
- How long as Dept. been talking about this?
- Should serve alcohol at meetings
- Don't need to break into small groups
  - Meant to keep everyone quiet
- There are a lot of people who should be here tonight
- The # of ranchers as busy as they are coming to this meeting tells you something
- Is this going to increase size of State employees to manage?
- This has been blown out of proportion.
- Who is behind this? What is the agenda? Who will fund it? Goal-plan-entity.
- "Public" comments do not represent "local" people (e.g. people in Missoula) & they outnumber locals.
  - Locals are impacted – public are not.
- How many citizens & who has asked for a huntable bison population in MT.
- FWP was charged with devising a "plan." They were not charged w/establishing a herd for hunting.
- What & who started movement?
- We would like to see our comments go somewhere-don't want to see them lost between here & Helena.
- FWP has always preached to get permission for access. However, the wheels of bison issue have been set in motion. Now public comment?
- We can't have just 1 agency making this decision when it impacts the whole state.
- Just who do you (FWP) think you are that you could attempt to jeopardize our businesses?
- Please keep comments from meetings separate (MC vs. BIL) so we know where they came from!
- If plan moves forward – an EIS will be completed
  - What about the economic impacts – will they be evaluated?
- Timeline? We are looking @ 2 years for this major policy change + as compared to the Keystone Energy Pipeline that has been studied for more than 4 yrs now w/no results.
- Who decided we needed to do this
- Everything seems very political.
- Is FWP just the messenger? Who is the driving force?
- The party responsible for initiating this debacle needs to be revealed to sportsmen & landowners to be addressed directly.

- I think the dept needs to stop the EIS study until they receive a direction from the legislature or governor
- If this is scoping, why is there a timeline already laid out
- Has EIS already been started? If has, how much time do we have to comment
- Why all of a sudden is F&G so involved/interested
  - Going to have to control # now or eventually →why not start in Park and contain it in Park
  - Shouldn't be telling us (non Montanans) what to do /how to manage
- What is goal of program?
- What would the “long-term” goals of this effort be?
- Nobody wants to say this was their idea
- How does FWP stop groups from intervening
- Will this scoping process doing any good? Or will it be like the archery elk tentative? ...Where public comment was strongly against it and ignored.
- F&G →start with good intentions– come back and want more
- Is there a backup plan or plan to shut this down if it hurts the livestock industry?
- Is FWP equipped for bison management
- Does FWP have to hire more people to do this
- I think the dept has already made up their mind & this is just a smoke screen
- Must be something in the works – or we wouldn't be here
- On management plan all questions already answered. Seems the decision has already been made.
- Hasn't FWP already crossed the fence without permission? Now asking for forgiveness and permission after being caught. (An analogy to poaching)
- Regardless of public input it appears a bison management plan in forthcoming
- These are just appeasement meetings & the decision has been made.
- Criticism that state is listening to special interest groups on a national level rather than local affected Montanans.
- Would be nice if Agencies would listen to the people who live in the area/region to be impacted. for a change.
- I think that people that are most affected should have a bigger say. It's our way of life. I do not want to see it taken over by bison.
- If Montana doesn't proactively manage bison folks outside MT will dictate to us how to manage.
- Most of the supporters will not be affected by bison.
- Will this go away w/ new director?
- Track all in favor of bison. If issue passes they need to adopt them in their backyard to roam freely.
- The director should not make the final decision, the commission should make the final decision
- The director should be an elected position
- Prudent to stop NGO's from pushing private agendas. Ex. When bison brought to Ft. Peck. Defenders of Wildlife paid for transport. This accelerated agenda always leads to mistakes.
- Wildlife: Landowners are not being properly represented at the state level. Private landowners are not represented by the governor's office.
- People that want bison have the money & time to pursue → We as landowners trying to make a living do not have that luxury and don't want to be shouldered with bison
- Buffalo easier to manage then “wolves” public is not given enough opportunity to help manage bison (hunt them)
  - MT legislature fortunately is not involved with this
  - Keep the decision made in the state of Montana by Montanan's NOT out of state (see wolves) do not involve even ID or WY
  - (Above statement agreed to by others –whole group)
- The people that are really effected only represent 2%, they need more representation because they are the ones effected
- The dept should listen to the people of MT and given a priority over others that have never stepped foot in the state
- Before the dept does anything with any plan should seek legislative approval w/ the signature of the governor
- Any plan should be approved by the legislature
- Bison issue seems to be driven by people who aren't impacted by bison
- First look has to go to local community where impacted, not areas not impacted

- I think FWP is being blackmailed the US FWS...and DOI.
- If it becomes a federal issue instead of State, Private landowners will be considered few in number that are affected. Comments such as only affecting a few farmers or ranchers can cause people from other areas to vote in favor of having Buffalo on CMR – they are not always given the correct information on bison & the effects they have. If it becomes a federal issue where everyone has equal say farmers & ranchers are up a creek.
- The feds have dropped the ball.
- CMR is not managing their land (fences, weeds, etc.) how will they manage bison? They probably will not do any bison mgt.!
- In no action, will Fed Govt. get involved?
- Salazar wants to create the “Montana Nat’l Park”
- We own part of a ranch that borders CMR – USFWS has proved themselves incompetent at managing resources
  - Fencing
  - Burning
  - Weeds (nox by the acres)
- FWP is notorious for not working w/ other entities (counties, local govt., grazing assoc.)
- Who would manage them? FWP, BLM, Prairie Foundation?
- Federal agencies at State agencies can’t get along very well.
- I am comfortable that FWP is being tasked with developing a plan for free-ranging bison that apparently will be residing on Federal land by the same federal agencies that created the over population in the first place.
- Concern is if bison are established on CMR, they are not able to take care of the refuge now. They are not taking good care of refuge. When asked about weeds, CMR says they don’t have funds. Not taking care of Spotted Knapweed + other noxious weeds.
- How will FWP deal with Buffalo Field Campaign and other groups that disagree with management practices
- Are there other states thinking of doing this
- Concerns w/ management on reservation
- Don’t have a problem with bison on reservations.
- Can reservation even handle bison?
- This is being sold as restoring cultural heritage for Native Americans but there have been bison on Ft Peck for 15 yrs. They have had them!
- Indians signed treaties allowing them to hunt bison outside of reservations. They could go to Yellowstone.
- I have relatives that border Fort Belknap --ranchers are not compensated for torn up haystacks or lost winter grass.
- Bison on reservation will not stay there
  - Just like the elk
  - 20 yrs ago we never had any – now we have lots
- Concerning tribal treaty rights I don’t think we should be expanding off reservation hunting rights
- 3 million acres not enough in Yellowstone park?
- The park service did not manage the bison numbers in the park so when the numbers go out of hand, the Federal agency dumped it (the problem) on surrounding states. The idea of establishing colonies is not a good alternative.
- The 1<sup>st</sup> priority should be managing the park bison before starting a free-ranging herd. Management agencies need to demonstrate that they can manage one area before expanding to free-ranging herds.
- Clean up brucellosis in the park.
- Concentrate on management of bison in Yellowstone – fence them in if necessary and control numbers by hunting/culling there
- Keep in the Park –OK with that and manage # in Park
- Keep them in the Yellowstone Park →there would then be no discussion → manage # in the Park
- If folks want to see bison – go to Yellowstone
  - Get rid of a few more wolves bison could make a better living in the Park
- State of MT should first control the Northern Yellowstone bison population before introducing more bison in to the state
- Keep them in the Park

- Keep herd in Park, purify herd and keep them there
- Are there enough bison currently to sustain in Yellowstone N.P?
- Why not shoot all bison leaving YNP rather than hazing? General license would allow more.
- Leave in YNP, and clean up brucellosis in YNP. Last know reservoir of disease caring animals (bison).
- If you want to see them, go see Yellowstone.
- Another alternative to hunt the free roaming Bison leaving YNP more opportunity where it exists w/o moving any Bison.
  - ↑ This will make money, rather than spend lots to transport & manage. Cost: return ratio per animal.
- The first groups of bison moved from Gardiner facility to reservation was done illegally.
- Inter-Agency bison plan already exists for bison leaving Yellowstone NP. (MFWP, MCGA, Farm Bureau)
- I think one push behind this is that Turner only had the bison for a limited time & will be turning them back to the state. So the state needs to do something with them.
- Our land is within tribal boundaries & we are not compensated for damage. Bison are state-owned for 6 years but tribes are liable-this will cause endless lawsuits
- What will we do w/ the Ted Turner bison in 2015 when the 5 years are up?
- Bison are supposedly lean & healthy, which may be true but Ted Turner has a processing plant & could send it to people.
- Shut off funds to study & support this.
- All this \$ spent on nonsense -put children 1<sup>st</sup> -fund education.
- Lots of lawsuits which cost \$. The \$ comes from taxpayers because it is State & Fed. lawsuits.
- I would be interested if FWP would do a cost analysis of the cost processing Yellowstone bison against managing a free-ranging herd.
- This has united people against FWP – there will be financial repercussions.
- Funding for program, whole process.
- I am not in favor of taking land off the tax rolls for bison.
- This whole idea is going to cost a ton of money (legal fees, fences, private prop damage, forage, added staff, added admin) and I want to know where it is gonna come from
- Take a realistic financial approach – send money into situations that take care of people in need – not use that money for folks entertainment
- This plan is a total waist of resources; the resources would be better used on wolf management or eradication.
- I would like to see our tax dollars & hunting fee dollars go the restoration of our free roaming elk herds & control of our wildlife prior to being spent on establishing more bison herds.
- I think MT FWP is short several million dollars already & money should not be spent for any reintroduction
  - Ditto above
- Who will pay for this program?
- Where will funding come from?
- What are costs? Is this economically self-sufficient?
- How will FWP handle increased workload? Where will money come from to manage them?
- How will managing bison be financed.
- Who would be responsible for financial impacts for the maintenance of the herds, damage to the neighboring lands, crops, + potentially neighboring herds of domestic livestock?
- Whose going to pay for it?
- Stable, long term funding source? In-state or out sourced (Sierra Club)
- What effect will limited amount of Block Management have on Department
- How would the proponents of this like it if we put all their \$ in a pile & let the bison shit on their investment.
- Concern I'm having is where is the \$ coming from to finance the scoping process? What are we taking \$ from to finance this?
- How much \$\$ will EIS and process cost taxpayers?
- Put out budget and run on that like everyone else

- Who is going to pay for it? Ranchers are strapped already – we are taxed. These programs cost \$ & the government is already broke.
- Invest in Bison – Not Children--- It does not make sense!
- Litigation will be problem in today's day and age regardless of direction bison management plan goes.
- Let the people who want them have them
- Conservatives rule-clean up the governor's office.
- Western half of MT wants this and even the wild federation or national wildlife federation--Then they wonder why they can't hunt
- How would bison affect historical sites?
- We are not saving the species.
- One of the dumbest ideas I've seen in 70 yrs
- Will this go same direction as wolf management. It has been poor.
- I think Schweitzer will be the head Wrangler.
- Glasgow going to be the most affected
  - Lake not going to be a barrier– that's pucky
- What else is MFWP up to other than bison?
- Who is going to protect the F&G Department folks if they go ahead with free roaming bison across MT
- I think the whole thing is ridiculous.
- Seems like people have a good idea for what should happen in someone else's neighborhood. But not their own.
- I am glad my children chose not to be in MT agriculture.
  - That's a very sad statement. I hope my children can continue to stay in agriculture.
- Would like to know how FWP employees feel about free-ranging bison.
  - If employees don't support it, they won't do a good job.
- Come November, this may not be an issue.
  - I think we are stuck with Tester again.
- Millions spent on wolves \$ can be spent better
- Asinine idea
- Grazing fees est. in 1930's/ cow calf pair – even grazing fees along w/cattle prices.
- Melstone area bison leave farm and range 60 miles. These go unclaimed and are shot.
- If everyone votes the right way in Nov., we won't have to deal with this shit anymore
- Will Gov Schweitzer explain his idea about establishing a beachhead?
- What battle is he starting w/ [a beach head]?
- FWP has bought way too much land the last few years – we don't want to see this continue for bison.
- I hate bison.
- Nov – May (2012) Press bad mouthing buffalo.

### **Alternatives:**

- No bison. No alternate plans.
- Senate Bill 212 – No Alternative
- Bison NO! Hell NO!
  - No flexibility.
- We don't want them.
- Zero tolerance for bison.
- The only option we support is NO ACTION.
- 110% adamantly against it
- In eastern part of state we have a lot of public land (CMR, etc.) we don't want them, we have a lot at stake.
- Instead of free-ranging idea let folks hunt a few in Yellowstone - Best of both worlds - lots of opportunity.
- Do nothing with bison mgt, do not release on landscape. Situation will end up like wolf.
- Let people who want them have them - we do not want them in Eastern Mt.

- You have Yellowstone – Until they can be managed successfully do not take on more.
- No Action
- Don't bring them in first place
- No bison expansion.
- No wild bison.
- Put all bison on ship. Send them to Russia.
- No wild bison free roaming.
- Definitely not in favor
  - No bison/no bison
  - No action – if people that have bison want them they can keep them.
    - Definition of bison in place for that very reason – to make people accountable
    - Establish liability
- Take no action on the issue as an alternative
- No action – same as WY with wolves
- There is no room for anything other than the “No Action” alternative.
- No bison
- No bison
- Send the bison to New York along with wolves
- No action
- No Action – No Alternative – Group Consensus
- No Action. Let private landowners manage bison herds as they see fit. All herds should be fenced.
- Bad idea for free roaming bison
- We don't need buffalo we have plenty of wildlife now
- Shoot – Shovel – Shut-up
- Don't want bison in my backyard
- In favor of no action
- No action
- No free roaming bison.
- No action.
- Feed enough wildlife already against any free roaming bison
- I am against the whole idea. Don't see how this is going to work.
  - Even with best intentions it will get out of control.
- NO, NO, NO
- I just don't want bison.
- Group thinks no action should be taken w/ bison mgt. (8 individual names listed)
- I am absolutely opposed to free-roaming Bison! I feel that FWP has purposely totally ignored the negative aspects on the land of unmanaged Bison grazing.
- I am opposed to wild-ranging bison + I do not think they should transport the problem they have at Yellowstone to Easter Montana.
- Central Park, NYC w/ wolves, prairie dogs and rattlesnakes
- I just don't want bison
- A good alternative is to leave them in Yellowstone.
- Please place the bison where there is the most local support. Do NOT place them where the locals are very opposed.
- I prefer the no action alternative
- We are opposed to ANY efforts to establish a free-ranging bison herd.
  - Me too!
- Presenting free-ranging bison as large herd puts fear in people. Any efforts should start small and be learned from through time.
- When governor terms out or retires can we use his ranch as a bison research area?
- I think there should be a spot (50,000 ac?) outside Park where bison are established – AND STOP THERE
- Go back to original management plan for park when they were kept from coming out or park.

- Upfront for all pages: Entire group is opposed o the establishment of wild, free-roaming bison in MT.
- Identify state lands that have no livestock grazing and fence bison.
- Observational herd at first peoples Buffalo jump state park should be an alternative.
- MFWP should begin a Bison relocation plan for Micoshika State Park that uses Custer State Park’s plan as a template/model.
- Bison are a plains animal. CMR and surrounding BLM lands are not prairie. It’s rough country.
  - Strong Historical evidence of Bison occupying the Missouri River Break region in the past
- Alternative 2: if tax dollars are used for a small herd (for educating landowners) the same funds should be used to educate the general public (supporters).
- When CMR refuge was established in 1938, it was recommended that Bison be put there eventually.
  - When Bison were on what is now the CMR Refuge, there was no lake there. There was a wide river riparian habitat
- It’s been over 100 years since we’ve seen free roaming bison, aren’t many places that are appropriate but someplace like the CMR may be